Instructor: Dr. Jordan Soliz  
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Office Hours: My official office hours are 9:30-10:15 Mon and Wed. However, you should feel free to schedule other times to meet or simply stop by if my office door is open.

**Required Texts**  

Reading Packet [Available for purchase from the Communication Studies office].

**Course Description**  
The role and mission of the faculty and students of the Department of Communication Studies are to examine human symbolic activity as it shapes and is shaped by relationships, institutions, and societies. This work concerns the creation, analysis, and critique of messages. The department's research, teaching, and service devote particular attention to understanding the ways in which communication sustains and erodes collaboration within and among local, national, and global communities.

The course will provide an overview of theory and research on intergroup relations to demonstrate the manner in which communication both affects and reflects our social group memberships. The objective is to provide you with the theoretical foundation to view various contexts of communication through an “intergroup lens.” In doing so, you should have the skills to both research and critically evaluate historical, present, and future social issues associated with intergroup relations. The material we will cover comes from various social science areas (e.g., communication, social cognition, social psychology, sociolinguistics, sociology, history). Throughout the semester, we will address the question: How can communication scholars or a communicative perspective enhance our understanding of identity and intergroup relations? In addressing this question, consider the theoretical, methodological, and applied implications of a communicative perspective.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS & POLICIES**

**Attendance Policy**  
This is a graduate-level seminar… you should be here! Obviously, illness and personal/family emergencies may necessitate an absence from class. Frequent absence will result in an incomplete or failing grade for the course (most likely a failing grade). If you will be absent for any religious observance, please let me know prior to the dates you will be gone.

**Academic Integrity**  
All course work should be original and unique for this class (i.e., do not use work from other courses even if it is your own). Plagiarism results in, at minimum, failure on the assignment, but can result in failure of the course and consequences to your graduate standing. Not knowing the definition of plagiarism does not excuse you from the consequences.

**Services for Students with Disabilities**  
The UNL office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) “provides special assistance to students with disabilities through individualized help and counseling.” If you have a disability for which you wish to request accommodations and have not contacted SSD, please do so as soon as possible. Their office is located in 132 Canfield Administration Building or you can contact SSD at (402) 472-3787. Information about their services can be found at [http://www.unl.edu/ssd/index.html](http://www.unl.edu/ssd/index.html). Please also contact me privately in regard to your needs in this course.
Expectations, Assignments & Evaluation

In my approach to graduate education, a 900-level graduate seminar is a collaborative learning environment that is dependent on active involvement of all members of the seminar. As the instructor, my role is to facilitate discussion, guide us in certain directions when needed, and provide clarification and explanation. **Your role is to be a scholar!** Read, immerse, think, question, apply— that is why you are here and that is what I expect from you in this course. As such, course activities will include a very limited amount of lecture. Rather, we will focus on discussion and activities that facilitate discussion (e.g., short films, documentaries, in-class activities). Your final evaluation will be based on discussion and a semester project.

**Discussion (50% of final grade).** In this course, student learning is contingent on completing assigned readings and being an active member of the seminar. You are expected to come to class having thoroughly read the assigned readings in a manner that allows you to be critically engaged in discussion. Thus, you should not only participate, but you should be proactive in generating discussion. In reading the material, you should identify what you believe are the important concepts and ideas, develop thought-provoking discussion questions, identify any clarification questions, and/or develop propositions for which fellow students can respond. Although not a formal requirement, it may beneficial to develop a list of questions, propositions, etc. for each reading prior to class. Throughout the semester, I will evaluate your discussion involvement so you know if you need to maintain or change your approach to the course. Also, I encourage you to stay up-to-date on current events—local, national, and international—so we can discuss the applied implications of the material. In fact, I encourage you to share articles, personal experience, news reports, etc. that relate to material we are covering. We will devote a portion of each class period to answering the “so what?” question. In other words, we will focus on the applied aspect of the material. Early in the semester, I will assign you as a “discussion leader” for one of the weekly topics. In this capacity, you have the opportunity to lead, guide, direct, etc. a discussion (approx. 30 minutes) on the readings or a topic related to the readings. The purpose of this is to give the opportunity and experience facilitating a graduate-level seminar—a responsibility many of you will have in your academic careers.

**Semester Project (50% of final grade).** For the semester project, you have two options. **First,** you may choose to develop a research proposal on a topic relevant to intergroup communication. The research proposal will follow a standard manuscript format: a literature review/warrant, research questions/hypotheses, method section, analysis plan, and conclusion. **Second,** you may choose to write a chapter-length manuscript (approx. 25-30 pages) in which you argue for taking an intergroup perspective on a specific context of inquiry. As an example of this type of chapter, you may want to review the Scott (2007) article in Communication Studies in which he articulates a vision for a social identity perspective on organizational communication. In addition to these two options, I am open to ideas you may have about a semester project. When considering your project, you should choose an option that best fits with your academic goals and program of study. I would suggest meeting with me early in the semester to brainstorm ideas or discuss a specific idea. I would also encourage you to keep me updated on the progress of the project throughout the semester. Depending on the nature of your project, I may recommend that you read some of the articles/chapters in subsequent weeks and/or recommend supplemental readings. We will discuss your semester projects on the last class period of the semester and I will provide you more information on this later in the semester.

Grades will be assigned by a traditional breakdown of points (i.e., A: 94% and above, A-: 90-93%, B+: 87%-89%, B: 84-86%, B-: 80%-83%, etc.).

**Semester Schedule and Readings**

The readings for each week do not represent the depth and scope of each topic. Rather, the readings were chosen to give you a “glimpse” into the theories or research within the specific topic. Readings are listed in the order they should be read. The goal is to adhere to the semester schedule as much as possible. However, depending on the circumstance, there may be slight modifications. If you have any questions about the material, please let me know.
Week 4 (1/31): Theoretical Foundation for a Social Identity Perspective

▪ Giles, Reid, & Harwood (Ch. 1, GRH)


Week 5 (2/7): Three Theories of Communication and Identity


Week 6 (2/14): Social Categorization & Prejudice


Reicher (Ch. 14, GRH)

Week 7 (2/21): Language, Identity, and Intergroup Attitudes

Reid & Anderson (Ch. 8, GRH)

Sutton (Ch. 9, GRH)

Clement, Shulman, & Rubenfeld (Ch. 10, GRH)


Week 8 & Week 9 (2/28 & 3/7): Reducing Intergroup Bias and Conflict


Ellis (Ch. 11, GRH)

Klocek, Novoa, & Moghaddam (Ch. 7, GRH)

On-line reading of “Israeli-Palestinian” conflict (TBA)

Week 10 (3/14): Social Identity and Mediated Communication

Mastro (Ch. 16, GRH)

Walther & Carr (Ch. 17, GRH)


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**Week 11 (3/21): Spring Break**

• No readings

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**Week 12 (3/28): Communication and Ethnic Identity**

• Verkuyten (Ch. 2, GRH)


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**Week 13 (4/4): Urban Gangs and Social Identity**

• Documentary and Discussion: “Made in America”

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**Week 14 (4/11): Gender, Sexual Identity, and Communication**

• Kalbfleisch (Ch. 3, GRH)


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**Week 15 (4/18): No Class! Where is Jordan?!?? Read for Enjoyment!**


Week 16 (4/25): Intergroup Perspective on Organizational Identity/Age Identity/Intergroup Perspective on Family


•Hummert (Ch. 4, GRH)

•Drury (Ch. 5, GRH)

•Soliz (Ch. 15, GRH)

Week 17 (5/2): Project Discussions