

## Course Syllabus

\*A Draft; i.e., this syllabus will undergo updating throughout the course.

### *Human Difference, Cultural Understanding, and Social Healing*

**Day and Time:** Mondays, 2:15–3:40, Mar. 21–May 9

**Location:** United Christian Parish, 11508 North Shore Drive, Reston, VA

**Instructor** Tony Whitehead, PhD, MSHyg.

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*\*If you have any disabilities and need any accommodations, please let Dr. Whitehead know.*

**A. COURSE OVERVIEW.** This seminar will introduce participants to the use of the concept of culture, as a framework for harmonious communication, as well as a source of conflict or communication breakdown between individuals or groups. It will explore how the cultures, subcultures, and culturally constructed roles into which humans are socialized contribute to harmonious communications with those who share similar frames of reference, while leading to possible differences in interpretation, communication breakdowns and conflicts with those who don't. The course will also examine how communication breakdowns and conflicts occur because of the relationship between the cultures and subcultures into which we are socialized, and our sense of "self." The course will explore how cultural constructions of sex (gender) race, ethnicity, region, politics, nationality, profession, discipline, workplace, and other cultural roles into which we are socialized can influence how we interpret the self and the "other" and inadvertently lead to intrapersonal, interpersonal and/or intergroup conflict, as well as to interpersonal communication breakdowns. As such, this seminar will explore several loci of conflict or communication breakdowns: (1) the self (intra-personal conflict); (2) interpersonal relationships; (3) inter-gender relationships; (4) interethnic and interracial relationships; and (5) cross societal/cultural relationships. It will explore these loci for divergent interpretations, conflict or communication breakdowns in specific settings such as workplace or educational settings.

**B. COURSE OBJECTIVES.** This course is designed to explore:

1. the relationship between culture, communication, and conflict;
2. the social, cultural and biological foundations of perceived human difference; and
3. a better understanding of one's own identity, and how it is related to interactions with others, and their perceptions of difference;

## C. RELATED (NOT REQUIRED) READINGS

1. Rosenblum, Karen E. and Toni-Michelle C. Travis (eds.), The Meaning of Difference: American Constructions of Race, Sex and Gender, Social Class, and Sexual Orientation. New York: The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. 2000; 2011; 2015.

In this course I will cover not just one area of human difference and communication difficulties, such as race and racism; but also include various others as well, such as gender, ethnic, religious, class, regional, and cross-national. As such this book by Rosenblum and Travis has readings on these various locations of human difference. However, there has been seven editions of this book, and multiple editions of a book usually mean that a few articles published in earlier editions are dropped in later editions, and a few new ones are added. The last time I taught this course was in 2012, in which I used the 6<sup>th</sup> edition (2011). Because I don't plan to buy the 7<sup>th</sup> edition (2015), most of the articles cited below, except one (by Fausto-Sterling) are from the 6<sup>th</sup> edition (which you can still purchase used online from Amazon from \$5.95 up), if you are enticed to read some of the titles below). However, there are a couple of items from the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition that I have included here, which were not in the 6<sup>th</sup> edition. I have shaded these items from this 2<sup>nd</sup> edition in green so that you will know that they are not in this 6<sup>th</sup> edition. As you review the modules below, the lists of articles that will appear to be very long. However, these are not required readings, but are included for you if you would like to read articles related to the themes that will be discussed for each specific module. I also decided on this long list to provide choices based on the variations of interests of those in the class. Moreover, the articles in this book are very short and easy to read. Some are personal accounts by the authors of their own experiences. With regards to my discussions in class, I will draw on specific articles. But the basis for much of our discussions will be from my own writings and personal experiences.

2. Powell, J. A. Racing to Justice: Transforming Our Conceptions of Self and Other to Build an Inclusive Society. Bloomington and Indianapolis: University of Indiana Press, 2012. This book is a more academically philosophical and historical book than the book by Rosenblum and Travis, exploring the concept of the self and the evolution of the cultural constructs associated with race and racism in the United States.
3. Gudykunst, WR, Bridging Differences: Effective Intergroup Communication. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2004. Below, I suggest a few chapters from this book because of the author's widely recognized expertise on interpersonal and intergroup communications. However, again, I include chapters from my use of the book in 2012, which was published in 2004. There is now a 4<sup>th</sup> edition, which I have not purchased because of its cost of \$157.
4. Whitehead, T.L. various writings by the instructor, including some book chapters or journals, as well as excerpts from his various working papers that will be

uploaded on OLLI's Document Storage, or can be found on his website., <http://tony-whitehead.squarespace.com/>.

## D. WEEKLY SCHEDULE BY MODULES

### WEEK 1: Introduction

#### MODULE 1 (Weeks 2 & 3): Culture, Human Difference, the Self, and Communication Breakdowns

##### A. LECTURE AND DISCUSSION

##### 1. What is Culture: The Attributes of Culture from an Anthropologist's Perspective

- Culture is a “holistic” flexible and non-constant system.
- Culture provides rules and routines that facilitate order, regularity, familiarity, and predictability.
- Culture provides “meaning.”
- Culture is the primary source of a people’s knowledge about the world.
- Culture is a shared phenomenon.
- Culture contributes to human communication and *miscommunication*.
- Culture implies values,
- Cultural patterns may be *ideal* as well as *real*.
- Culture may be *tacit* as well as *explicit*.
- Cultural patterns are *horizontally* (within generations) and *vertically* (intergenerationally) reproduced.
- The expression of cultural patterns is *highly influenced—but not determined by—environment*.
- Culture is a *historical production*.
- Culture is *functional*.
- Humans are organism that are continuously creating Culture.

##### 2.. The Cultural Systems Paradigm: An Anthropological Perspective on Human Difference, Cultural Understanding, and Social Healing:

- Graphic Illustration of the CSP
- Similarities in the Human Condition
- Differences in the Human Condition: A Product of Individual and Group Personalities as Reflected in Their Behavioral, Ideational and Social Systems.
- The Human Individual as a Product of Biology, Social Structure, and Culture.
- The Human Individual as an Organic or Biological Being: The Role of Genetics and Physiology.
- The Human Individual as an Organic or Biological Being: The Necessity of Humans to Meet Organic Needs.
- The Human Individual as a Cultural Being: One Function of Culture is to Facilitate Human Survival and Give Meaning to the Life Experience.
- The Human Individual as a Social Being: Culture, Survival, and Meaning are Facilitated for Humans Through Social Living or Social Structure.

- The Human Individual as a Social Being: Social Living for Humans Means that Social Needs Have to Be Met, Creating the Need for the Development of Social Institutions or Social Structure.
- The Human Individual as a Cultural Being: In order to Give Meaning to Life, Social Groups and their Individual Members Have Cultural Needs that Have to Be Met.

### 3.. Culture, (Mis)Communication, The Self, and Conflict

#### a.. Language and Communication

#### b. The Relationship Between Language and Culture

#### c. Paralingual Forms of Communication

#### d. Non-Verbal Forms of communication

#### e. Material Culture and Other Human Symbolisms

#### f. Environment and Cultural Interpretation

#### g. Historical Process and Cultural Interpretation

#### h. Human Needs and Cultural Interpretation

#### i. Humans as Symbols: The Cultural Interpretation of Human Physical, Social or Cultural Features

#### j. Culture and the Self

- What is the Self?: Personal Values and Style
- The Evolution of the Human Self: Life Stages, Significant Social Systems, and Culture
- Cultural Rules, Culturally Ascribed Social Roles or Scripts, Mechanisms of Social Control, and Inter- and Intrapersonal Conflict.
- The Self and the Collective Subconscious.
- National Personalities?
- High & Low Contact Cultures—High & Low Contact Personalities
- High & Low Expressive Culture—High & Low Contact Personalities

### **B. RELATED READINGS**

1. Gudykunst, W.B. , Chapter 2, "Understanding Cultural Differences," pps. 41-73
2. Whitehead, T.L. (2002) , "The Cultural Systems Paradigm:" Cultural Ecology of Health and Change Working Papers.
3. Powell, J.A., "Introduction: Moving Beyond the Isolated Self," IN: Racing to Justice.
4. Gudykunst, W.B. , Chapter 1, "Communication with Strangers, pps..1-40.
5. Gudykunst, W.B., Chapter 5, "Exchanging Messages with Strangers," pps. 191—232.

## **MODULE 2: (Weeks 4): Sites and Cultural Constructions of Human Difference Based on Individual Characteristics**

### **A. Sex and Gender**

#### **1. Male versus Female: Sex, Gender, Communication, and Conflict:**

- a. Gender Constructs: Cultural Frameworks Associated with Sex.
- b. Societal and/or Culturally Defined Role Expectations Based on Gender
- c. The Enculturation of Gender Role Expectations

- d. Socially or Culturally Ascribed Gender Role Expectations and Personality: Intrapersonal Conflict
- e. Gender Constructs, Inter-gender Communication, and Interpersonal Communication
- f. Locations of Conflicts and Problems in Male-Female Conflicts

- Platonic Heterosexual Relationships
- Sexual Flirtations, Dating, and Courtship Behavior
- Marriage and Family Relationships
- Workplace Settings
- Institutional Settings: Schools, Churches, etc.
- Community and Society: Practices and Policies
- Other Locations?

## **2. Beyond Male versus Female**

- a. Cultures with only two sex related gender constructs
- b. Cultures with more than two sex related gender constructs
- c. Perceived social and personal threats of homosexuality

## **3. Related Readings**

### **Male Versus Female (Cultural Scripts and Social Roles)**

1. Basow, Susan (2000), "Gender Stereotypes and Roles" The Meaning of Difference, pp 101-115.
1. Kimmel, M.S. (2011), "The Gendered Society," The Meaning of Difference, p. 113-123.
2. Busch, Andrea M. (2011), "Basketball." The Meaning of Difference, (Personal Account) p. 1.22
3. Tannen, Debra, (2000)"Wears Jump Suit, Sensible Shoes, Uses Husband's Last Name." The Meaning of Difference, pp. 256-259

### **Beyond Male versus Female**

1. Fausto-Sterling, Anne, (2000) " Why Male and Female are Not Enough, The Meaning of Difference, , pp. 87-92
2. Williams, W.L. (2000), "The Berdache Tradition," The Meaning of Difference. Pp. 92-101.
3. Lancaster, R.N. "The Biology of the Homosexual," The Meaning of Difference, p. 147.
4. Peplau, L.A. and L.D. Garnets (2011), "'A New Paradigm for Understanding Women's Sexuality and Sexual Orientation" The Meaning of Difference, p. 157-166.
5. Rochlin, Martin (2011), "The Heterosexual Questionnaire." The Meaning of Difference, p. 166-167.
6. Dreger, Alice (2011), "Where is the Rulebook for Sex Verification" The Meaning of Difference, p. 123.-124
7. Wilchins, Riki, (2011) "All Together Now: Intersex Infants and IGM," The Meaning of Difference, p. 124-129.

## **Disability and Illness**

1. Gordon, Beth (2000), "I am Legally Blind." IN: The Meaning of Difference, (Personal Account), pp. 210
2. Lukos, Elizabeth (2000), "Becoming a Minority." IN: The Meaning of Difference, (Personal Account), p. 465
3. French, Sally (2000), " `Can You See the Rainbow?': The Roots of Denial." IN: The Meaning of Difference, pp. 194-201.
4. Fine, Michelle and Asch, Adrienne (2000), "Disability Beyond Stigma: Social Interaction, Discrimination, and Activism." IN: The Meaning of Difference, pp. 201-209.
5. R.B. (2000), "Seeing Race, Seeing Disability." IN: The Meaning of Difference, (Personal Account), p. 412.

## **MODULE 3 (Weeks 5 & 6). Sites and Cultural Constructions of Human Difference Based on Group Characteristics: Race, Ethnicity, Class, Religion, Region, etc.**

### **A. LECTURE AND DISCUSSION**

1. Race, Ethnicity, Region, Class, Caste, Cross National, and Religion
  - a. What is Race?: Biological Difference or Cultural Construction?
  - b. What is Racism? Biological Difference & Cultural Construction?
  - c. Race and Culture Viewed as Immutable Difference
  - d. The Evolution of Race and Capitalism as Core Cultural Constructs in the US>
  - e. What is Ethnicity?
  - f. The Ethnic Experience in the United States: Similarities and Difference
  - h. Regional Differences and Conflict: The North Won the War, but Not the National Sphere of Influence.
  - h. Class and Classism
  - i. Regional:
    - "This Place is Too Yankeeified"
    - Language, Region, and Status
    - "Good Old Boys" and "Tight-Ass Bitches."
  - j. Cross National Relations and Conflict
    - Cultural Shock, Cultural Clash, and Reverse Cultural Shock.
    - Life in Other Cultures as a Minority Experience
    - What is Ethnocentrism?: A Normal Process of Enculturation?
2. Locations and the Institutionalization of Difference & Hierarchy
  - a. At the Societal Level: Policies and Programs Based on Difference
  - b. Neighborhood and Community: Who is Next Door?
  - c. Institutions: Service Providers, Education, Religious, etc.
  - d. The Workplace: "We can't do the things that we used to do."
  - e. Family and Household? The preference for difference
  - f. Friendship and Peer Systems

#### h. Other Locations?

### 3. Religion: Faith, Evidence, and Religion as Cultural Construction

- Proselytizing, Cultural Clash Which is the True Religion and Who is the True God
- The Fall of a Sunday School Super Star as A Man of God
- Can Rastafarianism become a Great Religion
- Why I don't argue with Believers
- The Function of Religion in Society
- Religion and Conflict
- Why the Separation of Church and State?
- Religion and Mental Illness.
- Spirituality as a Basic Human Need and Religion
- Religion and the Human Need for Community
- Expressive Human Needs and Religion as Vessel

## B. RELATED READINGS

### General

1. Gudykunst, W.B. , Chapter 3, "Understanding Group Differences", pps..74-112
2. Rosenblum, K.E. and T.C. Travis (2011), "Experiencing Difference: Framework Essay." IN: The Meaning of Difference, pp. 165-188.
3. Frye, Marilyn (2000), "Oppression." IN: The Meaning of Difference, pp. 190-194.

### Race , Racism, and Identity.

#### 1. Powell, J.A.,

1. Smedley, A. (2011) "Race" and the Construction of Human Identity," The Meaning of Difference, p. 46-56
2. Davis, F. James (2011), "Who is Black? One Nation's Definition." The Meaning of Difference, p. 56-64
3. Grimes, Niah (2011), "A Loaded Vacation" The Meaning of Difference, pp. 66
4. Garroutte, E.M. (2011), "Real Indians: Identity and the Survival of Native America," The Meaning of Difference, p. 66-74
5. Pereira, Sherri H (2011),, " I thought my Race was Invisible." The Meaning of Difference, p. 88.
6. Frankenberg, Ruth (2011), "Whiteness as an Unmarked Category." The Meaning of Difference, p. 88-94
7. Lee, J. and F.D. Bean (2011), "America's Changing Color Lines: Immigration, Race/Ethnicity and Multiracial Identification," The Meaning of Difference, p. 94-104.
8. Morgenstern, Julia, (2011), "Personal Account: The Price of Non-conformity," The Meaning of Difference, p. 101.
9. Tehranian, John (2011),, "From Friendly Foreigner to Enemy Race," The Meaning of Difference, p. 104-113.

10. Al-Hajebi, Surmaya (2011), ""Personal Account: Master Status: Pride and Danger.," The Meaning of Difference, p. 111.
11. Ambrose, Rashonda (2000), "Shopping with a Friend." IN: The Meaning of Difference, (Personal Account) p. 61.
12. R.M.A., (2000), "A Wonderful Opportunity." IN: The Meaning of Difference, (Personal Account), p. 42.
13. Haynes, Keeva (2000), "Going Home." The Meaning of Difference, (Personal Account) p.230.
14. Williams, P. J. (2011), "On Race and Risks." IN: The Meaning of Difference, pp. 254-256.

### **Ethnicity**

1. Jaimes, M. Annette (2000), "Federal Indian Identification Policy." IN: The Meaning of Difference, pp. 49-60.
2. Fernandez, Carlos A, (2000), "La Raza and the Melting Pot: A Comparative Look at Multiethnicity." IN: The Meaning of Difference, pp. 62-70.
3. Suro, Robert (2000), , "How Latino Immigration is Transforming America." IN: The Meaning of Difference, pp. 362-372.
4. Espiritu, Yen Le (2011), "Asian American Panethnicity." IN: The Meaning of Difference, pp. 75-87
5. Liu, Eric (2000), "The Accidental Asian." IN: The Meaning of Difference, pp. 212-223.
6. Madrid, Arturo (2000), Diversity and Its Discontents."IN: The Meaning of Difference, pp. 224-230.
7. Miyamoto, J.N (2000), "What are You?" IN: The Meaning of Difference, p.189.
8. Kelley, Patricia (2011), "Memories of Summer Camp." IN: The Meaning of Difference, (Personal Account), p. 350.
- 9..The Washington Post (2011), "The Evolution of Identity" IN: The Meaning of Difference, p. 55.

### **Class**

1. Zweig, Michael (2011), "What's Class Got to Do with It?" The Meaning of Difference .p. 130-133.
2. The Economist (2011), "More or Less Equal," The Meaning of Difference .p. 133-36
3. McNamee, S.J. and R.K. Miller Jr. (2011), "The Silver Spoon: Inheritance and the Staggered Start," The Meaning of Difference ., p. 136-147.
4. Pascarell, Rose B (2011), "That Moment of Visibility." The Meaning of Difference (Personal Account), p..300.
5. Lareau, A. and E.B. Weininger (2011), "Class and the Transition to Adulthood, "The Meaning of Difference .p.292-301.
6. Reuss, Alejandro (2011), "Cause of Death: Inequality," The Meaning of Difference .p.301-304.
7. Larew, John (2011), "Why are Doves of Unqualified, Unprepared Kids Getting into our Top Colleges? Because their Dads are Alumni." The Meaning of Difference .p. 305-310..



8. Siddique, Hoorie I., (2011), "I am a Pakistani Woman." The Meaning of Difference, (Personal Account) p. 145.
9. Kahlenberg, R.D (2000), "How much Social Mobility Exists in the United States." IN: The Meaning of Difference, pp. 117-129.
10. Mincy, R.B (2000), "The Underclass: Concept, Controversy, and Evidence." IN: The Meaning of Difference, pp. 130-142.

### **Regional (More Later)**

### **Cross National (More Later)**

### **Religion (More Later)**

**WRITING EXERCISE: Who am I?** This is a writing assignment that will be handed out in class. Students will take the exercise home to complete and submit in written form, and submit the following week. Students will also verbally present their essays, and given 10 minutes each to do so.

## **MODULE 5 (Weeks 7 and 8): Bridging Difference and Social Healing**

### **A. LECTURE AND DISCUSSION: STRATEGIES FOR BRIDGING DIFFERENCE**

1. Overcoming your sense of feeling powerless
2. Turning Knowledge and Understanding into Action: "Make the Road by Walking." (R&T, pgs 481-482):
3. The Power of Dialogue (Horton and Freire, cited in R&T, pgs. 481-83).
4. Using a Socratic Approach to Sharing Knowledge or Information.
5. Working on the Yourself First (R&T, pgs).
  - 5.1. Increase your tolerance for making mistakes
  - 5.2. Appreciate the statuses you occupy (Overcoming shame and/or guilt about your sense of privilege or lack of privilege status).
  - 5.3. "Learn to sit in the fire. "
6. Finding a Personal Spiritual Balance Between Overcoming Personal Inner Struggles and Empathy for Others. (Some of my Spiritual Heroes: Jesus, Mahatma Ghandi, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King).
7. A Values Clarification Exercise for Working on the Self in Facilitating Cultural Understanding and Social Healing.

### **B. RELATED READINGS**

1. Rosenblum, K.E. and T.C (2011): "Bridging Difference: Framework Essay." IN: The Meaning of Difference, pp. 480-488.

- 2.Cogan, J.C. (2011): "Influencing Public Policy" IN: The Meaning of Difference, pp. 492-502.
- Johnson, A.G. (2011): "What Can We Do? Becoming Part of the Solution." IN: The Meaning of Difference, pp. 502-507.
- Wimsatt, W.U. (2011). "In Defense of Rich Kids." IN: The Meaning of Difference, pp. 508-511.
- Kivel, Paul (2011), " Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice". IN: The Meaning of Difference, pp. 512-516.
- 7.Gudykunst, W.B. , Chapter 7, "Being Perceived as Competent Communicators, pps 233—273.
- 8.Gudykunst, W.B. , Chapter 8, Managing Conflict with Strangers, pps. 274,--308.
9. Gudykunst, W.B. , Chapter 9, Developing Relationships with Strangers, pps. Pps, 309-344
10. Gudykunst, W.B. , Chapter 10, "Building Community with Strangers," pps. 345—374.