

**Content Area:** Grp4 and Grp 1

**Competency Group:** W only

**Course number:** CLCS 1103 W

**Course title:** Languages and Cultures

**Number of Credits:** 3

**Initiating Dept.:** Modern and Classical Languages

**Contact Person:** Roger Travis

**Unit Number:** 1057

**Phone:** 6-3316

**Existing Course:** NO

**A current GEN ED ?:** NO

**Dept Approval Date:** 10-14-05

**School/College Approval Date:** -

**First Offering of New Course:** Fall

**Year of First Offering:** 2006

**Content Area:** Grp4 and Grp 1

**Competency Group:** W only

**Proposed Cat Copy:** CLCS 1XX W Languages and Cultures Fall semester. Three credits. Wagner, Urios-Aparisi. Hands-on, module-based interdisciplinary course to develop an understanding and critical awareness of basic and critical issues concerning socio-cultural factors of languages, language use and language learning, linguistic diversity, language research methodology, and the differences between the diverse modes of communication. Optional 1-credit INTD Linkage through Language sections in Spanish and German.

**Current Catalog Copy:** N/A

**Course Information:** In this hands-on, module-based three-credit interdisciplinary course, the students develop an understanding and critical awareness of basic and critical issues concerning language and language use. The developing of awareness and sensitivity towards language and

its use, towards linguistic diversity and socio-cultural issues and towards the differences between the diverse modes of communication will increase students' ability to improve their foreign language learning experience as well as the reflection on their own language use in context and their writing skills. Weekly reading assignments will consist of short articles and chapter excerpts and will be applied to classroom activities. Each student will develop an e-portfolio which will include their writing assignments including the various versions of their written samples, their homework assignments, and their in-class activities.

### **Course Objectives:**

Students will be able to:

- 1) understand important concepts of language which will facilitate their foreign language learning experience,
- 2) develop tools to understand how language and communication work in context,
- 3) develop critical thinking and inquiry skills in issues of diversity and language and apply general concepts and knowledge to specific situations in the discussions of case studies
- 4) define , describe, compare and contrast different approaches in language and communication research
- 5) critically evaluate multimodal communication by comparing written, oral, nonverbal language including new modes of communication such as internet, e-mail and chats.
- 6) develop writing skills by writing and revising 5-6 page writing assignments at the end of each of the three modules and by receiving extensive writing training
- 7) apply computer literacy skills through the use of technology which is a crucial component in every part of the course

**How Meets Goals of Gen Ed.:** The proposed course addresses most of the goals of general education directly.

**1. Become articulate:** This course focuses on the students' ability to become more articulate orally and in their writing. We will discuss the development of reflexive skills on language and its functions, as a system that explains thought and communication and as a fundamental tool to understand the world. These skills will be developed through oral discussions and debates on each topic. Students will be asked to prepare one topic in depth for presentation and all the topics for discussion in the classroom. Through interactions with their fellow students and the instructors students will be motivated to present their arguments clearly. The case method is used to foster student involvement in the discussion of multi- and intercultural communication and multimodal communication . In addition, students will complete 3 writing assignments, one at the end of each module. Guidance and instruction will be provided for the written and oral assignments. All written assignments will be handed in again after having received instructor

feedback. Students will also be asked to complete rubrics assessing their own as well as their peers' performance in oral discussion and on written assignments.

**2. Acquire intellectual breadth and versatility :** The course intends to foster the recognition of structures in language and communication and how these structures affect human behavior at different levels. Therefore, by focusing on language and its use, the students will be able to acquire knowledge of social and cognitive processes which they can apply to learning other subjects.

**3. Acquire critical judgment:** As the General Education Requirements suggest, this course will encourage students to acquire critical judgment and reflect upon and critically engage in discussions of matters dealing with language and diversity and thereby human experience. While discussing the cases students will have to weigh their peers' statements and find logical arguments for their position.

**6. Acquire consciousness of the diversity of human culture and experience :** Language is an important tool in our society. By discussing issues such as differences and similarities in how we communicate in different parts of the world, and how language works in different modes, just to mention a few examples, students will acquire consciousness of the diversity of human culture and experience. This developing awareness and sensitivity towards language and how language is used in context, towards linguistic diversity and socio-cultural issues and towards the differences between the diverse modes of communication will increase students' ability to improve their foreign language learning experience as well as the reflection on their own language use in context and their writing skills.

**7. Acquire a working understanding of the processes by which they can continue to acquire and use knowledge:** One of our foci is on the mechanisms and processes of human communication and interaction. Such topics will provide students with tools that they can apply to further their knowledge in life long learning. Students will read research articles in the three modules. They will discuss the methods applied as well as the empirical implications of the results. In addition, students will be asked to find appropriate research questions in the areas of the course content that they are most interested in.

**Specific Criteria Arts and Humanities:** This course fulfills the several Specific Criteria for Group I- Arts and Humanities:

**1.) Investigations and historical/critical analyses of human experience .** We will focus on language as a mode of communication which can also involve other modes such as nonverbal, written and mediated modes of communication. This criterion will be met through the analysis of real life communicative interactions within the parameters set by research in discourse analysis and pragmatics. Those parameters will be discussed and applied to examples found in their own daily life.

**3.) Investigations into the modes of symbolic representation.** Inevitably in the study of language and its functions, we encounter the topic of symbolic representation which will be applied as a semiotic resource. The analysis of nonverbal language such as photography reveals

the mechanisms underneath these modes and how they are negotiated by the participants in interaction or by the artist. We would like the students to realize that both are part of a continuum that uses the same mechanism of meaning.

#### **4.) Comprehension and appreciation of written, graphic and/or performance art forms .**

Within this framework, the syllabus will include activities that allow for the analysis of differences and similarities when using different modes of communication and this will further their understanding and comprehension of different forms of written or visual art.

**Specific Criteria Social Sciences:** N/A

**Specific Criteria Science and Technology:** N/A

**Specific Criteria Arts and Humanities:** This course fulfills the several Specific Criteria for Group I- Arts and Humanities:

**Specific Criteria Diversity and Multiculturalism (Group 4):** As the General Education Requirements suggest, this course will encourage students to reflect upon and critically engage in discussions of matters dealing with language and diversity and thereby human experience. The course content and design will encourage students to explore their own language tradition within the larger world.

The course meets the following criteria:

**1. Emphasize that there are varieties of human experiences, perceptions, thoughts, values, and/or modes of creativity.** We will especially emphasize the linkage between language and culture. We will stress the importance of this connection. Students will approach this topic by studying individual cases of differences in politeness and language use, of dialectal varieties and the questions of language contact..

**2. Emphasize that interpretive systems and/or social structures are cultural creations.** As we said before, we will show how creation of meaning is a negotiated activity between participants in an interaction. Students will acquire the tools to deal with and analyze these acts of negotiation.

**3. Consider the similarities that may exist among diverse groups .** An important concept in the study of meaning in language and language learning is that of context. Language and language meaning has to be negotiated by the participants in an interaction. The negotiation of context is made by the participants who are aware of cultural and social norms. Teaching and examining such cultural and social norms which determine linguistic behavior will be achieved by establishing comparisons and connections between the students and their own social and linguistic behavior. Cases based on real interactions will provide further material for students to try out and analyze interactions in a safe setting, *i.e.* , the classroom while still having the advantage of working with authentic materials.

**4. Develop an understanding of and sensitivity to issues involving human rights and migration.** Issues such as politeness and difference in the performance of language acts allow for increase awareness of the differences in order to overcome prejudices or stereotypes.

**5. Develop an awareness of the dynamics of social, political, and/or economic power in the context of any of the above four items.** Similarly to the previous criteria, the comparison and the study of politeness and socio-cultural differences of language use will help to develop awareness of the political and social mechanisms that determine language choices. These choices can be illustrated by the study of bilingualism and code-switching in topics such as Spanglish and other phenomena of language contact. We will study these topics with the case method.

The course is also international as it focuses on issues of diversity/multiculturalism in linguistic cases outside the United States . The study of cultural and social norms and how they determine linguistic behavior will be accomplished by establishing comparisons and connections between the students in their own social and linguistic behavior and examples from societies in other countries outside the United States . The presentation of studies done in other countries will also be applied to cases and discussions of the socio-cultural and political consequences of language contact.

**Specific Criteria Q course:** N/A

**Specific Criteria W course: Specific Criteria W course:** Each student will develop an e-portfolio which will include their writing assignments including the various versions of their written samples, their homework assignments, and their in-class activities. Peer and expert feedback of written assignments will provide the students with the tools to engage in the writing process whose major component is effective revision.

According to the criteria for the “W” courses, the writing assignments will enable and enhance learning the content of the course since they will focus on practicing the contents with essays in which they will expand on their theoretical knowledge and its practical application in specific situations. There will be three essays of five pages. These essays will be written in three steps: preparation, first draft and second draft. The essays' weight will be 40%. We will grade each of the steps in the writing of the essay.

The writing instruction consists of general instruction in the class, written feedback and individual conferences since we expect that the class will have students from different backgrounds and skills. Students will also be asked to complete rubrics assessing their own as well as their peers' performance in oral discussion and on written assignments.

Also, there will be 2 one-page summaries of articles as part of oral presentations on specific topics. These summaries and presentations will also function as a way of preparation for the writing of the essays since they will be related to the essay topics.

The syllabus will state clearly that the students must pass the "W" component of the course in order to pass the course and **they must get at least 30% (C) in order to fulfill this requirement.**

**Laboratory Courses Description: -**

**Semester offered:** Fall 2006

**Number of Sections:** 1

**Seats/Section:** 19

**Total Num Students/Year:** 19

**Role of Grad Students: -**

**Availability at Regional Campuses: -**

**Resources Available:** YES

**Why No Resources to teach course.: -**

**Impact of Course on Teaching Loads:** The teaching faculty has prepared to include this course in their fall teaching load.

**Supplementary Information: -**