Intercultural Communication

Prof. Anna Sfardini

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course will provide a theoretical overview of the concepts of communication, culture and interaction and the analytical tools needed to understand communicative processes against the backdrop of the social and cultural transformations which mark contemporary times. At the end of the course, students will be able to make full use of the key concepts of intercultural communication from a theoretical and empirical point of view. In addition, students will learn to analyse communication as a complex social phenomenon, and adopt a critical and analytical approach towards the prevailing rhetorical representations of the Other and the use of stereotypes in media communication. Finally, students will be able to design and develop a project based on the analysis of concrete case studies in the field of intercultural communication.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The topic of intercultural communication will be explored by concentrating on two fields: the first dealing with the most important models of the relationship between culture and problems associated with the perception of cultural difference (stereotypes, stigma, prejudice, ethnocentrism); the second focuses on analysing a specific area of cultural transmission, namely mediated communication, with a view to identifying the mechanisms and rhetorical strategies that govern representations of otherness, drawing on its multiple representations in the contemporary global context. Lectures will present and discuss case studies from different areas of contemporary culture and international communication: the representation of Otherness in social, media and political discourse (for example in newspaper articles, tv series, films, advertising), the role of audio-visual media in (re)defining identities and belonging in national and transnational media landscapes.

***READING LIST***

# D. Moïsi, *La geopolitica delle serie TV. Il trionfo della paura*, Armando Editore, Milano, 2017.

M.J. Bennett, *Principi di Comunicazione Intrculturale*, FrancoAngeli, Milano, 2015.

B.M. Mazzara, *Stereotipi e pregiudizi,* Il Mulino, Bologna, 1997.

C. Giaccardi, *La comunicazione interculturale nell’era digitale,* Il Mulino, Bologna, 2012.

B.M. Mazzara, *Stereotipi e pregiudizi,* Il Mulino, Bologna, 1997.

Further reading material will be indicated on Blackboard during the course.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course is delivered by means of frontal lectures and the analysis of media products in the classroom, with the active participation of students. Attendance is therefore highly recommended.

Lecture notes, further reading and material presented on the course will be provided via the Blackboard platform.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Written assessment, structured as follows: six open-ended questions, receiving a rate from 0 (no answer) up to 5 points (excellent answer) each. Students will be asked to describe and put into practice the key concepts learnt during the course, orient themselves among the different topics of intercultural communication, and use their newly acquired argument skills during the exposition and the analysis of different issues.

The final mark will also take into account the following assessment criteria: the relevance of the answers, the appropriate use of technical jargon, and the ability to create links between the key concepts explained during the course and open issues.

Alternatively, students can take two intermediate tests instead of a single final assessment: at the end of semester 1 (in January) there will be a written test (with open and closed-ended questions) on the first part of the course; at the end of semester 2, students will have the possibility to discuss a project based on the analysis of one of the topics explained during the second part of the course (to be decided with the lecturer). The written test is structured in 3 open-ended questions, receiving each one a rate from 0 (no answer) up to 5 points (excellent answer) each; 15 closed-ended questions receiving each a rate from 0 (if uncorrect) to 1 (correct answer). The project, instead, will be carried out in groups of two or three students and evaluated in thirtieths (the minimum to pass the test is 18/30).

Also students who decide to take the two intermediate tests, will get just one final mark, resulting from their performance in the first and the second test (each one is 50% of the final mark). The assessment criteria are the same indicated above.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

There are no prerequisites for attending the course. However, students should ideally be interested in the analysis of human and mediated communication and contemporary issues related to cultural differences. Students attending classes are allowed to take the two intermediate tests explained above.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.