

Building Effective Communication Skills:

A Workshop for International Graduate Students

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Our Co-Sponsors

- > Core Programs in the Graduate School**
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- > FIUTS**
 - Foundation for International Understanding Through Students**



Who are we?

> Ziyang Bai

- From Beijing, China
- Came to UW in 2011
- Educational Researcher & Practitioner
- Love food and traveling

> Monica Cortés Viharo

- From Oakland, CA
- Came to UW in 2014
- Actor, Public Speaking Coach, PhD Student
- Wife and Cat Mommy

We are both graduating in June 2019! Yay!



Goals of the Workshop

- > **Learn about cultural differences and communication styles**
- > **Discuss communication skills in and out of the classroom**
- > **Practice tips for effective communication and networking skills**
- > **Develop strategies for real world communication situations in academic, professional and social setting**
- > **Connect with your peers to build community**

Networking Opportunity

“Communication”

- > **What’s one strength you possess with regard to communication?**
- > **What’s one challenge you face in communication?**
- > **What is the difference in communication styles between your home country and here?**

Non-Verbal Communication



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Differences in Communication

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Cultural Dimensions and Individual Factors

Theoretical underpinning

- > **High/Low context**
- > **Large/small power distance**
- > **Individualism and collectivism**
- > **Tolerance for ambiguity/uncertainty avoidance**
- > **Silence**

Communication Scenarios

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Scenario I

- > You call the office of your advisor to make an appointment, he/she isn't in the office, and you decide to leave a message. You call again later and your advisor is able to answer. You ask for an appointment to talk about your research project. Discuss a time when you can meet, and then conclude the conversation.**



Practice with a Partner

- > One plays faculty/phone**
- > One plays student**
- > Then, Switch.**
- > You have 5 minutes.**



Scenario II

- > At a gathering, you are walking up to someone to start a conversation. Please write two questions and be ready to ask two follow up questions. An exit strategy is needed to end the conversation.**



Practice II

- > Find someone you haven't talked to.**
- > You have 3 minutes to ask a question, ask a follow up question, keep the conversation going.**
- > At the end of the 3 minutes, exit the conversation when the light dims in the room.**
- > Then find a new partner.**



Scenario III

- > You are at a conference or reception, and two people are having a conversation. You are going to join the existing conversation, and introduce yourself.**



Practice III

- > Find two other people you haven't spoken to.**
- > Decide quickly who will be the person joining the conversation.**
- > Start chatting and make sure the person joining the conversation has enough time to make introduction.**
- > You have 3 minutes.**



Bottom-Line in Communication

At least, remember these...

- > **Be open-minded;**
- > **Critical Thinking;**
- > **Group/Team Work;**
- > **Ask questions when in doubt;**
- > **Don't take it personal;**
- > **Cordially professional relationship: Let things go**

American Values in Communication

This is never a golden standard since we are all human.

- > **Casual Conversation (a.k.a. small talk): weather, weekend, holiday, vacation, sports**
 - People take turns frequently
 - Not much personal topic involved; unless close friends
 - No controversial topics (i.e. sex, religion, politics)
- > **Body language**
 - Not much touching involved; moderate or event quiet conversations preferred;
- > **Story narratives – With “details”**

Modes of Communication

There can be more than this list can encompass...

- > **Email;**
- > **Phone;**
- > **One-on-one (work);**
- > **Group (social);**
- > **Meeting (work);**
- > **Presentation (1 to many – small audience);**
- > **Public Speaking (1 to big audience);**
- > **Teaching (lecture, lab, office hour, quiz section);**

Resources

- > **FIUTS Conversation Group;**
- > **Public Speaking Course;**
- > **Speaking Center;**
- > **Core Programs: Winter & Spring Quarter Workshops**
- > **Career & Internship Center: Networking events/workshops**
- > **Community Building: RSOs; GPSS; Meet-ups;**
- > **Counselling Center & Ombud – Conflict Management;**
- > **Legal Services – Landlord;**
- > **Others? Please share with the group!**



International Grad Student Webpage

- > grad.uw.edu/international_graduate_students
- > **Get Involved!**
 - International Grad Student Advisory Board (IGSAB)
 - Fill in the Catalyst Application to be part of this group
 - <https://catalyst.uw.edu/webq/survey/baiziyan/341682>



Your feedback is appreciated!

- > Please take some 5 minutes to fill out the evaluation form.**
- > Then we will move onto Q&A.**



You will Rock in Graduate School!

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