



KIIS SPAIN MAY, Summer 2018

COMM 263: Fundamentals of Communication and Culture

Professor: Greg Feeney, Ph.D.

Email: Greg.Feeney@kctcs.edu

Syllabus subject to change

Course Description

This course examines how communication patterns are influenced by surrounding cultures and how culture is created and sustained through communication. It focuses on communication across cultural boundaries, and is designed to prepare students to effectively adapt and succeed in a contemporary world that is becoming more and more culturally diverse.

The Spanish program site will serve as a focus for the application of intercultural communication concepts to daily social interactions with the purpose of developing basic skills for understanding and improving communication across multiple cultures.

Course Competencies

1. Evaluate, summarize and interpret a variety of reading material dealing with the study of intercultural communication.
2. Recognize the basic elements of culture and the effect of one's culture upon communication with others.
3. Demonstrate an awareness of ethical considerations in making value judgments about the customs, traditions and communication techniques practiced by people from other cultures.
4. Demonstrate the skills necessary for effective cross-cultural interaction.
5. Describe the nature of ethnocentrism, explain how to modify unacceptable communication behaviors and identify strategies to overcome them.
6. Describe the process of perception and the perceptual problems most commonly found in cross-cultural encounters.

Required Reading

There are daily assigned readings for this course.

Course Activities

- Journals: The KISS Spain May experience provides excellent opportunities to think about intercultural communication from different perspectives. Students will complete directed journal assignments to capture these thoughts. Journal assignments will generally include: thoughts and feelings about the readings and class discussions; observed daily examples of concepts addressed in the class and field trips; reflection and analysis of daily personal social interactions with individuals from different cultural backgrounds.
- Assigned readings/In-class assignments: Completing assigned readings prior to discussions will help students understand the material discussed and be prepared with questions to clarify difficult concepts. Information found in the readings will be used to guide both class discussions and graded activities.
- Exams: There will be two exams covering assigned readings and class discussion/activities.
- Reflective essay: The material presented in the readings, class discussions, and the experience of living in Spain will provide students ample reason to reflect on their personal background and culture, to develop a better understanding of cultural differences around the world, and to improve their intercultural communication skills. A directed essay will ask students to share their insights in these areas and demonstrate their understanding of key concepts.
- Oral Presentation: Students will be directed in organizing an oral presentation to share with the class that will address an analysis of their personal experience and growth in intercultural communication during their time in Spain. This presentation requires students to incorporate concepts discussed throughout the course and will draw heavily from the reflective essay.

Grading Criteria (250 points)

Journals	40pts
Assigned reading/In-class Assignments	30pts
Exams	100pts
Reflective essay	40pts
Oral Presentation	40pts

Grading Scale: 225-250 = A; 200-224 = B; 175-199 = C; 150-174 = D