

COMM 373: COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE  
WINTERIM 2014/15, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA - UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - STEVENS POINT

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### **Course Description and Purpose**

“Study communication theories, media, methods, and strategies for affecting or resisting change in society.”—UWSP Course Catalog

This course focuses on the role of communication in social change in Australia. Through lectures, discussions, fieldtrips, tours and directed activities in New South Wales, we will explore historical and contemporary challenges the people of Australia – Aboriginal Australians, new immigrants, and many others -- have faced and how communication facilitated the process of social change.

### **Learning Outcomes**

Upon the completion of the course students should:

1. be able to explain ways the communication process influences how and what we learn
2. be able to explain the essential characteristics of persuasion and influence
3. be able to explain how public persuasion processes have facilitated social change in Australia
4. gain an understanding of Australian Aboriginal culture
5. experience and gain an understanding of Australian society and cultural history
6. gain a fresh perspective and understanding of their own society and culture

### **Required and Recommended Texts**

There is no required textbook to this course. Required readings (short articles) and links to required and recommended materials shall be made available on the course website (D2L). If you do not read the materials ahead of our lectures or fieldtrips, you are likely to be lost and confused, and thus you won't be able to benefit from the program.

### **Activities and Grading**

Your final grade will be based on the following assignments and activities:

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Total Points</u>	<u>Percent of Final Grade</u>
Directed Activities (3 at 25 points each)	75 points	15%
Blog Entries (5 at 50 points each)	250 points	50%
Oral Report (1 at 25 points)	25 points	5%
Reflection Paper (1 at 100 points)	100 points	20%
Participation	50 points	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>500 points</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Grading scale for final grade:*

95 – 100% = A	84 – 86% = B	74 – 76% = C	60 – 66% = D
90 – 94% = A-	80 – 83% = B-	70 – 73% = C-	< 60% = F
87 – 89% = B+	77 – 79% = C+	67 – 69% = D+	

### **Explanation of course activities**

#### Directed Group Activities:

You will participate in three directed group activities. You will be assigned to a group before each activity begins.

#### Blog Postings:

In addition to the original posting you made to set up your blog, you will be posting five blog entries. Each blog post will be graded. You will receive instructions about the blog topics, but you will be free to determine the focus and style of your blog entries.

#### Oral Report:

Each student will present a 3 to 5 minute oral report reflecting on their time in Australia. The reports will be presented during the session on January 15.

#### Reflection Paper:

Your final graded assignment will be a reflection paper in which you shall focus on your Australia experiences in light of the learning outcomes specified in this syllabus.

#### Participation:

Participation is an essential element of the course. The grade you receive for participation will reflect:

- How you treat your classmates, guest lecturers, members of the program staff, and the course instructor (e.g. do you show respect to them by showing up on time for scheduled activities etc.)
- Your general attitude about learning while you take part in various activities (e.g. do you show curiosity and your desire to learn, do you ask thoughtful questions and listen to answers? etc.)

## Attendance

Attendance is mandatory for every scheduled group activity, including lectures, fieldtrips, directed activities and scheduled outings. If you chose not to attend any scheduled event, you will fail the class. Excused absence will be granted to students only in cases of medical or other emergencies. Note that that hangovers or any side effects due to overly intense recreational activities do not qualify as medical emergencies.

## Missed/Late Assignments

Assignments must be handed in via D2L or posted online at the time specified by the assignment. Late assignments receive a failing grade. If you miss an assignment you will not be permitted to make it up.

## Academic Honesty

When completing your assignments, you are expected to do original work. That is, you must avoid any form of plagiarism. I consider plagiarism - as defined by *Dictionary.com* – the “use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one’s own original work.” A student caught on plagiarizing shall receive a failing grade for his/her assignment. Further academic misconduct shall be sanctioned in accordance with the *UWSP Chapter 14 – Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures*.

## Conduct in during lectures and activities

To provide a fruitful experience and an effective learning environment for all of us, I expect each of you to conduct yourself with respect for your fellow students, in line with the *UWSP Communal Bill of Rights*. Also,

- Being on time for all activities and departures is absolutely critical. Tardiness would disrupt our activity schedule and the dynamics of our learning community.
- Any use including the visual display of smart/cell phones is not tolerated during lectures and guest lectures. By the beginning of lectures, all cell phones must be turned off and put away until the end of class. I consider any use of cell phones, including text messaging, as disrespectful and disruptive.

## Course Schedule

(Note: This schedule is subject to change. Should changes occur, they will be announced)

Date	Activities	Assignments Due
Saturday, December 27	Flying to Australia	
Sunday, December 28	Day “Lost” in Transit	
Monday, December 29	Arrive in Sydney; Program Introduction; Walking Tour of Sydney and the Rocks; Lunch and Dinner as a Group	
Tuesday, December 30	Morning: UW-Stevens Point Lecture Afternoon: Directed Activity # 1 - Mass Transit Exercise	DA #1
Wednesday, December 31	Morning: UW-Stevens Point Lecture Afternoon: 3:00PM Group meeting Evening: New Year’s Eve and the Fireworks	

Thursday, January 1	Morning: Visit Koala Park Sanctuary Afternoon: Tour of Sydney Opera House	Blog Entry #1
Friday, January 2	Morning: Lecture on Contemporary Aboriginal Art Practices by Tess Allas of UNSW Afternoon: 1:00PM: Art Gallery Tour; 3:00PM: Lecture on Political Communication in Australia by Peter Chen - University of Sydney	
Saturday, January 3	Morning: Royal Botanical Gardens Tour; Government House Tour Afternoon: Short UW-Stevens Point Lecture; Directed Activity # 2	DA #1
Sunday, January 4	All Day Fieldtrip: Blue Mountains Excursion and Aboriginal Experience	Blog Entry #2
Monday, January 5	Morning: Guest Lecturer: Chris Tobin - Aboriginal Politics and Land Rights; Aboriginal History and the 'Outback' Afternoon: UW-Stevens Point Lecture	
Tuesday, January 6	Morning: Guest Lecture from Lucy Morgan: Refugee Council of Australia; Guest Lecture from Kenneth Hall: Colonial and Mining Times – Mining and Natural Resources Afternoon: Guest Lecture from Jennifer Bichel-Findlay: Comparing Australian Healthcare system to USA	Blog Entry #3
Wednesday, January 7	Morning: Guest Lecturer Thomas Evans: Sport and Culture in Australia; Short UW-Stevens Point Lecture Afternoon: Unscheduled Afternoon	
Thursday, January 8 – Monday January 12	Optional free time, You MUST be back at Urbanest Cleveland Street by the night of Monday January 12 so that you will be ready for a 7:15AM start on Tuesday morning	Blog Entry #4 – due by 11:59PM, Monday January 12
Tuesday, January 13	Morning: – Visit to The Hills Holroyd Parramatta Migrant Resource Centre Afternoon: UW-Stevens Point Lecture	
Wednesday, January 14	Morning-afternoon: Spit Bridge to Manly group walk, then unscheduled time at the beach Evening: Opera House Performance	Blog Entry #5
Thursday, January 15	Morning: Directed Activity # 3 Afternoon: UW-Stevens Point Lecture (oral reports and discussion) Evening: Farewell Group Dinner	Oral Report DA#3
Friday, January 16	Morning: check out of accommodation; arrive at Sydney International airport Afternoon: depart for Los Angeles	
Tuesday, January 20		Reflection Paper Due