

Culture Talk: Sensitizing Cultural Intelligence through Intercultural Radio Interviews

Judy René Sims (2010, April)

Evidence of Review Process

In August 2009, Dr. John Turner, Department of Electronic Media & Film, Townson University, posted a call for panelists to participate in his proposed panel, "Teaching a Class on Radio, Culture, and Society," for the April 2010 Broadcast Education Association Convention in Las Vegas, NV. In response to the call, I proposed my paper, and he accepted. Dr. Turner submitted the panel proposal (Session Type: "Invited Panel") to the Radio/Audio Media and International Divisions of the Broadcast Education Association. On November 8, 2009, Dr. Turner received an email message from the Chair of the Radio-Audio Media Division, Dr. John McGuire, Oklahoma State University, indicating the panel had been accepted. On November 9, 2009, Dr. Turner emailed the five panelists, "As you see below, John McGuire has notified me that our panel on Radio, Culture, and Society has been accepted for next April's BEA Convention in Las Vegas."

This paper was presented on the panel, "Perspectives on Teaching about Radio, Culture, and Society," sponsored by the Radio/Audio Media and International Divisions of the Broadcast Education Association (BEA) at the BEA National Convention. The purpose of the panel was to examine various perspectives - domestic and international - on teaching about radio, culture, and society, whether in a traditional lecture course or where students learn to produce their own radio programs, with an objective of impacting culture and society. This paper was based on a sabbatical project, "Culture Talk," both a faculty/student collaborative research study and a radio program, which explored the influence of culture on communication. The purpose of the radio program and research was to stimulate cultural intelligence and encourage understanding of how culture affects both the messages one delivers as well as how one communicates. Undergraduate students produced 20 episodes of "Culture Talk" for WUEC 89.7 FM, the campus radio station. Episodes of the radio program featured 30 and 60-minute intercultural interviews with 24 interviewees, including international students and scholars studying at the UW-Eau Claire, community members who emigrated from other cultures, and American Indians. Interviewees were asked a series of open and closed-ended questions that explored areas such as identity (ethnic, racial, and religious), verbal communication (linguistic styles and behaviors), nonverbal communication, values, and culture shock. The research was approved by the UW-Eau Claire Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects. All interviewees were provided informed consent; confidentiality was not guaranteed. This paper documents the different stages of the "Culture Talk" project, including—for example—the process of locating the interviewees, preparation for the interviews, production, editing, publicity, and promotion. Benefits of the project for the students, the interviewees, the university, and the listening audience are addressed. The "Culture Talk" project provided an opportunity to teach about radio, culture and society, wherein students learned to conduct intercultural interviews and produce radio episodes with the objective of impacting culture and society, episodes that provided current, real-life examples exemplifying the influence of culture on communication. (Contains Bibliography: 75 sources, Appendix A: "Listen to Culture Talk" print advertisement, Appendix B: "Radio Series to Feature Interviews Highlighting Cultural Communication," Appendix C: UW-Eau Claire Students Honored for Radio Show on Cultural Communication," and Appendix D: "Communication and Journalism Students Win State Broadcasting Awards").

Culture Talk: Sensitizing Cultural Intelligence through Intercultural Radio Interviews

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sponsored by the Radio/Audio Media and International Divisions
of the Broadcast Education Association (BEA) at the BEA National Convention
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Culture Talk: Sensitizing Cultural Intelligence through Intercultural Radio Interviews

This panel examines various perspectives - domestic and international - on teaching about radio, culture, and society, whether in a traditional lecture course or where students learn to produce their own radio programs, with an objective of impacting culture and society.

More than two decades ago, when employed as the faculty adviser for campus radio station, KHSU 90.5 FM, at Humboldt State University in Arcata, California, I co-produced a series of radio programs featuring intercultural interviews (Reitzel, A. & Sims, J., 1985, April 19; Reitzel, A. & Sims, J., 1985, December). In 2007, while exploring ideas for a sabbatical at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, I decided to return to the intercultural interview radio project from so many years ago. After being granted a 2008-2009 sabbatical, I began to work on "Culture Talk."

Both a faculty/student collaborative research project and a radio program, "Culture Talk" explored the influence of culture on communication. The study of intercultural communication attempts to discover how people from distinctively diverse cultures endeavor to communicate. Knowledge and understanding of intercultural communication is mandated by issues of globalization, changing patterns of domestic and international migration, advances in internet technology that allow people worldwide to connect with each other, the need to understand ethical issues from a cultural perspective, and opportunities for peace (Martin & Nakayama, 2010, 5-38). Intercultural communication competence (Neuliep, 2009, 393) is vital in a multicultural world as today's international marketplace demands globally and inter-culturally competent communicators. The key to such competence is cultural intelligence. The purpose of the "Culture Talk" radio program and research was to stimulate cultural intelligence and encourage understanding of how culture affects both the messages one delivers as well as how

one communicates. The intercultural interviews showcased in “Culture Talk” explored how culture, which can be thought of as “everything that people have, think or do” (Ferraro, 2006) or “programming of the mind” (Hofstede, 1984), influences communication. The “Culture Talk” interviews served to stimulate cultural intelligence by providing current, real-life examples exemplifying the influence of culture on communication.

During the sabbatical, five undergraduate students¹ and I produced 20 episodes of “Culture Talk” for WUEC 89.7 FM, our campus radio station (affiliated with Wisconsin Public Radio). Episodes of the radio program featured 30 and 60-minute interviews with international students and scholars studying at the UW-Eau Claire, community members who emigrated from other cultures, and American Indians. The 24 interviewees—16 women and eight men—included: (1) international students and scholars studying at UW-Eau Claire from Austria, Bolivia (two interviewees), China (two interviewees), Ethiopia, Germany, Kuwait, Malaysia, Moldova, Nepal (two interviewees), South Korea, Spain (two interviewees), Tunisia, and Ukraine, (2) community members who emigrated from other cultures including Kenya, Iran, Portugal and Laos (two interviewees), and (3) two American Indians (Ojibwe and Sicangu Lakota-Rosebud Sioux Nations). The research was approved by the UW-Eau Claire Institutional Review Board for the Protection

¹ UW-Eau Claire undergraduate students, Nessa Severson, Joe Tierney, Chelsea Jacobson, Anne Moser, and Pierce Koch, worked on the “Culture Talk” project. Severson and Koch worked as the interviewers, Tierney served as the technical engineer and audio editor, and Moser assisted with transcription of the some of the interviews. The following year—in an extension of the project—Jacobson assisted with transcription of the remaining “Culture Talk” interviews.

of Human Subjects. All interviewees were provided informed consent; confidentiality was not guaranteed.

As faculty adviser for the “Culture Talk” project, I was responsible for locating the interviewees, arranging the interview times, coaching the interviewers, directing the audio editor, managing the publicity and promotional messages, assisting with the design of the advertisements, accounting for the budget, designing the research, and overseeing the project. I also created a “Desire to Learn” (D2L) “Culture Talk” site, which featured all of the edited and unedited recorded interviews, the transcriptions, advertisements, news releases, and more. The D2L site was easily accessible by the five students that participated in the “Culture Talk” project.

Three of the five students (two interviewers and one transcriber) involved with “Culture Talk” were invited to participate in the project as a result of their previous work in one or more of my courses, i.e., Intercultural Communication and/or Research Methods. The technical engineer/audio editor responded to an on-campus advertisement seeking “a responsible and clear communicator experienced in multi-track audio recording with Adobe Audition software.” One of the researchers/transcribers was directed to me because of her interest in research and intercultural communication. All five students were paid with grant funding from one or more of the following programs: (1) the UW System Institute on Race and Ethnicity (IRE), (2) the UW-Eau

Claire Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP)², (3) the UW-Eau Claire Department of Communication and Journalism, and (4) the UW-Eau Claire Blugold Fellowship Program.³

As “Culture Talk” was a research project as well as a radio program, all of the interviewees were asked the same basic set of questions; the interviewers however were free to ask probing follow-up questions. The series of open and closed-ended questions explored areas including identity (ethnic, racial, and religious), verbal communication (linguistic styles and behaviors), nonverbal communication, values, and culture shock. For example, the “Culture Talk” interviews examined: (1) how cultural values (e.g., individualism/collectivism, power distance, and perceptions of time) affect communication behaviors, (2) how culture shapes verbal communication styles (e.g., direct and/or indirect, formal and/or informal) and verbal communication behaviors (e.g., the use of silence, use of "yes," etc.), and (3) how culture influences nonverbal communication behaviors (e.g., interpersonal distance, touch, and eye contact).

The two student interviewers were required to prepare for each interview by doing some background research and information-gathering about the cultures of each of the interviewees. Before each interview, we would meet as a group to discuss the relevant information, e.g., what

² <https://www.uwec.edu/orsp/>

³ <https://www.uwec.edu/blugold-fellows/>

we might expect the interviewee to say regarding their identity (ethnic, racial and religious), values, verbal communication (linguistic styles and behaviors), nonverbal communication behaviors, etc.

A majority of the 20 interviews conducted in 2008 and 2009 were recorded and edited in the campus radio studio. Adobe Audition software was used to edit the interviews. The student employed as the technical engineer/audio editor and I worked countless hours editing the "Culture Talk" recordings into 30 and 60-minute episodes. I provided direction regarding the editing in terms of content; however, the student did the actual editing. Although the student had not studied intercultural communication before his work on the "Culture Talk" project, he learned about it with apparent enthusiasm and seemed captivated by the subject matter. While we listened to the interviewees speak about their cultures, self-reported identities, verbal communication styles, verbal and nonverbal communication behaviors, and values, he would think of excellent questions, which we would discuss. It was an extraordinary student-centered learning experience.

In addition to editing the content, we created an introduction and conclusion for the program. The introduction, which featured the voice work of the audio engineer, was identical on each episode to create a sense of consistency:

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, 'People fail to get along because they fear each other; they fear each other because they don't know each other; they don't know each other because they have not communicated with each other.' 'Culture Talk' explores the influence of culture on communication by examining the verbal and non-verbal

communication behaviors unique to particular cultures as well as how a person's cultural values are expressed through their communication. 'Culture Talk' is funded with an UW System Race and Ethnicity grant as well as grants from the UW-Eau Claire Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, and the UW-Eau Claire Department of Communication and Journalism.

Likewise, the conclusion was the same for each episode, although the 2008 version was edited in 2009 to inform listeners that the program had been honored with awards:

You have been listening to 'Culture Talk,' produced by Dr. Judy Sims, of UW-Eau Claire's Department of Communication and Journalism, along with interviewers, Nessa Severson and Pierce Koch; researcher, Anne Moser and technical engineer, Joe Tierney. The award-winning 'Culture Talk' project is both a radio program and a Faculty/Student collaborative research study about the influence of culture on communication. 'Culture Talk' results were presented in April 2009 at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research, as well as UW Eau Claire's Student Research Day. 'Culture Talk' is funded with an UW System Race and Ethnicity grant as well as grants from the UW-Eau Claire Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, and the UW-Eau Claire Department of Communication and Journalism.

Station and program identifications (IDs) also were recorded for each episode and inserted throughout each 30 or 60-minute program; for example:

You are listening to 'Culture Talk' on WUEC 89.7 FM; I am Nessa Severson here with Pierce Koch and our interviewees today are Kaying Xiong-Vue and Sophia Vuelo, who are speaking with us about Hmong-American culture.

Music for each episode was provided by the interviewees. We asked each interviewee to supply an example of music representative of their culture. The music was added at the beginning and end of each episode; a bed of the music also was inserted under the introduction, station IDs, and the conclusion.

During 2008-2009, the episodes were broadcast on Sunday evenings. In the spring 2010, some of the episodes were re-broadcast on Friday evenings. Each episode recording also was converted to an audio link and posted on WUEC 89.7 FM's website, where interested listeners could access the streaming audio of the interviews.

In order to achieve our goal of stimulating the cultural intelligence of the listening audience, it was imperative to publicize "Culture Talk." Publicity involved promotional messages, advertisements, news releases, on-campus events, and more. For example, the students assisted in writing and recording promotional messages for each episode; the promotional messages were read by the on-air announcers during the week of each "Culture Talk" broadcast. For example, the following 15-second promo was used during week of April 12-16, 2010:

LEARN HOW YOUR CULTURE AFFECTS HOW YOU COMMUNICATE!

WE'LL HEAR FROM KEY-MAMO WAH-HOME-EE OF KENYA ON "CULTURE TALK"

FRIDAY, APRIL 16TH FROM SIX THIRTY TO SEVEN PM ON WUEC 89.7 FM.

“Culture Talk” was promoted through advertisements in the UW-Eau Claire campus newspaper, *The Spectator*, as well as two local publications, the Eau Claire *Leader Telegram* and *Volume One*. A senior artist from the UW-Eau Claire Publications Office (Creative Services) worked with us to create the advertisements. We assisted the Publications Office by photographing each of the interviewees during their interviews. The photographs then were used to create the advertisements (see Appendix A for an example of one of the “Listen to Culture Talk” print⁴ advertisements). The UW-Eau Claire News Bureau (University Communications) also prepared some press releases to assist in the promotion of “Culture Talk” (see Appendix B for the news release⁵, “Radio Series to Feature Interviews Highlighting Cultural Communication Differences”).

Promotional “Culture Talk” email messages also were sent each week to UW-Eau Claire faculty and students in departments with majors and minors such as: American Indian Studies, Anthropology, Business Administration, Communication and Journalism, Foreign Languages, International Business, Management, Marketing, Sociology, TEFL and TESOL. Each week we also featured a “Culture Talk” PowerPoint slide on the monitor located in Hibbard Hall outside of the

⁴ From “Listen to Culture Talk” advertisement (2008, November) created by the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Publications Office (Creative Services). Copyright [2008] by the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire and the UW System Board of Regents. Reprinted with permission.

⁵ From “Radio Series to Feature Interviews Highlighting Cultural Communication Differences” (2008, October 24) created by the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire News Bureau (University Communications). Copyright [1995-2009] by the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire and the UW System Board of Regents. Reprinted with permission.

university's Communication and Journalism Center (CJC). Thus, as students walked by the CJC in Hibbard Hall, they could see a "Culture Talk" promotional slide.

In addition, "Culture Talk" was promoted through an interview aired on "Spectrum West," a Wisconsin Public Radio (WPR) program, which was broadcast on WHWC 88.3FM. On November 13, 2008, one of the "Culture Talk" team members, Nessa Severson, and I were guests on Spectrum West; host, Kathy Stahl, interviewed us about the "Culture Talk" project. Wisconsin Public Radio also helped to promote "Culture Talk" by advertising it on the WPR sign located outside of their Eau Claire radio studio (see Figure 1, Wisconsin Public Broadcasting sign⁶ promotes "Culture Talk" radio program).

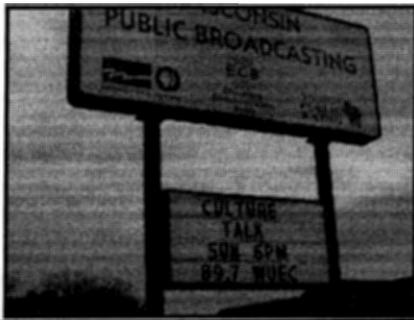


Figure 1. Wisconsin Public Broadcasting sign promotes "Culture Talk" radio program

On October 26, 2008, the "Culture Talk" team also participated in UW-Eau Claire's International Folk Fair, which was sponsored by the Center for International Education. The booth

⁶ From Wisconsin Public Broadcasting sign promoting "Culture Talk" radio program (2008, November 5). Photograph by Dean Kallenbach, Senior Regional Manager, Wisconsin Public Radio. Copyright [2008] by Dean Kallenbach, Wisconsin Public Broadcasting. Reprinted with permission.

promoted the “Culture Talk” radio program and displayed information about the research study. Members of the “Culture Talk” team spoke about “Culture Talk” with community members, students and children. Those who visited the booth had the opportunity to listen to excerpts from “Culture Talk” interviews.

“Culture Talk” also was entered into several competitions. In 2008, the Ukrainian episode of “Culture Talk” was submitted to the 2009 Wisconsin Broadcasters Association (WBA) Student Awards for Excellence Competition; the episode was honored with Second Place in the Public Affairs/Talk Show Category (see Appendix C for the news release⁷, “UW-Eau Claire Students Honored for Radio Show on Cultural Communication”). In 2009, the Hmong-American episode of “Culture Talk” was entered into the 2010 WBA Student Awards for Excellence Competition; it was honored with First Place in the Public Affairs/Talk Show Category (see Appendix D for the news release⁸, “Communication and Journalism Students Win State Broadcasting Awards”).

In April 2009, the students presented their work at UW-Eau Claire’s Student Research Day and were awarded First Place in Behavioral and Social Sciences Category One for their poster and presentation. UW-Eau Claire’s Student Research Day was designed to give students the

⁷ From “Communication and Journalism Students Win State Broadcasting Awards” (2009, April 2) created by the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire News Bureau (University Communications). Copyright [1995-2009] by the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire and the UW System Board of Regents. Reprinted with permission.

⁸ From “Communication and Journalism Students Win State Broadcasting Awards” (2010, March 11) created by the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire News Bureau (University Communications). Copyright [2010] by the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire and the UW System Board of Regents. Reprinted with permission.

opportunity to present the results of collaborative research conducted with faculty mentors. The event highlighted student research accomplishments and the important role that faculty play as mentors in the scholarly activity process. A PDF of the “Culture Talk” research day poster can be viewed at Minds@UW.⁹

We are hopeful “Culture Talk” benefitted the University, the listeners, the faculty, and the interviewees. “Culture Talk” supported the University by: (1) providing recognition for UW-Eau Claire's campus radio station through programming compatible with the stations’ mission to serve as the voice of the University, (2) increasing international awareness and understanding of intercultural communication in the community,(3) showcasing UW-Eau Claire students and faculty as well as international students, scholars and/or faculty visiting the UW-Eau Claire, (4) strengthening the relationship between the University and the community, and (5) providing UW-Eau Claire students with an opportunity to work with professionals in public radio.

We believe the “Culture Talk” interviews helped and will help listeners to: (1) develop their cultural intelligence, (2) understand their own cultural patterns are “not any more central to reality than any other culture” (Bennett, 1993, p. 46), and (3) to understand that although differences exist among people, it is also important to recognize similarities. In particular, we are hopeful “Culture Talk” helped and will help to provide accurate information about U.S. Americans of Hmong descent and the two American Indian cultures investigated, as well as how their cultures influence their communication. Based on feedback received from our Hmong-American

⁹ <https://minds.wisconsin.edu/handle/1793/35701>

interviewees, the relationship between the UW-Eau Claire and some members of the Hmong community was strengthened through "Culture Talk." Based on the feedback received from our American Indian interviewees, the relationship between the UW-Eau Claire and some members of the American Indian community also was strengthened through "Culture Talk."

Numerous UW-Eau Claire faculty members have been able to incorporate the "Culture Talk" interviews into their courses through assignments and/or extra credit activities. For example, episodes from both the American Indian and Hmong-American "Culture Talk" episodes have been used in the Fundamentals of Speech course, which requires students to learn more about communication behaviors unique to these specific cultures. "Culture Talk Listening Exercises," based on the "Culture Talk" audio interviews, also were created for use in the Intercultural Communication course.

We received positive feedback from all of the interviewees involved with "Culture Talk." We are confident the international students involved with the project benefited by the opportunity to: (1) meet additional U.S. American students through working with our "Culture Talk" team, (2) learn more about how research projects are conducted in the U.S., e.g., the students were exposed to the requirements mandated by our Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects, (3) be exposed to new technology and learn more about radio and the media in the U.S., (4) share information about themselves, their cultures and their values, (5) learn more about themselves, (6) share their "Culture Talk" experience with family and friends (each interviewee was provided with a CD and audio link of their interview, as well as a copy of the advertisements created to promote their particular episode), and (7) experience

another glimpse of the U.S. American education system through participation in our faculty/student research project.

The “Culture Talk” project was the result of a team effort involving the UW-System on Race and Ethnicity, the UW-Eau Claire Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, the UW-Eau Claire’s Learning and Technology Services, the UW-Eau Claire Publications Office (Creative Services), the UW-Eau Claire News Bureau (University Communications), the UW-Eau Claire Center for International Education, the UW-Eau Claire Department of Communication and Journalism, Wisconsin Public Radio, the interviewees, and the students on the “Culture Talk” team. The “Culture Talk” project provided an opportunity to teach about radio, culture, and society, wherein students learned to conduct intercultural interviews and produce radio episodes with the objective of impacting culture and society, episodes that provided current, real-life examples exemplifying the influence of culture on communication.

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¹⁰ Undergraduate student Nessa Severson assisted in reviewing the relevant literature and helped to prepare a bibliography and reference list for the "Culture Talk" project.

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Silvia and Claudia Lozano,
Bolivia



Kimamo Wahome, Kenya

Does "yes" mean "yes" in all cultures?

Are gestures interpreted the same way throughout the world?

How does eye contact differ from culture to culture?

Do all cultures maintain the value "time is money"?

Do all cultures speak "to the point"?

DEVELOP YOUR CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE!

Learn how your culture affects how you communicate

Listen to "CULTURE TALK"

WUEC 89.7 FM

WISCONSIN
PUBLIC
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WUEC 89.7 FM • 6:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m.

Sunday, Nov. 9 (Bolivia and Kenya)

Sunday, Nov. 16 (Kuwait)

Sunday, Nov. 23 (Germany and Malaysia)

University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire



"Culture Talk" is funded through grants from the UW System Institute on Race and Ethnicity; UW-Eau Claire's Office of Research and Sponsored Programs; and the UW-Eau Claire Department of Communication & Journalism.

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Radio Series to Feature Interviews Highlighting Cultural Communication Differences

RELEASED: Oct. 24, 2008

EAU CLAIRE — Is it important to always make eye contact during one-to-one conversation? To what extent should a person focus on his or her individual accomplishments during a job interview? Does that acquaintance really mean yes when she agrees to work with you on a new venture?

The answer to all of the above, according to a University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire expert on intercultural communication, is "That depends," and a November series of Sunday evening radio broadcasts will explain why such questions can't be answered with a simple yes or no.

Because people's values and their related verbal and nonverbal communication behaviors vary greatly among cultures, what works in one setting may not necessarily work in all situations, said Dr. Judy Sims, professor of communication and journalism.

"If people simply assume that everyone in the world is taught the same values and communicates in identical ways, then it makes it much more difficult to try and do business with each other, resolve conflicts and so on," Sims said.

Sims, while on sabbatical leave for the 2008-09 academic year, is conducting a faculty-student collaborative research project titled "International Awareness Through Intercultural Radio Interviews." For the project, UW-Eau Claire student researchers are conducting 20 interviews with people of diverse cultural backgrounds. The first six interviews, to be digitally recorded and then edited to 30 minutes in length, will be aired as a radio series called "Culture Talk" at 6 p.m. Nov. 9, 16 and 23 on WUEC-89.7 FM, a regional studio of Wisconsin Public Radio that includes programming by UW-Eau Claire students and faculty. Additional interviews will be aired during the spring semester.

Following the radio broadcasts, the audio from the interviews also will be available on the WUEC Web site, www.uwec.edu/wuec, and the UW-Eau Claire Center for International Education Web site, www.uwec.edu/cie. "Culture Talk" is funded through grants from the UW System Institute on Race and Ethnicity, as well as UW-Eau Claire's Office of Research and Sponsored Programs and department of communication and journalism.

Among the "Culture Talk" interviewees are international students and scholars visiting the university; community members who have emigrated from other cultures; community members who are Hmong, American Indian, African-American and/or Hispanic-American; and community members with disabilities. The interview subjects include individuals from Bolivia, Malaysia, Kenya, Germany, Ukraine, China, Portugal, Spain, Moldova and South Korea, as well as a UW-Eau Claire alumnus born in the United States but raised in Kuwait.

Eye contact is one example of a communication behavior that varies among cultures, Sims said.

"For example, in Bolivia, direct eye contact is very important," Sims said. "Failure to meet someone's gaze can be interpreted as untrustworthiness."

Cultures also vary in their degrees of "power distance," or the way they value status differences and social hierarchies, Sims said.

"For example, in China, one does not refer to brothers and sisters by names," Sims said. "Rather, one would say 'elder brother,' 'first sister,' 'younger brother,' and so on. The language reinforces this value placed on status differences."

Another cultural difference occurs with regard to communication style, Sims said, with some cultures tending to be direct and others tending to be indirect with more reliance on nonverbal cues.

"For example, use of the word 'yes' is not always an affirmative response in China," she said. "Instead, it may be a polite (indirect) response that really means 'no.'"

Nessa Severson, New Glarus, a UW-Eau Claire senior majoring in music and German education and an interviewer for the "Culture Talk" project, said participating in the research provides experience that will be valuable as she pursues her goal of teaching internationally.

"The ability to communicate with people from other cultures and backgrounds will be a valuable asset for a career in the United States or abroad," Severson said.

While the researchers gather background cultural information before each interview, the interviewees provide details not uncovered during the information-gathering process, she added.



Sylvia (left) and Claudia Lozano Aguirre, UW-Eau Claire international students from Bolivia, were interviewed recently by UW-Eau Claire student researchers in the WUEC-89.7 FM studio. The sisters are among those whose interviews will be aired in November during the "Culture Talk" radio series.

"The great thing about this research project is that we learn so much from each interview," Severson said. "We prepare beforehand by becoming familiar with the culture, but the interviewees always give some answers that are surprising."

Anne Moser, Hudson, a senior organizational communication major and the interview transcriber on the project, also appreciates the knowledge she's gaining as a "Culture Talk" researcher.

"I'm learning to be patient," Moser said. "I'm also learning to be aware of situations where I may let my pre-existing opinions or ethnocentrism hinder my ability to withhold judgment of others."

Other students working on the research project include interviewer Pierce Koch, Green Bay, a junior information systems and communication major, and technical engineer Joseph Tierney, Shawano, a sophomore history major. Severson, Moser, Koch and Tierney will present their research findings next spring during UW-Eau Claire's Student Research Day.

The "Culture Talk" project can have a positive impact at UW-Eau Claire and beyond, Sims said, noting that in addition to benefiting the individual students involved, the project also will benefit the UW-Eau Claire community as it works toward its strategic goal to accelerate global learning.

"'Culture Talk' should help to foster an institutional environment that promotes the learning of intercultural communication skills, which are crucial in a multicultural world with an international marketplace," Sims said.

Beyond UW-Eau Claire, the findings from the research can be applied to business, political and social settings, Sims said.

"Companies doing business domestically, internationally, multinationally and/or globally have realized they must be educated and aware of the influence of culture on communication," Sims said. "Global leaders have been placed in the critical position of managing a multinational team or project, often in virtual space. This kind of work demands globally and interculturally competent communicators. It's all about cultural intelligence."

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JP/JB

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UW-Eau Claire Students Honored for Radio Show on Cultural Communication

RELEASED: April 2, 2009.

Eau Claire — Four students at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire have been recognized for their work on a radio program that focuses on the influence of culture on communication.

The Wisconsin Broadcasters Association honored a segment of "Culture Talk" with a second place award in the Public Affairs/Talk Show (Radio) category at the WBA Student Awards for Excellence ceremony in March.

The episode featured an interview with UW-Eau Claire international student Anna Bakhtiyarova, a graduate student from Ukraine who is in the communication sciences and disorders program.

"Culture Talk," part of a UW-Eau Claire student-faculty collaborative research project, is produced by seniors Nessa Severson, New Glarus, Anne Moser, Hudson, and Pierce Koch, Green Bay; and sophomore Joe Tierney, Shawano. Dr. Judy Sims, professor of communication and journalism, serves as faculty adviser. The segment featuring Bakhtiyarova was the sixth episode of "Culture Talk." Fourteen additional episodes have since been recorded.

"With each 'Culture Talk' interview and recording, we have learned more about intercultural communication and improved our interviewing, editing and sound engineering skills," said Sims.

"Culture Talk" is funded by a grant from the UW-Eau Claire Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, a UW System Institute on Race and Ethnicity grant and funding from UW-Eau Claire's department of communication and journalism.

"Culture Talk" broadcasts will be featured on [WUEC-89.7 FM](#) from 6-7 p.m. every Sunday through May 17.

Students will share results from the "Culture Talk" research at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research in La Crosse April 16 and at UW-Eau Claire's Student Research Day April 27.

For more information, contact Sims at simsjr@uwec.edu.

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LB/NW

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Clockwise, from top left: Nessa Severson, Anne Moser, Pierce Koch, Dr. Judy Sims, Joe Tierney.

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Communication and journalism students win state broadcasting awards

RELEASED: March 11, 2010

EAU CLAIRE — A number of University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire students received 2010 Student Awards for Excellence from the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association.

UW-Eau Claire placed first in the public affairs and talk radio show category for "Culture Talk," a program focused on how culture influences the way in which people communicate verbally and nonverbally. Student producers recognized for "Culture Talk" were Joseph Tierney, [Shawano](#); Nessa Severson, [New Glarus](#), now a UW-Eau Claire graduate; Pierce Koch, [Green Bay](#); and Anne Moser, [Hudson](#), now a UW-Eau Claire graduate. Dr. Judy Sims, professor of communication and journalism, serves as faculty adviser.

The winning episode, transcribed by Chelsea Jacobson, Sartell, Minn., featured an interview with two local Hmong-American women: Dr. Kaying Xiong-Vue and Sophia Vuelo. The [broadcast is available online](#).

UW-Eau Claire also took first in the television newscast category for its show "Update News." Student staff members recognized for the show were Brent Brevak, [Ashland](#); Michelle Clemens, [St. Paul, Minn.](#); Netra Gillard, [Burnsville, Minn.](#); Kara Karlin, [Reedsburg](#); Lucy Lee, [Eau Claire](#); Megan Lowry, [Burnsville, Minn.](#), now a UW-Eau Claire graduate; Dustin Luecke, [Onalaska](#); Ali Meerkins-Weiler, [Mound, Minn.](#); Amanda Miller, [Menasha](#); Alyssa Ogletree, [Madison](#); Alex Otte, [Mosinee](#); Vanessa Tait, [Lakeland, Minn.](#); Matt Troge, [Black Earth](#); and Jenny You, [Cottage Grove, Minn.](#) Jack Kapfer, associate professor of communication and journalism, serves as faculty adviser.

Jenny You also placed second in the television news story category for the story "Kindness."

Since 1951 the WBA has been the only trade association which supports, promotes and represents all radio and television broadcasters in Wisconsin. Ninety percent of all radio and television stations in Wisconsin are WBA members.

For additional information, contact Dr. Judy Sims at 715-836-3267 or Jack Kapfer at 715-836-2300. For [more information about the awards](#), call WBA at 608-255-2600 or visit their Web site.

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LA/RD/DW

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Updated: March 11, 2010

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