



Course Syllabus

COM 201

Intercultural Communication

Fall 2025

Class Information

Day and Time: T/Th 9:30–10:45

Room Number: E208

Contact Information

Instructor Name: J. Scott Bridger, PhD

Instructor Email: sbridger@criswell.edu

Instructor Phone: O: 214-818-1323; M: 630-251-0636

Instructor Office Hours: T/Th 8:30–9:30; 14:00-15:00

Course Description and Prerequisites

Explores the foundational principles of intercultural communication from the fields of social psychology, cultural anthropology, sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, and communication theory with specific applications to Christian Ministry in culturally diverse contexts.

Course Objectives

- Demonstrate competency and facility with the major concepts and categories in the fields of cultural anthropology and intercultural communication.
- Explore some of the challenges involved in communicating across various boundaries – e.g., cultural, religious, linguistic, etc.
- Articulate an understanding of receptor-oriented communication.
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the inherent translatability of the gospel message.
- Apply the principles of intercultural communication to your life as a disciple and vocational aspirations.
- Acquire a Passport for international travel in preparation for CRIS 202 (see exemptions below).
- Complete a Background Check and MinistrySafe Training in preparation for CRIS 202.

Required Textbooks

Passport: This course requires you to obtain your passport during the semester (see below). All costs associated with obtaining one's passport are to be covered by the student.¹

Hiebert, Paul G. *The Gospel in Human Contexts: Anthropological Explorations for Contemporary Missions*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2009. ISBN: 9780801036811. 217 pages.

¹ See the discussion in the next footnote about students who are exempt from this requirement.

Moreau, A. Scott. *Effective Intercultural Communication: A Christian Perspective*, 2014. ISBN: 9780801026638. 405 pages.

Storti, Craig. *Understanding the World's Cultures*. Boston: Nicholas Brealey, 2017. ISBN: 9781473670334. 168 pages.

NOTE: Please bring your books to each class session

Recommended Reading

Howell, Brian M., and Jenell Williams Paris. *Introducing Cultural Anthropology: A Christian Perspective*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, a division of Baker Publishing Group, 2019.

Course Requirements and Assignments

- A. **PASSPORT (5%)**: This course prepares students for the Global Learning and Service practicum (CRIS 202); therefore, all students² must **secure a passport book (not a passport card), or provide documentation that it is in process**. To fulfill this course requirement, each student must submit a high-quality color **scan (not a photo)** of their passport (or documentation) on Canvas by **midnight, March 20th**. **Completion of this requirement by the due date is required to pass this course**. Students should begin the process for obtaining a passport **at the very beginning of the semester**. For US citizens, the process and application can be found here: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/how-apply.html>. All costs are to be covered by the student. **Please alert Dr. Bridger immediately of any difficulties encountered during the process.**
- B. **CLASS PARTICIPATION (15%)**: Students are expected to come to each class session having read the assigned reading, completed the quizzes, ready to take lecture notes, do the **Storti exercises in class**, and engage in discussions (**please bring your books to each class**). **Attendance will be recorded each session**. A student must be present for the **entire class** to receive a **full participation grade** for that day. At the discretion of the professor, a participation grade **under 80%** will result in a letter grade reduction; **74% or lower** will result in an "F" for the course.
- C. **MOREAU QUIZZES (20%)**: A quiz will be administered via Canvas over each chapter of the Moreau book as outlined in the reading schedule. Each week's quiz is due **by midnight before class**. Of the 13 Moreau quizzes, your **two** lowest grades will be **dropped** and there will be **no** make-up quizzes.
- D. **HIEBERT QUIZZES (10%)**: During the designated weeks in the schedule, a quiz will be administered via Canvas over select chapters from the Hiebert book as outlined in the reading schedule. Each week's quiz is due **by midnight before class**. Of the six Hiebert quizzes, your **lowest grade** will be dropped and there will

² In general, four groups of students are exempt from the Israel trip: (1) Students with documented chronic health conditions, (2) international students on a F-1 visa, (3) DACA students, and (3) students with a status that does not allow international travel. If a student falls into one of these categories, he/she should **notify the professor in Canvas where this assignment is due** in order to be **exempt** from this requirement. Exempt students do a domestic US trip for CRIS 202 in place of the Israel trip. Students in one of these categories who would prefer to go to Israel are required to **inform the professor as soon as possible and are responsible for researching the US's and Israel's exit/entry policies and visa requirements as they pertain to the student's status**. See further discussion under **Course/Classroom Policies and Information** below.

be **no** make-up quizzes.

- E. **CROSS-CULTURAL CONTACT DISCUSSION BOARD (20%):** (**NOTE:** Failure to submit this assignment will result in an **“F” for the course**). Each student is required to meet **at least once** with an international of your same gender whose first and primary language is something other than English. Exceptions to these general guidelines are possible but should be cleared with the professor. **NOTE:** It is acceptable to meet virtually; however, an in-person meeting is preferable. Be prepared to show hospitality to your guest by buying coffee, etc. Your discussion board post is due by **midnight December 17, 2025** and should be between **400-500 words**. It should contain each of the following elements:
1. First, you are to **get to know your contact’s background by using the “Five Fs”:** **(1) family/friends, (2) fun/hobbies, (3) food, (4) festivals/holidays, (5) faith.** Take notes to record in your discussion board.
 2. Second, you will work through the **Short Form Cultural Intelligence (SFCQ)** questionnaire with your contact (i.e., the same questionnaire you completed for yourself at the beginning of the course). After completing it, you are to compare/contrast your results and your contact’s and upload the results and your analysis to the **discussion board** and explain your findings there.
 3. Third, you should cover the following exercises **after we’ve gone over them in class: Review Exercises (Building Blocks 1-2 and Building Blocks 3-4) from the Storti book.** You should compare/contrast your results and your contact’s and upload the results to the **discussion board** and explain your findings there.
 4. Finally, in two **100-word responses**, you are to **read and comment on at least two other classmates’** cross-cultural contact posts.
- F. **MID-TERM EXAM (15%)** A mid-term exam covering the first half of the course – **lectures, Moreau, Hiebert, and Storti** – will be administered during the designated week. See Canvas for details.
- G. **FINAL EXAM (15%):** A final exam covering the second half of the course – **lectures, Moreau, Hiebert, and Storti** – will be administered during finals week. See Canvas for details.

Course/Classroom Policies and Information

Passport (Israel Trip): The passport requirement is in preparation for CRIS 201 and CRIS 202 whereby all undergraduate students³ prepare for and participate in a trip to Israel. The trip is designed to complement a student’s major in Bible and Theology. It is also designed to assist students in applying what they have learned in other courses while learning and serving cross-culturally. For students who are **exempt** from the Israel trip (see below), an alternate **domestic US** cross-cultural service experience for CRIS 202 will be arranged. The College believes that visiting the Holy Land and serving fellow image-bearers in challenging contexts cultivates graduates who exemplify the biblical qualities of ambassadors, cultivators, peacemakers, problem solvers, and professionals. **Exemptions from the Israel trip are limited to:**

1. Documented chronic medical conditions (documentation needs to be provided when requested by an employee of the College)
2. DACA students (unless a student elects to apply for the proper permissions for entry into Israel and a safe return to the US without complication).
3. International students on an F-1 visa (unless a student has researched and provided documentation to the College regarding the requirements for entry into Israel and a safe return to the US without complication).
4. Any other student whose status in the US prevents them from traveling internationally.

³ Apart from the exemptions listed in this section.

If you are uncertain regarding your status and this requirement, it is the student's responsibility to speak directly with the professor. Students in one of these categories who would prefer to go to Israel are required to **inform the professor as soon as possible and are responsible for researching and reporting back to the professor regarding the US's and Israel's exit/entry policies and visa requirements as they pertain to the student's status.**

Discussion Board Comment Guidelines (Maria Puzziferro):

- An acceptable post to the discussion board would contain accurate, original, and relevant comments. The comments should stimulate additional thought about the issue being discussed. A simple "I agree" or "I disagree" will not be counted as an adequate comment.
- Your postings should reflect (a) facts, (b) logical reasoning, (c) be related to the topic, (d) be written well (no spelling errors, etc.), and (e) be on time. Try to avoid sharing your personal opinions if you cannot back them up with facts and/or statistics.
- You may certainly express your views and beliefs in the context of the discussion topic, but **DO NOT** use your views to attack others. Simply use your best judgment and treat others with respect. This will be important to bear in mind as we discuss very sensitive and controversial issues.
- When posting, be sure to present your thoughts and point of view in an unbiased way. You can and should cite evidence for your assertions where appropriate. Use your textbooks as educational aids.
- Your postings should be clear, yet concise. Please do not feel as though you must write a lot. Think quality over quantity.

Video Recording

To ensure FERPA compliance when a course is live-streamed or recorded, students can opt out of video recordings by requesting seating in a designated area off camera. Students who sit outside of this area are giving implicit permission to be recorded.

Class Attendance:

Students should only enroll in courses they are able to attend regularly.

- **On-campus** students are expected to attend class **in person** according to the course syllabus.
- Students enrolled in the **online section** must pay any applicable online course fees.
- Online students are expected to attend class **synchronously** at the scheduled time via the designated video conferencing platform, Zoom, found in the left-hand global menu in Canvas.
- Online students must have their **cameras turned on with sound muted** during class, and actively participate in discussions and activities. In order to be properly identified, students must upload a picture ID to their Canvas Account Profile *prior to the first online meeting*. For instructions on how to upload a profile picture, [click here](#).

Missed Classes:

- Each instructor may decide how attendance impacts your grade and learning objectives. Details are provided within the course syllabus.
- Students are responsible for catching up on any material missed due to absence or tardiness.
 - Instructors are **not required** to allow make-up work for missed classes.

Attendance & Financial Aid:

- Students receiving **grants, loans, or scholarships** must meet participation requirements set by the college.
- It is the student's responsibility to:
 - Review relevant sections of the Academic Catalog.
 - Contact the **Financial Aid Office** for details on how attendance affects aid.
 - Understand the consequences of non-participation.

Census Period Attendance Requirement:

- Though Criswell College does not officially take attendance, it must verify that students **begin their courses** to meet federal aid regulations.
- **During the census period** (first two weeks of a 16-week semester or first week of shorter terms), students must participate in **academically related activities**, or they may be dropped from the course.

Examples of Qualifying Activities:

- Attending class in person or via live video with the instructor present
- Submitting an assignment, quiz, or exam
- Taking part in assigned tutorials, study groups, or discussion boards
- Having documented communication with the instructor about course content

Important Note:

Simply logging into Canvas or a Zoom session without participating (e.g., camera off, no interaction) **does not count** as attendance.

Canvas:

- Criswell College uses Canvas as its web-based Learning Management System (LMS).
- **For online courses** at Criswell College, instructors use Canvas to:
 - Organize course content on a module basis using organizational tools within Canvas
 - Control the timing of course requirements through module control or assignment due dates to ensure that students are engaged for the full length of the semester or term
 - Accept assignments from students only inside the Canvas course (emailed assignments are not acceptable)
 - Provide written feedback on assignments only within Canvas, preferably through Speedgrader
 - Use the Announcement or e-mail feature in Canvas to communicate with the students rather than by broadcasting to a class email listserv outside of canvas
 - Use Zoom in Canvas for all "live" (synchronous) class sessions

Important Note:

Students needing assistance with Canvas should contact the Canvas Help Support line at 844-358-6140. Tech support is available at this number, twenty-four hours a day.

Campus Closure

To ensure the health and safety of students and employees, college administrators may decide it is necessary on rare occasions to close the campus. Once this decision is announced, instructors will contact students to provide further details regarding the campus closure's impact on those courses. Students are responsible to watch for communication from their instructors and respond appropriately. (Unless otherwise specified by the instructor in this syllabus, this communication will be sent to the student's Criswell College e-mail account.)

In order to make progress toward the courses' objectives, instructors have the freedom during most campus closures to require students to participate in activities as alternatives to meeting on campus. An instructor may, for example, hold class remotely (through Zoom) at the scheduled time, provide a recording of a class or presentation for students to watch independently, or assign other activities that students are to accomplish before returning to campus. Students are responsible for accomplishing these alternative activities as well as any course requirements listed in this syllabus during the period of the campus closure. If, during the period of the campus closure, personal circumstances prohibit a student from accomplishing these alternative activities or course requirements and assignment listed in the syllabus during the campus closure, the student is responsible for communicating with the instructor as soon as possible. Instructors will not penalize students who do not have the means to accomplish the alternative activities during the period of the campus's closure and will work

with students whose circumstances during the campus closure prohibited their timely completion of course requirements and assignments in the syllabus.

Grading Scale

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|----|--------|------------------------------------|
| A | 93-100 | 4.0 grade points per semester hour |
| A- | 90-92 | 3.7 grade points per semester hour |
| B+ | 87-89 | 3.3 grade points per semester hour |
| B | 83-86 | 3.0 grade points per semester hour |
| B- | 80-82 | 2.7 grade points per semester hour |
| C+ | 77-79 | 2.3 grade points per semester hour |
| C | 73-76 | 2.0 grade points per semester hour |
| C- | 70-72 | 1.7 grade points per semester hour |
| D+ | 67-69 | 1.3 grade points per semester hour |
| D | 63-66 | 1.0 grade point per semester hour |
| D- | 60-62 | 0.7 grade points per semester hour |
| F | 0-59 | 0.0 grade points per semester hour |

Incomplete Grades

Students requesting a grade of Incomplete (I) must understand that incomplete grades may be given only upon approval of the faculty member involved. An “I” may be assigned only when a student is currently passing a course and in situations involving extended illness, serious injury, death in the family, or employment or government reassignment, not student neglect.

Students are responsible for contacting their instructors prior to the end of the semester, plus filing the appropriate completed and approved academic request form with the Registrar’s Office. The “I” must be removed (by completing the remaining course requirements) no later than 60 calendar days after the close of the term or semester in which the grade was awarded, or the “I” will become an “F.”

Academic Honesty

Absolute truth is an essential belief and basis of behavior for those who believe in a God who cannot lie and forbids falsehood. Academic honesty is the application of the principle of truth in the classroom setting. Academic honesty includes the basic premise that all work submitted by students must be their own and any ideas derived or copied from elsewhere must be carefully documented.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- cheating of any kind,
- submitting, without proper approval, work originally prepared by the student for another course,
- plagiarism, which is the submitting of work prepared by someone else as if it were his own, and
- failing to credit sources properly in written work.

Course Policy on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Examples of AI-related functions you **may not use** without permission:

- Text Generation – You may not use AI to generate text for use in an assignment.
- Outline Generation – You may not use AI to generate an outline for an assignment.

AI-related tools you **may use** without permission:

- Spellcheck and grammar – built into Word, Pages, and Google Docs
- AI re-writing tools – tools that take what you've written and help make it clearer, such as what Grammarly offers. However, you must cite Grammarly or other sources in your assignment/paper and submit both original draft of paper and the final paper.
- AI research and summarize – tools that help you find sources to cite, such as the new AI tools built into Logos Bible Software.)

Institutional Assessment

Material submitted by students in this course may be used for assessment of the college's academic programs. Since programmatic and institutional assessment is done without reference to specific students, the results of these assessments have no effect on a student's course grade or academic standing at the college. Before submitting a student's work for this type of assessment, the course instructor redacts the work to remove anything that identifies the student.

Institutional Email Policy

All official college email communications to students enrolled in this course will be sent exclusively to students' institutional email accounts. Students are expected to check their student email accounts regularly and to respond in an appropriate and timely manner to all communications from faculty and administrative departments.

Students are permitted to setup automatic forwarding of emails from their student email accounts to one or more personal email accounts. The student is responsible to setup and maintain email forwarding without assistance from college staff. If a student chooses to use this forwarding option, he/she will continue to be responsible for responding appropriately to all communications from faculty and administrative departments of the college. Criswell College bears no responsibility for the use of emails that have been forwarded from student email accounts to other email accounts.

Disabilities

Criswell College recognizes and supports the standards set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and similar state laws, which are designed to eliminate discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities. Criswell College is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualifying students, faculty, and employees with disabilities as required by applicable laws. For more information, please contact the Student Services Office.

Intellectual Property Rights

Unless otherwise specifically instructed in writing by the instructor, students must neither materially nor digitally reproduce materials from any course offered by Criswell College for or with the significant possibility of distribution.

Research and Writing Standards

The default writing style for written assignments in Criswell College Courses is the latest edition of *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations* by Kate Turabian. However, instructors are free to require alternative writing styles in their courses. These styles include but are not limited to the American Psychological Association (APA), Chicago Manual of Style, Modern Language Association (MLA), and Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) writing guides.

Resources and Supports

Canvas and SONIS: Criswell College uses Canvas as its web-based learning tool and SONIS for student data. Students needing assistance with Canvas should contact the Canvas Help Support line at (844) 358-6140. Tech support is available at this number, twenty-four hours a day. Students needing help with SONIS should contact the Campus Software Manager at studenttechsupport@criswell.edu.

Student Services: The Student Services Office exists to foster and encourage success in all areas of life—physical, intellectual, spiritual, social, and emotional. Students are encouraged to reach out for assistance by contacting the office at 214.818.1332 or studentservices@criswell.edu. The Student Services Office also works with local counseling centers to ensure that every student has access to helpful mental health resources. More information is located on the college website at [Criswell College Mental Health Resources](#), and students may contact the Director of Student Services if they have any questions.

Wallace Library: Students can access a wide range of academic resources and receive research assistance by contacting or visiting the Wallace Library, located on the second floor of the Education Building.

Login credentials for accessing the library's databases are emailed to students near the beginning of each semester.

For more information or assistance, email the Wallace Library at library@criswell.edu or visit www.criswell.edu/academics/wallace-library/.

Tutoring Center: Students are encouraged to consult with tutors to enhance their skills and build confidence. All tutors are recommended by faculty to ensure they are qualified to support the student body. To meet with a tutor, students can schedule an appointment through Calendly at <https://calendly.com/criswell-tutoringcenter>. The Tutoring Center is located in room E203 of the Education Building.

For questions, email tutoringcenter@criswell.edu.

Course Outline/Calendar

| WEEKS/TOPICS | CLASS DATES | ASSIGNMENTS | DUE DATE |
|--|---------------|--|------------------|
| | | M=Moreau Reading Quiz H=Hiebert Reading Quiz S=Storti – <i>these exercises will be done in class</i> | |
| Week 1: Introduction; Anthropology | Aug 19/21 | Introduction to the course SFCQ Questionnaire (PDF in Canvas) S: Pre-Test; Intro; Ex 1.1 | |
| Week 2: Introducing Intercultural Communication; Culture | Aug 26/28 | M # 1: M (Intro, Ch. 1) H #1: H (Ch. 1) S: Ex 1.1 – 1.5 | Midnight 8/25 |
| Week 3: Introducing Intercultural Communication; Culture | Sept 2/4 | M #2: M (Chs. 2-3) S: Ex 2.1 – 2.4 | Midnight 9/1 |
| Week 4: Introducing Intercultural Communication; Language | Sept 9/11 | M #3: M (Intro to Pt. 2, Ch. 4) H #2: H (Ch. 2) S: Ex 2.5 – 2.8 | Midnight 9/8 |
| Week 5: MinistrySafe Training | Sept 16/18 | M #4: M (Ch. 5) S: Ex 2.9 – 2.12 | Midnight 9/15 |
| Week 6: Foundations of Intercultural Communication Patterns; Social Structure | Sept 23/25 | M #5: M (Chs. 6-7) H #3: H (Ch. 3) S: Ex 2.13 – 2.18 | Midnight 9/22 |
| Week 7: Foundations of Intercultural Communication Patterns | Sept 30/Oct 1 | M # 6: M (Intro to Pt. 3, Ch. 8) MIDTERM EXAM (due by Midnight 10/3) | Midnight 9/29 |
| Week 8: Patterns of Intercultural Communication; Economics | Oct 7/9 | M #7: M (Chs. 9-10) H #4: H (Ch. 4) S: Ex 3.1 – 3.3 | Midnight 10/6 |
| Week 9 | Oct 14/16 | STUDENT DEVELOPMENT WEEK | |

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|--|-----------|---|-------------------|
| Week 10: Patterns of Intercultural Communication; Authority and Power | Oct 21/23 | M #8: M (Chs. 11-12) Passport Submission Due S: Ex 3.4 – 3.6 | Midnight 10/20 |
| Week 11: Patterns of Intercultural Communication; Authority and Power | Oct 28/30 | M #9: M (Chs. 13-14) H #5: H (Ch. 5) S: Ex 3.7 – 4.2 | Midnight 10/27 |
| Week 12: Developing Intercultural Expertise; Kinship and Marriage | Nov 4/7 | M #10: M (Intro to Pt. 4, Chs. 15-16) S: Ex 4.3 – 4.5 | Midnight 11/3 |
| Week 13: Developing Intercultural Expertise; Religion and Ritual | Nov 11/13 | M #11: M (Chs. 17-19) H #6: H (Ch. 8) S: Ex 5.1 - Epilogue | Midnight 11/10 |
| Week 14 | Nov 18/16 | M #12: M (Chs. 20-22) Cross-Cultural Contact Update Due S: Post-Test | Midnight 11/17 |
| Week 15 | Nov 25/27 | THANKSGIVING | |
| Week 16: Developing Intercultural Expertise; Religion and Ritual | Dec 2/4 | M #13: M (Chs. 23-24) Cross-Cultural Contact Discussions | Midnight 12/1 |
| Week 17 | Dec 11 | FINAL EXAM (due by Midnight 12/11) | Midnight 12/11 |