

CONF 325 – Dialogue and Difference

Semester: Fall 2012

Section/CRN: 001/77401

Class Time: Mondays and Wednesdays 1:30 – 2:45 p.m.

Location: Krug Hall 3

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 3:00 PM - 4 PM, Robinson B 365

Instructors: Leila Peterson, Undergraduate Program in Conflict Analysis and Resolution lpetersh@gmu.edu & Michael P. Smith English Language Institute msmit2@gmu.edu

Course Description and Objectives

Communicating across differences of age, gender, language, culture, and political orientation, and in different contextual situations, is a useful skill for every individual. It is also integral to the success of any attempt to resolve conflict, whether individual, group/institutional, or global. An important part of this course is the collaboration between the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution and the English Language Institute (ELI). By offering a context for students to learn with individuals from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, we will all gain insight into the role of culture in dialogue. An understanding of culture and its influence on our perspectives is essential for effective communication.

Through interactive exercises, students will develop an understanding of the challenges of communicating across differences and the skills required to communicate effectively. Students will engage in a workshop on dialogue skill-building and multiple dialogue sessions with the ELI students, first learning the theory and skills that underlie successful participation and facilitation of dialogue and then applying them in the exploration of issues such as gender, religion, and international affairs.

Objectives:

- Understand the conflict resolution theory supporting dialogue, including identity and the construction of difference, the role of dialogue in democracy, and the role of dialogue in conflict resolution.
- Build individual communication skills related to cross-cultural communication and dialogue.
- Become familiar with a variety of dialogue models and group process techniques and be able to apply them in designing and implementing dialogues.

Course Requirements

- A. Participation, Knowledge of Course Materials and Contributions in the Classroom (25%)** Students are expected to participate fully in all exercises and complete all weekly, required readings in preparation for class discussion. There will be several in-class quizzes on the readings.
- B. Reflection Papers on Dialogue Sessions and completion of associated assignments (25%)** Students will engage in **six** facilitated dialogue sessions and will complete five reflection assignments. Students will complete a reflection assignment on *each* dialogue session, except for the week before your turn to lead the in-class dialogue.
- C. Design and Implement a Dialogue (25%)** Students will work in small groups to design a dialogue session, including designing format and preparing questions.
- D. Final Paper (25%)** Final paper that integrates the dialogue experience, lectures, class exercises and the readings. **Final Paper Due on December 12 by 11:59 pm via email.** If you do not receive a confirmation email by December 13 at 10 AM, please contact me ASAP to ensure that I have received your paper.

Class Policies and Procedures

Cell Phones and Computers: Please keep cell phones OFF during class. Use of computers is only permitted during lectures for note-taking. Computers should be shut off during class discussions, student presentations, exercises, and exams.

Late Assignments: Students are responsible for completing individual and group assignments on time. You will be penalized the equivalent of a 1/2 letter grade for each day the assignment is late. Incomplete grades will not be granted save in cases of personal or immediate family illness or emergency.

GMU Email: Some class assignments and readings will be sent via e-mail and students are responsible for checking GMU email and keeping up-to-date with these. [Note: This class will often meet in other locations, please pay attention your email.]

Honor Code: *"To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: **Student members of the George***

Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work." For an overview of the Honor Code, see: <http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>

All George Mason University students have agreed to abide by the letter and the spirit of the Honor Code. You can find a copy of the Honor Code at academicintegrity.gmu.edu. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee for review. With specific regards to plagiarism, three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. If you have questions about when the contributions of others to your work must be acknowledged and appropriate ways to cite those contributions, please talk with the professor.

S-CAR requires that all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit a student's work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. S-CAR's policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace or substitute for it."

University Resources and Assistance

Writing Center: The Writing Center provides tutors who can help you develop ideas and revise papers at no charge. It can sometimes accommodate walk-ins, but generally it is best to call for an appointment. The services of the Writing Center are also available online.

Location: Robinson Hall A, room 114. **Contact:** (703) 993-1200 or <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>

Hours: Wednesday through Thursday from 9:30 to 7:30. Friday hours are 9:30 to 2:30.

Disability Resource Center: The Disability Resource Center assists students with learning or physical conditions affecting learning. Students with learning differences that require special conditions for exams or other writing assignments should provide documentation provided by the Disability Resource Center. Please see one of the instructors the first week of classes.

Location: SUB I, Room 222 **Contact:** 703-993-2474 www.gmu.edu/student/drc/

Electronic Reserves

Adobe Acrobat must be installed on your computer to view and print some E-Reserves Readings. E-Reserves permit students to access Course Readings remotely from home or office, and allow students to view and print materials using Adobe Acrobat Reader. All users of the E-Reserves must comply with the University Policy and Copy Right Law (Title 17, United States Code)

Accessing E-Reserves:

1. Go to <http://oscr.gmu.edu>
2. Click on the magnifying glass (Search electronic reserves)
3. Using the drop-down boxes, select the course [CONF 325-001] and instructor [Staff]
 - a. The section and faculty are opposite of what is on the schedule
 - b. Be sure it says "Spring 2012"
4. Enter in the password (**to be given in class**) and click submit to view the item
5. To view and print an article click on the small PDF button or the Link button if available

If you experience problems with an electronic reserve item or need additional help please contact the E-Reserves Coordinator at 993-9043. If you need additional assistance please e-mail ereserves@gmu.edu.

Required Readings

Understanding Intercultural Communication by Stella Ting-Toomey and Leeva C. Chung.
(Available in the Bookstore)

The Little Book of Cool Tools for Hot Topics: Group Tools to Facilitate Meetings When Things are Hot, by Ron Kraybill & Evelyn Wright. (Available in the Bookstore)

Course packet available through electronic reserve.

"The Complexity of Identity: 'Who am I?'" by Beverly Daniel Tatum, p. 9-14 & "The Cycle of Socialization" by Bobbie Harro, p. 15-21. *Readings for diversity and social justice: An Anthology on Racism, Sexism, Anti-semitism, Heterosexism, Classism and Ableism*, Edited By Maurianne Adams, et al. [Ereserve]

"Constructing Categories of Difference" by Karen Rosenblum and Toni-Michelle Travis (eds) from *The Meaning of Difference: American Constructions of Race, Sex, Gender, Social Class and Sexual Orientation*, pp. 1-33. [Ereserve]

“The Living Technology of Dialogue: Listening; Inquiry and Reflection” by Linda Ellinor and Glenna Gerard in *Dialogue: Rediscovering the Transforming Power of Conversation*, pp. 98-127. (Ereserve)

“The Living Technology of Dialogue: Suspension of Judgment; Identification of Assumptions” by Linda Ellinor and Glenna Gerard, in *Dialogue: Rediscovering the Transforming Power of Conversation*, pp. 59-97. (Ereserve)

“Chapter 4: Introducing Dialogue into Routine Meetings” and “Chapter 5: Transforming Casual Encounters Through Dialogue,” in *The Magic of Dialogue*, pp. 58-89. [Ereserve]

“Chapter 16: Embracing the Paradox: Dialogue That Incorporates Both Individual and Group Identities” and “Chapter 17: The Content/Process Balance in Intergroup Dialogue” by Ruby L. Beale and David Schoem, in *Intergroup Dialogue*, pp. 247-279.” [Ereserve]

“Communal Art-making and Conflict Transformation” by Paolo J. Knill in *Art in Action: Expressive Arts Therapy and Social Change*, edited by Ellen Levine and Stephen Levine, pp. 53-77. [Ereserve]

Broome, B. J. and Jakobsson Hatay, A. (2006). Building Peace in Divided Societies: The Role of Intergroup Dialogue, in John Oetzel and Stella Ting-Toomey (eds), *Handbook of Conflict Communication*, pp. 627-662, Sage Publications. [Ereserve]

“Chapter 20: Design Considerations in Intergroup Dialogue” by Ruby L. Beale and David Schoem, in *Intergroup Dialogue*, pp. 306-327.” [Ereserve]

“Interview: Paulo Freire: Discussing Dialogue” pp. 276-293. in *Dialogues in Public Art* by Tom Finkelpearl & Vito Acconci. [Ereserve]

Weekly Themes, Readings and Assignments

WEEK 1 MONDAY AUGUST 27

Introduction to Dialogue

Introductions and expectations; Group norms; Overview of course and syllabus; The principles of dialogue

WEEK 1 WEDNESDAY AUGUST 29

Theories of Dialogue

The role of dialogue in conflict resolution and social change; philosophical and theoretical approaches to dialogue

Readings Due:

“Dialogue: Something Old; Something New” by Glenna Gerard and Linda Ellinor. (via Email)

Chapter 1: Why Study Intercultural Communication? in *Understanding Intercultural Conflict* by Stella Ting-Toomey. pp. 3-21.

Week 2 MONDAY SEPTEMBER 3 - Labor Day - No Class

Week 2 WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 5

Identity and the Construction of Difference

Readings Due:

“The Complexity of Identity: ‘Who am I?’” by Beverly Daniel Tatum, p. 9-14 & “The Cycle of Socialization” by Bobbie Harro, p. 15-21. *Readings for diversity and social justice: An Anthology on Racism, Sexism, Anti-semitism, Heterosexism, Classism and Ableism*, Edited By Maurianne Adams, et al. [Ereserve]

“Constructing Categories of Difference” by Karen Rosenblum and Toni-Michelle Travis (eds) from *The Meaning of Difference: American Constructions of Race, Sex, Gender, Social Class and Sexual Orientation*, pp. 1-33. [Ereserve]

WEEK 3 MONDAY SEPTEMBER 10

Culture and Communication Workshop – Part I (Listening Skills)

Inquiry and Reflection

Quiz on the readings

Readings Due:

“The Living Technology of Dialogue: Listening; Inquiry and Reflection” by Linda Ellinor and Glenna Gerard in *Dialogue: Rediscovering the Transforming Power of Conversation*, pp. 98-127. (Ereserve)

“Chapter 2: What is Intercultural Communication Flexibility?” in *Understanding Intercultural Conflict* by Stella Ting-Toomey. pp. 22-37.

WEEK 3 WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 12

Culture and Communication Workshop – Part I (Listening Skills)

Listening

Readings Due:

“Chapter 3: What are the Essential Value Patterns?” in *Understanding Intercultural Conflict* by Stella Ting-Toomey. pp. 38-63.

WEEK 4 MONDAY SEPTEMBER 17

Dialogue Skills Workshop: Part II Suspension of Judgment & Identification of Assumptions

Readings Due:

“The Living Technology of Dialogue: Suspension of Judgment; Identification of Assumptions” by Linda Ellinor and Glenna Gerard, in *Dialogue: Rediscovering the Transforming Power of Conversation*, pp. 59-97. (Ereserve)

WEEK 4 WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 19

Dialogue Skills Workshop: Part II Suspension of Judgment & Identification of Assumptions

Readings Due:

“Chapter 4: What are the Keys to Understanding Cultural and Ethnic Identity?” in *Understanding Intercultural Conflict* by Stella Ting-Toomey. pp. 64-90.

WEEK 5 MONDAY SEPTEMBER 24

Dialogue Skills Workshop: Part III Facilitation & Techniques for Group Dialogue Quiz on the the readings

Readings:

“Chapter 2: Basic Tools,” pp. 7-25 and “Chapter 4: Tools for Gathering Ideas and Options” in *The Little Book of Cool Tools for Hot Topics* by Ron Kraybill and Evelyn Wright (pp. 30-48)

WEEK 5 WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 26

Dialogue Skills Workshop: Part III Facilitation & Techniques for Group Dialogue

Readings:

Chapter 5: Tools for Dialogue” in *The Little Book of Cool Tools for Hot Topics* by Ron Kraybill and Evelyn Wright (pp. 49-76)

WEEK 6 MONDAY OCTOBER 1

Dialogue #1: Comedy and Culture (instructor-led dialogue)

Screening: “Just Like Us”

Readings:

“Chapter 4: Introducing Dialogue into Routine Meetings” and “Chapter 5: Transforming Casual Encounters Through Dialogue,” in *The Magic of Dialogue*, pp. 58-89. [Ereserve]

WEEK 6 WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 3

Dialogue #1: Comedy and Culture (instructor-led dialogue)

NOTE: Class Location TBD

DUE: Dialogue 1 Reflection Assignment – Tuesday, October 9

Readings:

“Chapter 6: What is the Connection Between Verbal Communication and Culture”
in *Understanding Intercultural Conflict* by Stella Ting-Toomey. pp. 110-129.

**WEEK 7 TUESDAY OCTOBER 9 [NOTE: MONDAY CLASSES MEET ON TUESDAY
THIS WEEK BECAUSE OF COLUMBUS DAY]**

Facilitation and Process Design

DUE: Dialogue 1 Reflection Assignment – Tuesday, October 9

Readings:

“Chapter 16: Embracing the Paradox: Dialogue That Incorporates Both Individual
and Group Identities” and “Chapter 17: The Content/Process Balance in
Intergroup Dialogue” by Ruby L. Beale and David Schoem, in *Intergroup
Dialogue*, pp. 247-279.” [Ereserve]

WEEK 7 WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 10

Facilitation and Process Design

Readings:

“Communal Art-making and Conflict Transformation” by Paolo J. Knill in *Art in
Action: Expressive Arts Therapy and Social Change*, edited by Ellen Levine and
Stephen Levine, pp. 53-77. [Ereserve]

WEEK 8 MONDAY OCTOBER 15

Dialogue 2: Gender in the family and workplace

NOTE: Class Location TBD

Readings:

“Chapter 10: What Are the Challenges in Developing an Intercultural-Intimate
Relationships?” in *Understanding Intercultural Conflict* by Stella Ting-Toomey.
pp. 204-227.

WEEK 8 WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 17

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Readings:

“Chapter 7: What are the Different Ways to Communicate Nonverbally Across
Cultures?” in *Understanding Intercultural Conflict* by Stella Ting-Toomey. p.
130-156.

WEEK 9 MONDAY OCTOBER 22

Dialogue 3: Crime and Punishment

NOTE: Class Location TBD

DUE: Dialogue 2 Reflection Assignment

Readings: “Chapter 8: What Causes Us to Hold Biases Against Outgroups?” in *Understanding Intercultural Conflict* by Stella Ting-Toomey. pp. 157-178.

WEEK 9 WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 24

ELI DOES NOT HAVE CLASS TODAY.

Readings:

“Chapter 9: How Can we Manage Intercultural Conflict Flexibly?” in *Understanding Intercultural Conflict* by Stella Ting-Toomey. pp. 179-203.

WEEK 10 MONDAY OCTOBER 29

Dialogue 4: Election Topic TBD

DUE: Dialogue 3 Reflection Assignment

NOTE: Class Location TBD

WEEK 10 WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 31

Readings:

“Part IV: Chapter 5: Shadow and Dialogue” and “Chapter 6: Difference and Dialogue” in *Dialogue: Rediscovering the Transforming Power of Conversation*, pp. 268-281.

WEEK 11 MONDAY NOVEMBER 5

Dialogue 5: Election Topic TBD

NOTE: Class Location TBD

DUE: Dialogue 4 Reflection Assignment

WEEK 11 WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 7

ROLE OF DIALOGUE IN SOCIETY

Readings

Broome, B. J. and Jakobsson Hatay, A. (2006). Building Peace in Divided Societies: The Role of Intergroup Dialogue, in John Oetzel and Stella Ting-Toomey (eds), *Handbook of Conflict Communication*, pp. 627-662, Sage Publications. [Ereserve]

WEEK 12 MONDAY NOVEMBER 12

Dialogue 6: The Muslim World and the West

DUE: Dialogue 5 Reflection Assignment

NOTE: Class Location TBD

WEEK 12 WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 14
REFLECTION & EVALUATION ON OUR DIALOGUES

Readings:

“Chapter 20: Design Considerations in Intergroup Dialogue” by Ruby L. Beale and David Schoem, in *Intergroup Dialogue*, pp. 306-327.” [Ereserve]

WEEK 13 MONDAY NOVEMBER 19
The Role of the Media and Technology in Public Discourse
DUE: Dialogue 6 Reflection Assignment

Readings:

“Chapter 11: What Are the Communication Issues Facing a Global Identify?” in *Understanding Intercultural Conflict* by Stella Ting-Toomey. pp. 228-248.

WEEK 13 WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 21 - NO CLASS

HAPPY THANKSGIVING

WEEK 14 MONDAY NOVEMBER 26
Dialogue and Action

Readings:

“Chapter 12: How Can We Become Ethical Intercultural Communicators?” in *Understanding Intercultural Conflict* by Stella Ting-Toomey. pp. 250-265.

WEEK 14 WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 28
PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Readings:

“Interview: Paulo Freire: Discussing Dialogue” pp. 276-293. in *Dialogues in Public Art* by Tom Finkelpearl & Vito Acconci. [Ereserve]

WEEK 15 MONDAY NOVEMBER 31
Dialogue & Art
Final Paper Due on December 12, 2012 (Wednesday)

WEEK 15 WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 1
Reflection and Celebration!!!