# Module 8: Intercultural Communication Standards

* 1. **Start Module**
     1. **Part 1: Welcome**

Welcome to the Massachusetts World Languages Curriculum Framework Implementation Training Series! This training is brought to you by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in collaboration with the Center for Applied Linguistics. These Online Learning Modules are one component of the Implementation Training Series and are designed to support you in understanding and using the 2021 Massachusetts World Languages Curriculum Framework.

You are in Module 8: Intercultural Communication Standards. This module will discuss the Intercultural Communication Standards in the Framework and highlight ways in which you can address these Standards in your classroom.

* + 1. **How do I navigate this module?**

First, let’s talk about how to navigate this module. To navigate between the slides of this module, you can click here: on the NEXT button, to see the next slide, and here: on the PREVIOUS button, to go back to the last slide. Please note that on slides that have interactive features, such as clickable icons or tabs to learn more, you will not be able to click NEXT to see the next slide until you click on each of these features.

At the bottom of each slide, you will also see the volume button to make the audio louder or quieter; the closed-captions button to turn on closed captions and read along with the audio; a seek bar, and a replay button.

You can click on the seek bar to control which part of the screen you want to see, and you can click on the replay button to replay the entire slide.

On the left, you can see the menu. You can click on any title to navigate to the slide you want to view. The menu also has a search bar, here. If you are looking for a particular topic, you can search for it. For example, if you want to learn about the Framework, you can type the word “Framework” into the search bar, and the menu will display all slides that mention the Framework.

On the top right, you can click here on the Resources button where you can find a transcript of the full text of this module as well as a one-page summary.

* + 1. **What are the goals of this module?**

Now let’s talk about the goals of this module. At the end of the module, you will be able to answer these questions:

* What is the Intercultural Communication mode and why is it important to develop proficiency in this mode?
* What are the Massachusetts World Languages Standards for Intercultural Communication?
* How can I address the Intercultural Communication Standards in my classroom?

**1.2. Part 2: Intercultural Communication**

* + 1. **What is the mode of Intercultural Communication?**

Intercultural Communication involves interacting appropriately with others in and from another culture. This form of communication involves using knowledge of target-language cultures’ products, practices, and beliefs to understand and produce content in the target language that is comprehensible to others. Intercultural Communication is an important component of how students communicate and use the target language to acquire linguistic proficiency, and it is one of the four communicative modes included in the Domain of Communication Practices.

* + 1. **What do students do in the mode of Intercultural Communication?**

In the Intercultural Communication mode, students read, listen, and view through the lens that the message’s originator intended. When transmitting information, students select language and topics that will be comprehensible to their audience or interlocutor(s). Students also employ culturally appropriate nonverbal behaviors to set at ease or not offend their audience or interlocutor(s).

* + 1. **Why is it important to develop proficiency in Intercultural Communication?**

It is important to develop proficiency in Intercultural Communication for many reasons. Click on each section of the circle to learn more.

Proficiency in this mode encourages students to respect and uphold the value of all cultures and languages, which increases their social and emotional competence through improved social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making abilities across diverse situations.

Proficiency in Intercultural Communication also supports students in investigating products and practices to understand cultural perspectives; interacting with others in and from the target culture; and ultimately behaving in culturally-appropriate ways.

Proficiency in Intercultural Communication is essential for advancing proficiency in other communicative modes, acquiring the cultural knowledge needed to communicate effectively in the target language, and applying what has been learned to make connections with diverse perspectives and communities.

Proficiency in this mode also prepares students to think and act with critical consciousness when participating in the life of their communities. Students use their knowledge of cultural products, practices, and perspectives to appropriately interact with and advocate for others, allowing them to positively contribute to the world.

Finally, interacting with cultural competence and understanding through Intercultural Communication supports student engagement with people and texts from other cultures, and encourage students to consider their own identities and capacities to make connections, making proficiency in this mode important for students’ overall growth and development through Deeper Learning.

**1.2.4: Pause for Equity**

Now, let’s take a few minutes to pause for equity in line with Massachusetts’ vision for [Deeper Learning](https://www.doe.mass.edu/kaleidoscope/overview.html), which encompasses the Framework’s priorities for Social Justice and reflects Massachusetts’ goals of having all students explore identity, diversity, justice, and action, combined with mastery. If you are completing this module in a group, you may find it helpful to talk about the guiding questions on this slide with your colleagues and take this opportunity to share your insights and experiences. If you are completing this module on your own, you can independently reflect on these questions and consider ways in which they apply to your own teaching context and experiences.

Before we dive into the individual standards, consider the following questions:

* How do you think students might demonstrate mastery in the Intercultural Mode?
* How will the Intercultural Mode enable students to reflect on their own identity and behaviors? In what ways will it introduce students to diverse perspectives?
* How might the Intercultural Mode inspire students to independently extend their learning of the language and/or culture?

**1.3. Part 3: Intercultural Communication Standards**

* + 1. **What are the Intercultural Communication Standards?**

The Intercultural Communication Standards are descriptions of the skills that students can demonstrate at different levels of proficiency in the Intercultural Communication mode and are organized by proficiency level from Novice Low to Superior. Each Intercultural Communication Standard contains between three and five different Functions, and each Function has a Standard Identifier numbered from 4.a. to 4.e along with the proficiency level abbreviation.

* + 1. **How do the Intercultural Communication Standards progress across proficiency levels?**

In Module 4, you learned that Context, Text Type, Supports, and Comprehensibility progress in a similar way across proficiency levels for all of the Communication Standards. In addition to these linguistic components, Functions, which describe what students can do with the language, gradually progress in difficulty, rigor, and/or complexity across proficiency levels in the Communication Standards, though this progression may look different for each of the communicative modes. Click here to see a chart showing how Functions progress across proficiency levels within the Intercultural Communication Standards.

As shown in the chart, some Functions are repeated from level to level (as indicated by a check mark) and some Functions progress from level to level (as indicated by a check mark in a new row or a check mark with a plus sign). These Functions, which are brand new Functions that emerge at higher proficiency levels or new, more rigorous features of a previously acquired Function, appear in bolded text within the Framework. We will look at the Intercultural Communication Standards in greater detail in the following slides, and while we will be focusing on the progression of Functions across proficiency levels, we recommend that you also reflect on ways in which other linguistic components (Context, Text Type, Supports, and Comprehensibility) progress from level to level throughout this Module.

* + 1. **What is the Intercultural Communication Standard at the Novice Low level?**

There are three Functions within the Intercultural Communication Standard at the Novice Low level, marked as NL 4.a, 4.b, and 4.c. As you can see, students at this level can refer to some typical products and practices related to the target culture; use appropriate highly practiced gestures and behaviors; and recognize some behaviors that are likely to offend.

* + 1. **What is the Intercultural Communication Standard at the Novice Mid level?**

There are three Functions within the Intercultural Communication Standard at the Novice Mid level, marked as NM 4.a, 4.b, and 4.c. Two of these Functions are repeated from the Novice Low level, and one is more rigorous, as students can use rehearsed gestures and behaviors.

* + 1. **Discussion/Reflection**

There will be several opportunities for discussion and reflection in this part of the Module. The questions presented on the Discussion/Reflection slides are designed to help you discuss or reflect on what you have learned so far in this module. If you are completing this module in a group, you may find it helpful to talk about these questions with your colleagues and take this opportunity to share your insights and experiences. If you are completing this module on your own, you can independently reflect on these questions and consider ways in which they apply to your own teaching context and experiences.

This set of questions for discussion and reflection are:

* What do you notice about how the Standard progresses within the Novice Low to Novice Mid levels?
* What can your Novice-level students do? Does your experience align with the expectations outlined in the Standards?
* Where do you see Social Justice or SEL implications within these Novice standards?
* What do you expect Novice High students who are moving up into the Intermediate level to be able to do?
  + 1. **What is the Intercultural Communication Standard at the Novice High level?**

There are three Functions within the Intercultural Communication Standard at the Novice High level, marked as NH 4.a, 4.b, and 4.c. As you can see, each Function has more rigorous features of the previously acquired Functions. As shown in NH 4.a, students at this level ask questions about common products, practices, and/or perspectives to demonstrate curiosity, and they can use learned gestures and behaviors, as shown in NH 4.b. Students can also avoid major social blunders.

* + 1. **What is the Intercultural Communication Standard at the Intermediate Low level?**

There are three Functions within the Intercultural Communication Standard at the Intermediate Low level, marked as IL 4.a, 4.b, and 4.c. All of the Functions are repeated from the Novice High level. The progression from Novice High is instead seen in use of the more complex text type of unconnected simple sentences and greater comprehensibility.

* + 1. **What is the Intercultural Communication Standard at the Intermediate Mid level?**

There are three Functions within the Intercultural Communication Standard at the Intermediate Mid level, marked as IM 4.a, 4.b, and 4.c. All of the Functions are repeated from the Intermediate Low level. The progression from Intermediate Low is instead seen in use of the more complex text type of series of connected sentences and greater comprehensibility.

* + 1. **Discussion/Reflection**

The questions for discussion and reflection are:

* What do you notice about how the Standard progresses within the Novice High to Intermediate Mid levels?
* What can your Intermediate-level students do? Does your experience align with the expectations outlined in the Standards?
* Where do you see Social Justice or SEL implications within these Intermediate standards?
* What do you expect Intermediate High students who are moving up into the Advanced level to be able to do?
  + 1. **What is the Intercultural Communication Standard at the Intermediate High level?**

There are four Functions within the Intercultural Communication Standard at the Intermediate High level, marked as IH 4.a, 4.b, 4.c, and 4.d. As you can see, three of the Functions have more rigorous features, and one Function is brand new.

As shown in IH 4.a, students at this level invoke, discuss, and inquire about common products and practices that inform perspectives. Students at this level can also adapt language and behavior to communicate appropriately in most formal and informal settings, as shown in IH 4.b, and communicate in a manner that is clear and inoffensive, as shown in IH 4.c. Finally, as shown in IH 4.d, students at this level can demonstrate awareness of cultural diversity and bias.

* + 1. **What is the Intercultural Communication Standard at the Advanced Low level?**

There are four Functions within the Intercultural Communication Standard at the Advanced Low level, all of which are repeated from the Intermediate High level. The progression from Intermediate High is instead seen in more complex text types, greater comprehensibility, and no need for supports.

* + 1. **What is the Intercultural Communication Standard at the Advanced Mid level?**

There are four Functions within the Intercultural Communication Standard at the Advanced Mid level, all of which are repeated from the Advanced Low level. The progression from Advanced Low is instead seen in more complex text types and greater comprehensibility.

* + 1. **Discussion/Reflection**

The questions for discussion and reflection are:

* What do you notice about how the Standard progresses within the Intermediate High to Advanced Mid levels?
* What can your Advanced-level students do? Does your experience align with the expectations outlined in the Standards?
* Where do you see Social Justice or SEL implications within these Advanced standards?
* What do you expect Advanced High students who are moving up into the Superior level to be able to do?
  + 1. **What is the Intercultural Communication Standard at the Advanced High level?**

There are five Functions within the Intercultural Communication Standard at the Advanced High level, marked as AH.4.a, 4.b, 4.c, 4.d, and 4.e. As you can see, one of the Functions is repeated from the Advanced Mid level, three Functions have more rigorous features, and one Function is brand-new. Students at this level can invoke, discuss, and inquire about many distinct products and practices (AH.4.a). They can interact with others from target-language cultures in social and professional situations (AH.4.b), and they can communicate in a manner that is free of traits of their personal languages or cultures that would offend or confuse (AH.4.c). Finally, the new Function that emerges at this proficiency level, AH.4.e, indicates that students can engage in, negotiate with, and improvise with cultural norms, etiquette, and nonverbal cues.

* + 1. **What is the Intercultural Communication Standard at the Superior level?**

There are five Functions within the Intercultural Communication Standard at the Superior level, all of which are repeated from the Advanced High level. The progression from Advanced High is instead seen in more complex text types.

* + 1. **Discussion/Reflection**

The questions for discussion and reflection are:

* What do you notice about how the Standard progresses within the Advanced High to Superior levels?
* What can your Advanced High and Superior students do? Does your experience align with the expectations outlined in the Standards?
* Where do you see Social Justice or SEL implications within these Superior standards?
  1. **Part 4: Addressing the Standards**
     1. **How do I address the Intercultural Communication Standards in my classroom?**

To address the Intercultural Communication Standards in your classroom, it is important to set unit goals/objectives for Intercultural Communication; design summative assessment tasks to determine if students have met unit goals/objectives for Intercultural Communication; and plan student-centered learning experiences that develop and advance students’ Intercultural Communication skills and abilities and that support them to independently extend their learning.

* + 1. **How do I set goals and objectives for Intercultural Communication?**

When setting unit goals/objectives for Intercultural Communication, we recommend that you start by selecting at least one NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statement for this mode of communication. You should then align the statement with the Massachusetts World Languages Standards for Intercultural Communication that are listed for the targeted proficiency level(s) of your unit. Finally, you should adapt the statement based on your students’ individual needs, interests, and abilities, as well as the topics or themes of your unit. Click here to learn more and to view the [NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements](https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/can-dos/Intercultural%20Can-Do_Statements.pdf) for Intercultural Communication.

* + 1. **How should Intercultural Communication be assessed?**

To assess Intercultural Communication, we recommend that you embed Intercultural Communication into the performance tasks and rubrics that you’ve designed to assess the other communicative modes. This can be done by ensuring that authentic texts present a variety of cultural practices, products, or perspectives, and that tasks involve further exploration of and interaction with these features of target-language cultures. You may also find it helpful to use [ACTFL’s Intercultural Communication Reflection Tool](https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/can-dos/Intercultural%20Can-Dos_Reflections%20Scenarios.pdf), which provides examples of reflective activities that can be used to support your understanding of your students’ Intercultural Communication skills and abilities. Such activities, including self-assessments, reflections, and culture learning portfolios, can serve as effective alternative forms of assessment for determining if students have met Intercultural Communication goals and objectives.

* + 1. **How do I teach Intercultural Communication?**

Click on each tab to learn more about how to teach Intercultural Communication.

When teaching Intercultural Communication, it is important to design learning activities and experiences with all students in mind, including students with disabilities and students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Intercultural Communication learning activities and experiences should align with your unit goals/objectives.

Intercultural Communication activities should also provide opportunities for students to observe, compare, reflect, interact, and reflect again to develop intercultural competence. This cycle of learning provides all students with opportunities to reflect on their own perspectives and experiences; critically think about how their perspectives and experiences impact their perceptions of others; and subsequently apply what they’ve learned when interacting with speakers from the target-language culture.

When teaching Intercultural Communication, it is important to encourage students to apply their intercultural competence to build a more equitable world, and you may find it helpful to include project-based learning or service-learning opportunities that allow students to serve as agents of change in their classroom, school, and community.

Students will also benefit from learning experiences that follow the framework for reflective activities in [ACTFL’s Intercultural Communication Reflection Tool](https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/can-dos/Intercultural%20Can-Dos_Reflections%20Scenarios.pdf). This framework outlines the following steps for deep reflection and intercultural learning: (1) introducing cultural products, practices, or perspectives during instructional time; (2) encouraging reflection on attitudes, values, and beliefs during and/or outside of instructional time; and (3) promoting collaboration, interaction, and the application of knowledge through follow-up activities in the classroom.

Click on the box at the bottom of the slide to view an article about teaching Intercultural Communication from [*The Language Educator*, an ACTFL publication](https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/tle/TLE_JanFeb18_Article.pdf).

* + 1. **What does addressing Intercultural Communication look like in different contexts?**

Click on the boxes to see examples of Intercultural Communication goals/objectives and tasks for different contexts. The example tasks provided on this slide could be used in IPAs for summative assessment purposes or included as key learning activities and/or formative assessments during the course of instruction. You can view all examples or the one that is most similar to your context, as you only need to click on one example before you are able to move on to the next slide.

* Elementary, Intermediate
  + Context: Elementary Spanish (Intermediate Mid)
  + Goal/objective: I can ask questions about and compare school systems in my own culture and target cultures, using a series of connected sentences and sometimes relying on clarification and circumlocution.
  + Task: Students watch a video about primary schools in Spain, discuss differences in school systems, and complete an interactive journal activity in Spanish comparing Spanish schools to their own school experience.
  + Discussion: What is one way that this task could be extended to further consider diverse experiences?
* American Sign Language, Advanced
  + Context: Secondary American Sign Language (Advanced Mid)
  + Goal/objective: I can collaborate on an online project to explain misconceptions of the target culture and demonstrate awareness of cultural diversity and bias using a series of connected paragraphs.
  + Task: Students research and discuss stereotypes associated with Deaf culture and create a series of educational, culturally-appropriate videos in ASL that identify, analyze, and deconstruct these stereotypes.
  + Discussion: What is one way that this task could be extended to further consider diverse experiences?
* Secondary, Intermediate
  + Context: Secondary German (Intermediate Mid)
  + Goal/objective: I can ask questions and talk about similarities and differences between festivals with a peer from the target culture using a series of connected sentences and sometimes relying on clarification and circumlocution.
  + Task: Students write and respond to German social media posts about famous music festivals in Germany and the United States using learned behaviors for online interactions in German.
  + Discussion: What is one way that this task could be extended to further consider diverse experiences?
* Secondary, Advanced:
  + Context: Secondary Chinese (Advanced High)
  + Goal/objective: I can gather information about many distinct practices in the target culture, explain differences between my culture and the target culture, and communicate in a manner that does not offend or confuse the audience using extended discourse.
  + Task: Students research the amount of government funding for different services in China and the United States, analyze the differences, and present their findings and hypotheses in culturally-appropriate ways to Chinese students during a video conferencing session.
  + Discussion: What is one way that this task could be extended to further consider diverse experiences?
    1. **Discussion/Reflection**

The following questions are designed to help you discuss or reflect on what you have learned so far in this module. If you are completing this module in a group, you may find it helpful to talk about these questions with your colleagues and take this opportunity to share your insights and experiences. If you are completing this module on your own, you can independently reflect on these questions and consider ways in which they apply to your own teaching context and experiences.

The questions for discussion and reflection are:

* What is your experience setting goals or objectives for Intercultural Communication?
* What Intercultural Communication learning activities or assessment tasks have you used in your classroom, and which would you like to use more?
* What resources do you find most helpful for teaching or assessing Intercultural Communication?
  1. **Part 5: Conclusion**
     1. **What did we learn in this module?**

We have now come to the end of Module 8. Let’s summarize the topics this module covered. In Module 8, we learned what Intercultural Communication is and why it is important to develop proficiency in this mode; what the Intercultural Communication Standards are, and how to address the Intercultural Communication Standards in your classroom.

You can check the Resources section for a one-page summary of the topics covered in this module.

* + 1. **Check for Learning**

Complete the following check for learning to see what you have learned in this module. After answering each question, click submit to check your answer against the expected response. You will have two opportunities to answer the questions correctly, and if you do not answer correctly, you will see the correct response before being prompted to move on to the next question.

* + - 1. **Question 1**

True or false: Intercultural Communication involves interacting appropriately with others from your culture.

* + - 1. **Question 2**

What are Novice Low to Novice Mid students able to do in the Intercultural Communication mode? Select all that apply.

* + - 1. **Question 3**

Match the Function with the appropriate proficiency level.

* + - 1. **Question 4**

Which of the following is important for developing and advancing Intercultural Communication skills? Select all that apply.

* + - 1. **Question 5**

Which of these Functions are present at the Intermediate level? Select all that apply.

* + - 1. **Question 6**

How might the Intercultural Communication Standards be used to support CASEL’s core SEL competencies?

* + - 1. **Question 7**

How might the Intercultural Communication Standards be leveraged to support Massachusetts’ vision for Deeper Learning?

* + 1. **What’s next?**

We hope you will also join us for the next module, Module 9: Overview of Linguistic Cultures Standards.

* + 1. **Thank you!**

Thank you for completing this module and showing your commitment to providing high-quality world language education by learning more about the 2021 Massachusetts World Languages Framework!