



LEZIONI APERTE A.A. 2026-2027 UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI PARMA

Dipartimento/i Struttura organizzativa	Dipartimento DUSIC
Corso di laurea/ambito di riferimento	Global Studies for Sustainable Local and International Development and Cooperation
Titolo dell'iniziativa	Beyond Borders, Beyond Words: Understanding Non-Verbal Communication Across Cultures
Referente dell'iniziativa e contatti	Michela Canepari michela.canepari@unipr.it Diego Saglia diego.saglia@unipr.it
Tematiche trattate nella lezione/seminario	Non-verbal communication (body language, silence, colour symbolism, and other culturally specific forms of communication)
Abstract dell'iniziativa	In an increasingly interconnected yet culturally diverse world, communicating effectively across cultures requires far more than speaking a common language. Much of what we communicate is conveyed without words: gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, silence, personal space, posture, clothing, colours, and other visual and behavioural cues all contribute to the way messages are interpreted. Because these elements are deeply rooted in cultural traditions and social conventions, they may carry very different meanings from one society to another, leading either to misunderstanding or to richer communication between people from different cultural backgrounds. This two-session seminar explores the fascinating world of non-verbal communication through linguistic, literary, and cultural perspectives. Drawing on examples from literature, film, television, and everyday cross-cultural encounters, participants will discover how meanings are constructed beyond language and how cultural values shape the interpretation of human behaviour. Particular attention will be devoted to body language, proxemics, eye contact, silence, dress codes, and the symbolic meanings associated with colours – for example, how the colours of clothing may communicate celebration, authority, mourning, spirituality, or social identity in different cultural contexts. By analysing both fictional narratives and real-world examples, students will reflect on the ways in which non-verbal signs contribute to characterisation, cultural identity, and interpersonal relationships. They will also explore how literature and cinema represent encounters between cultures, revealing both



	the challenges and the opportunities that arise when individuals with different cultural backgrounds interact. Through an engaging and interdisciplinary approach, Beyond Borders, Beyond Words invites participants to discover that what we do not say is often just as important as the words we choose. By the end of the seminar, students will have gained a deeper understanding of the invisible dimensions of communication and of the importance of empathy, cultural sensitivity, and cross-cultural awareness in today's global society. Through language, literature, film, and visual culture, they will be encouraged to look beyond stereotypes and appreciate the richness and complexity of human communication across cultures.
Periodo di svolgimento e durata	The initiative consists of two open lectures. The first lecture, delivered by Prof. Michela Canepari, will take place on 22 March at 3:00 p.m. The second lecture will be delivered by Prof. Diego Saglia. The date and time will be announced in due course. Further details will be communicated as soon as they become available.
Destinatari e modalità di iscrizione (es. se è previsto un termine entro il quale iscriversi contattando direttamente il/la referente dell'iniziativa)	Students from upper secondary schools
Modalità di svolgimento (presenza o distanza)	In-person
Note	