**CHIN6500**

**INTERCULTURAL SEMINAR**

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| Instructor | Email | Office Hours & Location |
| Xiaoliang Li | xl@gatech.edu | T. Th. 12: 30 – 1:20pm; 310 Swann |

**General Information**

**Description**

Conducted in Mandarin Chinese, this seminar provides students a cross-cultural research platform to explore the importance of intercultural communication skills in dealing with issues in current events and international affairs in globalization today. This course begins with discussion of intercultural communication studies, theories and concepts, to lay a foundation for students to analyze their China experience and current Sino-U.S. events. Students then develop communication knowhow that will enable them to function effectively and comfortably in a China-related field.

## Drawn from students’ personal experience, we focus on analyzing Chinese and American interactions, and how to work together to resolve differences and misunderstandings. Because success can only be achieved by knowing your counterpart as well as yourself, it is important for students to understand both how Americans view Chinese culture and how Chinese view American culture. Our goal is to foster the practical intercultural communication skills that future American leaders -- in business, industry, government, and the professions -- will be confronting in the 21st century.

## Pre-Requisites

## Students taking this class should have substantial China experience and cultural exposure, preferably including summer study abroad in Shanghai and Qingdao, or individual China studies.

## Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

We seek to identify the distinctive patterns of thought and action that account for the particular configurations of Chinese and American cultures. Once students have successfully completed the course, they will be able to:

1. Demonstrate advance-low level of Chinese proficiency – verging on an advance-high level – via research, class discussion, presentation, interacting with Chinese people, and course project activities.
2. Articulate how stereotyped views of Chinese and Americans affect their daily lives Sino-American business transactions, and the broader Sino-American relationships
3. Identify significant cultural differences, verbal and non-verbal, between Americans and Chinese, focusing on intrapersonal, interpersonal and organizational communication patterns.
4. Understand proper attitudes and behaviors for a Chinese culture in which norms and values are implicitly understood rather than explicitly expressed.
5. Develop effective intercultural communication skills, both verbal and nonverbal, including familiarity with the emerging cyberspace platform, in dealing with issues that the world faces in the 21st century.

This seminar should enable students to achieve the Learning Outcomes listed in the Georgia Tech Quality Enhancement Plan:

<http://www.assessment.gatech.edu/SACS/QEP/QEP_Mar21_Georgia_Tech_finalprint.pdf>).

The goals are to enhance students’:

* Chinese language proficiency;
* intercultural awareness;
* intercultural assimilation;
* intercultural communication skills;
* global disciplinary practice.

**Course Requirements & Grading**

1. Class participation (25%) The final grade for participation will be based on substantive contributions made in Chinese by each student in every class. Specifically: 1) frequency of communication (5points); 2) the amount of Chinese is used in class (5points); 3) the ability to communicate ideas clearly (5points); 4) creativity of thought (5points); 5) written exercises during classes (5points). Participation grades will be posted monthly on t-square.
2. There will be 3 individual research presentations (15%). Judged by 1) pronunciation, 2) tones, 3) grammar, 4) fluency, 5) content and structure. Presentation topics will be assigned one week ahead of the presentation as well as being posted on t-square.
3. Three 10-item quizzes (15%) will be on Chinese language characteristics, basic concepts of China’s traditional culture, and The 10 Commandments of intercultural communication; (0.5 points per item.
4. A midterm (20%) will examine students’ understanding of intercultural communication theory, Chinese cultural history, society, stereotypes, personality, material culture, etc. The format will be multiple choice, true/false and/or fill in the blanks, as well as short questions and answers.
5. Final Project (25%) There will be two components of the final project: a 2000-character paper (15%) and a video presentation (10%). Based upon research, discussions, and observations, students will conduct course projects on intercultural problem-solving in by introducing specific aspects of Chinese culture, discussing interactions or confrontations between Eastern and Western cultures, analyzing cultural clashes, or telling a China-related personal story, etc. Specifically, topics can include Chinese language learning, education, communication patterns, population, human rights, the rise of China, mutual stereotypes, sustainable development, health maintenance, agriculture, trade, technology, etc.

The written paper will be expected to 1) have a clearly stated theme and a cogent point of views (4 points), 2) demonstrate advanced level of Chinese language skills (4 points), 3) evince one’s grasp of Chinese culture (4 points), 4) elaborate upon analytic implications of the theme (3 points). Video presentation will be judged by 1) video delivery, 2) pronunciation, 3) tones, 4) grammar, 5) fluency; (2 points each).

**Grades will be computed as follows:**

A 90-100%

B 80-89%

C 70-79%

D 60-69%

F 0-59%

**Course Materials**

Course materials, including texts and audio/video materials, and assignments will be posted on t-square. Students will share assignment research results with the class. Research resources may be in both Chinese and English but assignments, project reports, class discussions and presentations will be in Chinese.

**Course Expectations & Guidelines**

Students are expected to （1）engage in role playing during class simulations, （2）conduct research, and （3）deliver presentations on both Chinese and American cultural behavior, way of thoughts, and social norms. Students will work on dialogues and essays reflecting cultural clashes foreigners encounter in China, which will not only enhance their language proficiency, but also foster their intercultural communication skills. The format will include lectures to provide background information; discussions and simulations based on readings and research; written assignments on the handouts.

## Academic Integrity

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. For information on Georgia Tech's Academic Honor Code, please visit http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code/ or <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/>.

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

## Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services at (404)894-2563 or <http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/>, as soon as possible, to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

## Attendance and/or Participation

## Participation in classroom discussions and simulations is mandatory. Because much of the learning will take place in class, no unexcused absence is allowed. For each such absence, ½ point will be deducted from your final grade. The participation component of your grade will be based upon the frequency and creativity of your participation in class discussions.

If a student misses a class (or a test), it is his or her responsibility to get the notes from another class member and to make arrangement to view the missed materials (or schedule a time with the instructor to make up the test).

Students who are absent because of participation in approved Institute activities (such as field trips, professional conferences, and athletic events) will be permitted to make up the work missed during their absences. Approval of such activities will be granted by the Student Academic and Financial Affairs Committee of the Academic Senate, and statements of the approved absence may be obtained from the Office of the Registrar. <http://catalog.gatech.edu/rules/4/>

## Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement

At Georgia Tech we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. See <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/22/> for an articulation of some basic expectation that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

## Student Use of Mobile Devices in the Classroom

The use of mobile devices in classroom is not allowed except for taking notes or using dictionary apps.

**Course Schedule**

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| Week 1 | * Course introduction, syllabus, handout * Why must we understand, and why understanding is so difficult – culture and intercultural communication defined * Intercultural communication basics -- Elements of intercultural Communication |
| Week 2 | 1. Cultural history – cultural personality shaped by history/tradition  * A Journey Shared -- How did China and the U.S. get to where they are today * Land, people, and governance   Reading: Lecture #1  Assignment #1 ((Introducing American culture to Chinese – a briefing on your beliefs, values, perceptions, and identities.) |
| Week 3 | 1. Cultural language: the characteristics of Chinese language   Readings: 1）Lecture #2  2）*Learning Chinese in China I & II*  Presentation #1 |
| Week 4 | 1. Material culture I: Chinese food culture   Material culture II: clothing, housing, transportation, way of life, etc.  Readings: 1）Lecture #3  2）“The Changing Chinese Concept of Wealth”.  Quiz #1 |
| Week 5 | 4. Cultural Personality -- Likes and dislikes, myths and ideals – Yardstick to measure personal and group prowess  Reading: Lecture #4  Assignment #2 (Do’s and Don’ts – your personal experience) |
| Week 6 | 5. Role Relationship: I. Cultural rules for each role are unspoken but expected   * “A Great Wall” -- misunderstanding each other,   Class exercise: Role play   * Cultural Language beyond words: “high-context culture” versus “low-context culture”;   Readings: 1）Reading: Lecture #5 I  2）“Little white Lies”.  Presentation #2 |
| Week 7 | Role Relationship: II. East meets West – understanding the differences  Readings: 1）Reading: Lecture #5 II   * Intracultural and intercultural perspectives * How to make conflict work in a positive way. |
| Week 8 | Happy Fall Break   1. Non-verbal communication   Readings: 1）Reading: Lecture #6 |
| Week 9 | 7. Cultural beliefs -- How stereotypes affect daily life & business transactions  Cultural Beliefs I: Yin-Yang -- perplexities, conundrums, and exotic mysteries as understood and misunderstood by Westerners; origins of the Yin-Yang symbol; Yin-Yang in food.  Readings：Lecture #7 I  Midterm exam |
| Week 10 | Cultural Beliefs II: Chinese medicine – an intercultural analysis (Yin-Yang theory and health)  Readings: 1）Reading: Lecture #7 II  Assignment #3 (Internet research: What are the Chinese learning about and thinking of us?)  Quiz #2 |
| Week 11 | 8. Ethnocentrism: universal but dangerous   * Episodes of Heshang (the River Eulogy) – a critique of Chinese civilization   Readings: 1）Lecture #8  2）Heshang   * Chinese Perspectives: What are the Chinese learning about us?   Presentation #3 |
| Week 12 | 9. Art – reflecting themes of a culture at a given time in its history   * Aesthetic differences: beautiful vs. ugly * Change of value by time and place   Readings: Lecture #9  10. Spatial Relations  11. Time  12. Recognition and Reward  Readings: Lecture #10，11，12  (Topic selection for final project) |
| Week 13 | 13. Bridging Differences – 10 commandments of intercultural communication. (Developing intercultural skills in understanding culture)  Readings: Lecture #13 |
| Week 14 | Research and Discussions   * Cyberspace: How an emerging intercultural medium through which communication is both facilitated and complicated * Economy, Politics and Culture: How to effectively handle touchy problems and disputes   Quiz #3  Happy Thanksgiving |
| Week 15 | Research and Discussions   * Sustainable development and intercultural communication: Why “As China goes, so goes the world” * Why and how national identity, national allegiance, national humiliation, and national pride affect people’s behavior when interacting with outsiders in present-day China * Global implications – How can we work together without giving up our own values, beliefs, and aspirations? |
| Week 16 | Semester summary  Final presentation |
| Final | Term project/paper due |