Course Description:
This course offers the MA TESOL student an understanding of the cultural issues that come into play in their professional lives as classroom ESL/EFL teachers. First, students will explore the concept of culture and common approaches from the field of intercultural communication. Next, a discourse systems approach will allow students to analyze and evaluate how to work within an unfamiliar culture. Then, the discourse systems approach will be applied to educational culture and a critical view of schooling will emerge. Finally, students will analyze and design classroom activities that create a positive classroom environment for all learners and teach culture.

Course Goals:
By the end of the course, students will be able to:
- Define culture and explain the relationships between culture, language, and education.
- Identify cultural issues that may complicate the success of ELLs in ESL/EFL classrooms.
- Understand and apply intercultural communication principles to work effectively with ELLs and their families.
- Create, implement and evaluate classroom activities that foster cultural awareness.
- Create their own positive classroom culture to create a “third place” for students to analyze and practice both home and target cultures.
- Utilize models of discourse systems and politeness systems to analyze human interaction.

Course Texts:
Required:  
(IC)

Recommended:

Supplementary materials will be made available as needed in Blackboard.

Requirements:
Attendance is key for course success, as is active class participation. It is expected that you will attend and be fully prepared for every class by having completed all readings and assignments before class. All work must be handed in by the due dates established; late work receives a grade reduction. Assignments have varying due dates as described below.
**Academic Integrity:**
You are subject to the Academic Integrity Code of American University. Please see this website for more information: [http://www.american.edu/provost/registrar/regulations/reg80.cfm#list](http://www.american.edu/provost/registrar/regulations/reg80.cfm#list). All work you submit must be your own or must be properly documented. In addition, collaborative work and work already submitted in other classes must be approved in advance by the instructor.

**Schedule:**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings and Assignments</th>
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| Jan. 16 | Course introductions  
Leading class discussions  
What is culture? (Unit 1) | To be read by today:  
CBC, Ch. 1  
Agar, Ch. 1                                                                 |
| Jan. 23 | Intercultural communication  
Culture and the individual | To be read by today:  
CBC, Ch. 2 and 4  
Gudykunst & Lee-2003                                                                 |
| Jan. 30 | Cultural values                                                      | To be read by today:  
CBC, Ch. 5  
Damen-1987  
(American Ways)                                                                                                                                 |
| Feb. 6  | Teaching culture with language                                       | To be read by today:  
CBC, Ch. 6 and 7  
Erling-2005                                                                 |
| Feb. 13 | Crossing cultures                                                   | To be read by today:  
Brown & Holloway-2008  
Decapua & Wintergerst-2004  
Due today:  
Critical incident                                                                 |
| Feb. 20 | Discourse systems (Unit 2)                                           | To be read by today:  
IC, Ch. 1 and 2  
Barna-1985                                                                 |
| Feb. 27 | Culture and discourse systems                                        | To be read by today:  
IC, Ch. 6 and 7                                                                 |
| Mar. 6  | The discourse approach                                              | To be read by today:  
IC, Ch. 3, 4 and 12  
Due today:  
Class observation report                                                                 |
| Mar. 13 | **No Class: Spring Break**                                          |                                                                                         |
| Mar. 20 | Discourse systems                                                   | To be read by today:  
CBC, Ch. 8 and Ch. 10  
IC, Ch. 9, 10 or 11                                                                 |
| Mar. 27 | **No Class: TESOL International Conference**                        | To be read by today:  
IC, Ch. 5                                                                 |
| April 3 | Educational cultures (Unit 3)                                        | To be read by today:  
CBC, Ch. 9  
IC, Ch. 8  
Deal & Patterson-2009  
Smithee et al.-2004  
Due today:  
Cultural issues in your classroom                                                                 |
| April 10 | Contrastive rhetoric  
Classroom expectations in conflict                                   | To be read by today:  
CBC, Ch. 3  
Kaplan-1966                                                                 |
Assignment Description and Due Dates:

**Discussion leader (15%)**

*Date varies*

Each student will be responsible for leading one class during the semester. For effective class leading you should:

- Complete all the readings for the class period.
- Prepare the class session, including discussion and at least one cultural activity.
- Lead the class discussion beyond basic comprehension questions (approximately 1 – 1 ¼ hours).
- Carry out one cultural teaching activity to demonstrate or related to the main points from the reading (15-30 minutes).
- Summarize and reflect upon the class session in a 1-2 page single-spaced reflective paper (due 1 week after leading the class). Submit via Blackboard by 5:00 p.m. on the date due.

**Critical Incident (15%)**

*February 13*

Each student will submit a critical incident following the guidelines given in class and a 1-2 page (typed, single-spaced) explanation. A few will be tried out and evaluated by the class. *Submit via Blackboard by 5:00 p.m. on the date due.*

**Class Observation Report (20%)**

*March 6*

For this 2-3 page (typed, single-spaced) paper you will interview a classroom teacher, observe his/her class for a minimum of one (academic) hour, and report on both the explicit and implicit cultural beliefs you find. *Submit via Blackboard by 5:00 p.m. on the date due.*

**Cultural Issues in Your Classroom (25%)**

*April 3*

In this 5-7 page (typed, single-space) paper you will describe your students’ target discourse system (where they will be using English) and identify cultural issues to respond to when teaching your student audience (what difficulties they may have in the target discourse system). In this paper, you should:

- Describe your student audience including information about their culture
- Describe cultural issues in the classroom for your students, for you as their teacher, and for other stakeholders (parents, administrators, employers, etc.)
- Describe cultural issues the students may have as they navigate their target discourse system
- Describe how you will respond to these cultural issues

Please use APA Style guidelines and refer to relevant theories as well as reflect on your knowledge from practice. *Submit via Blackboard by 5:00 p.m. on the date due.*
**Culture Project (Unit Plan) (25%)**

For the final class project, you will design a unit plan (a minimum of 10 instructional hours) for an ESL/EFL or content-based instruction class of your choosing which deals explicitly with cultural issues. Several cultural activities should be included, as well as a 1-2 page (typed, single-spaced) explanation of the unit plan. Choose one activity to present to the class on May 1. *Submit via Blackboard by 5:00 p.m. on the date due.*

**Evaluation**

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion leader</td>
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<td>Critical incident</td>
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<td>Cultural issues in your classroom paper</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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