UNIV 2350 Seminar in Critical Inquiry
Taking Calls in Mumbai: Technology and Intercultural Communication
100% Online
Virtual Office Hours: M-Th 9-10a*
Instructor: Beau Pihlaja, MDiv, ThM, PhD (student)
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Peer Leader: Librarian:
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Course Description

What impact does technology have on intercultural communication? Does it enable it? Inhibit it? Improve it? Complicate it? What issues do individuals and groups face when they attempt to communicate cross-culturally via the internet for instance? What implications does this have on businesses, for example, that rely on computer mediated communication (CMC) to interact with international business partners? These are the questions that will occupy us throughout UNIV 2350: Intercultural Communication and Technology. Students will use this theme to address the goals of UTEP’s UNIV 2350 course goals. Students will study issues in intercultural communication, the history and development of various technologies and their impact on our society and intercultural communication.

Regarding the course theme, students should be able to:

1. Articulate basic issues pertaining to Intercultural Communication.
2. Articulate the ways in which technology helps/hinders Intercultural Communication.
3. Critically evaluate technology as a tool and its ethical implications.
4. Plan, execute, and present as a group basic research using a variety of tools (i.e., library, reputable internet resources, etc.)

UNIV 2350 Course Goals

Goal 1. Enhance students’ ability to assess technology
Goal 2. Develop and promote student teamwork
Goal 3. Enable Students to Relate Technology to Community Context
Goal 4. Advance students’ communication skills using technology
Goal 5. Engage students in exploring the ethics of technology.

Virtual Office Hours: M-Th 9-10am*
*Emails will be answered at this time. Emails sent after office hours have ended will, as a general rule, be answered during the next virtual office hours session. I will available to answer questions at this time via chat. I reserve the right to adjust these hours on any given week to accommodate committee meetings, unexpected events, etc. Please check the announcements. I am not available for in-person meetings in this course, except in the case of emergencies. If you would like to chat with me by phone whether during office hours or otherwise, please send me an email and a note about the time you’d like to call.

Teaching Method
The teaching method for this course, given its online nature, will involve a combination of guided group discussions/readings, audio/film presentations, and individual direction/instruction via email or chat. The online nature of the course will also require students to take responsibility to do the assigned individual and group work and seek help in a timely manner for things they do not understand or when issues arise (particularly pertaining to group work).

Course Materials
All required readings will be made available online.

Technology Requirements
As this is a 100% online course it is imperative that you make sure your computer’s software and browsers are capable of handling the technical demands of working extensively online. Incompatible software or outdated hardware will not be an excuse for unfinished or failure to submit work.

Make sure you are using compatible and up to date versions of:
- Adobe Acrobat/Flash Player
- Java
- QuickTime
- Windows Media Player

Course Requirements Descriptions

Participation (20%)
Students will be expected to participate at two crucial levels: 1.) Complete all online assignments, participate in all online discussions and group projects. If you fail to participate in group discussions or the final presentation discussion your participation grade will be reduced in addition to any points deducted for failure to complete the assignment. While attendance will not be graded in this class students are subject to the attendance policy enumerated below. 2.) Critically and thoughtfully engage the assignments, your fellow students, your professor and peer leader. Failure to demonstrate this engagement (as determined by the instructor) will result in the reduction of grade.

Weekly Assignments/Discussions (30%)
Students will be expected to complete a variety of reading assignments and discussions. All readings will be made available online. Students may be assigned to respond to readings in a variety of ways (e.g., individually in quizzes or group discussions online). Failure to participate and give evidence (in quiz responses and/or discussions) of serious engagement with readings will result in reduction of grade. Students will also need to complete a variety of assignments related to research development and the course themes that may involve different kinds of engagement (discussion, reports, etc.). Please note failure to participate in group discussions will result in a reduction of group discussion grade and lowered participation grade.
Students must demonstrate serious engagement in addition to simply completing the work. Failure to do so will result in reduction of grade.

Research Portfolio (50%)
Students must complete two research projects. The portfolio consists of two parts completed throughout the semester. Students will

- write a paper, and
- produce a group presentation from research conducted as a group.

Students are responsible to complete each stage of the assignments (both individual and group work) in full and by the appropriate due date (see schedule). Students will have the opportunity to evaluate fellow group members on their participation on any group work, this evaluation may be used to assign students’ final grade.

**Grading**

A=90-100%  B=80-89%  C=70-79%  D= 60-69%  F= 0-59%

*Please Note: Because this course is a core requirement, students must attain a C or better. Students with a D or lower will be required to retake UNIV 2350.*

**UNIV 2350 Grade Point Values**

Participation [200pts x .2] (20% of overall grade):

*Group Discussions* - 100pts (writes four group postings, responds to group members who post on time)

*Final Presentation* - 100pts (responds to each other group’s presentation, helps respond to questions/comments on own group’s presentation)

Assignments/Quizzes/Group Discussions [1700 x .3] (30% of overall grade)

*Assignments* Online Learning Aptitude Quiz (25pts) + Introductory Discussion Board Participation (25pts) + Permission to Use Work Form (25pts) + Reading Electronic Texts (25pts)= 100pts

*Module Quizzes:* 100pts X 10 = 1000pts

*Group Discussions:* 150pts x 4= 600pts

Research Portfolio [500pts * .5] (50% of overall grade)

*Individual Paper* - Library Modules (25pts) + Evaluating Research Assignment (25pts) + Individual Paper Check-In Assignment (10pts) + Final Draft (90pts)= 150pts

*Group Project* - Group Contract (25pts) + Work Log Participation (25pts) + Final Presentation (300pts)= 350pts

**Suggested Procedure for Completing Work**

I would recommend you complete each session in Blackboard in the following manner:

- Read any posted announcements
- Check your email and reply as necessary
- Review the course calendar to double check daily/weekly requirements
- Complete your next **individual** module requirements (module quizzes open at 8am on Monday and are available until 8am the following Monday, all quizzes are open book and limited to 3 attempts)
- Complete your next **group** work module requirements (if due soon)
- Read/Review Research Portfolio instructions for the different parts
- Conduct any group work/communication needed depending on time during semester and proximity of due date

At any point: email your peer leader or instructor with questions.

**Expected workload**

In a normal face-to-face course the workload expectation would be 3 hours a week for every one hour in class (i.e., 9 hours a week for a 3 credit hour class for a total of 12 hours weekly workload). Since our course is 100% online what would normally be “class time” is applied to the readings, journals, group work, and portfolio work. Under normal circumstances, one could expect to spend between 10-12 hours a week reading, responding and working on assignments. This is an *average* guideline and the amount of time required for work on any given week may differ significantly from student to student.

**Policies and Procedures**

**Contacting Instructor**

*Emails will only be accepted through Blackboard.* In the event of a system outage or other emergency I can be reached at bspihlaja@utep.edu or by phone at (915) 747-8444.

- Include a subject line with some indication of what the email is about
- It would also help for you to include the name of your section’s peer leader in the subject line (this is easier to distinguish the different sections I teach than the CRNs)
- Always remember to include your “signature,” your first and last name.

I will do my best to respond to emails during posted online office hours or throughout the day as possible until 5pm on weekdays.

If you do not receive a response within that time period, *send a second email* or contact the peer leader if it is an emergency.

Expect emails sent after 5pm on Friday to be answered Monday at the earliest.

Feel free also, to contact me during my “Virtual Office Hours.” Emails will be answered at this time. Emails sent after office hours have ended will, as a general rule, be answered during the next virtual office hours session. I will available to answer questions at this time via chat or via phone. I reserve the right to adjust these hours on any given week to accommodate committee meetings, unexpected events, etc. Please check the announcements. Because we have students joining us from out of town, I am not available for in-person meetings in this course. This is to ensure fairness and uniformity of experience for all students.
I will not accept assignments through email (with the exception of the group presentation if it is too large to send through Blackboard email).

Attendance
As this is a 100% online course: Failure to complete any assignment in each of the course “areas” (quizzes, discussions, Research Portfolio requirements) on time (or within the prescribed late work period [see below]), online or in class will constitute an “absence.” If a requirement area has more than one reading or requirement, completion of one part of the assignment will count as participation for that area and you will not be counted absent (though you will be penalized for not completing the assignment).

If you are absent from class (as defined above) more than 4 times before the drop deadline for the semester [see: UTEP Academic Calendar] the instructor will have the right to withdraw you from the course and you will receive a “W.” You are, however, still responsible for withdrawing yourself from the course. Failure to do so may result in you receiving an “F” for the course.

If you are absent from class (as defined above) more than 4 times after the semester’s drop deadline, the instructor has the right to fail (“F”) you for the course.

PLEASE NOTE: As this is an online course, participation is all the more crucial. You will still be responsible for completing assignments (individual and group) on time. There is not less work with an online class only more work you must do on your own. Please be aware of this and plan accordingly.

Late Work
Turn in all work online by the time specified in the schedule.
Late work will not be accepted.

Missed Assignments
There is no make-up work for any assignment with the potential exception of legitimate, verifiable* medical emergencies, verified within a reasonable amount of time after the fact.

I will not accept assignments via email after assignments have closed.

*I will expect proof of doctor’s notes, etc. and clear indication as to why the emergency prevented you from completing the assigned work on time. As there is no class meeting and all assignment deadlines are known well in advance, doctor’s visits and the like can be scheduled to accommodate the course deadlines. They will not be necessarily accepted as an excused absence.

A word about a death or serious illness in the family during the course: While clearly we cannot “plan” when serious tragedies hit us, how you respond to them in relation to this class will be up to you. If your family is struck by tragedy (e.g., a serious illness or a death of a close friend or loved one), I am going to strongly recommend that you drop the course and re-take it at a later date. Some things are simply more important than school.
If, for whatever reason you decide to continue in the course, you will still be responsible for the entirety of the remaining course requirements. Tragedy of this sort cannot itself be grounds for extensions on work or a change in grade at the end of the course.

Extra Credit
Given the advanced nature of this course, you should expect no extra credit. I do reserve the right to offer it should I feel it appropriate.

Format
All written assignments must be typed on white paper, double spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman Font, with one inch margins, and conform to the APA style for citations, bibliography, and paper formatting (with minimal changes which will be discussed in class). All written assignments must be uploaded via blackboard. Further instruction will be provided in class.

Policy for final exams [From the online Schedule of Classes]
Exemption from final examination may not be given. Final examinations are scheduled to be two hours, forty-five minutes in length and take place during the final examination period. It is the policy of the university not to administer a second final examination in the course. It is also university policy that students shall not have more than two final examinations in a single day. In the unlikely event that the examination schedule results in a student having three final examinations on a single day, the faculty member upon the request of the student shall reschedule the second of that student’s three examinations.

Copyright Statement
Some of the materials in this course are copyrighted. Violation of US copyright law can result in civil damages up to $100,000 for each work copied. Copying of textbooks is not “fair use” under the Copyright Act. The “fair use doctrine” only permits non-commercial copying of part (in general, not more than 10%) of a copyrighted work. Your cooperation is expected.

1.3 Student Conduct: [From the Handbook of Operating Procedures: Student Affairs]
Students are expected to respect other students in the class, the peer leader, and the instructor. Class discussions are to be conducted with respect for one another.
Each student is also responsible for notice of and compliance with the provisions of the Regents Rules and Regulations, which are available for inspection electronically at http://www.utsystem.edu/bor/rules/homepage.htm.

Online Conduct
Communicating online can make us feel “safe” and comfortable. Sometimes it makes us feel too safe which, ironically, makes our behavior feel “unsafe” for others. Pay special attention to how you and your colleagues conduct yourselves in this class on the discussion boards, in emails to one another, in emails to your instructor and peer leader.
Some things to think about:

**Language:** Given the absence of face-to-face clues, written text can easily be misinterpreted. Avoid the use of strong or offensive language and the excessive use of exclamation points. If you feel particularly strongly about a point, it may be best to write it first as a draft and then to review it, before posting it, in order to remove any strong language.

**Be Forgiving:** If someone states something that you find offensive, mention this directly to the instructor. Remember that the person contributing to the discussion is also new to this form of communication. What you find offensive may quite possibly have been unintended and can best be cleared up by the instructor.

**This is Permanent:** Think carefully about the content of your message before contributing it. Once sent to the group, there is no taking it back. Also, although the grammar and spelling of a message typically are not graded, they do reflect on you, and your audience might not be able to decode misspelled words or poorly constructed sentences. It is a good practice to compose and check your comments in a word-processor before posting them.

**Test For Clarity:** Messages may often appear perfectly clear to you as you compose them, but turn out to be perfectly obtuse to your reader. One way to test for clarity is to read your message aloud to see if it flows smoothly. If you can read it to another person before posting it, even better.

**Remember Your Place:** A Web-based classroom is still a classroom, and comments that would be inappropriate in a regular classroom are likely to be inappropriate in a Web-based course as well. Treat your instructor and your fellow students with respect.

**Follow the Parameters/ Stick To The Point:** Follow the posting requirements and parameters set up by your professor. Contributions to a discussion should have a clear subject header, and you need to stick to the subject. Don't waste others' time by going off on irrelevant tangents.

**Read First, Write Later:** Don't add your comments to a discussion before reading the comments of other students unless the assignment specifically asks you to. Doing so is tantamount to ignoring your fellow students and is rude. Comments related to the content of previous messages should be posted under them to keep related topics organized, and you should specify the person and the particular point you are following up on.

*(Guidelines provided courtesy of Instructional Support Services)*

**You should also remember:**

- Consider your audience. Remember that members of the class and the instructor will be reading any postings.
- Respect and courtesy must be provided to classmates and to instructor at all times. No harassment, flaming, or inappropriate postings will be tolerated.
- Do not use inappropriate language, all capital letters, or language short cuts. Online entries should be written in Standard English with edited spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- When reacting to someone else's message, address the *ideas*, not the person. Post only what anyone would comfortably state in a face-to-face situation.
Be sure to read everyone's responses before posting. Avoid repetition of what someone else has already said. Add something new to the discussion!

- No credit will be received for yes/no answers. Posts should justify positions and provide specific examples. Students must demonstrate that they have read the assignment and their classmates' comments carefully and thoughtfully.

- Be sure to post in a timely fashion to receive credit for attendance and for the discussion. Pay close attention to the posted deadlines.

(Courtesy of Instructional Support Services Digital Academy)

1.3.1 Scholastic Dishonesty: [From the Handbook of Operating Procedures: Student Affairs]
It is the official policy of the University that all suspected cases or acts of alleged scholastic dishonesty must be referred to the Dean of Students for investigation and appropriate disposition. It is contrary to University policy for a faculty member to assign a disciplinary grade such as an "F" or zero to an assignment, test, examination, or other course work as a sanction for admitted or suspected scholastic dishonesty in lieu of normally charging the student through the Dean of Students. Similarly, students are prohibited from proposing and/or entering into an arrangement with a faculty member to receive a grade of "F" or any reduced grade in lieu of being charged with scholastic dishonesty. Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

1.3.12 Plagiarism: [From the Handbook of Operating Procedures: Student Affairs]
"Plagiarism" means the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of it in one's own academic work offered for credit, or using work in a paper or assignment for which the student had received credit in another course without direct permission of all involved instructors.

Policy for Students in need of accommodation:
If you have or suspect a disability and need an accommodation you should contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services Office at 747-5148 or at cass@utep.edu or go to Room 302 (Temporarily) Union East Building. Accommodations made through CASS must be discussed and available to instructor on the first day of class.

Foster Homeless Adopted Resources (FHAR)
If you have aged out of foster care in Texas, were adopted, or find yourself homeless or with unstable/inadequate housing, there may be resources available to you. See me or a FHAR advisor at the Academic Advising Center. If you know someone in these circumstances, please also refer them to me or a FHAR advisor.

Syllabus Change Policy:
This syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.
Course Content

Schedule by Week

(You can also check the Course Calendar in the Course Menu for a monthly or weekly schedule)

Week 1 (1/21-1/27)

Orient yourselves to course. Read introductory material. Explore course requirements. Contact instructor with any questions you have.

Introductions Discussion
Post due by 1/27, 8:00am

Week 2 (1/27-2/3)

Online Learning Aptitude Test
Reading Electronic Texts
Permission to Use Student Work

Due Monday 2/3, 8:00am

Week 3 (2/3-2/10)

Learning Module 2 Quiz
Due Monday 2/10, 8:00am

Library/Evaluating Research Modules
Due Monday 2/10, 8:00am

Week 4 (2/10-2/17)

Learning Module 3 Quiz
Due Monday 2/17, 8:00am

Group Module 1
Individual posts due by Wednesday 2/12 by 11:59pm, completed discussion (comments, responses, etc.) due by Monday 2/17, 8:00am

Week 5 (2/17-2/24)

Learning Module 4 Quiz
Due Monday 2/24, 8:00am

Individual Paper Check-In Assignment
Due Monday 2/24, 8:00am
Week 6 (2/24-3/3)

Learning Module 5 Quiz
Due Monday 3/3, 8:00am

Group Contract
Due Monday 3/3, 8:00am

Week 7 (3/4-3/10)

Individual Paper Safe-Assign Assignment
Due Friday 3/7, 11:59pm

Research Paper Final Draft
Due Friday 3/7, 11:59pm

Week 8 (3/10-3/17)

Spring Break

Week 9 (3/17-3/24)

Learning Module 6 Quiz
Due Monday 3/24, 8:00am

Group Module 2
Individual posts due by Wednesday 3/19 by 11:59pm, completed discussion (comments, responses, etc.) due by Monday 3/24, 8:00am

Week 10 (3/24-3/31)

Learning Module 7 Quiz
Due Monday 3/31, 8:00am

Week 11 (3/31-4/7)

Learning Module 8 Quiz
Due Monday 4/7, 8:00am

Group Module 3
Individual posts due by Wednesday 4/2 by 11:59pm, completed discussion (comments, responses, etc.) due by Monday 4/7, 8:00am

Week 12 (4/7-4/14)

Learning Module 9 Quiz
Due Monday 4/14, 8:00am

Week 13 (4/14-4/21)

*Learning Module 10 Quiz*
Due Monday 4/21, 8:00am

*Group Module 4*
Individual posts due by Wednesday 4/16 by 11:59pm, completed discussion (comments, responses, etc.) due by Monday 4/21, 8:00am

Week 14 (4/21-4/28)

*Learning Module 11 Quiz*
Due Monday 4/28, 8:00am

Week 15 (4/28-5/5)

*Work on Group Presentation*

Week 16 (5/5-5/12)

*Work Log Completed*
Due Wednesday 5/7, **8:00am**.

*Final Presentation, Peer Reviews for Final Presentation*
Due Wednesday 5/7, by **8:00am**.

Dead Day (5/9)

Final Exams Week (5/12-5/16)

*Comments*
Due by Thursday, 5/15 by **11:59pm**

*Group Responses*
Due by Friday, 5/16 by **11:59pm**