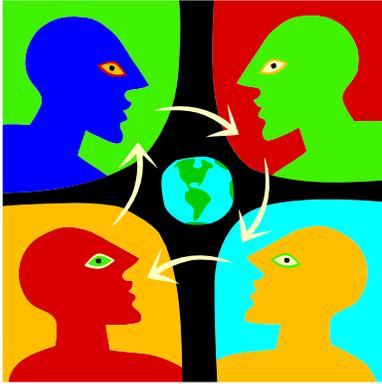


Writing 20



Translating the Culture Shock: Beyond Intercultural (Mis)Understanding

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Section 65 - TTh 10:05 - 11:20 Carr Building 125

Section 75 - TTh 11:40 - 12:55 Art Building 102

About this course

Have you ever felt misunderstood or out of place when traveling away from home? Do you plan to study abroad, join the Peace Corps, or develop a Duke Engage project with a local community unfamiliar to you? Are you an international student trying to make sense of American life or Duke's campus culture? Are you a *national* student trying to adjust to college life?

Many who have experienced powerful intercultural encounters claim they have been “changed forever,” yet find their experience untranslatable, difficult to “put into words.” The ever increasing globalization of our world offers many opportunities for intercultural contact and exchange; yet it also carries the potential for many “untranslatable” moments, misunderstandings and conflicts in interpersonal, educational and professional settings. This has sparked a renewed interest in the scholarly research of intercultural communication by linguists and social scientists alike, as well as the publication of numerous practical training guides designed to develop one's “cultural intelligence” or “cultural competency” in the diplomatic, philanthropic and business worlds.

In this course, we will read and write about different theories and perspectives on intercultural communication and its barriers. Drawing from readings in anthropology, translation studies, linguistics, psychology and short fiction, you will compose short weekly responses focusing on different aspects of academic writing (i.e., acknowledging sources, delineating a claim, supporting an argument). These will help you build both a theoretical background and a repertoire of writing skills that you will use to write two longer projects.

In the first project, you will analyze a work of fiction depicting a cross-cultural encounter by critically employing one or more of the interpretive lenses previously explored in the course. The final project will be a case study of your choosing. You will draw from the readings, your own and your fellow classmates' experiences at home and abroad to develop a "translation" of an intercultural encounter or conflict that interests you. This may involve conducting interviews and fieldwork observations in the Duke or Durham community, or it may take the form of an exploratory research on an issue or site you hope to visit in the future.

Reading Materials

Rewriting: How to Do Things with Texts by Joseph Harris. Utah State University Press, 2006

The Craft of Research. Booth, Colomb and Williams.

"Shitty First Drafts" by Anne Lamott in *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life*. New York: Pantheon, 1994.

The Body Ritual of the Nacirema Horace Miner

Cultural Relativism Melville Herskovits

Traveling Cultures James Clifford

The Power of Hidden Difference Edward Hall

Understanding Intercultural Communication Samovar and Porter

Science and Linguistics Benjamin Lee Whorf

On Being Foreign: Culture Shock in Short Fiction Lewis and Jungman (eds.)

A fiction piece of your choice (film, short story or novel)

Films

(list may be adapted as semester progresses)

Writing Across Borders- Wayne Robertson

Paradise Bent: Boys will be Girls in Samoa - Jeanette Mageo

Promises – B.Z Goldberg

A Heart Broken in Half – Dwight Conquergood

Between Two Worlds – Dwight Conquergood

Possible Topics for Final Essay

- Students abroad, strangers at home
- The ethics of interventional philanthropy
- Intercultural communication in a global market
- The language and culture of the World Wide Web
- The different subcultures on Duke's Campus
- On being an expatriate – Can one ever “return” home?
- Dating cultures and interracial relationships
- Translating Languages, Translating Cultures: How effective is the application of linguistic theories to cultural analysis?
- A critical analysis of the film or work of fiction depicting “culture shock.”
- Is Esperanto Enough?
- A Critical Analysis of “Intercultural Training” guides
- A pre-research “cultural” preparation for a DukeEngage site project
- Coming to terms with your own “culture shock” experience in light of class readings.
- Intercultural Intelligence in Conflict and Peace Studies
- Colonial Encounters
- Case study

About Academic Writing

Regardless of the field of study you plan to pursue, the sort of intellectual work you will be asked to do in the university will most often involve careful and productive reading, critical thinking and analysis, and clear and effective writing. The purpose of Writing 20, then, is to provide you with opportunities to practice the fundamentals of academic work. The following are specific goals and practices of Writing 20, as defined by the faculty of the Duke University Writing Program:

Goals

While many of the specific features of academic writing vary from discipline to discipline, *students in all sections of Writing 20 learn how to:*

1. *Engage with the work of others.* In pursuing a line of inquiry or research, scholars need to identify and engage with what others have written about a text or issue. This academic move asks that writers read closely and attend to context, and that they make fair, generous, and assertive use of the work of others.

2. *Articulate a position.* The point of engaging with the work of others is to move beyond what has been said before. Scholars respond to gaps, inconsistencies, or complexities in the literature of their field and anticipate possible counterarguments in order to provide new evidence or interpretations that advance clear and interesting positions.

3. *Situate their writing within specific contexts.* In order to best contribute to their fields of inquiry, scholarly writers need to develop an awareness of the expectations and concerns of their intended readers. These expectations include not only appropriate and effective support for an argument, but also conventions of acknowledgement, citation, document design, and presentation of evidence.

Practices

The actual labor of producing a written academic argument usually involves taking a text through several drafts. In developing their work-in-progress, *students in all sections of Writing 20 are offered practice in:*

1. *Researching.* Students critically read scholarly work about their topics of interest. Depending on the field, this research may include locating sources, questioning methodology, examining evidence, identifying social or political contexts, or considering the implications of an academic work.

2. *Workshopping.* Academic writers re-read their own writing and share work-in-progress with colleagues in order to reconsider their arguments. Students learn how to become critical readers of their own prose through responding to one another in classroom workshops, seminar discussions, or conferences.

3. *Revising.* Students are asked to rethink their work-in-progress in ways that go beyond simply fixing errors or polishing sentences in order to extend, refine, and reshape what they have to say and how they say it.

4. *Editing.* As a final step in preparing documents for specific audiences, students are expected to edit for clarity, proofread for correctness, and make effective use of visual design.

Participation

Like most intellectual work, the work we will do in this course will be collaborative in nature. You will frequently respond to other authors' texts and ideas, discuss your own ideas with your classmates, receive comments on your work as a writer, and offer feedback on the writing of others in the class. You will almost certainly need the help of librarians, teachers and colleagues in finding sources, and will seek the assistance of staff, friends or roommates in editing, proofreading, formatting and posting your texts. Although writing may seem solitary at times, the truth is that intellectual work requires engagement in dialogue and collaboration with other readers and writers.

An important part of your work in this course will be learning how to productively respond to the work of others, and how to effectively incorporate other readers' responses to your own writing. We will also discuss acceptable citation methods and ways to otherwise acknowledge the influence of other thinkers on your own writing. I expect the work you do for this course to be conducted according to the spirit of integrity advanced by the Duke Community Standard <http://www.integrity/duke.edu/ugrad>. I have ZERO tolerance for academic dishonesty and will report any suspected case of plagiarism to the Office of Judicial Affairs for appropriate disciplinary and/or judicial action. If plagiarism is confirmed, it will be grounds for failure in the course.

Submitting Work

I will ask you to post most of your assignments on Blackboard (<https://courses.duke.edu>). In addition, you will often need to bring hard copies of your drafts to be worked on in class. Although most of our work in this course will consist of drafting and revising, I expect each of the drafts you turn in to reflect the best and most thoughtful work you can produce given the time allowed for the task. The responses you will receive to your work (as well as the responses you will offer your colleagues to their drafts) will center mainly on helping you redirect or refine your thought, expand or complicate your ideas, or make your arguments more clear. This does not include editing or proofreading your text for correct grammar and spelling. These tasks will be *your* responsibility.

Please compose your writing projects in Microsoft Word, using font 12, double-spaced lines, and MLA formatting. You can find style manuals in our libraries or on the Writing Studio website. See below.

The Writing Studio

Duke's Writing Studio is an excellent resource for obtaining assistance with and responses to your work as a writer. The tutors at the Writing Studio are trained professionals, and they offer one-on-one help with any phase of any writing project you do as a Duke student. Whether you are drafting, revising, or editing, use the online appointment form to book a session with a tutor in advance <http://www.ctlw.duke.edu/wstudio>. When you arrive at your conference, bring the essay or project you are working on with you, as well as a copy of the assignment you are responding to. Ask your tutor to email me a summary of your conference. I will read it as a sign that you are taking your writing seriously.

Grading

Although I will read all – and offer written comments on most – of your assignments, I will only attribute letter grades (in addition to points) to the final versions of your two major writing projects. The correspondence of points to letter grades (for final drafts and semester grade) will be as follows:

| | | |
|----------|----------|--------------|
| 93-100 A | 77-79 C+ | 60-62 D- |
| 90-92 A- | 73-76 C | 57-59 E+ |
| 87-89 B+ | 70-72 C- | 53-56 E |
| 83-86 B | 67-69 D+ | 50- 52 E- |
| 80-82 B- | 63-66 D | below 50 = F |

Calculating Semester Grade

First major essay (final draft) 100 points max - 20% of final grade

Second major essay (final draft) 100 points max - 30% of final grade

Class Participation (attending, completing, assignment, contributing to discussion or workshop)
3 pts (max) per class Average: 10 % of final grade

Weekly Assignments: (responses to reading, in-class writing, drafts, peer reviews, oral presentation, etc.) 10 pts (max) each Average score: 40 % of final grade

Absence & Late Policy

Because I view our work in this course as a collaborative effort, I expect you to attend every class, and to come prepared to contribute to discussions and workshops. I am also aware that circumstances may occasionally require you to be absent; so you will be allowed to cancel *two* of your class participation scores (an absence = 0 pts for that day) without penalty to your grade. These are not to be interpreted as “bonus absences” but as an allowance for inevitable occurrences (such as personal illness) or competing responsibilities (such as required attendance in varsity sports or other University-sponsored events). If you are absent a *third* time, you will receive a “zero” for class participation on the day of your absence. For each additional absence, your *final semester grade* will be lowered by a third of a letter grade, unless you present me with a “Dean’s Excuse.”

Barring severe illness, family emergency or comparable crisis, I will not accept late assignments without considerable penalty to your grade. In the case of final drafts of major essays, your grade will be lowered by 5 points for each day it is late (meaning each 24-hour period beyond the deadline). For example, “92” (A-) essay will get assigned an “87” (B+) if it is due to be posted at 5:00pm on Friday and you submit it at 5:15pm on Friday). Whenever possible, please let me know ahead of time if you will not be able to attend a class or submit a project on time.

A Final Word

Participating in an academic seminar entails, among other things, disagreeing with ideas or positions of others on a common set of texts or issues. The greater the diversity of ideas brought to the table, the greater the potential for an enriching and stimulating seminar, as long as the participants respect one another's points of view and argue for or against one another's *ideas* (as opposed to arguing against one another).

I hope we can all make good use of the diversity of ideas that are sure to come to our table! I look forward to working with and learning from each of you!

Acknowledgements

As is the case with all academic work, the work of composing this syllabus was a collaborative endeavor. I wish to thank all my colleagues at the University Writing Program whose work, including their syllabi, have directly or indirectly helped me shape this version of Writing 20. Thanks also to my students from the Fall of 2008, who have given me valuable feedback on this course.