COMG 785: Intergroup Communication
Fall 2014  M 3:00-5:30pm  George 214

Instructor: Jessica Gasiorek  Office: George Hall 321
Office Hours: By appointment  E-mail: gasiorek@hawaii.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces and surveys communication research taking an intergroup perspective, a relatively new but rapidly growing approach to studying human communication. Grounded in social identity theory—which the course will introduce—an intergroup perspective considers people not only as individuals, but also as members of social groups (e.g., gender, age, ethnicity, nationality, region, etc.), and investigates the ways in which these social group memberships relate to the way that we communicate with each other. We will discuss how the way that we communicate can signal social identity, be used to categorize and evaluate people, and activate stereotypes in interaction. We will also consider how the activation of certain social categories and stereotypes can influence how we communicate with others, and how this can both facilitate and complicate interaction between members of different social groups. Through the lens of communication accommodation theory (a theory firmly rooted in the intergroup tradition), we will also examine how we use communication to regulate and manage our social world, and explore how these processes can go awry. In this, we will consider research across a diverse range of domains, including language attitudes (accent/language choice), intergenerational communication, communication in health care, family communication, computer-mediated communication, and police-civilian interaction.

COURSE GOALS

After completing this course, you should be able to:
- Explain what an intergroup perspective on communication is;
- Explain how social group membership and categorization process influence communication;
- Explain the basic tenets of social identity theory (SIT), self-categorization theory (SCT), and communication accommodation theory (CAT);
- Recognize and provide examples of how social identity can affect interaction.

COURSE READINGS

All course readings will be posted on Laulima, unless announced otherwise in class. A complete list of the course readings can be found at the end of this syllabus. The following two edited books are optional additional resources about intergroup communication. We will be reading selections from these texts in class, but the whole books are excellent collections if you are interested in pursuing further work in this topic area.


COURSE WEBSITE

You are expected to be familiar with Laulima (http://laulima.hawaii.edu/) for access to the course website. The website will provide you with the latest announcements, readings, and additional course resources. You are expected to regularly check the Laulima website. You must log in using your University of Hawai‘i username and password.
INTERGROUP COMMUNICATION
COURSE POLICIES

Attendance: Attendance is critical to this class. Class is discussion based, and you are expected to be an active contributor. If you are going to miss class, you need to contact me ahead of time, and you are responsible for the material covered in your absence.

Late Work Policy: Late work will only be allowed under extraordinary, documented circumstances. The instructor of the course should be notified immediately when such circumstances occur and either an alternative assignment or extension will be provided. If you are participating in a university-affiliated activity, you must make arrangements with me prior to the absence.

Academic Integrity: Any student caught plagiarizing an assignment or cheating on an exam will receive a failing grade on the assignment or exam, and may be subject to further disciplinary action. Using someone else’s information in any way—their words, their ideas, or their explanations—without acknowledging them is considered plagiarism. This includes paraphrasing another person’s words without citing the source; copying information from the Internet, other students, or any kind of published material without citing the source; or submitting materials that you have written for another class without the permission of both courses’ instructors.

University of Hawai‘i’s Student Conduct Code covers these and other infractions in greater depth. You are expected to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code, which can be found at http://studentaffairs.manoa.hawaii.edu/policies/conduct_code/.

Email Use: You are responsible for checking your email account frequently and consistently to remain current with University communications. You are expected to monitor and manage your email storage quota to ensure that you are able to receive new messages. Please check your email every day to keep up to date on important correspondence related to this course.

I will respond to your emails within 48 hours. If I do not respond within 48 hours, please email me again—occasionally emails get caught in spam filters or otherwise lost. Emails received after 6:00pm the night before an assignment is due may not receive a reply before the assignment needs to be submitted, so plan ahead and ask questions early.

Students with Disabilities: If you anticipate the need for accommodations to meet the requirements of this course, you are encouraged to contact the KOKUA Program on campus for information about their services. These services are free and confidential to University of Hawai‘i students. The KOKUA office is located in the Queen Lili‘uokalani Center for Student Services Building, Room 013. You can also call the KOKUA office at (808) 956-7511 or email the program at kokua@hawaii.edu. Please plan to meet with me by appointment or during office hours to discuss accommodations and how the course requirements and activities stated herein may influence your ability to participate fully.

Office Hours: This course does not have set office hours, but my door is always open to you (if it looks closed, knock!). I am on campus every MWF, and most days TTh. Feel free to come by to discuss content from the course, ask questions about the field/further graduate studies, or just say hello. If you would like to set up a specific time to meet, please send an email (gasiorek@hawaii.edu).
INTERGROUP COMMUNICATION
ASSIGNMENTS

Weekly Reading Responses (220 points): Each week, you will submit a short response to the week’s readings, via Laulima, before the start of class. These are due by 5:00 pm on the Sunday before each class. These reading responses should be 2-4 paragraphs (equivalent to approximately ¾ to 1 single-spaced page). The goal of these responses is to give you an opportunity to solidify and articulate your thoughts and/or reactions to the articles we read, and to give me a sense of how you are doing with these readings. The format and content of these is quite flexible, but some things you may consider writing about are:
- Questions you had about the article, e.g., terms, methods or analyses you did not fully understand;
- What you found most striking, interesting, or surprising and why;
- Connections that you saw between articles in the week or in the course, or between these and other reading you have done elsewhere;
- Any critiques or concerns you had, e.g., questioning why they used a certain approach or construct, issues with their methods or measures;

In this, you can address all of the readings for a week or a subset of them. One is due each week for Weeks 3-15. You have two (2) “free passes” you can use to skip a response paper. However, you must explicitly indicate to me that you are using your “pass” by going to the Laulima site and writing the word “Pass” in the Reading Response text box for the week.

Leading Class (60 points): Each of you will be responsible for leading half of one class during the semester. Sign-ups for this will be on the first day. The week that you lead class, you are responsible for having in-depth knowledge of the articles for that week, and for leading the week’s discussion (including preparing discussion questions and/or additional activities). I am happy to meet with you before class to help you prepare, or go over any questions you may have. More details on this will be discussed in class.

Final Project (160 points): As a final project for this class, you will produce a 12-20 page paper that applies an intergroup perspective to a topic of your choice. This paper may be done individually or in pairs (with individual papers expected to be ~12-15 pages, and group papers expected to be ~15-20 pages). The format of this paper is flexible: it may be a theoretical paper (e.g., application of an intergroup perspective to a novel area; literature review that integrates an intergroup approach with another theoretical framework or approach; an extension of an existing theory); it may be a study proposal (i.e., a literature review culminating in testable hypotheses); or a study in full (if you have or intend to collect data this semester as part of another project). I want this assignment to be maximally useful to you, so I would encourage you to choose whatever format helps you achieve other goals you may have (i.e., gaining research experience, learning more about a topic or applied area of interest, etc.).

There will be two “check-ins” on this project during the semester. The first will be a meeting with me, scheduled outside of class by Friday, October 24th (20 points). In this meeting, we will discuss your ideas for the project, and talk about what kind of format you will be using. The second check-in will be a written outline of your final paper, due before the start of class on Monday, November 10th (20 points). The final paper (120 points) will be due on Monday, December 15th by 5:30pm. Additional information about this assignment will be discussed in class.

Presentation (60 points): You will need to make one presentation for this course, during the last week of the semester (December 8). In it, you will present your final project to the class. This presentation will be approximately ten to fifteen minutes, and should demonstrate your ability to clearly articulate the content of your project and answer questions about it from an educated audience. Additional requirements for this presentation will be discussed in class.
INTERGROUP COMMUNICATION
COURSE SCHEDULE

The following is a tentative schedule for the semester. Changes may need to be made to this schedule.

Week 1, August 25: Introduction to Intergroup Perspective and Social Identity

Week 2, September 1: No class – Labor Day

Week 3, September 8: Social Identity Theory and Self Categorization Theory

Week 4, September 15: Categorization, Stereotypes, and Language

Week 5, September 22: Intergroup Communication and Language Use
Week 6, September 29: Language Attitudes


Week 7, October 6: Language Attitudes and Ideologies

- Marlow, M., & Giles, H. (2010). ‘We won’t get ahead speaking like that!’ Expressing and managing language criticism in Hawai’i.

Week 8, October 13: Ethnolinguistic Vitality and Intergroup Communication


Week 9, October 20: Communication Accommodation Theory

Final paper meeting required by Friday October 24


Week 10, October 27: Intergenerational Communication


**Week 11, November 3: Healthcare and Medical Contexts**


**Week 12, November 10: Gender and Sexuality**

*Final paper outline due November 10*


**Week 13, November 17: Family Communication; Police-Civilian Interaction**


**Week 14, November 24: Education; Computer-Mediated Contexts**


**Week 15, December 1: Conclusion and Summary**


**Week 16, December 8: Presentations of Final Projects**

Final Projects due by 5:30pm on Monday, December 15th.
# INTERGROUP COMMUNICATION
## POINTS BREAKDOWN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Assignments</th>
<th>Points Possible</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Responses</strong></td>
<td><strong>220</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>20 points each x 11 responses</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Leading Class</strong></td>
<td><strong>60</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Final Project</strong></td>
<td><strong>160</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting by 10/24</td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Outline due 11/10</td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td><strong>120</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation of Final Paper</strong></td>
<td><strong>60</strong></td>
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Total Points Possible = **500**  Total Earned =  

Final grades will be assigned on the following basis:

A = 92.5-100%; A- = 89.5-92.4%;
B+ = 86.5-89.4%; B = 82.5-86.4%; B- = 79.5-82.4%;
C+ = 76.5-79.4%; C = 69.5-76.4%;
D+ = 66.5-69.4%; D = 62.5-66.4%; D- = 59.5-62.4%;
F < 59.4%