

COM 3352 Intercultural Communication Syllabus

Instructor: István Ottó Nagy (*See last page for bio sketch*)
Tel: +36 (30) 9336950 (mobile)
E-mail: nagy.istvan.otto@gmail.com
Office hours: 1 hour before or after the class meets, upon request

Course Description and Objectives

We live in an increasingly globalized world. Technology enables us to do business just as easily with our neighbors as with a businessperson thousands of miles away from us. Knowing how to navigate cultural differences is an increasingly valuable skill that will make you a more valuable employee. Encounters among members of different cultures frequently fail simply because of basic cultural differences, such as the importance of time, proper greetings, or even the use of eye contact.

Therefore, this course is an introduction to foundational and contemporary concepts, practices, and processes of intercultural communication, methods of critical intercultural analysis, and the scholarly field of intercultural communication. Students in this course will engage in a critical assessment of intercultural communication theories and applications. This course will address topics ranging from the contested nature of culture and cultural definitions; globalization, intercultural conflict, and modern technological influences in intercultural practices; representation of cultures and identities in popular media; and the relationship between languages, power, and culture.

This course is designed to help students to become a better communicator in cross-cultural situations. Students will learn about barriers to successful communication that involve cultural differences. They will also learn more about their own communication style and how it can be developed to facilitate more successful intercultural encounters.

Students will learn to apply various skills that they have developed in other (communication) courses, including the ability to analyze an audience and the context of the communication in an intercultural encounter. Likewise, skill and insights into message development and the ways in which different groups receive and interpret messages will take on new meaning when applied in an intercultural context.

At the end of this course students will understand the relevance of intercultural communication to all organizations and endeavors, and why it matters strategically. The course introduces all of the main themes and explains why the management of the intercultural communication is a vital ingredient for multinational corporate success.

Learning occurs through many different activities and in different ways for different people—so in this class we will draw upon many different approaches to facilitate learning. A few examples include: case studies, group projects, individual assignments, personal reflection, analysis and evaluation, group discussion and lecture.

We will engage these topics through multiple and diverse readings, examples from television and film, reflexive writing assignments, research activities, class discussions, and in-class activities.

In summary, the primary objective of this course is

- to understand and engage the theories, practices, and field of intercultural communication;

- to develop skills to research, observe, and analyze intercultural communication in everyday life, popular media, and other mediated discourse;
- to develop skills to engage in mindful, reflexive, and accountable dialogue through difference;
- to identify and understand various benefits and challenges involved in competent and socially just intercultural communication

NOTE: This syllabus is subject to change throughout the semester. Sometimes we need more or less time on a particular topic, thus, the instructor reserves the right to make changes to assignment, deadlines and required readings. All such changes will be communicated via email and in class.

Learning outcomes

Students will be able to:

- define and identify intercultural communications;
- define major concepts and theories of intercultural communication
- identify and analyze both the similarities and differences between two cultures;
- describe the differences between high- and low-context cultures;
- identify nonverbal codes and predict the impact of these codes in understanding cultural competence;
- apply cultural variations in interpersonal relationships;
- compare and contrast individual communication preferences with demands of global citizenship.

Working through the course students will be able to:

- develop a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate attentiveness to and analysis of diversity and equity;
- apply and evaluate modes of academic inquiry, creative expression, or results of research to problems in historical and contemporary global contexts;
- articulate connections among local, national, and international contexts and evaluate the ways that historical and contemporary global influences affect their current situations;
- integrate and synthesize Core knowledge, enabling them to analyze open-ended problems or complex issues;
- to engage in systematic research processes, frame questions, read critically, and apply observational and experimental approaches to obtain information.

Reading list

The following material is recommended for the course:

- The Culture Map – Breaking Through the Invisible Boundaries of Global Business by Erin Meyer / Public Affairs / New York / 2014
- The Culture Map – Decoding How People Think, Lead and Get Things Done Across Cultures by Erin Meyer / Public Affairs / New York / Int'l Edition / 2015

Assessment

How the Class Sessions Will Be Conducted

The instructor is committed to creating an environment that thrives on collaboration and mutual respect and I needs the help of all participants to reach this goal.

A. Lectures

All associated presentations and/or lecture notes (in .pdf format), which cover the material in each class, will be available to the students either electronically, or from the instructor as handouts before / during / after classroom session(s). Ensure you listen to the lectures.

B. Individual Participation and Class Discussion

To ensure successful course completion, regular attendance and participation is expected. Reading and homework assignments will be assigned in class.

The success of the class is highly dependent on careful student preparation prior to class and active student involvement during class discussions. Question and answer sessions will be conducted during the scheduled class times, based on the week's lecture topics. All discussions and questions will be placed in their respective topics for ease of understanding by all class members.

All class members are invited to fully participate in the discussions, assisting their class members when they are able. This means class members may answers questions if they know the answers.

Participation is defined as actual work conducted in the classroom and in discussion groups. Class participation grades will be based both on quality and quantity of participation in class discussions and on attendance in class.

Class Attendance

Regular and punctual attendance at every class session is a requirement: each class covers material not found in the readings. Furthermore, participation in class discussions is an important part of the learning experience for all students as well as a factor in grading. If illness or another unusual circumstance requires missing a class, please do your best to inform me (or, if I cannot be reached, the Program Coordinator) in advance.

Group Work

Many of the assignments in this course may require/permit group work. Please be advised that team members bear responsibility for their own success as well as that of the work group. In general the instructor expect teams to manage their own conflict. In exceptional cases, however, a group may choose to oust a member. But first, the group must make serious attempts to resolve the difficulty, retain a written record of the problem and efforts to resolve it, alert and seek the counsel of the instructor, demonstrate consensus among the rest of the group that drastic action is required, and provide a formal warning to the member prior to expulsion. There are significant consequences to being ousted from a group, and the expelled member is responsible to immediately make arrangements with the instructor to complete the full team assignment(s) individually.

Grading Scale and Evaluation of Student Work

In this course, grades will NOT be given as rewards for coming to class, completing readings and homework in a timely fashion, or having a great attitude. These are expected from all students: see above!

Grades will serve as both a quantitative and qualitative assessment of the quality of work of the student

The following scale represents how grading of student work will be done and represents the level of the instructor's expectations for the class.

- A = Exceeds course requirements. Exceptionally well-prepared and executed completion of assigned work, indicating significant effort, individualized creative style, and demonstrating a thorough grasp and mastery of the related material. For written assignments: writing is insightful and error-free; message is communicated clearly and directly.
- B = Meets, and at times, exceeds course requirements. Student demonstrates fundamental mastery of the material. Work is creative, well-prepared, and demonstrates considerable effort. Is distinctly superior to an average or "C" effort. For written assignments: writing is generally effective with respect to clarity, directness, and conciseness; some uneven or awkward passages are apparent, as are a few errors in grammar or punctuation.
- C = Meets course requirements. Satisfactory completion of assigned work at a level of effort and competency normally expected of the majority of students (i.e., basic completion, average performance, reasonable effort and preparedness). Student demonstrates minimum mastery of the material. This is average work that fails to stand out in any way. For written assignments: writing is reasonably clear, concise, and direct; uneven or awkward passages are apparent, as are multiple errors in grammar or punctuation.
- D = Basic course requirements are only partially met. Student does not demonstrate minimum mastery of the material. Receiving this grade indicates the unsatisfactory completion of assigned work, either through misperceived objectives or the failure to grasp key concepts. This work is below average. For written assignments: The message is not communicated clearly, directly, or concisely. There is considerable unevenness or awkwardness in passages, and work is characterized by errors in grammar or punctuation.
- F = Basic course requirements are not met. Student demonstrates little or no mastery of the material. Receiving this grade indicates either a failure to complete the assigned work, or failure to grasp key concepts due to lack of reasonable effort. Work is below the minimum level of acceptance. For written assignments: Writing lacks style, content, and format associated with a college-educated individual.

The instructor reserves the right to adjust the scale, that is, to grade on a "curve", should he find that significantly more than the usual number of students would not pass the course under the indicated grading scale or should the distribution of the grades represent an unrealistic pattern.

Academic Integrity

The Instructor expects all students to adhere to the fundamental principles of academic integrity in any and all behaviors associated with their course work and otherwise, as stated in the Honor Code (see Student Handbook). Attempted cheating of all forms is treated extremely seriously and can result in dismissal from the University.

Brief Bio of the Instructor

István Ottó Nagy is leading his own consultancy firm (since 2012), providing specialized consultancy programs and projects, individual and group coaching and tailored training session for executives in multinational and Hungarian organizations. Previously he was the partner of Ernst & Young, leading the Firms' Advisory Services in Hungary. Prior to joining Ernst & Young he was a Senior Manager of Deloitte. Before that, he was senior manager of A.T. Kearney and he spent several years in the Business Consulting division of Arthur Andersen. Nagy is an adjunct faculty of the CEU (*Business School*) since 1996. He teaches regularly in various executive, post-graduate and graduate courses, including various MBA courses.

Nagy holds a Master of Science (in Electrical Engineering) from the Technical University of Cluj (Romania) and an M.B.A. from the University of Tulane (USA). He is a Certified Management Consultant since 1996.

For further details please check <http://www.linkedin.com/in/ionagy>

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