

# **SAMPLE SYLLABUS**

## **COMM 340: Intercultural Communication**

Summer 2020: Brussels, Belgium

### *Tentative Course Syllabus*

Instructor: Todd Lee Goen (aka, Goen)

Meeting: 9:00 – 11:45 MTWR

Office Hours: During Lunch & As Arranged

E-mail: todd.goen@cnu.edu

### ***Required Materials***

Oetzel, J. G. (2009). *Intercultural communication: A layered approach*. New York: Vango Books.

Ainsley, D. J. (2018). *Belgium*. Broomall, PA: Mason Crest.

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed). Washington, DC: APA.

Additional materials and readings will be posted via Scholar (i.e., Blackboard).

### ***Catalog Description***

This course is an exploration into human communication in cross-cultural settings. Students examine the basic human communication process and determine how it is shaped by cultural values. Additionally, they learn how to confront and manage culture shock effectively in cross-cultural encounters.

### ***Course Goal***

This course provides a basic understanding of intercultural skills and competencies. Students will learn to analyze their culture and a variety of other cultures and to assess what communicative differences are products of culture. Further, students will have the opportunity to practice their intercultural communication skills in an intercultural setting.

### ***AIGM Learning Objective***

At the conclusion of an AIGM course, students should be able to demonstrate knowledge of an outcome or consequence that results from interactions between different cultures or subcultures.

### ***Course Learning Objectives***

1. Students will acquire the basic terminology necessary for comparing and contrasting cultures.
2. Students will analyze the differences between their culture and the host culture.
3. Students will consider the ways in which culture shapes communication.
4. Students will explore intercultural communication in a variety of cultural contexts and sites.
5. Students will practice intercultural communication skills in a variety of settings.

### ***Statement on Physical Requirements***

This is a study abroad course conducted outside of the U.S., which means this course will be in a location where the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) does not apply. Faculty will make every effort to accommodate students with physical requirements. However, all students should be aware this program includes excursions requiring significant amounts of walking. None of the walking is strenuous per se. However, walking is a much larger component of European culture than the U.S. Participants should be able to walk up to

eight miles in a day. Students desiring accommodations for these physical components should discuss the program with faculty prior to departure to ensure accommodations are possible. Also, note some buildings/locations may not be handicap accessible.

## **EVALUATION**

Grade calculations for this course will be as follows:

		<b>Grading Scale</b>			
Reading Quizzes	100	A	460-500	C	365-384
Reflective Essays	150	A-	450-459	C-	350-364
Cultural Presentation	100	B+	435-449	D+	335-349
Article Reflection	50	B	415-434	D	315-334
<u>Participation</u>	<u>100</u>	B-	400-414	D-	300-314
TOTAL 500		C+	385-399	F	below 300

Please note: (a) I only change grades in the event of a mathematical error. Rounding does not exist in a point based grading system – it is arbitrary grade inflation. (b) It is your responsibility to keep all graded assignments until final grades are posted. These will be necessary for any grade dispute (i.e., to reconcile a recording error).

### ***Grading Standards***

- A- to A      excellent work that exceeds course/assignment requirements
- B- to B+    good work that goes beyond the required level for the course/assignment
- C- to C+    satisfactory work that meets the course/assignment requirements
- D- to D+    work that deserves credit, but does not meet the course/assignment requirements
- F            unsatisfactory work that fails to meet requirements and demonstrates a lack of effort

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

### ***Reading Quizzes***

There will be 10 reading quizzes covering the content of the Oetzel textbook worth 10 points each (100 points total & 20% of the final grade). The goal of the quizzes is to ensure that you are familiar with the material and to increase the depth of class discussions. Quizzes are an easy way to boost your grade, but can also be detrimental to your grade should you fail to read. Students will complete quizzes via Scholar (i.e., Blackboard) prior to class. Each quiz will consist of 10 closed-ended items and students will have 10 minutes to answer all items. Quizzes are due by 11:59 PM CNU time the date prior to departure to give students more opportunities to explore the host culture and to increase the quality of the in-country experience.

The 10 items for each reading quiz come from a pool of items. Thus, each student will receive a unique quiz. Students should be aware that the CNU Honor Code applies to all quizzes. Violations of the honor code with regard to the completion of quizzes will be handled as follows: For a first infraction, the student will receive a zero on the quiz. For a second infraction, the student will receive a failing grade for the course.

*While there are not reading quizzes over the content of the Ainsley text, I will lead class discussions and excursions with the assumption you are familiar with this information. As this text provides background information regarding the history and culture of Belgium, failure to read it prior to departure will inhibit your ability to understand some of the content of the course and excursions.*

### ***Reflective Essays (REs)***

There will be 10 reflection prompts worth 15 points each (30% of the final grade) for you to complete throughout the term. The goal of the reflective essays is to aid you in identifying and analyzing specific intercultural communication behaviors used in a variety of interactions. A detailed handout with specific instructions for each reflective essay is available on Scholar (i.e., Blackboard). REs are due by 11:59 PM Brussels time (5:59 PM CNU time) on the date reflected on the course schedule.

#### ***Culture Presentation***

Each student will complete a 30-minute group presentation to the class focused on a specific element of intercultural communication. The presentation will compare and contrast U.S. culture to Northern European culture, and is worth 100 points (20% of the final grade). Students will be assigned to groups prior to departure and will examine some aspect of culture not covered in this course. A detailed handout with specific instructions for this assignment is available on Scholar (i.e., Blackboard) as is a grading rubric.

#### ***Article Reflection***

There are a number of short, popular press and news articles that address cultures throughout the world in some way posted to Scholar (i.e., Blackboard). Each student will be responsible for providing an in-class, five-minute analysis of one of these articles during the time abroad. This assignment is worth 50 points (10% of the final grade). A detailed handout with instructions and a grading rubric are available via Scholar (i.e., Blackboard).

#### ***Participation***

As this is an upper-division communication course, there is an expectation that students will participate in class discussion, fieldtrips, etc. Thus, participation accounts for 100 points (20%) of your grade. As this is a study abroad course with specific activities and excursions designed to enhance student understanding of course material, there is an expectation student participation will exceed typical participation in an on-campus course. A detailed handout regarding expectations for participation is available on Scholar (i.e., Blackboard). Students should chat with me during the term if they have questions about their participation.

### **COURSE POLICIES**

#### ***Attendance***

Given this is an upper-division course that fulfills an Area of Inquiry requirement, there is an expectation you will not miss class meetings. My observation is that students who choose not to attend my classes do not perform as well as students who do attend. If you miss a class you need to obtain notes from a classmate rather than the instructor. Further, handouts, assignments, and other course materials are only available from the instructor on the date distributed in class. Tardiness and leaving class early are unacceptable. Excused absences outside of university policy are solely at the discretion of the instructor.

SPECIAL NOTE: I am aware this is a study abroad course and know that the laws in Europe (i.e., drinking age) are different from the United States. However, I will NOT alter the nature of assignments nor the mode of delivery simply because we are studying abroad. I expect you to be in class and to complete coursework on time. While we may be in Europe, this is still an educational exercise with specific university requirements. Any student who misses more than **TWO** class periods (equivalent to two weeks of a regular semester) will receive a letter grade deduction per additional absence. Given the number of students, the familiarity we will acquire, and the compressed nature of the course, everyone will know if you are absent.

#### ***Scholar (i.e., Blackboard) & Other University Technology***

As you are aware, there is a six-hour time difference between Christopher Newport University (CNU) and Brussels. Brussels is six hours ahead of CNU. Thus, routine maintenance to Blackboard and other campus  
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technology is likely to occur during the day in Brussels (usually in the mornings). Your instructor will try to make you aware of any Blackboard outages (and other campus technology services). However, it is not possible to predict all of these events. Students should complete work early to ensure on time submission. **Blackboard problems will *not* excuse late work!**

#### ***Deadlines & Expectations***

The standard expectation for collegiate level work is that students will spend 2-3 hours outside of class for every hour in class. I expect students to read assigned materials prior to attending class. You fully expect me to prepare for each class. I expect the same of you. I am here to facilitate your education, but I am not responsible for your education (only you can be). Students are responsible for all of the reading material – whether covered in class or not. Further, I expect you to complete all assignments in a timely fashion. **Late work is unacceptable.** While I want you to enjoy our time in Europe, we are still engaged in an academic endeavor. Just as with any other summer course, you will devote a significant amount of your day to academic pursuits if you wish to be successful in this course.

#### ***Reading Policy***

It is often difficult to participate in class discussion and to fully comprehend the material if you come to class unprepared. Students are expected to complete the assigned readings before attending class. I assume you completed and understood the readings. I will use the class period to expand on the material and/or present new material. Some material in the reading(s) will not be covered expressly in class as it provides the background to understand the material discussed in class. If it becomes apparent that the majority of the class did not read the material for an assigned class period, I will dismiss class as continuing is a waste of time. My role as instructor is to assist you in understanding this material – it is **not** to spoon-feed you. ***You are responsible for all the material covered in this class and assigned in the readings. Further, you have a responsibility to yourself, your classmates, and your instructor to contribute to this course.***

#### ***Make-Up Work***

Make up work is allowed only in the event of an excused absence. Excused absences constitute the following: 1) severe injury or illness; 2) death, serious illness, or emergency in student's immediate family; 3) participation in authorized University-sponsored activities; 4) religious observances; 5) participation in court-imposed legal proceedings; and 6) required participation in military obligations. ***Only students with an excused absence may make-up work in this course.*** In the event of an emergency (categories 1 & 2), students should notify their instructor as soon as physically possible (preferably prior to the class meeting). Advance notice (one week minimum) is required for all other excused absences (3 - 6). Documentation for excused absences is **required**. All make-up work is due the class period following the student's return to class.

#### ***Disabilities Statement***

I will accommodate students with documented disabilities according to the guidelines provided to me by the Dean of Students. If you have a documented disability, I highly recommend you meet with the Dean of Students to discuss accommodation(s). Please do not hesitate to contact me at any point during the semester to discuss your performance and/or accommodations. ***Any student with a documented disability should consult with Student Disability Services and the instructor prior to departure.***

#### ***Requirements for Written Work***

Unless the assignment provides alternate instructions, all written work must be typed, doubled-spaced in Times New Roman 12-point font with one-inch margins and no extra space between paragraphs. These requirements are **not** the default settings for Microsoft Word. References and citations should conform to the guidelines specified in the ***Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) 6th Edition***.  
COMM 340 Syllabus, SU20, Goen

Written work should be free of spelling and grammatical errors! Unless the instructions indicate otherwise, I do not accept work submitted via e-mail. **Failure to meet these requirements will result in a grade of zero.**

The corporate and professional world demands excellence in written work. This requires you to conform to specific standards and conventions associated with the field/company that employs you. Thus, my expectations for written work submitted in this course are high. Double-check to ensure your work conforms to the requirements specified in the assignment handout. I highly recommend students make use of peer review opportunities.

#### ***Academic Integrity***

As a member of this academic community, you accepted the following pledge:

*On my honor, I will maintain the highest possible standards of honesty, integrity and personal responsibility.*

*That means I will not lie, cheat, or steal and as a member of this academic community, I am committed to creating an environment of respect and mutual trust.*

This pledge should govern all behavior and work associated with this course. Students engaging in behaviors or submitting work inconsistent with this pledge will face sanctions.

I have a zero tolerance policy concerning academic dishonesty, as I believe that it is detrimental to the educational process. Given this stance, please note the following:

1. I have a responsibility to report individuals who violate the academic integrity policy.
2. I have read the university's academic integrity policy, and I understand it.
3. I have a reputation for (a) spotting plagiarism and (b) locating plagiarized works.
4. I know how to use an Internet search engine.
5. I have no qualms about assigning a grade of F.

I take academic integrity very seriously. In addition, the Department Communication and Christopher Newport University take academic dishonesty very seriously. You should take academic integrity seriously, too. The *minimum* penalty for academic dishonesty in this class is a **zero** on the assignment. Ignorance is not a defense. When in doubt, ask!

**Remember: The CNU Honor Code governs your behavior while abroad!**

#### ***24 Hour Rule***

Experience indicates that careful consideration and reflection of one's graded work facilitates meaningful discussion. Thus, I require that students wait 24 hours after receipt of the graded assignment before contacting me with questions concerning a grade. This gives students time to think through their questions and increases students' objectivity.

#### ***Final Grade & Incompletes***

You must complete the presentation, half of the quizzes, and half of the REs to receive a final grade (even if it is for a grade of zero) — students who do not complete these will receive a grade of F. An incomplete will be given only when a student who is passing the course has a "relatively small" remainder of the semester's work to complete and is unable to complete the work due to a significant life event. I adhere strictly to this policy. I will assign a grade of incomplete ONLY in accordance with university policy.

#### ***Grievance Procedure***

Occasionally, a student is dissatisfied with some dimension of the course. If you have a concern at any time during the course, please come speak with me directly during office hours, by appointment, or via e-mail. If you want to appeal a grade, my policy is that you must make the grade appeal in writing to me within *seven*

calendar days after the assignment is returned. Prepare and submit a typed argument indicating what your specific appeal is and what grade you believe you deserved. A good argument references texts, readings, and/or class notes. Turn in the appeal before or after class, during office hours, or at a scheduled appointment within one week of the assignment being returned. If you have employed these measures and are still dissatisfied, or feel that an appropriate resolution may not be reached by working with me, then I encourage you to contact the Chair of the Department of Communication, Dr. Linda Manning, in accordance with the procedures outlined in the university handbook. She will also need a written appeal in order to assist you.

#### ***Electronic Devices***

TURN THEM OFF!!! The use of electronic devices (i.e., cell phones, pagers, iPods, etc.) in class is prohibited. All such items are to be turned off (not to vibrate) during class. Students with visible or audible electronic devices presentations will receive a ZERO on that assignment — NO EXCEPTIONS. I reserve the right to answer any cell phone that rings during class (same for texting). Laptops are permissible if used for educational purposes. Anyone wishing to surf the Internet, Facebook, e-mail, shop online, chat, send text messages, etc. can find someplace other than the classroom to do it (and be much more comfortable). Such behavior is distracting to other students and will not be tolerated. If you are unable to control these behaviors for fifty minutes, have the decency to sit on the back row! Students using laptops for non-course purposes seated anywhere other than the back row will forfeit their right to use their laptops for the remainder of the term. We are abroad and maintaining connections with family and friends are important. However, class time does not prohibit maintaining contact with people in the U.S. – it merely delays it.

#### ***Freedom of Expression - Safe Space/Learning Environment***

One of the purposes of education is the free exchange of ideas. Informed disagreement is critical to the learning process and I welcome it in this space. I do not expect you to agree with every idea/theory discussed in this course (I do not) as informed disagreement is a valued component of the educational process. However, **I WILL NOT TOLERATE any form of disrespect directed toward an individual.** This is an environment open to the discussion of ideas, but not to degradation. *This is especially important in an intercultural communication course abroad because we will discuss many of the challenges students face in their daily interactions.* BE WARNED: If you attack another student in this class, I will attack you! Then, I will ask any student who cannot comport himself/herself in an appropriate manner to leave until such a time as s/he can behave acceptably. Also, this type of behavior will result in a significant deduction to the participation grade.

#### ***Syllabus as Contract***

This syllabus constitutes a social contract between the instructor and all of the students enrolled in this class. This document, assignment sheets, and other course handouts/documents explain the policies and procedures for this course. Please read all of these documents carefully. Your continued enrollment in this course indicates your understanding of the policies and procedures for this course **and** your agreement to adhere to said policies and procedures. If you have any questions regarding the course policies and procedures at any point during the semester, please ask your instructor immediately.

### **UNIVERSITY MANDATED STATEMENTS**

#### **Disabilities:**

In order for a student to receive an accommodation for a disability, that disability must be on record in the Dean of Students' Office, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, David Student Union (DSU). If you believe that you have a disability, please contact Dr. Kevin Hughes, Dean of Students (594-7160) to discuss your needs. Dean Hughes will provide you with the necessary documentation to give to your professors.

Students with documented disabilities are required to notify the instructor no later than the first day on which they require an accommodation (the first day of class is recommended), in private, if accommodation is needed. The instructor will provide students with disabilities with all reasonable accommodations, but students are not exempted from fulfilling the normal requirements of the course. Work completed before the student notifies the instructor of his/her disability may be counted toward the final grade at the sole discretion of the instructor.

### **Success:**

I want you to succeed in this course and at CNU. I encourage you to come see me during office hours or to schedule an appointment to discuss course content or to answer questions you have. If I become concerned about your course performance, attendance, engagement, or well-being, I will speak with you first. I also may submit a referral through our Captains Care Program. The referral will be received by the Center for Academic Success as well as other departments when appropriate (Counseling Services, Office of Student Engagement). If you are an athlete, the Athletic Academic Support Coordinator will be notified. Someone will contact you to help determine what will help you succeed. Please remember that this is a means for me to support you and help foster your success at CNU.

### **Academic Support:**

The Center for Academic Success offers free tutoring assistance for CNU students in several academic areas. Staff in the center offer individual assistance and/or workshops on various study strategies to help you perform your best in your courses. The center also houses the Alice F. Randall Writing Center. Writing consultants can help you at any stage of the writing process, from invention, to development of ideas, to polishing a final draft. The Center is not a proofreading service, but consultants can help you to recognize and find grammar and punctuation errors in your work as well as provide assistance with global tasks. Go as early in the writing process as you can, and go often!

You may drop by the Center for Academic Success to request a tutor, meet with a writing consultant, pick up a schedule of workshops, or make an appointment to talk one-on-one with a University Fellow for Student Success. The Center is located in Newport Hall, first floor, room 123.

### **\*\*\* Tentative Schedule \*\*\***

This schedule may change due to the needs of the class. Your instructor will announce any deviations from this schedule in class.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings &amp; Assignment Due</u>
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#### Pre-Departure Orientations

#### **2018**

Nov.	Introduction & Overview (Parents Invited)
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#### **2019**

Jan.	Living in Brussels: Expectations & Challenges
Feb.	Traveling in Europe: A Primer
Mar.	Course Introductions (First Day of Class)

#### **Pre-Departure Work** (11:59 PM the day prior)

**RE # 1; All Quizzes;** Ainsley Text

Reading Quizzes & Corresponding Chapters (first five must be completed in order)

Defining Intercultural Communication	chs. 1 & 2; Quiz 1
Histories & Futures Shaping Cultures	ch. 12; Quiz 2
Identity & Intercultural Communication	ch. 3; Quiz 3
Attributions/Attitudes	ch. 4; Quiz 4
Initial Intercultural Interactions	ch. 5; Quiz 5
Intercultural Relationships	ch. 6; Quiz 6
Intercultural Workplaces	ch. 8; Quiz 7
Intercultural Communities	ch. 10; Quiz 8
Intercultural Education	ch. 7; Quiz 9
Intercultural Health Care	ch. 9; Quiz 10

13 May	<b>DEPART U.S.</b>
14 May	<b>ARRIVE PARIS; PARIS TOURS</b>
15 May	<b>PARIS TOURS</b>
16 May	<b>DEPART PARIS; ARRIVE BRUSSELS; GROCERY SHOPPING &amp; SCAVENGER HUNT</b>
17 May	<b>BRUSSELS CITY TOUR; MURAL WALK</b>

#### Week 1

18 May	Intercultural Concepts & Difference	RE # 2
19 May	<b>BRUGES TOUR</b>	
20 May	Connections between Past, Present, & Future	
21 May	Attributions & Attitudes	RE # 3

#### Week 2

25 May	Culture & Identity	
26 May	Culture & Language	RE # 4
27 May	<b>BASTOGNE &amp; ARDENNES CEMETERY</b>	
28 May	Intercultural Interactions	RE # 5

#### Week 3

1 June	Intercultural Relationships	
2 June	<b>EU COMMISSION &amp; US EMBASSY</b>	RE # 6
3 June	<b>GHENT</b>	
4 June	Intercultural Workplaces	RE # 7

#### Week 4

8 June	Intercultural Communities	RE # 8
9 June	<b>EU PARLIAMENT</b>	
10 June	Intercultural Education	RE # 9
11 June	<b>CHOCLATIER &amp; CANTILLON TOURS</b>	
12 June	<b>Group Presentations</b>	RE # 10
13 June	<b>CHECK OUT &amp; DEPART BRUSSELS</b>	