

Course Expectation Resource Sheet - COM 260

“What can students expect if they choose this course?”

Course: COM 260 - Communicating with Cultural Competence

Department: Communication, Media, Journalism, & Film

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisite: None

Catalog Description: A cultural competence-based approach to contemporary intercultural communication issues in the United States. Topics include consideration of communication practices as they relate to ethnicity, race, religion, gender, sexuality, family structure, social class, age, and ability.

Catalog: 2025-2026 **Last Updated:** 2/24/2026

Gen Ed Course: Yes

Gen Ed Area: PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Gen Ed Requirement: Cultural Competence
(GEC 115)

CORE-42 Course: Yes

CORE-42 Area: Social & Behavioral Sciences

MOTR Code - MOTR Title: SBSC 101 -
Introduction to Intercultural Communication

Is credit also available through:

[Advanced Placement \(AP\)?](#): No

[College Level Exam Program \(CLEP\)?](#): No

[International Baccalaureate \(IB\)?](#): No

(click link for more information and required scores)

Responses and Advice from Department Representatives

Last Updated: 3/2/2026

The following responses apply to: Both seated and online courses

What expectations do you have for students in this course?

Students should come to class prepared, having completed any assigned readings or reviewing of course materials that are posted usually within a weekly or bi-weekly course topic module. Instructors mainly use 3 or 4 brief reflection essays throughout the term allowing students to explore the importance of cultural competence in everyday interactions of society. Students should also expect to participate in class discussions and view film/media materials that spotlight course concepts and allow students to reflect on experiences of those who differ from them. Online students may see brief module/chapter quizzes that cover chapter/module materials. These quizzes are primarily multiple choice and allow the students to take and retake to gain competency on subject matter.

What types of study skills do you expect students to use in this course?

Students should read course assignments and attend course lectures. Emphasis is on applying concepts and connecting these to real-world examples. Active listening to others in the course whether it is through in-person or online course discussion is also a key to further understanding. Time management and responsibility to oneself and to others in the course are important, especially when working on individual as well as any small group course activities.

What study techniques seem to work best for students who do well in this course?

Time management is one key to doing well in COM 260. Students move together through different topics, and it is essential that students be present or check in regularly. Curiosity and communication are key! These are demonstrated by attending class, completing class work and assignments on time, addressing any questions, and participating in discussions whether they occur in a seated class or online component.

What behaviors or habits seem to cause students to struggle in this course?

Procrastination or waiting till the last moment to complete assignments where rushing to complete leads a student to not address discussion questions, or responses to assignments. Students should know that instructors have high expectations and want you to succeed. Life and balancing commitments are a part of everyday life, and instructors are happy to help a student (within reason) especially if that student communicates in a timely fashion, takes responsibility, and is willing to learn and do the work.

What types of struggles do you see most often? What recommendations do you give to students who struggle in this course? What other advice do you offer to students for success in this course?

The most common struggle is missing class and falling behind on class participation/discussions and assignments. Students are encouraged to attend consistently, get to know their classmates and their professor, and take advantage of office hours when concepts seem unclear. It is strongly recommended that, especially for online sections, that students recognize that this course is not self-paced, individualized instruction. It is expected that each student will be able to set aside an appropriate amount of time each week to complete assignments, and that assignments will be done in a timely fashion.

Regarding technology (this applies to online sections, but seated as well), it is strongly recommended that, in addition to your standard means of access, you have an alternative plan for acquiring course materials, should your computer fail to function or your internet becomes disrupted. The MSU campus library is an excellent option if it is nearby. There are other options that can be explored such as through the MSU Help Desk. Contact your instructor to let them know if tech issues are causing issues completing an assignment. Tech issues happen. These should be seen as little hiccups that can be remedied and not turned into full-blown issues that wreck your semester.

How do you describe the course to students when they ask “What is this class about?” (without using the catalog description)?

COM 260 introduces students to intercultural communication with an emphasis on practical application and skills for everyday life. Instead of being confrontational or reinforcing socialized stereotypes a relational/competence approach focusing is prioritized. This means that a combination of gaining knowledge, understanding motivation, applying skills, and continuing the work to effectively interact with one's fellow human beings is celebrated and recognized as a life-long process. COM 260 is a good stop for such a journey.

Beyond meeting a General Education requirement, what benefits can students realize from choosing this course?

Benefits that can be gained from taking this course include:

- Identify the rights and responsibilities students have in their own communities and the broader society.
- Recognize the needs of the communities in which they belong and understand how to address those needs.
- Understand, critically examine, and articulate key similarities and differences between their own cultural practices and perspectives and those of other cultures, past and present.
- Identify the importance and best practices of developing skills for working/interacting with others.

Other than your major/minor/certificate students, what groups of students could find this course relevant to their degree program or career path?

Communication and becoming competent when interacting with others who are both similar and different from oneself is a part of every major, minor, certificate, degree and profession. The course continues to increase in popularity among students. Students report on the value of what they are learning in the course both personally and professionally whether it is immediate or in the future.

*Prepared by the Reynolds College Center for Student Success
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