CIEE Prague, Czech Republic

Course title: Intercultural Communication and Leadership
Course code: COMM 3301 PRAG
Programs offering course: Central European Studies, Communication, New Media, and Journalism, Global Architecture and Design
Language of instruction: English
U.S. semester credits: 3.00
Contact hours: 45.00
Term: Fall 2022

Course Description

This course explores the contemporary host culture through the lenses of intercultural studies. Students will learn about current cultural, societal and political themes in the host city, compare ethnic and racial identities in the host country and the U.S., and explore the experiences of diverse populations within the host country. We will examine the complexity of host culture values, beliefs, and practices and learn to identify the cultural differences and similarities between the host culture and U.S. American cultures. Students will also learn about key intercultural communication theories, frameworks and leadership practices in order to deepen their cultural self-awareness, acquire new perspectives and effectively communicate and interact with culturally different others.

Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

- Understand and competently discuss societal, political and cultural themes as they relate to racial and ethnic identity configurations in the host country.
- Increase self-awareness, particularly cultural self-awareness.
- Acquire 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).
- Recognize cultural differences and similarities between U.S. American and the local culture and develop effective strategies to bridge differences.
- Develop an intercultural leadership practice that helps students translate their culture-specific and culture-general knowledge into moment-to-moment competence.

Methods of Instruction

Learning will involve in-class exercises, active reflection, discussion, readings, field reports, short lectures, and out-of-class activities that help you engage in the local culture on a deeper level. Each class session will involve students completing readings and activities online in Canvas in advance of, during, and after class sessions.

Certain days in the schedule will include expert guest speakers and events pertaining intercultural communication and leadership skills. Throughout the instructional activities, students will be invited to engage in critically constructive conversations in the contemporary context of intercommunity relations in the host environment, the USA, and globally.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Three Response Papers 25%
2. Cultural Comparison Research Proposal Poster 10%
3. Cultural Comparison Research Paper 25%
4. Digital Cultural Analysis Project 25%
5. Participation 15%
TOTAL 100%

Course Requirements
Three Response Papers

These response papers would need to be rooted in/show a clear engagement with the reading, would need to be argumentative in nature, and would need to be shaped around a thesis/position statement. Total Word Count = 2200

• **Response paper #1** (due in first quarter of the course) exploring Self Awareness Word Count = 400 : response weighting = 5%

• **Response paper #2** (due in the second quarter of the course) exploring the Black Lives Matter movement Word Count = 800 : response weighting = 7.5%

• **Response paper #3** (due in the third quarter of the course) exploring intercultural growth Word Count = 1000: response weighting = 12.5%

Cultural Comparison Research Proposal Poster

As a preparatory, formative assignment in advance of the summative research paper (below) students will create and present a research proposal in poster format. The proposal will provide a concise summary of the main elements of the research paper, including:

1. the central research question and sub-questions
2. the proposed methodology
3. a summary of three potential cultural (media based) artefacts for study
4. the bibliography, with three annotated readings

Cultural Comparison Research Paper

This paper would take the form of an argumentative research paper, incorporating instructor and peer feedback on the research proposal poster, which means that students should go beyond a mere one-to-one summary or application of the concept/theme and the film or TV series under consideration and must instead advance and support an original argument about the chosen cultural (media based) artefact film or television show that is grounded in the reading(s) they have selected. Total Word Count = 2500

This research paper should include:

• a title and subtitle;
• an introduction, culminating in a carefully crafted thesis statement;
• one or more paragraphs that unpack (at least) one specific scene from the student’s chosen film, episode, or music video and marshal -- i.e. refer directly to and/or embed in their paper -- specific arguments raised in the readings to buttress the student’s reading and support their thesis statement;
• a conclusion, which may include further/future avenues of approach to the question(s) raised.

Digital Cultural Analysis Project

Students will be asked to analyze a cultural communications artefact, including a newspaper or magazine article that is published in their host culture while the course is in session, and to record their findings in either a 10-minute vlog or podcast episode.

Regardless of the format they choose, students must identify which cultural values or critical concepts are at work in the article, before examining in detail how these values shape how the subject of the article is framed, and how information is presented to the reader. Students should also pay specific attention the ways in which this article hails or interpellates the readers from the host culture, and suggest at least one way in which a reader from outside the host culture might be clued into the cultural superstructure (or dimensions) of the article.

Since students will share their analysis in either a vlog or podcast episode, their presentation style may be informal and conversational. That said, students’ commentary should reflect a close engagement with the cultural or critical concept(s) at work in their chosen article, and should be informed by one or more of the readings discussed in class (although quoting directly from the reading is not required).

Students will post their vlog or podcast recording in Canvas, along with a link to the article or cultural artefact they have chosen to analyze and respond to.
In addition to creating and sharing their cultural analysis project, each student will also be asked to respond to one of their fellow students’ projects. Students will respond during the class session where the vlogs, short films, or podcast episode are presented; this response should address a specific argument raised or point made by the original poster, and may take any form (e.g. a critical question, a point of departure, or a suggestion for shifting the discussion in a new direction).

**Participation**

Participation is defined as meaningful contribution in the classroom, using the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Meaningful contribution requires students to prepare in advance of each class and regularly engage with the resources, discussions, reflective assignments, and all other learning activities. Students are required to demonstrate engagement with course materials, for example, through insightful, constructive comments and by using subject-appropriate terminology in: peer-to-peer feedback (after viewing the presentations of others), interaction with guest speakers, where available, and submissions related to other outside-of-class activities. Students should ensure that submitted commentary balances opinions, general impressions, and specific and thoughtful criticisms or contributions.

During the course there will be key assignments that will also be part of the total participation percentage. These assignments are:

**Who I AM activity:**

Students complete a diagram where they have to identify in as many circles as they can a group that has shaped their values. It can be a significant part of who they are, or something that has influenced how they choose to identify themselves to others. Then students need to fill in some follow up questions that will be used in group work in class. This activity intends to help students identify personal values that will contribute to developing self-awareness.

**Name Game with Cultural Partner:**

Students interview their cultural partner about the origin of their names, the objective of this activity is to identify aspects affecting the choice of their names and analyse the cultural context in the process of giving names in cultures. Students will write approximately one page reporting the results of their interview and conclusions.

**The Danger of the Single Story in Advertising:**

Students need to revise and find an example from an advertising campaign that is a representation of the message from the Ted Talk by C. Ngozi. The objective of this task is to become aware of the power of advertising campaigns in reinforcing one sided stories. Students select the example and then present it in the class or share it in discussion board justifying their option.

**Case studies (2):**

After exploring cultural dimensions and factors of intensity, students are exposed to case studies to read or watch, usually this are short pieces selected by instructor, so group discussion or pair discussion can be facilitated to identify which dimensions are conflicting and propose a few actions that could lead to better managing the something up moments in the cases.

**Crafting a Vision Statement:**

Within the context of personal leadership students will write their vision statement. Students will be given guidelines to craft their vision, so this turns into something personal and authentic that is aligned with their personal commitments and with everything they doing order to guide their choices.

**Critical Moment Dialogue:**

Within the context of personal leadership, students are requested to use the CMD by selecting a something up moment and then do the CMD individually or facilitate it to someone else. Given that this is an elaborate debrief of conflicting cultural moments, this activity is monitored closely by instructor, so the stages of CMD are properly used and useful for the users.

**Reading Comprehension quiz:**

Students take a quiz in canvas on the content from the first reading of the class.

Students show their summarizing skills by designing a mind map for these key readings of the course. By doing so, they find the connections in the concepts explained by the author and show their understanding of the content of the readings.


Discussions

In order to use the theory, concepts learned in the readings and in instructor' presentations, discussions will follow co-curriculars or guest speakers. Being able to exchange ideas and provide arguments towards current issues affecting how societies, cultures and groups interact is part of the path in developing cultural competence. These discussions are in class-discussions and online in Canvas. Students should anticipate contributing to 4 to 5 discussions online in Canvas, in addition to discussions in the classroom.

Attendance

To encourage engaged learning, regular class attendance is required throughout the program. This includes any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as internship, service-learning, or other required field placement.

An excused absence in a CIEE course will only be considered if approved by a CIEE Center Director/Academic Director (not the Instructor), and:

- it is a self-certified absence for illness (only once per course, requires formal request before or within 24 hours, cannot miss assessment worth more than 5% of final course grade)
- a doctor's note from a local medical professional is provided
- evidence of a family emergency is provided
- it is a pre-approved observance of religious holiday

Unexcused absences include personal travel and/or travel delays, as well as missing more than 25% of a single class period (including tardiness and early departure). Assessments missed due to unexcused absences will be marked as zero. Students with over 10% unexcused absences will be contacted by CIEE staff. Students with over 20% unexcused absences will be contacted by CIEE staff, receive a formal warning letter (shared with their home institution) and lose 10% of the final course point total (e.g., a final A grade of 93% will be lowered to a B grade of 83%).

For more detail, please consult your CIEE Academic Manual.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is essential to a positive and inclusive teaching and learning environment. All students are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness, respect, and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own can result in grade penalties or disciplinary action. See the CIEE Student Academic Manual for further information on academic integrity.

N.B. Course schedule and co-curriculars are subject to change. The final duration and distribution of content and assignments will be determined and presented to students at the onset of the course.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1

Class: 1.0 Introduction

Defining culture, Brave Spaces, and foundations of anthropological 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, and establish a set of class expectations and rules that will
help create the type of atmosphere needed to facilitate their learning. Through a series of discussions, the class will approach the concept of culture and the elements that define it. Also, an approach to understanding the importance of intercultural communication and the non-tangible elements at play in cultural interactions will serve as an introduction to the course framework.

Cultural Analogies
Learning Zone
Brave Space Discussion
Activity: Finding a cultural partner

Reading:


Class: 2.0 Perception and Suspending Judgment

The class will start with a lecturette that draws on the Bennett reading that 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 other cultures and how they might do so in a more interculturally competent way.

Engagement Activity: Geertz`s reading comprehension quiz

Readings:

Week 2
Class: What is in a Name?
3.0

During this class students will learn about the layers of culture that determines names of people and the significance in naming. Students will understand why they are named the way they are named and use the same values to determine the naming cultures of other societies and that of their cultural partners.

Engagement Activity: Name Game with Cultural Partner

Readings:

Dweck, Carol. https://www.ted.com/talks/carol_dweck_the_power_of_believing_that_you_can_improve


Class: 4.0 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 with other cultures. Through a series of exercises and activities, the class will explore the associations of their different identities with their culture. This session will also explore the visibility of identities and the way other people perceive them.

Debrief Name Game with Cultural Partner

Engagement Activity: WHO I AM Activity

WHO I AM Activity
**Week 3**

**Leadership Contexts**

This class outlines foundational and contemporary approaches to leadership, including group leadership concepts in organizations (e.g. transformational, transactional, and charismatic leadership, and followership), political leadership, and community leadership.

**Readings:**


**Class: 6.0 **

**Cultural Dimensions**

Students will also be 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.

Debrief Engagement Activity WHO I AM with Cultural Partner

**Reading:**


**Response Paper #1**

**Week 4**

**Culture and National Identity**

Today’s class is dedicated to analyzing and discussing culture-specific material about a different national identity, specifically that of the academic culture of US universities, with regard to the cultural value patterns discussed in the previous class. Through the proposed discussions and exercises, students will learn how to explore an unknown culture applying the frameworks they have learned to better understand aspects of the academic culture of the US.

**Readings:**

Nathan, Rebekah, My Freshman Year, Ch 4 “As Others See Us.” The Classroom Experience (pages 77 - 85).

**Class: 8.0 **

**Culture, Communication, and Community Leadership in Practice**

Today’s class explores the intersection of communication and culture. This session examines certain communication patterns used in different cultures and the relationship between language and culture. Through related exercises and discussions on the assigned readings, students will identify and apply different communication styles.

Engagement Activity: Mind Map with Ting-Toomey reading
Readings:


New York: Oxford University Press.

Response Paper #2

Week 5

Class: 9.0 Culture & Communication

This session examines certain nonverbal communication patterns used in different cultures and their relationship to and culture. Through related exercises and discussions on the assigned readings, students will identify and apply different communication styles.

Readings:


Ting-Toomey & Chung, ‘What are the different ways to communicate nonverbally across cultures?’ (pp. 130-153)

Class: 10.0 Stereotypes and Cultural Generalizations

Through a lecturette and discussion 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. Learners will also examine different types of stereotypes, negative and positive. Through class exercises they will identify statements that are stereotypes and change these statements into cultural generalization statements.

Engagement Activity: Analyze ads and marketing campaigns where single stories are told and how these impact stereotypes and generalizations. Students are expected to bring their own examples taken from home, host or any other cultural context they choose.

Readings:


Cultural Comparison Proposal Poster

Week 6

Class: 11.0 Racial Prejudice in the US

This class will follow on from learning about terms like Stereotypes, Cultural Generalizations, Power and Privilege to learn about Diversity in America. Students will learn about the many aspects of Racial and Ethnic Diversity in America. Students will learn about the US demographics and the views about Diversity in America. Lastly, student will learn about social movements in America that
are active in America that enforce Racial Prejudice or fight against Racial Predjudices.

**Readings:**

*Key ways the U.S. changed in the 2010s | Pew Research Center*

[https://haenfler.sites.grinnell.edu/subcultural-theory-and-theorists/right-wing-subcultures/](https://haenfler.sites.grinnell.edu/subcultural-theory-and-theorists/right-wing-subcultures/)

**Class: 12.0 Black Lives Matter**

This class will examine the #BLM Black Lives Matter: Past, Present and Future phenomenon and how it is affecting the lives of black and minority people in the US.


**Response Paper #3**

**Week 7**

**Class: 13.0 Culture Shock**

Students will discuss key concepts around culture shock and theories of intercultural adjustment. Through several testimonials, students will learn first-hand experiences of US Americans abroad and their challenges when experiencing a reverse culture shock back in the US.

**Reading:**

Ting-Toomey & Chung, ‘What is culture shock?’ (pp. 91-109)

**Class: 14.0 Intercultural Competence**

Developmental model of intercultural sensitivity and IDI- Intercultural Inventory.

Students will analyze stages of the DMIS- Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity with cases of study abroad students and other experiences to comprehend the differences stages between a monocultural mindset and intercultural mindset.

Students will also explore the Intercultural Development Inventory in order to comprehend what it is required to develop intercultural competence.

**Readings:**


**Week 8**

**Class: 15.0 Digital Storytelling and Vlogs/Podcasts: Story Circles**

Students watch previous digital stories and engage in a discussion board that analyses these 3 videos by describing the elements that must be present in a good digital story.


**Cultural Comparison Research Paper**

**Class: 16.0 Introduction to Personal Leadership**

In this session students will apply learnings and knowledge of past sessions to immerse themselves into developing bridging skills like personal leadership. In this class students will draft their vision statements and they will be introduced to what a something up moment is to learn the benefits of managing Critical Moment Dialogue (CMD) process.

Activity: Crafting your Vision Statement

**Reading**
Week 9
Class: 17.0 Practicing with the Critical Moment Dialogue

Students will discuss how to engage with each one of the components of the CMD, using the CMD as a tool for Resolving Cross Cultural or Inter-Personal Conflicts, and exploring practical exercises to master each one of the components: attending to emotion, judgement, physical sensation, cultivating stillness, engaging with ambiguity and aligning with vision.

Students must come to class with their own critical incident to practice the CMD with a partner in class.

Activity: CMD in Class

Reading:


Class: 18.0 Reciprocal and Inclusive Learning in Host Culture Spaces

Faculty will facilitate an out-of-class activity with students which will be connected to a selected reading for the class. Afterward, students will produce a reflective piece based on the article they read and their onsite experience. An example could be a video (if being taught online) or a visit (in being taught in-person) to a museum or a market or any site the faculty would choose. Here, students are asked to examine how a chosen cultural value pattern or patterns, or a communication styles manifest in the intercultural spaces they visit.

Reading


Week 10
Class: 19.0 Digital Cultural Analysis Presentations

Students will showcase their final Cultural Analysis products (vlog or podcast), and respond to questions and commentary from peers.

Digital Cultural Analysis Project

Class: 20.0 Viewing Cultures: Hofstede’s Insights

Students will review and discuss cultural norms and intercultural communication opportunities and challenges in the context of Hofstede’s Insights. The objective in this class is to explore the tools available and the potential in today’s world to promote development of intercultural competence regardless our positions and contexts. This coaching session will be practical, workshop like, and instructor will show examples of continuity of engagement in the path of developing intercultural competence. Resources will be circulated by the instructor.

Readings:

Is it Teasing or Harassment?

https://hbr.org/2015/03/case-study-is-it-teasing-or-harassment

Your meetings can be virtual, but the cultural differences are real

https://medium.com/@Dean_Foster/your-meeting-may-be-virtual-but-the-cultural-differences-are-real-fc0c6d1aa0b0


Week 11
In the final class, students will submit their final discussions to Canvas research paper. The instructor will also provide a review session of the class content, and support students as they reflect on their preparations to study in the USA.

Course Materials

Readings


Nathan, Rebekah, My Freshman Year, Ch 4 “As Others See Us.” The Classroom Experience (pages 77 - 85).


Online Resources


Your Meeting May be Virtual, but the Cultural Differences are Real.

Case Study: Is It Teasing or Harassment?

Does Your Language Shape How You Think?

INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS THE ALT-RIGHT?