CIEE Rome, Italy

Course title: Intercultural Communication and Leadership
Course code: (GI) COMM 3301 ROIT
Programs offering course: Rome Open Campus Block
Open Campus Track: Communications, Journalism, and New Media
Language of instruction: English
U.S. semester credits: 3
Contact hours: 45
Term: Fall Block I 2020

Course Description

In this class, students will develop skills, knowledge, and understanding that will help them communicate and engage more appropriately and effectively in Rome, Italy as well as in other intercultural contexts. Students will explore various topics in intercultural communication in the context of the study abroad experience and will practice intercultural learning processes to apply when working across difference in a wide variety of contexts. Students will increase their own cultural self-awareness, relate culture-specific knowledge to intercultural communication theories and research methods, strengthen their ability to recognize and bridge cultural gaps, and develop intercultural leadership skills to help them become more effective in an interdependent world. Students will be assessed via assignments and activities that include: reflective writing, collaborative discussions, individual or group presentations, analysis of readings, and in-person participation.

Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

- Increase their own self-awareness, particularly their cultural self-awareness.
- Develop a deeper understanding of the field of intercultural communication and intercultural concepts/theories and their relevance to their own experience in the host culture(s).
- Increase their ability to recognize and bridge cultural gaps.
● Develop an intercultural leadership practice that helps them translate their culture-specific and culture-general knowledge into moment-to-moment competence.

Course Prerequisites

None, apart from an open mind and a sincere interest in developing intercultural competence which will involve a deep level of self-reflection.

Methods of Instruction

Learning will involve in-class exercises, active reflection, discussion, readings, fieldwork, lectures, and site visits that help students engage in the local culture on a deeper level.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Fieldwork Assignments (3) 20%
2. Critical Analysis Papers (3) 20%
3. Homework (IDI, readings, etc.) 25%
4. Final Digital Storytelling Project 20%
5. Class Participation 15%
   TOTAL 100%

Course Requirements

Fieldwork Assignments (3)

As part of this course, students will understand the purpose and appropriate methods used to engage in independent fieldwork which will include participant observation, interviewing, and ethnographic writing. As part of the fieldwork component, students are required to identify a Cultural Partner at their CIEE location–someone who has been a resident of the host culture for many years.

Submission due dates for each one are listed in the schedule. They will be graded on the depth of reflection and application of course concepts to students’ personal experiences. Each assignment should be 500-600 words.

Fieldwork Assignment #1: Spend at least 60 minutes observing a public space in your host culture. It can be at a local café or a park, visiting a market, shopping in a
store, or any high traffic area in your city. Take extensive field notes and comment on your initial response to the new environment/culture. What do you see, hear, feel, smell? What similarities and differences do you observe between your host country and your home culture? How did you feel as you participated in this activity? What surprised you? What insights did you gain? The language should be very descriptive and precise to help you articulate what you are observing.

Fieldwork Assignment #2: Complete the Personal Values activity with your Cultural Partner and take field notes immediately after. Based on your notes, reflect on insights you learned about your Cultural Partner’s values. In what ways are they similar or different to the cultural dimensions with which the dominant culture typically identifies? In what ways are they similar or different to your own cultural values to which you subscribe?

Fieldwork Assignment #3: Interview your Cultural Partner about the concept of leadership. What does it mean to be a leader? What are leadership skills? Who does your Cultural Partner consider to be a leader and why? Based on your detailed field notes, provide a critical and reflective analysis.

Critical Analysis Papers (3)

Students will be required to complete three Critical Analysis Papers. These short analytical writings provide students with the opportunity to reflect upon the class material and to critically analyze and apply materials from class and the readings to their experiences in the host culture. Critical Analysis Papers should be 650-750 words each, 1.5 spaced, with 12pt Times New Roman font. Students must cite at least 3 academic sources that contextualize some aspect of intercultural communication in the context of their host country for each paper. Additional details for each topic can be found on the Canvas assignment page. Due dates for each paper are listed in the schedule.

Topics for Each Critical Analysis Paper:

1. Culture in Context
2. Self-Awareness
3. Intercultural Growth

Homework (IDI, readings, etc.)
Homework will include assigned readings and activities to complete outside of class. Students are responsible for completing the homework assignments and asking for clarification when needed.

The IDI is an online assessment tool that measures our intercultural development. It contains 50 questions and takes about 20 minutes to complete. All ICL students take the IDI at the beginning and the end of the course. The student’s final grade will not be based on the results of the IDI, but they must complete it twice in order to pass the course. The instructor will provide students with the login in information. The results allow CIEE to analyze the effectiveness of the ICL curriculum and measure the overall intercultural learning of our students. If you are interested in receiving your scores, please let your instructor know so that you can schedule a 60-minute individual debrief with an IDI Qualified Administrator.

Final Digital Storytelling Project

As a final capstone for this course, students will create their own Digital Story. Digital Storytelling involves short (three- to five-minute) first-person stories embedded with images, videos, and any other visual means. Students will choose one of the four key learning areas of the course (self awareness, cultural literacy, cultural bridging, and personal leadership) and apply this specific theme to their own narrative of the study abroad experience. Combining images and audio, students will create a using iMovie (Apple), Apple Clips, Microsoft Photos, Shotcut (all free to download), or another video editing app. As part of the project, students will submit their final script during Week 9. Additional instructions will be available on Canvas.

Class Participation

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. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared in advance of each class session and to have regular attendance. Students must clearly demonstrate they have engaged with the materials as directed, for example, through classroom discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.
Regarding late submissions of coursework/assignments

As per the CIEE Participant Contract, late submissions of coursework / assignments during the course of the term of study are not accepted. Truly exceptional circumstances causing a student to request special consideration to submit an assignment late must be approved by the Center Director / Academic Director—individual professors do not have the authority to grant exceptions.

Attendance

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all absences will result in a lower participation grade for any affected CIEE course. Due to the intensive schedules for Open Campus and Short Term programs, absences that constitute more than 10% of the total course will result in a written warning.
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.

For CIEE classes, excessively tardy (over 15 minutes late) students must be marked absent.

Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as to any required field placement. Students may not miss placement/work hours at an internship or service learning site unless approved in advance by the Academic Director and placement supervisor. All students must complete all of the requisite 100 minimum work hours on site at the internship or service learning placement to be eligible for academic credit.

Students who miss class for personal travel, including unforeseen delays that arise as a result of personal travel, will be marked as absent. No make-up or re-sit opportunity will be provided.

Attendance policies also apply to any required class excursion, with the exception that some class excursions cannot accommodate any tardiness, and students risk being marked as absent if they fail to be present at the appointed time.

Absences for classes will lead to the following penalties:
N.B. Course schedule is subject to change due to study tours, excursions, and local holidays. Final schedules will be included in the final syllabus provided to students on site.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1
Class: 1.1 Culture & Ethnographic Fieldwork

Introduction: defining culture, Brave Spaces, and foundations of ethnographic fieldwork.

Students will be introduced to some of the types of activities and discussions in which they will be asked to engage, review the syllabus while also reflecting on the local educational culture, and establish a set of class expectations and rules that will help create the type of atmosphere needed to facilitate their learning.
Perception and Suspending Judgment

The class will start with an interactive lecturette that draws on the Bennett reading, further explains the focus and goals of the course, and discusses the topic of perception. Following this, we will introduce a method for suspending judgment so students become more aware of how they are perceiving the host culture and how they might do so in a more interculturally competent way.

Due: Complete Intercultural Development Inventory Pre-Assessment


Week 2

Class: Who am I in the context of this experience?

2.1

How do I learn? Discussion of Digital Stories

In this class, students will learn about the experiential learning cycle and how this help make the most out of their time abroad. Students will do an activity in which explore their preferred learning styles and discuss how to adapt other styles in order to maximize their ability to make sense out of their time abroad. Lastly, students will examine concepts and the impact of Digital Storytelling while exploring the appropriate digital tools to use in preparation for the final project.

Due: Fieldwork Assignment #1
Identity in Context

This class enables students to think critically about their own identities and how certain aspects of their identity configuration may influence and/or be influenced by their experience abroad. The class will start by facilitating an identity activity, then discuss the “intensity factors” identified in the Paige reading and which of these are having the biggest effect on the students’ experiences. We will also discuss the Personal Values activity associated with Fieldwork Assignment #2.


Dimensionalizing Cultures – Cultural Value Patterns

Students continue to reflect on the concept of culture and how it applies to their experience abroad. An important part of this lesson involves increasing students’ cultural self-awareness. Whether they were born
and raised in the United States or have only been a resident there for a short time, students can benefit from reflecting on prominent values in the U.S. and considering how residents of the host culture might view the U.S. and/or U.S. Americans.

Secondly, students are introduced to cultural dimensions, a framework commonly used to conceptualize the differences and similarities between cultures. These ideologies are used to compare how people in various cultures tend to approach particular concepts (such as time and power distance). We adopt a critical approach to dimensionalizing cultures as these patterns are not meant to categorize or label individuals but as a way to understand and organize cultural patterns/tendencies and relative relations. We will emphasize that cultural patterns can help students identify some areas to investigate when learning about an unfamiliar place, never to serve as the basis of assumptions about individual people.


Week 3
Class: 3.1 Critical Intercultural Communication

Culture Specific: Understanding the host country
Today’s class is dedicated to analyzing and discussing culture-specific material of the host country with regard to the cultural value patterns discussed in the previous class. Following that, students will spend the majority of this class engaged in an activity that helps them apply the frameworks they have learned to better understand the local culture.

Due: Critical Analysis Paper #1

2-3 culture-specific readings (TBD by instructor)

Class: 3.2

Cultural Engagement Activity

These are opportunities to take the learning outside the classroom to help students understand what they’ve been learning within the local context. As part of the activity, students will participate in a pre-brief and a reflection session in order to directly apply course concepts. The instructor will provide specific details about this activity, which will be prefaced with a pre-brief and concluded with a reflection session.

Class: 3.3

Culture & Communication

Today’s class is explores the intersection of communication and culture. Specifically, this class examines certain communication patterns used in different cultures and the relationship between language and culture. Through interactive exercises and discussion on the assigned readings, students will identify and apply different communication styles.

Due: Fieldwork Assignment #2


Week 4
Class:  4.1  Intercultural Leadership in the Age of Globalization

**Stereotypes, Power, and Privilege**

Through in-class discussion, participating in activities related to stereotypes and cultural generalizations, as well as watching “The Danger of a Single Story,” this class examines the perpetuation and reinforcement of stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination.

Due: Critical Analysis Paper #2


Culture-specific reading (TBD by instructor)

Class:  4.2  

**Conceptualizing Intercultural Competence**

We’ve focused on developing frameworks to better understand cultural difference and similarity. The rest of the course will connect this knowledge as means developing an intercultural leadership practice.
That is, students will integrate what they've learned about self-awareness and cultural literacy into how to behave in interculturally competent ways.


Class: 4.3

Introduction to Personal Leadership

This class introduces students to strategies for practicing intercultural competence. Through discussion and activities, students gain a deeper understanding of the principles and practices outlined in the course, and begin to see how they relate to their own experiences. This class involves using the Critical Moment Dialogue as a means to strengthen students' intercultural competence.


Week 5

Class: 5.1 Intercultural Leadership in the Age of Globalization Continued
Today's class will continue exploring leadership-focused strategies for practicing intercultural competence. Specifically, we explore the Critical Moment Dialogue framework as it relates to the host culture.

Due: Fieldwork Assignment #3

2-3 culture-specific readings (TBD by instructor)

Class: 5.2

**Digital Storytelling: Story Circles**

In this class, students will refine their stories for the final Digital Storytelling Project. The class will start with a brief check-in to get a sense of their progress on the project, and then show a few more examples of effective digital stories. Students will share their stories and share feedback on each other’s stories in small groups through Story Circles.

Due: Draft of script for final project

Class: 5.3

**Culture Shock and Intercultural Adjustment**

Students will discuss key concepts around culture shock and theories of intercultural adjustment. Students will participate in an activity in which they draw on their intercultural adjustment experience, followed by a presentation of two different intercultural adjustment models. The class concludes with in-depth discussions about the application of these frameworks to the students’ personal experiences.


Week 6
Class: Transitioning and Wrap Up
6.1

How can we articulate and use what we’ve learned?

This class signals a departure from the last several classes in which the focus was on bringing together all of the goal areas and practicing intercultural competence. In today’s class, students reflect on their experience during this block, what they have learned, and how they can effectively articulate that to others, whether it be friends and family, a future employer, or a potential graduate school program. The class begins with a brief check-in and stillness practice, followed by a discussion of the two readings, which focus on intercultural skills needed for the workplace and the importance of students being able to articulate how the study abroad experience helped them gain such skills. In the next activity, students reflect back on their time abroad and consider how they can apply what they’ve learned to future intercultural contexts.

Due: Critical Analysis Paper #3


Class: 6.2

Transitioning and Re-Entry

This class prepares students for transitioning to a new culture as well as re-entry into their home culture. We will start the class with a lecturette/discussion about the Storti reading and the transitioning and re-entry process. Students will also complete a guided reflection activity
used to ground their current experiences and prepare for their next intercultural experience, whether it is in a new location, the same destination, or return to their home culture.


Class: 6.3

**Digital Storytelling Viewing Party**

Today’s class serves as the final culmination of the course where students will reflect on their key takeaways from both the course and the study abroad program.

**Digital Story Presentations**

Due: Digital Stories, Complete the Intercultural Development Inventory post assessment online

**Course Materials**

***Readings***


