

GLOBAL CLASSROOM PROJECT – 2025

CROSS-CULTURAL CONVERSATIONS

PROF. DIJANA MAUNAGA TRAJKOVIC

ELAP: ENGLISH LANGUAGE FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES

Montgomery College

Prof. Dijana Maunaga Trajkovic

ELAI 990 ELAP Capstone Course

17 students: Cameroon, Brazil, Ethiopia (3), Guinea (2),
Haiti, Italy (2) Ivory Coast (2), Nepal, Nigeria, Portugal,
Senegal, Togo

XIM University

Dr. Isha Sharma

Business Communication

16 students from different regions of India

ELAI 990:

- Capstone - 6 credit course
- Integrated skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking)
- Four modules
 - Read academic articles
 - Watch TED Talks, lectures, documentary movies
 - Write essays, summaries, and response papers
 - Create two oral presentations with PPT

Module 1 Language and Culture:

- “Body Speaks: Body language around the world” by Kris Rugsaken
- “Blurring the Line between Language and Culture” by Fatiha Guessabi
- 2022 TEDx Talk, “*Implications of Culture on Language*,” by Amirpooya Dardashti

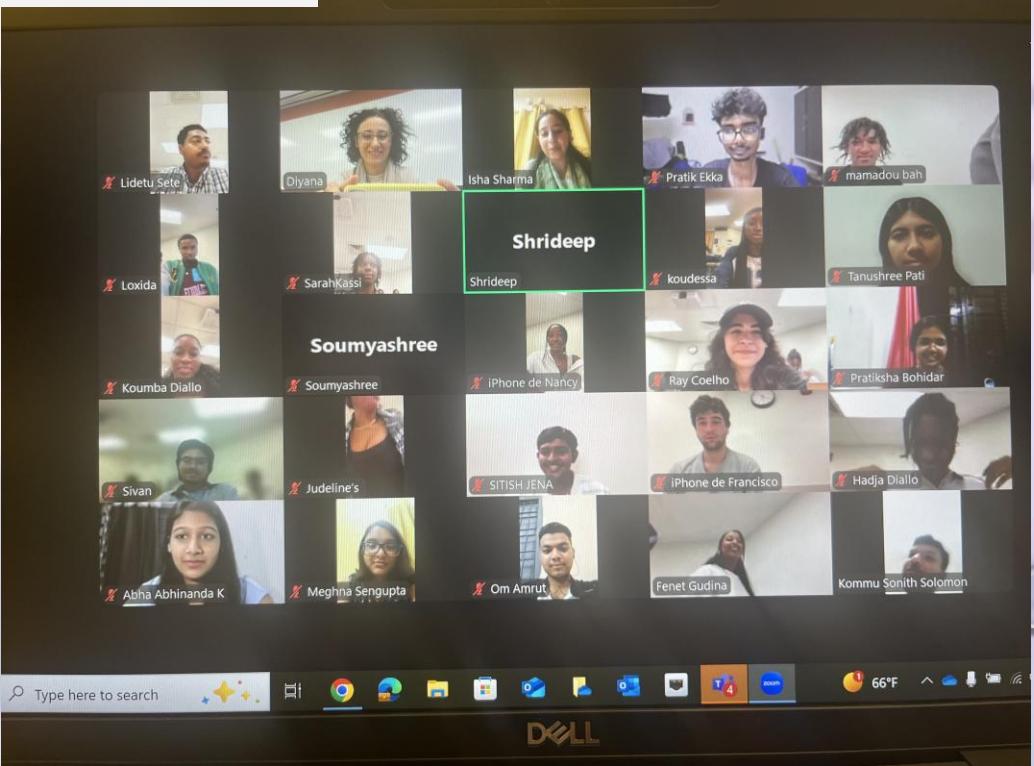
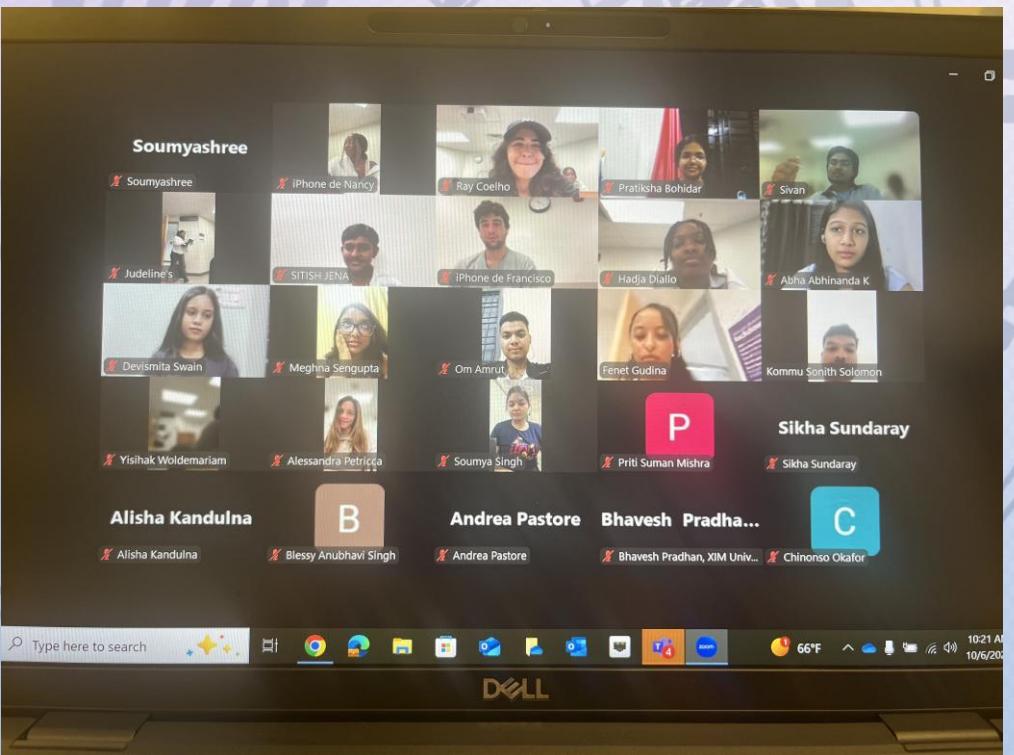
Assignment – Oral Presentation based on interviews

- Meet assigned partner, exchange contact info, and select discussion topics.
- Create questions for the partner and submit them in Blackboard for feedback.
- Conduct interview (phone, Zoom, or written)
- Create and submit an outline for presentation.
- Submit PPT before the in-class presentation.
- See tutors and professor for support.
- Deliver 5- to 7-minute-long presentation on similarities and differences between two cultures.

Grading Rubric

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement
Introduction	Clear, detailed background on partner, the countries, and chosen topics. Strong context. 4 points 3 points	Clear intro with some background and topic info. 2 points	Basic intro; lacks some key info. 0-1 points	Missing or unclear intro.
Main Ideas & Supporting Details	Presentation has clear, well-developed main ideas with strong supporting examples or evidence. 8-10 points 5-7 points	Main ideas are mostly clear with some supporting details. 2-4 points	Main ideas are present but weakly supported or unclear. 0-1 points	Main ideas are missing or very poorly supported.
Cultural Comparison	Excellent comparison between partner's and presenter's culture; shows insight and respect. 4 points	Good comparison with some detail; may lack depth. 3 points	Basic comparison with few insights. 2 points	No clear cultural comparison made. 0-1 points
Reflections and Conclusion	Deep reflection showing learning and personal insights & Strong, thoughtful conclusion that wraps up key points. 4 points	Good reflection and conclusion; may lack clarity or strength.. 3 points	Basic or surface-level reflection and conclusion . 2 points	Little or no reflection provided and weak or mission conclusion. 0-1 points
Visuals PPT	Visually engaging, well-designed, supports presentation content. 4 points	Generally well-made; some slides may lack polish. 3 points	PPT is plain, text-heavy, or slightly disorganized. 2 points	Poorly designed or missing visuals. 0-1 points
Delivery (Clarity & Confidence)	Clear, confident, well-paced delivery; speaker appears comfortable. 4 points	Mostly clear; some issues with pace or confidence. 3 points	Noticeable issues with clarity or confidence. 2 points	Mumbled, too fast/slow, or hard to follow. 0-1 points
Delivery Style (Engagement, Eye Contact, Expression)	Engaging tone, good eye contact, natural expression/body language. 4 points	Generally engaging; minor issues with eye contact or expression. 3 points	Somewhat flat or mechanical delivery. 2 points	Lacks expression or audience engagement. 0-1 points
Grammar Use	Consistent use of correct grammar structures. Errors are rare and do not distract. 4 points	Some minor grammar errors that do not affect meaning. 3 points	Several grammar errors; occasionally affect clarity. 2 points	Frequent grammar errors that confuse meaning. 0-1 points
Pronunciation	Clear, natural pronunciation; easy to understand throughout. 4 points	Mostly clear with few minor mispronunciations. 3 points	Some mispronunciations that slightly affect understanding. 2 points	Frequent issues that make comprehension difficult. 0-1 points
Vocabulary Use	Rich, varied vocabulary used accurately and effectively. 4 points	Good range of vocabulary; some repetition or minor misuse. 3 points	Basic vocabulary with some inappropriate word choices. 2 points	Limited vocabulary; frequent misuse of words. 0-1 points
Time Management	Presentation is 5-7 minutes long. 4 points	Slightly over/under the time limit. 3 points	Clearly too short or long, but presentation is complete. 2 points	Time issue seriously affects flow or clarity. 0-1 points

1st meeting: Monday, October 6

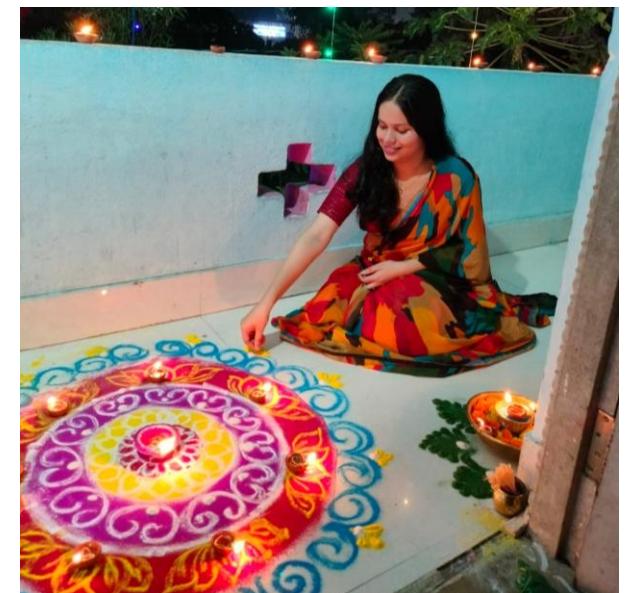
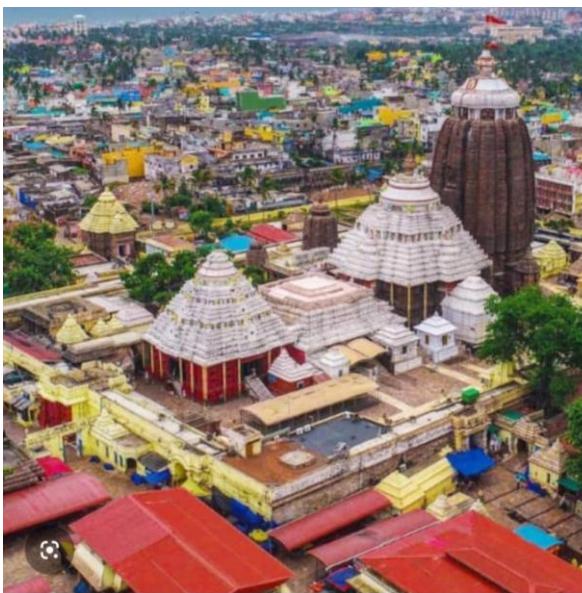
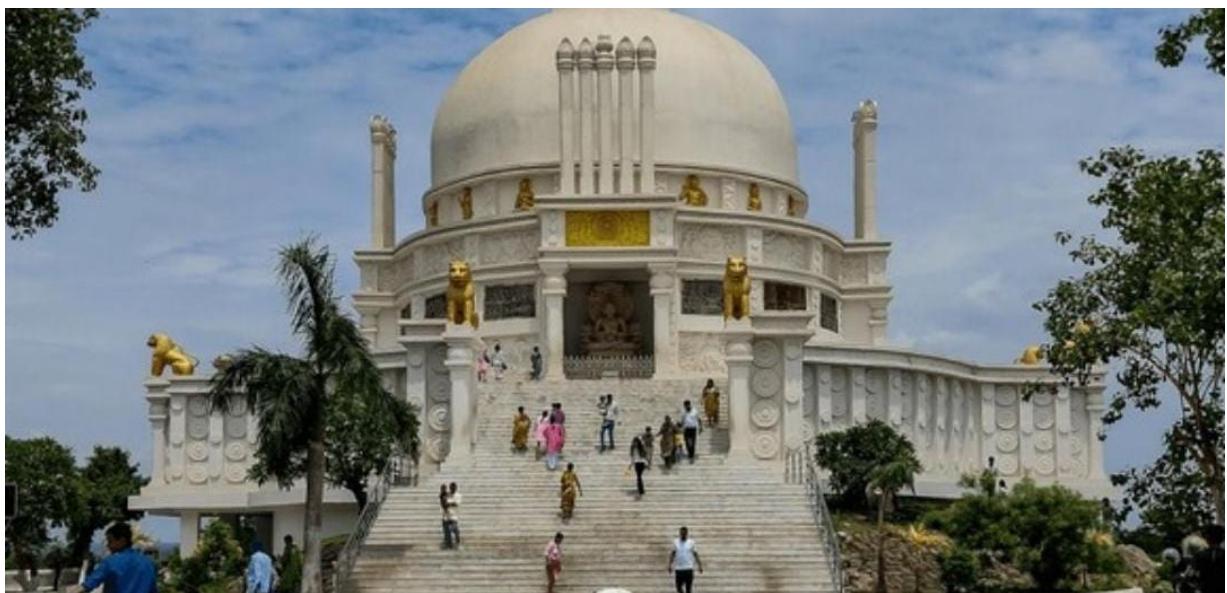


Culture-related topics based on students' interests

- Hobbies & Free Time**
- Religion & Faith**
- Social Life & Relationships**
- Celebrations & Festivals**
- Food & Clothing**
- Mindset & Mental Health**
- Communication (Formal/Informal) & Hospitality**
- Education & Career Goals**
- Academic Life & Extracurricular Activities**
- Norms & Taboos**
- Global Perspectives & Safety**
- Media & Entertainment**
- Traveling & Tourism**

2nd meeting and presentation day: Wednesday, October 22





MC Course Outcomes aligned with GC project:

- Use a variety of listening skills to comprehend lectures and other video/audio sources.
- Speak easily and articulately, self-correcting pronunciation and speech patterns for successful communication in an academic setting.

AACU Global Competency: Attitudes – Curiosity

Milestone 3:

- Asks deeper questions about other cultures and seeks out answers to these questions.

Student Reflections:

- Both my partner and I loved how religions, though different, unite families and communities in both of our countries.
- I love that this project makes me think about things we usually ignore — like how our habits and culture affect our happiness.
- Personally, what stood out to me the most is how both cultures use education and language as a tool for unity and identity. It made me realize that cultural differences are not barriers but bridges that help us learn from one another.
- Working with other cultures reminded me that though we speak different languages and live in different ways, we all share the same desire for peace, respect, and progress.
- Getting to learn about Indian culture was very interesting. I hope I convinced my partner to come to Italy and watch some soccer with a slice of pizza.

Next Steps:

- Get some Indian food with students at the end of the semester.
- Repeat the project in 2026.

A circular watermark seal for Montgomery College. The top half contains the word "MONTGOMERY" in red, block letters. The bottom half contains "COLLEGE" in red, block letters. The center features a stylized building with a tower, a lamp, and a banner at the bottom that reads "1940".

THANK YOU

A circular watermark seal for XIM University. The top half contains the word "XIM UNIVERSITY" in black, block letters. The bottom half contains the motto "Semper Excelstis" in black, block letters. The center features a blue globe with a white building on top, surrounded by a circular border with the text "XIM UNIVERSITY".A circular watermark seal for Montgomery College. The top half contains the word "MONTGOMERY" in red, block letters. The bottom half contains "COLLEGE" in red, block letters. The center features a stylized building with a tower, a lamp, and a banner at the bottom that reads "1940".