

COMM/BUS 360 COMMUNICATING ACROSS CULTURES: THE INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS CONNECTION

Fall 2023

Course Instructor: Dr. Michael Nevradakis

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Class Times: Monday & Wednesday 17:15-18:50

Office hours: Online, by appointment

Course Description

This course is about human communication in an increasingly integrated global economy. As entrepreneurship continues to boost its international character, people become travelers across different sociocultural and economic environments. The goal of business strategies and executives alike is to make things work in diverse cultural contexts, having to deal with local rules and particularities, habits and processes.

Course Approach

Approaching the field is a multi-disciplinary task. Therefore, this course borrows elements from communications, culture, management and business. It adopts a multi-dimensional approach to the subject matter, introducing topics such as cross-cultural communication, cultural intelligence, negotiations across cultures, workplace social communication, culture in virtual teaming, etc.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Understand the dimensions of culture and key theories of intercultural communication. • Analyze aspects of cultural differences in communication through real-life experience and case studies.
- Critically discuss major factors that influence cross-cultural communication.
- Understand the role culture and cultural difference play in business, professional, and organizational environments.
- Demonstrate their ability to analyze the value of human interaction at the workplace and internal communication systems.
- Develop required skills in communicating and operating effectively across cultures.
- Acquire the ability to efficiently and professionally communicate in an intercultural environment.
- Be able to apply various verbal and non-verbal communication methods in professional activities and resolve conflicts/problems in an intercultural environment.

Course Requirements

Midterm examination: A take-home examination with a “twist”: you will complete, at home, one of the end-of-chapter activities from SIX of the chapters that we have covered so far during the term. The choice of activities and chapters is up to you, but it must be six activities from six different chapters. Each activity is to be completed thoroughly as per the guidelines set forth in the textbook. Due date: Wednesday, Oct. 18.

Final examination: A take-home examination with a “twist”: you will complete, at home, one of the end-of-chapter activities from SIX of the chapters that we have covered so far during the term. The choice of activities and chapters is up to you, but it must be six activities from six different chapters. You may not submit activities for chapters for which you submitted responses for the midterm examination. Each activity is to be completed thoroughly as per the guidelines set forth in the textbook. Due date: Tuesday, Dec. 12.

1st Assignment [Teams of 2]:

Consider the different management styles in different cultural contexts. Select one, identify cultural characteristics and particularities in communication. Use the appropriate theoretical framework to support your analysis.

Step 1: Form a 2-member team and choose a culture-specific type of management style. Step 2: Gather and synthesize information from credible sources (academic or high-profile independent research institutes and organizations)
Step 3: Provide a fully referenced analysis on the topic (min 1,000 words)
Step 4: Prepare a 6-minute presentation to class.

Deadline for delivery of paper: Monday, November 6
Date of class presentation: Monday, November 6

2nd Assignment:

Critically analyze the effects of digital technology on cross-cultural communication. Select a corporate application, system or technique and discuss its role in enhancing communication across cultures. Use academic and other credible references to support your arguments. Deliver a fully referenced 1,500-word paper and prepare a 6-minute presentation to class.

Date of class presentation: Wednesday, December 6 (feedback will be provided)
Deadline for delivery of paper: Thursday, December 14

Notes:

To receive credit for an assignment, you must turn it in at the beginning of class on the due dates specified. No late assignments will be accepted. Unless otherwise specified, all submitted work must be your own, original work. Any excerpts from the work of others must be clearly identified as a quotation, and a proper citation provided.

Evaluation and Grading

Your grade for this course will be based on the following distribution:

Percentages

Assignment 1: **25%**
Assignment 2: **25%**
Midterm exam: **20%**
Final exam: **20%**
Attendance and participation: **10%**

Evaluation Criteria - Course Assignments

Grades are intended to give you a sense of the quality of a particular piece of work. Specifically:

An "A" paper will do all of the following:

- Carefully and thoroughly analyze the existing literature.
- Carefully and thoroughly evaluate the various viewpoints.
- Reach judicious conclusions, which are fully substantiated.

A "B" paper will do a couple of the following:

- Reasonably analyze the existing literature.
- Offer evaluation of the evident viewpoints.
- Reach a number of conclusions, which are substantiated.

A "C" paper will do many of the following:

- Fail to present the existing literature.
- Misinterpret readings, evidence and arguments.
- Offer a superficial evaluation of the evident viewpoints. - Reach a number of fallacious conclusions.

CYA Regulations and Accommodations

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all class meetings, on time, and to have prepared any assigned tasks for that day. Unexcused absences will directly affect grades. The class meets twice a week, so missing classes would result in gaps in the learning process.

CYA regards attendance in class and on-site (in Athens or during field study trips) as essential. Absences are recorded and have consequences. Illness or other such compelling reasons which result in absences should be reported immediately to the Student Affairs Office.

Class participation is also strongly encouraged. The classroom is meant to be an inclusive environment where each student's input is welcomed. Students are expected to come to the class prepared to participate in discussions, to share their experiences and perspectives that are relevant to the course material, and to ask questions.

Academic Accommodations

Policy on Original Work

Unless otherwise specified, all submitted work must be your own original work. Any ideas taken from the work of others must be clearly identified as quotations, paraphrases, summaries, figures etc., and accurate internal citations and/or captions (for visuals) as well as an accompanying bibliography must be provided (Check the Student Handbook, pg. 7).

Use of Laptops

In-class or onsite use of laptops and other devices is permitted if this facilitates course-related activities such as note-taking, looking up references, etc. Laptop or other device privileges will be suspended if devices are not used for class-related work.

Class Schedule

Day Meeting dates Topic / Readings / Assignments Due

Browaey's & Price, Chapters 1-2:

1, 2, 3 Sept. 4, 6, 11

**Introduction to intercultural
organizational communication**

Determinants of culture in business

**Dimensions of culture: Hofstede, GLOBE
project**

4, 5 Sept. 18, 20 **Browaey's & Price, Chapters 3-4: Business cultures
around the world**

Browaey's & Price, Chapters 5-6:

6, 7 Sept. 25, 27 8, 9 Oct. 2, 4*

**Browaey's & Price, Chapters 9-
10:**

10, 11 Oct. 9, 11 12 Oct. 16

**Cultural dimensions and
dilemmas Culture and styles of
management**

Browaey's & Price, Chapters 7-8:

**Culture and corporate strategy
Cultural change in organizations
International marketing
management**

**Culture and corporate
structures
Culture and leadership**

**Browaey's & Price, Chapter 11:
International marketing
management Midterm
examination review session**

13 Oct. 18 **Midterm examination** Browaey's & Price,

Chapters 12-13:

14, 15 Oct. 30, Nov. 1
Cultural diversity in

**organizations Business
communication across cultures**

16 Nov. 6 **Assignment #1 due, in-class presentations**

Browaey's & Price, Chapters 14-15:

- 17, 18 Nov. 13, 15 19, 20 Nov. 20, 22 21, 22 Nov. 27, **Browaey's & Price, Chapter 18; Mead & Andrews, Chapter 6**
Developing intercultural communicative competence
Cultural intelligence & corporate strategies in a multicultural environment
- 29 **Mead & Andrews, Chapter 6; other reading(s) TBA**
Corporate social responsibility: philanthropy, marketing or something else?
Business communication in an online/digital/remote environment
- 23 Dec. 4
Barriers to intercultural communication
Negotiating intercultural
Browaey's & Price, Chapters 16-17:
Working with international teams
Conflicts and cultural differences
- 24 Dec. 6 **I n-class presentations for assignment #2**
Final examination review session
- Dec. 12 **Final examination due (finals week, no class meeting)**
- Dec. 14 **Assignment #2 due (finals week, no class meeting)**

N.B.: Note that the schedule is tentative and subject to change. Changes will be announced in class and online. For instance, the schedule, in terms of subjects and readings, may be subject to change to benefit student learning and to keep up to date with current research.

* Class may take place online via Zoom.

Course Bibliography

>> CORE READINGS:

- Browaey's, M-J, Price, R. (2011). Understanding Cross-Cultural Management. Harlow: Pearson Education.
- Liu, Shuang, et al. (2023). Introducing Intercultural Communication. Available from: VitalSource Bookshelf, (4th Edition). SAGE Publications, Ltd. (UK).
- Mead, R & Andrews, T. (2009). International Management: Culture and Beyond. London: Wiley.

>> SUGGESTED READINGS (BEYOND COURSE REQUIREMENTS):

- DeVito, J. (2013). The Interpersonal Communication Book. 13th ed. Boston: Pearson.
- Hofstede, G, Hofstede, J. & Minkov, M. (2010). Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind. 3rd Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Trompenaars, F. & Hamden-Turner, C. (1998). Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Diversity in Global Business. New York: McGraw-Hill.

>> OTHER COURSE MATERIAL / SOURCES:

Additional pieces of literature and information material may be made available in class and online. Each theme corresponds to specific literature material students need to go through before class.