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: 3.00
Contact hours: 45.00
Term: Spring 2021

Course Description

Although contemporary Czech society is still perceived as very homogeneous, 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 analyzes this force and explores 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.

Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

- Understand and discuss 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;
- Critically examine the way historical and social contexts influence our perception of intercultural issues;
- Critically reflect on personal experience in the context of living abroad for four months employing the concepts and theories covered in class.

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

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.

**Attendance**

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program.

If you will miss a class for any reason, notify the Program Coordinator and your instructor beforehand via Canvas. You are responsible for any materials covered in class during your absence, and except in the specific cases listed below, credit will not be granted for missed assessments.

Excessive absences will result in a notification letter, and finally a warning letter, sent to you and your home school, based on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of course hours missed</th>
<th>Number of CIEE classes</th>
<th>Minimum penalty</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 10%</td>
<td>One to Three 90-min. classes; or One 180-min. class</td>
<td>No penalty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10% - 20%</td>
<td>Four 90-min. classes</td>
<td>Written notification* to the student, followed by a warning letter to the student and home school; 3% reduction in the final grade</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Five 90-min. classes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two 180-min. classes</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 20%</td>
<td>Six 90-min. classes; or Three 180-min. classes</td>
<td>Automatic course failure, and possible expulsion with notification to the home school</td>
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* The notification letters are intended to ensure that you are well advised in advance of any potential for failure or dismissal, so that you can take steps to avoid this.

As the table shows, **missing more than 20% of any class (e.g., due to undocumented illness, travel delays, flight cancellations, over-sleeping, etc.) results in automatic failure of the course.**

If you miss an assessment in class due to an absence, you will be able to make it up in the following instances:

- You provide a relevant doctor's note from a local medical professional to your Program Coordinator within 24 hours of your absence (a scan or photograph sent via e-mail are acceptable)
- A CIEE staff member verifies that you were too ill to attend class.
- You provide evidence of a family emergency to your Program Coordinator.
- You have an approved absence related to the observance of a religious holiday from the Academic Director based on a request submitted before you arrived onsite.

**Please note:** Absences incurred due to documented illness, documented family emergency or the observance of a religious holiday approved before arrival onsite do not count towards the total of absences. Students may self-certify one absence due to illness without providing a doctor's note as long as they notify the Program Coordinator within 24 hours of their absence by e-mail or a text message.

**Other attendance-related policies**

If you transfer from one CIEE class to another during the Add/Drop period, you will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of the new class provided you were marked present for the first session(s) of the original class.

If you are over 15 minutes late for a class, the instructor is required to mark you absent.

In case of class conflicts (irregularities in the class schedule, including field trips and make-up classes), always contact the Academic Department to decide the appropriate course of action.

Please remember to track your attendance on the Canvas Course Sites and report any errors in the record to the Academic Department within one week of the discrepancy date, as later claims may not be considered.

These attendance rules also apply to any required co-curricular excursion, activity, or event, and to for-credit internships.

CIEE staff does not manage absences at partner institutions providing direct enrollment classes (FAMU, ECES and FSV), but they have similar attendance policies and attendance is monitored there. Grade penalties may result from excessive absences.
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.

**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