

CH 760

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING

Instructors: TBA
Credit: 10
Time: TBA
Room: TBA
Office Hour: TBA

Course Description

Conducted in both Chinese and English with a Chinese cohort group studying the same topic in American culture, this course aims at exploring the different assumptions and expectations motivating different behaviors in different cultures when it comes to developing interpersonal relations and professional networks and providing training on perfecting one's performance in the social arts. With a focus on practicing the behavior patterns under specific and culturally authentic circumstances, this course addresses the following four areas: starting a relation, developing a relation, maintaining a relation, and repairing a relation. The emphasis of the course is to create meaningful opportunities, both in terms of cultural authenticity and in terms of quantity, for the learners to practice what are expected to be done in the target culture for the specific problems related to developing a meaningful interpersonal and professional relationship.

The Rationale

Three elements are basic to this course: its focus on behavior culture and interpersonal interaction at professional level; its student composition including American students with a Chinese cohort group; and its community practicum and report/review/reinforcement sessions.

The goal of training advanced level foreign language learners is to enable them to do things at professional level in the target culture. Being able to establish functional interpersonal relations and to develop professional networks is essential to this goal. To properly establish oneself in a foreign culture involves much more than just getting the foreign language and cultural codes right; it requires the skill to perform in certain ways that are in accordance with the terms embedded in that culture. To acquire this skill, the learner needs to study the behavior patterns of the target culture and to practice accordingly. This course provides opportunities and contexts to do just that.

The unique student composition has been employed since 1997 when this course was first offered within the US-China Links program. The benefits of such an arrangement include: 1) students from each cohort group can serve as cultural consultants who provide immediate and detailed advises and feedback to those from the other group. The immediacy of the peer advice and feedback have been very effective and valuable; 2) while helping others to learn their own

culture, the students in turn become more aware of behavior patterns that they have been taking for granted. The increased sensitivity helps the students to go beyond his/her own familiar assumptions and to pay closer attention to differences in different behavior cultures; 3) the process of helping one another to learn each other's culture is itself a process of trying to develop an effective working relationship with people from another culture. Negotiating cross-cultural peer adviser-advisee relations on a daily basis is at the heart of this course and is a valuable experience for all learners involved.

The features of community practicum and group report/review/reinforcement have also been in place since the first inception of this course. These features provide the following benefits to the learners: 1) they have the opportunity to practice what have been learned beyond the classroom, i.e., to try out in an non-instructor-controlled real context; 2) they have the opportunity to report their experiences to, and to receiving critiques from, their peers and instructors, i.e., to have questions from the "real world" discussed and answered and to have a better idea about what needs to be done next. All these contribute greatly to the improvement of the learners' communicative skills.

Textbooks

Required: 《中国人际关系：理念与行为》
Xiaobin Jian and Eric Shepherd
Publisher:
ISBN:
Price:

Supplement: 《从东到西看关系：我在美国教授关系学》
任京生 著
南方日报出版社2003年1月
ISBN: 7806521941
RMB: ¥16.80

Course Structure/Procedure

This is a performance orientated course. While the instructors offer insights to the topics in question, to create culturally authentic contexts for the students' assignments and to provide feedback to students' performances, all students are expected to perform under the instructors' guidelines as well as to serve as culture consultants and performing partners for students from the other cohort group. Students are evaluated and graded not according to how much they can talk or write about the target behavior culture, but how well they can accomplish relationship building tasks within that culture and how effective they can advise and assist their study partners from the cohort group.

The class meets two hours a day, five days a week for 10 weeks. Conducted in English, the first hour of the day is devoted to topics in American culture. The second hour of the day is conducted in Chinese and is used to deal with similar topics in Chinese culture. The weekly

course structure is to use the first three days of the week for instruction and performance, the fourth day for community practicum and the fifth day for report, review and reinforcement. The instructors will advise and assist the students in identifying and developing sites/opportunities within the local Chinese community for the students to conduct their community practicum. Utilizing what they have learned through out the course, students through community practicum are expected to develop meaningful relations with their contact sites/personnel in general and to carry out specific tasks as instructed or advised by their instructors on a regular basis. Further more, students are also expected to report their community practicum experience to the group on a timely (weekly) basis so that they can share the lessons they learned as well as receive critiques and advises from their peers and instructors.

Course grade (100%) consists of:

81%—Weekly performance (9% each for the last nine weeks; the first week has only three days and is used for introduction)

19%—Final Project

Course Schedule

Week 1 Introduction

Day 1 Introduction I: Assumption, Intention and Perception in Behavior Culture

Day 2 Introduction II: Key Concepts—主客、面子、人情、诚意、同、报

Day 3 Introduction III: Player of the Game

Week 2 Starting a Relationship I

Day 1 Making a First Contact I

1. Greeting
2. Presenting yourself

Day 2 Making a First Contact II

3. Making introductions
4. Parting

Day 3 Continuing the Interaction

1. Hǎnxuān
2. Mentioning the obvious
3. Choosing conversation topics
4. Small talks

Day 4 Community Practicum

Day 5 Post-practicum Review/Reinforcement

1. Greeting
2. Presenting yourself
3. Making introductions
4. Hǎnxuān
5. Small talks

Week 3 Starting a Relationship II

Day 1 Establishing Possibilities of a Relationship I

1. Guesting
2. Hosting

Day 2 Establishing Possibilities of a Relationship II

3. Participating through social rituals
4. A note on humor

Day 3 Follow-up after first contact

1. Telephone etiquette
2. Email conventions
3. Instant text messaging

Day 4 Community Practicum

Day 5 Post-practicum Review/Reinforcement

1. Participating through social rituals
2. Conventions for follow-up after first contact

Week 4 Developing a Relationship I

Day 1 Creating a Social Situation

1. Inviting and responding to invitations
2. Giving gifts and responding to gift giving
3. Meals: power lunch, formal banquet, casual diner, having diner at someone's home

Day 2 Creating Social Assets I

1. Complimenting directly
2. Complimenting indirectly
3. Reacting to compliment

Day 3 Creating Social Assets II

1. Doing favors for others
2. Asking others to do favors for you

Day 4 Community Practicum

- Day 5 Post-practicum Review/Reinforcement
1. Inviting and responding to invitations
 2. Giving gifts and responding to gift giving
 3. Giving compliment
 4. Reacting to compliment

Week 5 Developing a Relationship II

- Day 1 Giving/Getting Assistance
1. Requesting
 2. Offering
 3. Verifying

- Day 2 Building Personal Stories
1. Creating commonalties through sharing personal information
 2. Creating commonalties through sharing biographical information

- Day 3 Dealing with "Privacy"
1. "Privacy" and "personal space"
 2. "Privacy" in public sphere

Day 4 Community Practicum

- Day 5 Post-practicum Review/Reinforcement
1. Ways of creating commonalties
 2. Dealing with "privacy"

Week 6 Maintaining a Relationship I

- Day 1 Conducting Conversations
1. Starting a conversation
 2. Getting into a conversation
 3. Guiding a conversation
 4. Ending a conversation

- Day 2 Showing that You Do/Don't Understand
1. Giving feedback when you do understand
 2. Giving feedback when you don't understand

- Day 3 Getting Around when Others Don't Understand You
1. Interpreting signs when others are not following you
 2. Remitting the "awkward" situation

Day 4 Community Practicum

Day 5 Post-practicum Review/Reinforcement

1. Conducting a conversation
2. Interpreting feedbacks in a conversation

Week 7 Maintaining a Relationship II

Day 1 Expressing Emotions

1. Expressing your own emotions
2. Reacting to others' expression of emotion

Day 2 Expressing Opinions

1. Agreeing with someone's opinion
2. Disagreeing with someone's opinion

Day 3 Handling Sensitive Issues

1. Discouraging the discussion of sensitive issues before it starts
2. Diffusing the situation when you are on the spot

Day 4 Community Practicum

Day 5 Post-practicum Review/Reinforcement

1. Agreeing with someone's opinion
2. Disagreeing with someone's opinion
3. Discouraging the discussion of sensitive issues before it starts
4. Diffusing the situation when you are on the spot

Week 8 Repairing a Relationship I

Day 1 Dealing with Directness and Indirectness

1. Ambiguity as cultural behavior and as a strategy
2. Third party consultation as cultural behavior and as a strategy

Day 2 Dealing with the "Negatives" I

1. Dealing with suspicion
2. Dealing with misunderstanding

Day 3 Dealing with the "Negatives" II

3. Dealing with criticism
4. Dealing with rejection

Day 4 Community Practicum

Day 5 Post-practicum Review/Reinforcement

1. Detecting and interpreting signals of troubles and problems
2. Responding to "negative" expressions and actions

Week 9 Repairing a Relationship II

Day 1 Confronting Problems

1. Complaining
2. Criticizing
3. Blaming

Day 2 Getting out of Trouble “Honorably” and “Gracefully” I

1. Expressing regret
2. Apologizing

Day 3 Getting out of Trouble “Honorably” and “Gracefully” II

3. Accepting responsibilities
4. Accepting others’ apology

Day 4 Community Practicum

Day 5 Post-practicum Review/Reinforcement

1. When and how to be “confrontational?”
2. Exit strategies

Week 10 Handling Yourself in Formal Situations

Day 1 Interviewing for Employment

1. Presenting yourself
2. Responding to “hard” questions

Day 2 Conferencing I

1. Presenting
2. Participating

Day 3 Conferencing II

1. Presenting
2. Participating

Day 4 Community Practicum

Day 5 Post-practicum Review/Reinforcement

1. Giving presentation
2. Responding to questions

Week 11 Final Project Presentation and Critique