Michigan State University   **Course Syllabus**
FLT 815 – Section 731 – Online   **Spring 2024**
Teaching Culture in Foreign Language Classrooms

Instructor:	Dr. Bruna Sommer-Farias
Email:	This course: fariasbr@msu.edu | Program questions: maflt@cal.msu.edu
Office hours:	By appointment (see Class Policies #2)
Appointment site:	Request individual times via private chat in Teams at least 24 hours in advance

Course links: D2L course page: d2l.msu.edu → FLT 815 Culture in FLT
Microsoft Teams site: teams.microsoft.com → FLT 815 (look for our class logo or the link under the tab 815 Team in D2L)

CONTENTS

1. COURSE READINGS

- Holliday, A., Hyde, M., & Kullman, J. (2016). *Intercultural communication: An advanced resource book* (4th edition). New York: Routledge. [Purchase in print or ebook.]
- Corbett, J. (2010). *Intercultural Language Activities.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [Purchase in print, with or without supplemental CD]
- Liddicoat, A. J., & Scarino, A. (2013). *Intercultural language teaching and learning*. Malden, MA: Wiley. [Access via MSU Library at Ebook Central]

Additional readings will be available directly through the MSU library or through our course page on D2L (https://d2l.msu.edu/d2l/home/908254). A detailed reference list is provided at the end of the syllabus in APA format.

2. COURSE DESCRIPTION

As many scholars in foreign language education and applied linguistics have noted, culture is one of the most widely-used and least agreed-upon concepts in our field. This course is intended to embrace that complexity but also lead toward some clarity in the principles that can guide our pedagogical decisions and practices in regard to teaching culture and intercultural competence. To that end, the course begins with overviews of the many definitions and facets of culture and provides opportunities to reflect on your own understandings of culture. We will then delve into the theoretical underpinnings of culture and intercultural communication. Following that, we will explore frameworks for teaching not only cultural knowledge but also intercultural competence and discuss current national and international standards for teaching culture. Throughout the semester, we will consider the implications of these issues for teaching and assessing culture and intercultural competence in foreign language courses. The tasks for this course, which parallel the components of Byram and Zarate's (1997) intercultural competence framework, include reflective tasks, observation tasks, activity design tasks, and an investigative task in which you will use ethnographic interviews to engage with the themes of this course as they relate to specific individuals and contexts.

3. COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the semester, students in this course will be able to do the following:

1. Reflect on and articulate your own concepts of culture and your cultural background and identity as a foundation for the process of teaching culture and intercultural competence.
2. Engage with the complexities of culture as a concept and its relationship to identity, otherness, intercultural experience, and globalization in discussions and assignments.
3. Develop your own awareness of culture and intercultural competence in the classroom and hone your skills in creating activities that increase your own students' abilities in these areas.
4. Align your teaching of culture and intercultural competence with national and international standards for teaching culture in foreign language courses.
5. Investigate culture and intercultural experience through observation and interviews with informants, analyze your findings in light of current theory, and apply your findings to classroom instruction.

4. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The following table summarizes the five main components of your grade for this course. Further details, guidelines, and suggestions for each task will be provided as the semester goes on. All due dates are by midnight (in D2L, this is really 11:59 p.m.) on Wednesday of the specified week unless otherwise noted.

Tasks		Weight	Due Date
Comprehension Tasks – *Savoir comprendre*			
Online Discussions	Because this course includes concepts that make the familiar unfamiliar and the unfamiliar familiar, your process of reading, thinking, writing about the new ideas, and sharing them with your classmates is particularly important. Each week I will provide you with discussion prompts focusing on the readings for the week and/or a task related to the topic of the current module. Your postings will be assessed on the depth of your response to the prompt and your accurate and thorough use of the material you have read that week to support your ideas. In order to receive full credit, you must post a response to each prompt for the week (each thread) AND respond to at least one classmate in each thread.	30%	Every week

Initial posts – by midnight Wednesday

Response posts – by following module due date |
Reflective Tasks – *Savoir-être*			
Cultural Autobiography	This assignment asks you to reflect on and write about your own cultural background and intercultural experiences. I will provide you with a graphic organizer that is intended to guide this reflection and help you to structure your paper. Your essay of at least 1000 words should include an introduction, appropriate sections, and a conclusion. This task serves both as an important foundational step for further discussion of culture and as an initial writing assignment. Accordingly, the content should be thoughtful and specific while the writing style should be appropriately academic and show evidence of planning and revision.	10%	Module 2
Application Tasks – *Savoir-faire*			

Activity Designs (two activities and one presentation)	This assignment provides practice in applying the ideas of this course to the development of classroom activities in order to develop intercultural competence. *Activity Designs:* Based on activity descriptions of your choice in Corbett (2010), design activities for use in a teaching context that is relevant to you. For each activity, submit a plan and rationale using the provided activity design template and any images, links, handouts, rubrics, or other materials needed in order to carry out the activity. As per the 2017 NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements for Intercultural Competence, your activities should develop learners' ability to *Investigate* and *Interact* interculturally. These designs should also incorporate communicative and task-based principles taught in FLT 807 Methods and other FLT courses. *Activity Design Roundtables:* At the end of the semester, you will share one of your activity designs with your classmates in a virtual meeting (or in a video recording). In about 10 minutes, you will describe your activity and demonstrate how it will be presented to learners of your target language.	30%	**Investigation Activity:** Module 4 **Interaction Activity:** Module 6 **Activity Design Presentation:** Module 11
Investigative Task – *Savoir apprendre & Savoir s'engager*			
Intercultural Investigation Project	For your culminating task in this course, you will conduct an investigative project using qualitative research methods. These investigations will involve identifying informants with extensive intercultural experience and conducting interviews to learn about the development of their intercultural competence. You may conduct your interviews in the target language or in English. You will record, transcribe, and analyze these interviews from *emic* (insider) and *etic* (analytic or outsider) perspectives. What challenges has this person faced in crossing intercultural boundaries? How has this person's identity been affected? What has this person learned? What skills has your informant developed? This project will be completed in multiple stages that include planning your study, obtaining consent, conducting and transcribing interviews, analyzing the data, and presenting your procedure and findings in a research report. Your final paper of about 3000 words will follow the expected structure for qualitative research reports and draw upon at least 8 scholarly sources from the course and your own library research. Further guidance will be provided throughout the course.	30%	**Interview Transcripts** Module 9 **Descriptive Analysis** Module 10 **Thematic Analysis** Module 11 **Ethnographic Research Report** Module 12

Note: *Grades will be reported on an ongoing basis in D2L. You can review your grades and the weight of each assignment by clicking Grades in the Assessments menu. If you have questions or concerns about how your grade appears or is being calculated, please contact me. All percentages above relate to the final grade.*

5. GRADING SCALE

Grading is an extremely complex task. I view each course as a developmental process and each draft of each assignment as a step in that process. Also, I value transparency and clarity in grading. To that end, you will

receive a rubric for each assignment detailing the features that I expect to see, and I will use this rubric to assign your grades and provide specific comments. I expect you to use these comments to improve further drafts and assignments. If you read the materials carefully, complete all assignments in a timely manner, and attend to instructor and peer feedback, it is entirely possible to earn a 4.0 in this course.

If you get a 94% or above in this class, you will receive a 4.0. This shows that you met all requirements for the course and demonstrated your learning to an exceptional degree, and you even exceeded expectations in this course. Scores between 88% and 93% equate to 3.5, 82% to 87% to 3.0, etc. At the end of the semester, I reserve the right to adjust final averages based on the distribution of grades in the class. If I do adjust the grades, they will be adjusted fairly across all students, and they will only be adjusted upward.

94% or above is a 4.0 (A)	The student met all requirements for this course and demonstrated his or her learning to an exceptional degree and exceeded expectations in the course.
88% to 93% is a 3.5 (A-)	The student met all requirements for this course and demonstrated his or her learning very well.
82% to 87% is a 3.0 (B)	The student met most of the requirements for this course and demonstrated his or her learning relatively well.
76% to 81% is a 2.5 (C+)	The student did not fulfill all requirements for this course. Learning was demonstrated adequately.
70% to 75% is a 2.0 (C)	The student did not fulfill the requirements for this course. Learning was demonstrated somewhat adequately.

6. CLASS POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

6.1. Course modules and weekly activities

As mentioned above, this course consists of 12 modules. In the remaining weeks of the semester after we complete those modules, you will review the course content, share your work with classmates, and complete your investigative projects. The weekly due date for this course will always be **Wednesday midnight** (Eastern time, or in your time zone if later). Each week, you will participate in an online discussion and complete other related tasks. Responding to other students' posts is required and must be completed by **the following Wednesday**.

Online graduate courses in the MAFLT program at MSU rely on regular and consistent participation throughout the semester. It is recommended that you set aside **an average of 6-12 hours per week** for course tasks. Your workload will vary depending on your experience in FLT courses, your teaching experience, whether you have major assignments due that week, and other factors. Consider the course schedule early and often so that you can plan to complete assignments on time each week. See Late Policy below.

6.2. Communicating with your instructor and peers

Because this class is online, our communication by internet and phone will be very important. We will use the following three methods of communication as the semester goes on:

- Announcements in D2L (http://d2l.msu.edu);
- Microsoft Teams (teams.microsoft.com); and
- SpartanMail/Outlook email (http://spartanmail.msu.edu).

Further guidance on the use of each of these methods of communication will be provided in D2L under General Course Materials. **D2L Announcements** will be used to notify you when new modules and major

updates are released. We do NOT use D2L email. For more informal and immediate communication and for collaborative activities, we will use **Microsoft Teams**. Additional training on using Teams in this course will be provided via D2L and via Teams. Email will only be used on a limited basis, though you can reach me at fariasbr@msu.edu at any time. When I send email to you, I will use your **MSU email account**, not a personal account (this choice is for security and consistency). See the Technology section below for links to download the apps. Please make sure that you check your MSU email and your Microsoft Teams notifications regularly.

Making Appointments: Throughout the semester, office hours are available by appointment. Evening and weekend times can be requested. The default appointment length is 20 minutes. To make an appointment, send me an email or a private message in Teams. Please strive to make these appointments *at least 24 hours* in advance.

Joining Virtual Meetings. We will make use of one of the following tools for office hours, review sessions, etc.: 1) Microsoft Teams, or 2) Zoom (http://msu.zoom.us). Ideally, you will use a webcam, microphone, and headphones for these meetings, but you can also dial in by phone. These tools allow for real-time communication and sharing of our computer screens. Join my "personal meeting room" by going to the following stable URL: [removed]

6.3. Late assignments

You are responsible for submitting all components of each required task on time. With very few exceptions, due dates appear as 11:59 p.m. in Eastern time. For all course requirements, including posts in D2L Discussions and materials submitted via D2L Assignments. If your time zone is later than Eastern time, you may submit your materials as late as midnight in your own time zone. Late assignments will not be accepted unless you request an extension **prior to the due date**. If you realize that you will not be able to complete an assignment on time, you may request an extension. In these cases, I will still deduct a percentage (10% per day by default) from that assignment score.

If you submit an assignment after the due date without prior notice, I reserve the right to refuse acceptance of that assignment entirely. The maximum credit possible in this case is 50% of the assignment grade. Exceptions will be made in cases of documented medical emergencies or natural disasters.

6.4. Withdrawal policy

If you decide to withdraw from the course for any reason, please inform me as soon as possible. YOU must then un-enroll YOURSELF from the course. The MSU deadlines to drop courses and avoid penalties are very strict. You have about three weeks to drop a course and receive a refund. You have until the mid-point of the semester to drop the course without impacting your GPA (it will appear as W on your transcript). These dates are listed in the MSU Schedule of Courses, which you can access by going to Class Search in the Student Information System (https://student.msu.edu). You may also find these dates on the MAFLT website's Semester Updates post for the current semester, available here: https://maflt.cal.msu.edu/semester-updates.

Further information is available from the MSU Office of the Registrar: Programs and Policies. For further guidance on policies and procedures, see the **Foreign Language Teaching Program Handbook**.

8. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY GUIDELINES AND POLICIES
Expectations for Academic Integrity at Michigan State University

The principles of truth and honesty are fundamental to the educational process and the academic integrity of the University. The MAFLT Program adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See MSU Policies on Academic Integrity.)

You are responsible for knowing MSU's policy on academic honesty and plagiarism. Plagiarism can include accidental failures to cite appropriately, blatant use of others' words or ideas without proper attribution, self-plagiarism involving submission of the same paper in multiple courses, and other activities that constitute breaches of trust between instructors and students regarding student work. Familiarize yourself with this site: http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/academic-integrity/. Note that this web site states that "plagiarism not only is legally wrong but also morally corrosive… Any paper based upon the writing of others should *acknowledge every source used*."

Academic integrity also assumes that any and all work submitted by a student is generated by that student for the purposes of that course. Therefore, students should never:

- claim or submit the academic work of another as one's own
- procure, provide, accept or use any materials containing questions or answers to any examination or assignment without explicit authorization from the instructor
- use the http://www.allmsu.com website to complete any work for this course
- complete or attempt to complete any assignment or examination for another individual without proper authorization
- allow any examination or assignment to be completed for oneself, in part or in total, by another without proper authorization
- submit coursework completed for another course to satisfy the requirements of this course.

Possible penalties for breaches of academic integrity include: (a) receiving a penalty grade on the assignment, (b) failing the assignment, or (c) failing the class. Please note that unfortunately all three types of penalties have been given out to MSU undergraduate and graduate students before. If an instructor gives you a penalty, that instructor is expected to and will inform the director of the program and other relevant faculty of the penalty. Note that plagiarism can lead toward expulsion from MSU.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Usage: You are encouraged to be very discerning of your use of AI tools to create text, video, audio, or images in your work for this class. If any AI-generated content is used for your assignments, you must clearly indicate what part is yours and what part was generated by AI, which is expected to be a very low percentage in the initial or revision stages of the composing process. Any AI-generated work not cited and/or used for a large percentage of the assignments will be treated as academic dishonesty. If any questions remain, please reach out to me before submitting your work. Adapted from the Boston College Center for Teaching Excellence.

Disagreements and Appeals

If at some point during or after this course you have a dispute with an instructor about a grade, the application of a policy, or another aspect of the course, you should take the following steps: First, discuss the issue with your instructor in a live meeting (virtual or in person), not exclusively via email. Second, if you and your instructor are unable to resolve the dispute, you may contact the MAFLT Program Director. In the case of this course, the instructor is also the program director. Therefore, you may take your concerns to the Director of the Center for Language Teaching Advancement, Dr. Felix Kronenberg.

8. OTHER UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND RESOURCES
9.

Together We Will
The university hub for information about COVID-19 and the impact of the pandemic on learning and teaching is the Together We Will website. This website will continue to be updated with news, guidance, and resources. For additional resources pertaining to learning and teaching remotely, see: https://remote.msu.edu. For support relating to the mental and emotional impact of the current circumstances, see below for information about MSU Counseling and Psychiatric Services available to online and off-campus students.

Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives
Required Training: As of 2021, MSU released a new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Plan: As President Stanley recently announced, "The plan was designed as a framework of recommendations to improve the culture around DEI and to work with our strategic planning efforts." All members of the MSU community are required to complete DEI training. You will receive notifications via email and the Student Information System about this training.
Further Opportunities: The Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives offers a wide variety of resources that apply to MSU units and instructors and may also be useful to you as an educator. You can access those resources here: Diversity and Inclusion Opportunities.

MSU Religious Observance Policy
It has always been the policy of MSU to permit students and faculty to observe those holidays set aside by their chosen religious faith. If you wish to request accommodations such as an adjustment of due dates on course assignments due to a religious holiday or event, you are expected to contact your instructor in advance to make arrangements in advance. Please visit: http://www.reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Notices/ReligiousPolicy.asp).

Disability Accommodation Requests
Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services, and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities at 517-884-RCPD or on the web at http://www.rcpd.msu.edu. Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a verified individual services accommodation ("VISA") form. Please present this form to me at the start of the term and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc.). Requests received after this date will be honored whenever possible. Please visit: http://www.rcpd.msu.edu/Awareness/Home.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
Counseling services are available to distance-based MSU students as well as campus-based students through MSU Counseling and Psychiatric services, "the place on campus for students seeking help for a wide range of concerns, including depression, anxiety, stress management, homesickness, adjustment or acculturation, relationships, gender identity and sexual orientation (LBGTQ) concerns, substance abuse, trauma, eating or body image concerns, and other personal mental health concerns" (caps.msu.edu/about-us/index.html).
- The Guide to Health and Well-Being at MSU may be useful for a positive and successful experience for all Spartan students.
- CAPS is implementing a hybrid model of service as of Fall 2021, including an an online scheduling system for initial consultation appointments. Students can make a triage phone appointment with a counselor by providing some basic information using the online scheduling form.
- Newly launched mental health database ThrivingCampus can connect you with providers in your area.
- CAPS offers 24/7/365 crisis counseling services by calling CAPS' main number at 517-355-8270 and pressing "1" at the prompt. For other crisis services, students can also visit CAPS' Crisis Resources for Students webpage.

Use of Materials from the Course

As members of a learning community, students are expected to respect the intellectual property of course instructors. All course materials presented to students that are the copyrighted property of the course instructor are subject to the following conditions of use:

- **Use of instructional materials:** Students may use course materials including videos, lecture slides, and readings **only** for their own course-related purposes.
- **Sharing of instructional materials and recordings:** Students may not post any course materials online or distribute them to anyone not enrolled in the class without the advance written permission of the course instructor, and if applicable, any students whose voice or image is included in the recordings.
- Any student violating the conditions described above may face academic disciplinary sanctions.

Evaluations of Courses and Instructors

SIRS System: Michigan State University takes seriously the opinion of students in the evaluation of the effectiveness of instruction, and has implemented the SPLS (Student Perception of Learning Survey) process to gather student feedback. You will receive an e-mail sometime during the last two weeks of class asking you to fill out the online form at your convenience. You may find out more about the SPLS system at https://spls.msu.edu/students.

FLT Courses: For courses in the MAFLT and FLT Certificate programs, students will be asked to complete a program-specific questionnaire at the end of the semester. If you have specific concerns about a course during the semester, wish to discuss specific aspects of the course, or want to appeal a decision made by your instructor, you may contact the Program Director: https://maflt.cal.msu.edu/program-director.

COURSE MATERIALS

Course Textbooks:

Holliday, A., Hyde, M., & Kullman, J. (2017). *Intercultural communication: An advanced resource book* (4th edition). New York: Routledge.

Corbett, J. (2010). *Intercultural Language Activities.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Liddicoat, A. J., & Scarino, A. (2013). *Intercultural language teaching and learning*. Malden, MA: Wiley.

Journal Articles:

These articles are available through the MSU library's databases. I recommend that you begin your search at our MAFLT library guide: http://libguides.lib.msu.edu/maflt.

Anya, U. (2020). African Americans in world language study: The forged path and future Directions. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *40*, 97-112.

Byrnes, H. (2008). Articulating a foreign language sequence through content: A look at the culture standards. *Language Teaching*, *41*(01), 103-118.

Deardorff, D. (2006). Identification and assessment of intercultural competence as a student outcome of

internationalization. *Journal of studies in international education, 10*(3), 241-266.

Demossier, M., Bernasek, L., & Armbruster, H. (2019). Teaching ethnography as Modern Languages method: legacies and future practices for global citizens. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, *32*(3), 285-298.

Dogancay-Aktuna, S. (2006). Expanding the socio-cultural knowledge base of TESOL teacher education. *Language, Culture and Curriculum, 19*(3), 278-295.

Furstenberg, G. (2010). Making culture the core of the language class: Can it be done? *The Modern Language Journal*, *94*(2), 329-332.

Menard-Warwick, J. (2009). Co-constructing representations of culture in ESL and EFL classrooms: Discursive faultlines in Chile and California. *The Modern Language Journal, 93*(1), 30-45.

Books, book chapters, and other materials:

The following books and chapters are available as free e-books through the MSU library OR will be provided as PDFs via D2L.

Baker-Bell, A. (2020). *Linguistic justice: Black language, literacy, identity, and pedagogy*. Routledge.

Belz, J. A. (2007). The development of intercultural communicative competence in telecollaborative partnerships. In O'Dowd, R. (Ed.), *Online intercultural exchange: An introduction for foreign language teachers* (pp. 127-166). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Byram, M., Gribkova, B., & Starkey, H. (2002). *Developing the intercultural dimension in language teaching: A practical introduction for teachers*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, S. (2009). *InterViews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ryan, P. (2003). Searching for the intercultural person. In Alred, G., Byram, M., & Fleming, M. (Eds.), *Intercultural experience and education* (p.131-154)*.* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Roberts, C. (2001). *Language learners as ethnographers*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Saldaña, J. (2012). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sykes, J. (2017). Technologies for teaching and learning intercultural competence and interlanguage pragmatics. *The handbook of technology and second language teaching and learning*, *118*, 133.

Taylor-Powell, E. & Renner, M. (2003). *Analyzing qualitative data.* Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin System.