



**University of International Business and Economics
International Summer School**

PSC 204 Comparing American and Chinese Language and Culture

Instructor: Cornelius C. Kubler

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Credit: 3 units

Students

Freshmen and sophomores (any major)

Teaching Language

This course is taught in English.

Methods of Instruction

Classroom lecture and discussion

Classroom Capacity

20

Evaluation

Attendance and class participation	30%
Quizzes	40%
Open Book Final Examination	30%

About the Instructor

Cornelius C. Kubler, Stanfield Professor of Asian Studies at Williams College, received his B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees in linguistics from Cornell University. He earned a second M.A. in Chinese literature from National Taiwan University. From 1980-1991 he was employed at the Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State, where he served as Language Training Supervisor in Mandarin, Cantonese, Japanese, and Mongolian; as Principal of the advanced Chinese field school in Taiwan; and as Chair of the Department of Asian and African Languages. Since coming to Williams in 1991, he has chaired the former Department of Chinese and Asian Studies Program as well as, for a total of 12 years, the Department of Asian Studies, which he was instrumental in founding. He has also served as visiting professor at Eisenhower College, Portland State University, Middlebury College, National Taiwan Normal University, Chinese University of Hong Kong, and Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages. From 2014-2016, he served as American Co-Director of the Johns Hopkins University-Nanjing University Center for Chinese and American Studies in Nanjing, China. Kubler, who is author or coauthor of 20 books and over 50 articles on Chinese language pedagogy and linguistics, frequently serves as reviewer or consultant for Chinese and Asian Studies programs in the U.S. and overseas. He has served as Chair of the Test Development Committee for the SAT Subject Test™ in Chinese and as member of the

Executive Committee of the Association of Departments of Foreign Languages of the Modern Language Association.

Course Description

What types of languages are English and Chinese? How does the spoken and written structure of English compare with that of Chinese? Does the language you use affect the way you think? Is exact translation from one language to another possible? How do American and Chinese behavioral culture differ? And can a foreign language learner ever progress from cross-cultural communication to “same-culture communication”? These are the kinds of questions we will be taking up in this course. Learning objectives include increasing your own linguistic and cultural self-awareness; reducing errors in your spoken and written English; and developing knowledge, understanding, and practical skills that will help you communicate and engage more effectively with Americans and other English-speaking foreigners.

Syllabus

Week One:

the nature of language and languages, different types of languages, the structure of English, the structure of Chinese, comparing English and Chinese, the relationship between language and thought

Week Two:

writing systems, comparing how the English alphabet and Chinese characters represent sound and meaning, why translation from Chinese to English and vice versa is difficult, how to improve your learning of English and other languages

Week Three:

what is culture, different kinds of culture, aspects of American culture and society, aspects of Chinese culture and society, comparing American and Chinese culture and society, cross-cultural communication (both verbal and non-verbal)

Week Four:

avoiding Chinese-influenced linguistic and cultural mistakes when using English in American culture; how to get along with American professors, roommates, classmates, and homestay families; culture shock and intercultural adjustment

Required Text

Defense Language Institute. *A Contrastive Study of English and Mandarin Chinese* (1974).

Gao, Ge and Stella Ting-Toomey. *Communicating Effectively with the Chinese*. SAGE Publications, Thousand Oaks, California (1998).

Hu Wenzhong, Cornelius N. Grove, and Zhuang Enping. *Encountering the Chinese: A Modern Country, An Ancient Culture* (Intercultural Press, Boston, 2010).

Reference Readings

Christensen, Matthew B. and Mari Noda (ed.). *A Performance-based Pedagogy for Communicating in*



Cultures (National East Asian Languages Resource Center at The Ohio State University, Columbus, 2002).

Kubler, Cornelius C. (ed.). NFLC Guide for Basic Chinese Language Programs (2nd ed., Ohio State University, 2006).

Young, Linda W. L. Crosstalk and Culture in Sino-American Communication (Cambridge University Press, 1994).

(Also additional duplicated or on-line articles to be discussed in class)