Global Culture & Media Academy, Summer 2025

The University of Pennsylvania

July 7th- July 25th, 2025

Classroom: Williams Hall, Room 723

If you are interested in studying the humanities and all its possibilities, if you are looking to develop the skills related to interacting with the world as a global citizen in the fields of education, sociology, applied linguistics, museum sciences, business and more, the Global Culture and Media Academy is for you.

Director: Betsy Kells, Penn Language Center Technology Director

Instructor: Zhanar Beketova, Francophone, Italian and Germanic Studies

Zhanar Beketova is a PhD student in Germanic and Italian Studies, specializing in identity construction, women's studies, and multilingualism in post-war literature. She brings a rich background in language education, having taught German, Italian, and English as a Second Language (ESL) at both the high school and college levels, including at the University of Pennsylvania and Drexel University. Zhanar holds a Master of Science in Education (2023) in Teaching English to Speakers of Other

Languages (TESOL) from Penn's Graduate School of Education. Her academic and teaching experience, combined with her multicultural expertise, make her a valuable guide for students exploring language and culture in an international context.

Teaching Assistant:

Office hours: Monday and Wednesday during lunch or by appointment in person or via Zoom.

Required text: All resources will be provided on the Canvas course site, click on "Course Reserves" to access books, films, and reference materials. **The Canvas Learning Management System will be used daily for homework. Students should take notes from the reading to use in class discussions in which technology will not be used.**

Course Description: The Global Culture and Media Academy seeks to offer students a foundation for understanding the intricate and complex relationship between language, culture, communicative practices, and the role we play as individuals in the globalized world of today. The course will focus on key ideas in intercultural communication to provide a basis for nuanced practices, reflections, and strategies that are associated with 21st-century skills and essential behaviors of a global citizen. While the course primarily addresses topics related to "culture" and "Culture" (and their relationship), the incorporation of media allows students to grow in the areas of ethnographic data collection and deep analysis of language and culture as represented through different types of media. The Global Culture and Media Academy is fully residential with no commuter or online options.

Based on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Can-do statements, students will achieve various investigative and interactive objectives by the end of the course:

- In my own and other cultures, I can explain how stereotypes influence a country's products or marketing strategies
- I can share my interpretations of a piece of art or music with someone else while respecting theirs
- I can respond to a social media post in a culturally appropriate manner
- In my own and other cultures, I can explain how globalized products impact society and individual lifestyles
- I can collaborate on an online project to explain misconceptions underlying stereotypes

Through active learning, students will collaborate with their peers in activities that seek to promote nuanced reflection, keen observation, and transformative practices when engaging in intercultural communication.

Technology Statement:

Students are encouraged to bring their own laptops or devices with them to the program. Some in-class work will require the use of laptops whereas some in-class work will require the use of a notebook and pen. Other supplies will be distributed to students. Students will be informed the day before if they should bring their laptops with them to class the following day.

Guiding questions:

- *Why does language matter when doing intercultural communication?*
- *How do I change my language when doing intercultural communication?*
- *How are the ideas of nation, language and culture depicted in film?*
- *How are different cultures portrayed, and who gets to tell their story?*
- *What are some strategies that people use to address misunderstandings when communicating with someone from a different culture?*
- *How are family dynamics portrayed across cultures?*

Homework: There is required reading that students must do before each class meeting. To demonstrate mastery of the content and develop new skills related to synthesizing and public speaking, small groups of students will present the information that they learned to "teach" their fellow students what they learned in the reading. All readings are housed the Perusall 1.3 LTI in Canvas; Perusall is an interactive social annotation tool which tracks students' engagement with the text that allows for highlighting, comments, discussions and upvoting. Perusall also has robust analytics and so the instructors plan to reward the student(s) with the highest total engagement levels (cumulative) at the end of the program.

Lectures and workshops: Students are required attend daily classes and conversations led by the Program Director and Instructor as well as guest lectures by experts from a range of subjects related to intercultural communication, ethnography, sociolinguistics and cinema studies. Students are encouraged to ask questions, debate issues, and participate in lively class

discussions as you develop deep reflection skills to inform your intercultural communication practice. Students will have access to Penn's Van Pelt Library and other University resources, including the program's Canvas course website for additional content, including course films.

We will have a Monday – Friday schedule from 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. ET. Each day begins with the entire group meeting with the program director, and then we will engage in small group activities to facilitate group learning processes. Around noon we break for lunch, and in the afternoon depending on the day we will have a guest speaker, engage in sociolinguistic data gathering, or watch the films featured in the program. Other activities after 5 p.m. and on the weekends are organized by Penn SAS High School Programs and Summer Discovery.

Films: All of the films that will be shown as part of the academy are rated PG-13. Each film was selected based on its relevance to the topics covered in the Piller textbook and its merits for sociolinguistic analysis. Sometimes, the films may depict social issues that are uncomfortable to watch. Out of an abundance of caution and respect for our individual experiences, I am including the below statement to support a trauma-informed pedagogy:

"In this course, we will approach the study of culture, film, and other media from a variety of angles, including ethnography of observation, text and media analysis, sociolinguistics, and other relevant data-gathering approaches. In addition to solution-oriented and potentially uplifting content, we will also discuss a variety of challenging topics, including poverty, linguistic bias, systemic oppression, racism, slavery, and sexism. It is important that we discuss these issues respectfully, validating the lived experiences of those in the class. I also ask that each of us refrain as best we can from making any judgments about reactions others may have to course content. All of us respond to distressing material in varied and, often, unpredictable ways. While I cannot know in advance which topics could be challenging for each of you, I will do my best to describe potentially difficult material in advance of a given text.* If at any point, you have concerns about class content or want to discuss your personal reactions, I encourage you to email me, come to office hours, or schedule an appointment."

*Before each film you will read a critical analysis of the film that includes essential scenes in the film (i.e. potential spoilers) to prepare you for some of the more challenging content.

Site visits: Tour the Native American Voices Exhibition at the Penn Museum of Archeology and Anthropology, the Fisher Fine Arts Gallery, WXPN Studios, the Italian Market, Philadelphia's Chinatown, and other sites on Penn's campus. We will spend class time preparing for and debriefing on our visits. Please bring money, comfortable shoes, sunscreen, etc.

Capstone project: During the last week of the course, students will present a Capstone Project in which they propose a research project on a topic of their choosing related to the concepts that we have explored throughout the course. There is no restriction on the accepted languages for the data they choose as the basis for their research project, but they are encouraged to consider a language other than English. The activities that take place throughout this course have been designed to support the students in the work required for the Capstone Project. Students are permitted to work in small groups of up to four people.

Course Format and Policies: The course consists of daily reading and writing assignments on Canvas, lecture/discussion, films, field trips, and a Capstone Project. There are no grades, but regular attendance is expected. The course website on Canvas will contain an updated version of this syllabus, reading assignments and questions, and other course material. You are advised to check Canvas regularly for course updates. We will also send email to the class via Canvas so be sure to check your email regularly.

We will place a high value on participation. In addition to keeping up with readings and other assignments, everyone will be asked to lead discussions in your section at least once during the program, and we also expect to hear from you regularly throughout the program during class discussions. We hope to create a lively, stimulating class environment where you will feel welcome to ask questions, comment, and debate issues.

Capstone Project – Overview and Schedule: At the end of the course, students will submit a Capstone Project in which they propose a research project on a topic of their choosing related to the course content covered in the academy.

Designing your own research project: Identify a context in which you would like to gain a deeper understanding of the social practice of intercultural communication. What kinds of data do you need to collect to be able to answer these three research questions?

- What kinds of oral, written and computer-mediated communicative practices, particularly in relation to language choice, can be observed?
- What (language) ideologies are implicit in these practices?
- How are these practices, ideologies and discourses tied to culture?

Source: Piller, I (2017). Intercultural Communication: A Critical Introduction, Edinburgh University Press http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/upenn-ebooks/detail.action?docID=5013875.

Students will be split into groups of up to four people, and each group will choose from one of the media that will be discussed in class:

- Podcasting/ Audio
- Social media
- Traditional print media
- Visual arts
- Film: Feature-length film, or documentary film
- Music

By the end of Week 1 (<mark>Friday, July 11th</mark>), By the end of Week 1, you will have selected a media genre that you are interested in analyzing and developed a short paragraph relating your interest in analyzing the media you have chosen to the course concepts that we have discussed so far. You will upload your selected media genre and short paragraph to Canvas by the end of the day, Friday, <mark>July 11th</mark>. Your program director and teaching fellow will provide feedback.

By the end of Week 2 (<mark>Friday, July 18th</mark>) you will have identified the data that you would like to analyze- this can be from a film, from an online media space, a podcast, etc. You will have decided on the form your final project will take (PowerPoint, video, etc.) and if you will work in a group of up to 4 people.

During Week 3 you are taking your research and putting it into your final form. You will be given time to work on your project during our course meetings, but you may also spend time on it after class. The last two days are reserved for your presentations in which you will share your research proposal, including the design process, the connections that you would like to make to course content and why the social context is of importance to you and/or your group. Each group will be given twenty minutes to present their projects and ten minutes to answer audience questions.

Penn Summer Programs Office:

- SAS High School Programs general inquiries could be directed to hsprogs@sas.upenn.edu

Tech Support
- PennKey support: https://pennkeysupport.upenn.edu/contact
  - PennKeys: https://pennkeysupport.upenn.edu/contact
  - Email, two-step verification and other tech issues: Contact the Tech Center 855-249-3243 (Toll-free) or by email techcenter@upenn.edu
  - Also check: online-learning-help@sas.upenn.edu
  - Penncards: If you have an issue with your Penncard please inform your RC (resident counselor) about your issue
- Penn Canvas login: canvas.upenn.edu
- Canvas support: email: canvas@pobox.upenn.edu
- Zoom support: https://infocanvas.upenn.edu/guides/zoom/

Summer Discovery staff : Our residential partner, Summer Discovery, has an Academic Coordinator that is responsible for helping students with their Academic concerns:

Course Overview

Week 1: July 10 – 14, Introduction to Media Studies- What is media? In the first week of the course, aka Media Week, we will examine how different media types "do" culture, portray culture & language, and act as sites of cultural meaning-making. We will explore different ways of examining media to better understand underlying cultural messages. We will reflect on what this means to our own consumption of media. These actions will translate into the cultivation of the first step in the Capstone Project, which is to identify a media type that you are most interested in studying as relates to culture.

- **Guest Speaker**: Alexandrea Glenn, Librarian
- **Films: Arrival, S1mone**
- **Readings:** *Media Environments (2019)* assigned readings Canvas: Introduction, Chapter 1; Chapter 4; Chapter 5
- **Field Trip:**
- **Site Visits:**
  - **Monday pm:** Van Pelt Library
  - **Thursday pm:** Annenberg Center and public arts sculpture hunt
  - **Friday am:** WXPN Studios Tour

Can do statements:
- I can manage my non-verbal reaction and personal space when in a crowded environment such as standing in line
- In my own and other cultures, I can explain how stereotypes influence a country's products or marketing strategies
- I can share my interpretations of a piece of art of music with someone else while respecting theirs

Week 2: July 14th-July 18th, Introduction to Intercultural Communication: What is culture? In the second week of the course, Culture Week, we will do a deep dive into the meaning of culture. Through a close reading of the academic literature in intercultural communication, we will examine how "culture" is used to describe,

stereotype, and scapegoat human interactions. You will also reflect on your own culture, and the ways in which you move through cultures in your daily experience. This gives us the opportunity to explore the role of language in culture, how we humans use it to make sense of our world, or how it is controlled or policed. We will look at the often subtle, but potentially grave, outcomes of language policies around the world.

- **Guest speaker:** Dr. Jami Fisher, ASL Program Director; Professor Anne Pomerantz, Penn GSE
- **Film: Big Fight in Little Chinatown (2024)**
- **Reading:** Ingrid Piller Ch.4 & Ch.5, Piller, Ch. 6 & Ch. 7
- **Field Trip:** Chinatown

Can do statements:
- I can respond to a social media post in a culturally appropriate manner
- I can evaluate a film and its strategies for cultural depictions
- In my own and other cultures, I can explain how a culture's concept of time influences decisions in business, education and social scheduling

Week 3: July 21st- July 25th , Week 3- Contemporary and Emerging Media & Culture Landscape. In the third week of the program, students will be applying the content and skills gained in the first two weeks. We will start by connecting past and present as we analyze culture and media in Indigenous cultures around the world. Then, we will take our final Field Trip and conduct a mini ethnography of the Italian Market in Philadelphia. Have the skills that you have developed during this program allowed you to see the market and its changes in different ways? Lastly, you and your groups will present your research proposals.

- **Film: Tomorrowland (2015)**
- **Reading:** *Media Environments,* Reading 10.1; Reading 10.6
- **Field Trip:** Italian Market
- **Site Visit:** Penn Museum,

Can do statements:
- I can collaborate on an online project to explain misconceptions underlying stereotypes
- In my own and other cultures, I can explain how globalized products impact society and individual lifestyles

Submit and present Capstone Project: Designing Your Own Research Project- Thursday, Friday

References

DiPilla, M. (2016). South Philadelphia's little Italy and 9th street Italian market. Arcadia Publishing Inc.

Edinburgh, U. P. (2017). Intercultural Communication: A critical introduction. Edinburgh University Press.

Wilson, K. E. (2015). *Ethnic Renewal in Philadelphia's Chinatown: Space, Place, and Struggle*. Temple University Press.

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Vacker, B. (Ed.). (2019). *Media Environments* (4th ed.) [Textbook]. Cognella Academic Publishing.

Rymes, B. (2020). *How we talk about language : exploring citizen sociolinguistics /*. Cambridge University Press,.

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