This text, Understanding Intercultural Communication (UIC) 2nd edition, is written for you to increase your appreciation, knowledge, and skills about intercultural communication. With increased globalization and demographic changes in the U.S., it is inevitable that you will be communicating with people who are culturally different. Developing constructive, quality intercultural relationships can make life enriching and exciting to ourselves and to people around us.

This book is an introductory text designed for undergraduate students, teachers, and practitioners who are searching for a user-friendly text on the fundamentals of intercultural communication. With the lens of flexible intercultural communication, we thread through an abundance of intercultural material with a very practical theme.

This book emphasizes a strong value-orientation perspective and its effect on intercultural encounters. It also addresses the complex role of cultural-ethnic identity and global-local identity and their relationship to intercultural contacts in our increasingly pluralistic U.S. society.

This text is distinctive because of its well-balanced emphasis on both international/intercultural communication issues and U.S. domestic diversity issues. Our pedagogical approach to this book emphasizes a student-empowering philosophy via a tight integration of culture-sensitive knowledge, attitude checkpoints, and pragmatic communication skills necessary to develop intercultural communication flexibility in diverse contexts.

**SPECIAL FEATURES**

The second edition of the UIC text is a book with many special hooks and original features. For example, it offers first-time students the following:

- A comprehensive *introduction* to all the important concepts of intercultural communication.
- A sound *knowledge base* of contemporary intercultural communication research areas that reflect multiple theoretical viewpoints.
• A wide-angle lens to learn about intercultural and interethnic communication concepts drawn from diverse disciplines.
• A theory-practice emphasis via the use of timely, real-life news stories and case studies to connect with key concepts in each chapter—starting from Chapter 2 and ending with Chapter 12.
• A text with accessible language so that students, teachers, and practitioners of intercultural communication can enjoy reading the book in an interactive manner.
• Simple Tables and Figures to highlight various important intercultural and intergroup communication ideas.
• An intercultural “do-able” checklist at the end of each chapter to remind students to practice flexible intercultural communication skills in everyday interactions.

We have also updated many of the favorite features from 1st edition and added several new special features in this 2nd edition:

• Beginning with Chapter 2, each chapter opens with a real-life news event or personal case story to motivate students to reflect on and explore the connection between the story and chapter concepts.
• Top-Five Jeopardy boxes throughout the text to increase students’ global, pop culture, and domestic diversity literacy.
• Blog Post personal narratives, stories, and poems throughout the text to connect abstract intercultural concepts and principles with meaningful understanding.
• my.blog enjoyable mini-assessments which promote self-awareness and self-empowerment and which also encourage interaction with classmates through deeper dialogue.
• Live-Chat or L-Chat realistic workplace or interpersonal scenes to illustrate the dynamic, pulsating intercultural message exchange process.
• Hit-or-Miss mini-quizzes and mix-and-match questions on current global, international, online, and intercultural issues.
• Blog Pic photos to transport students to globally and culturally different communities where they will experience culture shock or cultural ambiguity.
• A well-designed Instructor’s Manual with many active learning exercises and activities plus instructional tips for managing challenging topics in the intercultural classroom.
• A captivating Interactive Student Study Guide that encourages students to read the actual text, reflect on and dialogue about the interactive discussion questions, and on their own, continue their intercultural learning journey by checking out the suggested websites, movies, books, and many other global and intercultural resource treasures.

WRITING THIS SECOND EDITION: ASSUMPTIONS AND CHANGES

Five initial assumptions guided the development of the second edition of this text. First, we patiently waited to work on the second edition in order to harvest the continually maturing insights of the intercultural/interethnic research field and the booming contemporary trends related to intercultural communication. We believe that the time is ripe now (theoretically and practically, for example, updating all Jeopardy Boxes on top-five trends in the do-
mestic, intercultural, and international arenas), after a five-year interval to upload this book with fresh research ideas, new perspectives, and the latest global trends and statistics (see, for example, Chapter 11). Second, we wanted students to enjoy learning about the various concepts of intercultural communication. Thus, we have intentionally integrated a carefully-chosen set of current, international news cases and real-life personal stories to highlight various intercultural concepts. Third, we wanted to signal to students that there is no one right way to practice competent intercultural communication in the 21st century—instead, there are many adventures awaiting them, and exciting opportunities to connect with globally and culturally different others. Thus, the recurrent theme in this text is *intercultural communication flexibility*. Fourth, we would like our students to develop a strong global and cultural consciousness via a self-empowered learning process—internalizing the inspiring individual stories and accounts and developing their own personal narratives, explaining them with the aid of the text’s concepts. Fifth, we wanted to have fun writing this book together—as a way of celebrating our friendship on a continuous and light-hearted basis. As we approach the ending journey of writing this text, we believe that we have realized our goals with joy and exhilaration!

What are the *changes or “news”* in this *Understanding Intercultural Communication, 2nd edition*? Based on the thoughtful feedback of students, instructors, reviewers, researchers, and practitioners using this text, and in conjunction with our own teaching and training experiences using this text in the U.S., Mexico, Canada, France, Germany, Portugal, Switzerland, South Africa, China, Hong Kong, Japan, and South Korea, we now identify the top-twenty changes or selected highlights. In this innovative second edition, we’ve:

- Throughout the entire text, called attention to the important role of technology in impacting the intercultural communication message exchange process;
- Updated reasons for studying intercultural communication in Chapter 1;
- Introduced the vital concept of “culture” more quickly by moving its definition from Chapter 2 to Chapter 1;
- Rearranged the “intercultural communication flexibility” theme from Chapter 1 to Chapter 2 and discussed the theme with more depth;
- Included the “motivational” value function in Chapter 3 and updated some of the value dimensions with the GLOBE project research results (see Chapter 3);
- Updated the complex discussion on “multiracial and biracial identity” in Chapter 4;
- Integrated more culture shock stories in Chapter 5 and eliminated some secondary concepts concerning the culture shock “hostility” stage;
- Combined Chapters 6 and 7 into one coherent chapter: Chapter 6 on *What is the Connection between Verbal Communication and Culture?*;
- Illustrated the nonverbal chapter (Chapter 7) with many fascinating global nonverbal examples and new facial nonverbal photos;
- Throughout the entire book, updated all photos taken from various countries and reflected individuals from different walks of life which we now call the *Blog Pic* special feature;
- Updated many of the poignant personal stories and illuminating examples throughout various chapters, which we now label as the *Blog Post* special feature;
• Introduced a popular training model, the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) in Chapter 8 on the “biases against outgroups” motif and provided a wealth of current news examples on “E.S.P.” (ethnocentrism, stereotypes, and prejudice);
• Explained a new intercultural workplace conflict model in Chapter 9 and also emphasized the importance of adaptive code-switching in managing conflict flexibly via lively dialogue examples in the Live-Chat, or L-Chat, special boxed feature;
• Inserted sections on online and mobile dating and “relational transgressions and terminations” in Chapter 10 on “intercultural-intimate relationship” challenges and emphasized the bicultural/biracial identity struggles of multiracial kids;
• Updated the entire Chapter 11 on the theme of “global-local dialectical identity” and its impact on intercultural communication and the accompanying communication change patterns in various nations or cultures;
• Revitalized the final chapter, Chapter 12, on the motif of “becoming flexible and ethical intercultural communicators” via the introduction of new concepts, and streamlined a set of ethical guidelines and questions to guide students to formulate their own principled ethical stance;
• Throughout the text, updated the popular Jeopardy Boxes (plus also changed from the top-ten trends to the top-five trends so that students can digest the information more enjoyably) and included intercultural and global statistics up to May, 2011;
• Retained the favorite self-assessment know thyself feature and renamed it as my.blog special feature in this edition;
• Created a new special feature called Hit-or-Miss to invite interactive learning through fun global knowledge quizzes and mix-and-match questions;
• Added more than 250 new references and deleted some outdated ones

BOOK DESIGN AND ORGANIZATION

This book is organized in three sections. The first section (Chapters 1-4) lays the foundational framework and concepts of intercultural communication. The reasons for studying intercultural communication and practicing flexible intercultural skills are articulated. Major research areas, such as cultural value patterns (e.g., individualism-collectivism) and cultural-ethnic identity, are explored—especially through the reflections of many cultural voices and personal stories.

The second section (Chapters 5-7) emphasizes the process of crossing cultural boundaries and the dynamic process of intercultural verbal and nonverbal exchange encounters. Topics such as developmental culture shock, language functions and diverse cultural verbal styles, as well as fun topics such as nonverbal space violations and cross-cultural gestures are discussed and accompanied with lively intercultural examples.

The third section (Chapters 8-12) focuses on intercultural-interpersonal relationship development contexts. Important factors such as E.S.P. (i.e., ethnocentrism, stereotypes, and prejudice) are discussed in depth. Practical knowledge and skills to manage intercultural conflict flexibly are proposed. Many animated conflict Live-Chat dialogues and interpersonal examples are used to illustrate the development of intimate intercultural relationships.
contemporary topic of the development of a morphing global-local identity is addressed through a new concept we coined, the “e.netizen” individual. We discuss the impact of technology and pop culture and its effect on our shifting value patterns. Finally, a cornerstone theme, becoming an ethical and flexible intercultural communicator, rounds out the book.

Throughout this book, personal stories, poems, news cases, blog pics, fun quizzes, global trend statistics, ethical dilemmas, and practical skill “do-ables” are offered to empower students to engage in active learning and to master the foundational concepts of intercultural communication. At the same time, we strive to give first-time students an accurate and enjoyable basic text to learn about intercultural communication. We want students to come away with a special appreciation for the mindful efforts and the artful skills it takes to communicate across cultures adaptively and flexibly. We want them to also resonate with the identity struggles in various forms as expressed by the diverse voices of multiple individuals in many of the special feature stories.

As we and you begin traversing the landscape of this book, we hope we have succeeded in motivating students and teachers to discover and to explore together: the unfamiliar worlds and some unfamiliar words, the slippery slopes and the diverse terrains, and the vulnerable faces and the amazing voices that struggle to be affirmed and listened to—from within and beyond the classroom instructional setting.