CIEE Prague, Czech Republic

Course title: Identity, Culture and Cultural Misunderstanding in the Czech Context
Course code: ANTH 3005 PRAG
Programs offering course: Central European Studies, Communication, New Media, and Journalism
Language of instruction: English
U.S. semester credits: 3
Contact hours: 45
Term: Spring 2020

Course Description

Although contemporary Czech society is still perceived as very homogenous, topics related to ethnicity, identity, culture and nationalism are nonetheless very vivid. There have been many changes in the ethnic structure of the country since 1918 and ethnic tensions became a strong force that have played an important role in all the changes that took place over the past twenty years. This course will analyze this force and explore the link between political, social and economic changes and intercultural issues from different perspectives. The aim of the course is threefold: an introduction to intercultural issues in the Czech context against a background of social, political and historical change; an introduction to the main topics related to intercultural issues; and a reflection on intercultural competencies. Part of the course will be organized together with a group of Czech students from Faculty of Humanities, Charles University, Department of Civil Society.

Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

• understand issues concerning identity, culture and cultural misunderstanding pertinent to the Czech environment and ways these issues have been addressed
• analyze the ways in which culture influences our daily life in general and in the Czech context specifically
• be able to critically examine the way historical and social contexts influence our perception of intercultural issues
• be able to reflect on personal experience in the context of living abroad for four months

Course Prerequisites

None

Methods of Instruction

To facilitate a genuine experience, the class will employ different methods and tools, including

• teacher’s presentations introducing particular topics
• students’ presentations demonstrating their understanding of a particular topic
• guest speakers
• reflections based on a wide range of training methods used in intercultural training
• field trips and observations
• an intensive workshops with Czech students
• a visit to an English-language performance at the Theatre of the Oppressed

N.B. Course schedule is subject to change due to study tours, excursions, or local holidays. Final schedules will be included in the final syllabus provided to students on site.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Individual Presentation 20%
2. Theatre of the Oppressed reflection 10%
3. Intensive Course Reflection 15%
4. Midterm Paper 15%
5. Final Paper 20%
6. Class Participation 20%
TOTAL 100%

Course Requirements
Individual Presentation

Each student will have a presentation based on a scholarly article and linking theoretical concepts to his/her own reflections of intercultural issues.

Lengths of the presentation – 20 minutes

Theatre of the Oppressed reflection

Each student will submit a reflection on the Theater of the Oppressed performance. Specific guidelines will be provided via Canvas course site.

Length: 750-1000 words

Intensive Course Reflection

Each student will submit a reflection on the workshop themes and activities. Specific guidelines will be provided via Canvas course site.

Length: 1300-1500 words

Midterm Paper

Each student will write two papers – a mid-term paper and a final paper, each divided into two parts: a description of a specific situation and its reflection in the light of the literature and concepts covered during the course. Specific guidelines will be provided via Canvas course site.

Final Paper

Each student will write two papers – a mid-term paper and a final paper, each divided into two parts: a description of a specific situation and its reflection in the light of the literature and concepts covered during the course. Specific guidelines will be provided via Canvas course site.

General parameters:
Midterm paper: 1200-1500 words, use of at least 3 theoretical texts to support the arguments presented.

Final paper: 1700–2000 words, use of at least 5 theoretical texts to support the arguments presented.

Class Participation

Activity in the class will be based on self-assessment and reflection of each class as well as active preparation for each class session, including reading the required texts and the ability to apply presented contexts in class discussions and activities.

CIEE Prague Class Participation Policy

Assessment of students’ participation in class is an inherent component of the course grade. Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Students are required to actively, meaningfully and thoughtfully contribute to class discussions and all types of in-class activities throughout the duration of the class. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared, as directed, in advance of each class session. This includes valued or informed engagement in, for example, small group discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

Students are responsible for following the course content and are expected to ask clarification questions if they cannot follow the instructor’s or other students’ line of thought or argumentation.

The use of electronic devices is only allowed for computer-based in-class tests, assignments and other tasks specifically assigned by the course instructor. Students are expected to take notes by hand unless the student is entitled to the use of computer due to his/her academic accommodations. In such cases the student is required to submit an official letter issued by his/her home institution specifying the extent of academic accommodations.
Class participation also includes students’ active participation in Canvas discussions and other additional tasks related to the course content as specified by the instructor.

Students will receive a partial participation grade every three weeks.

**CIEE Prague Attendance Policy**

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all absences are treated equally regardless of reason for any affected CIEE course. Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursions or events, as well as Internship.

Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

Missing classes will lead to the following penalties:

**90-minute semester classes:**

![Image 1](image1.png)

**180-minute semester classes:**

![Image 2](image2.png)
Persistent absenteeism (students approaching 20% of the total course hours missed, or violating the attendance policy in more than one class) will result in a written warning, a notification to the student’s home school, and possibly a dismissal from the program.

Missing more than 20% of the total class hours will lead to a course failure, and potential program dismissal. This is a CIEE rule that applies to all CIEE courses and is in line with the Participant Contract that each CIEE student signs before arriving on-site.

Late arrival to class will be considered a partial (up to 15 minutes late) or full (15 or more minutes late) absence. Three partial absences due to late arrivals will be regarded as one full class absence.

Students must notify their professor and Program Coordinators (PC) beforehand if they are going to miss class for any reason and are responsible for any material covered in class in their absence.

If missing a class during which a test, exam, the student’s presentation or other graded class assignments are administered, make-up assignment will only be allowed in approved circumstances, such as serious medical issues. In this case, the student must submit a local doctor’s note within 24 hours of his/her absence to the PC, who will decide whether the student qualifies for a make-up assignment. Doctor’s notes may be submitted via e-mail or phone (a scan or a photograph are acceptable), however the student must ensure that the note is delivered to the PC.

Should a truly extraordinary situation arise, the student must contact the PC immediately concerning permission for a make-up assignment. Make-up assignments are not granted automatically! The PC decides the course of action for all absence cases that are not straightforward. Always contact the PC with any inquiry about potential absence(s) and the nature thereof.

Personal travel (including flight delays and cancelled flights), handling passport and other document replacements, interviews, volunteering and other similar situations are not considered justifiable reasons for missing class or getting permission for make-up assignments.
For class conflicts (irregularities in the class schedule, including field trips, make-up classes and other instances), always contact the Academic Assistant to decide the appropriate course of action.

Course attendance is recorded on individual Canvas Course Sites. Students are responsible for checking their attendance regularly to ensure the correctness of the records. In case of discrepancies, students are required to contact the Academic Assistant within one week of the discrepancy date to have it corrected. Later claims will not be considered.

CIEE staff does not directly manage absences at FAMU and ECES, but they have similar attendance policies and attendance is monitored there. Grade penalties may result from excessive absences.

CIEE Academic Honesty Policy

CIEE subscribes to standard U.S. norms requiring that students exhibit the highest standards regarding academic honesty. Cheating and plagiarism in any course assignment or exam will not be tolerated and may result in a student failing the course or being expelled from the program. Standards of honesty and norms governing originality of work differ significantly from country to country. We expect students to adhere to both the American norms and the local norms, and in the case of conflict between the two, the more stringent of the two will preside. Three important principles are considered when defining and demanding academic honesty. These are related to the fundamental tenet that one should not present the work of another person as one’s own.

The first principle is that final examinations, quizzes and other tests must be done without assistance from another person, without looking at or otherwise consulting the work of another person, and without access to notes, books, or other pertinent information (unless the professor has explicitly announced that a particular test is to be taken on an “open book” basis).

The second principle applies specifically to course work: the same written paper may not be submitted in two classes. Nor may a paper for which you have already received credit at your home institution be submitted to satisfy a paper requirement while studying overseas.
The third principle is that any use of the work of another person must be documented in any written papers, oral presentations, or other assignments carried out in connection with a course. This usually is done when quoting directly from another’s work or including information told to you by another person. The general rule is that if you have to look something up, or if you learned it recently either by reading or hearing something, you have to document it.

The penalty ranges from an F grade on the assignment, failure in the course to dismissal from the program. The Academic Director is consulted and involved in decision making in every case of a possible violation of academic honesty.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1
Class Introduction

Expectations, a field trip, activities to introduce each other and share stories about multicultural issues.

Week 2
Class Minorities in the Historical Context

Situation in Czechoslovakia 1910–1938; situation of minority groups during Communism; situation in the Czech Republic after 1989. Relations between minority groups and majority population from international perspective.


Week 3
Class Multicultural Education in the Czech Context

Multicultural education from an international perspective; influence of societal context on implementation of multicultural education; Multicultural education in the light of culturalism and multiple-identities approach.

Moree, Dana. Chapter 1.


Friday: All Day Workshop with Czech Students

Week 4
Class Guest Speaker: Identity

Identity versus ethnicity; ethnicity as a part of multiple identities approach; culturalism versus multiple identities approach and intersectionality.


Week 5
Class Intercultural issues on the background of transformation

Influence of political transformation on the value system; multicultural education as a laboratory of intercultural relations; education system in Czechoslovakia and in the Czech Republic before and after 1989.


Theater of the Oppressed

Week 6
Class Guest Speaker: Culture

Midterm Exam Period
Onion model of culture; symbols, rituals, value system and pre-assumptions. Influence of culture on daily situations.


Week 7
Class Intercultural Sensitivity
Midterm Exam Period

Contact theory; intercultural sensitivity theory; analysis of specific situations in the light of intercultural sensitivity theory.


Week 8
Class Integration

The link between assimilation, integration, marginalization and segregation from the perspective of minority and majority groups. Integration in the light of daily situations; integration in education system, the case of the Czech Republic.


Week 9
Class Processes of exclusion and Power issues

Power as a means of segregation; exclusion from the perspective of group dynamics; ethnicity as a factor of exclusion; visibility versus in-visibility as part of processes of exclusion.

Week 10
Class Intercultural Communication

Communication models; culture as the third dimension of communication; cultural misunderstandings; analysis of specific situations in the light of the introduced theoretical concepts.

Week 11
Class Stigma and Racism

Intercultural evening from 7 till 10 pm in CIEE together with Czech friends and colleagues.

Theory of stigma; macroaggressions; stigma and racism; victims and oppressors in the light of the stigma concept. Methods of overcoming exclusion and hate speech.


Week 12
Class Methods How to Work with These Topics

Intercultural issues in education system and as a part of citizenship education; culture versus structure in concrete situations.


Week 13
Class Final Exam Week
Final reflection

No individual presentations.

Final paper

Course Materials
Readings