

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION & MANAGEMENT

3 credits

NOTE: This course is intended as a compliment to a summer internship.

OVERVIEW

The increase in diversity and globalization require employees to develop intercultural competences to work effectively in international assignments, on cross-cultural teams, with increasingly diverse customers and clients. This course is intended as a compliment to a professional internship. It seeks to provide students with an understanding of effective intercultural communication and management, and the challenges that are likely to be faced while interning (and working) internationally. The course focuses on international organizational behavior and practices.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course students will:

- Understand how people and organizations become infused with culture
- Gain an analytical and conceptual understanding of one's own culture and the differences with the host country's culture
- Understand the influence of culture on attitudes, communication and behavior
- Learn to recognize when cultural differences are affecting work relationships
- Understand the typical reactions to cultural differences, learn to be mindful of those reactions in ourselves, and learn strategies for responding productively and positively to cultural differences

TEXT

Adler, Nancy J. 2002. *International Dimensions of Organizational Behavior*. 4th edition. Cincinnati, OH: South-Western. ISBN: 0-324-05786-5 Paperback.

TOPICS & READINGS

- Introduction
- Effect of Culture on Behavior (Adler, Ch. 1)
- How Culture Affects Organizations (Adler, Ch. 2)
- Communicating Across Cultures (Adler, Ch. 3)
- Creating Cultural Synergy (Adler, Ch. 4)
- European Styles of Negotiation (Adler, Ch. 5)
- Leadership, Motivation, and Decision-making (Adler, Ch. 6)
- Negotiating Globally (Adler, Ch. 7)
- Expatriate Entry and Re-entry (Adler, Ch. 8)
- Expatriate Spouse (Adler, Ch.9)
- Global Careers (Adler, Ch. 10)

- Presentations of Training Packets

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING

Analysis of Personal Culture (20%; due at end of first week)

Students will write an analytical paper on their own culture and compare it with the culture of the host country. The purpose of this assignment is to develop mindfulness and self-reflection about one's culture, because this is a prerequisite for learning about the culture of others. The written report should be no more than 3 pages and include:

- Identification of the culture's key values accompanied by meaningful *behavioral* examples
- Discussion of cultural dimensions that seem to be taken for granted and those which seem to be contested
- Discussion of how one might frame the contrasting culture in the host country in ways that would improve the likelihood of getting along and working together

Manager Interview (10%; due at end of second week)

Students will interview their internship manager. The purpose of the assignment is to help students understand the difficulties and advantages of working in an international environment. The report should be no more than 3 pages, but should include:

- What experiences/issues did the manager identify as most challenging, most satisfying, and most puzzling?
- What advice would the manager give to others managing employees from different cultures to ensure success?

Intercultural Training Project (30%; due at end of fourth week)

Groups of 3-5 students will put together a training packet that could be used to prepare a manager for working in the host country. Each group should assume that they are a team of consultants working for an American firm to provide information on expatriate training for an assignment in the host country. Each group should prepare a training package that would be used to provide expatriates with a foundation for living and working in the host country. The training packet should include:

- (a) A cultural analysis of the host country using the arts, literature and/or mass media of the country. Identify the underlying beliefs and values reflected in these aspects of the culture. Discuss similarities and differences between American and Spanish culture. Do not focus only on history or geography, but on cultural beliefs, values, and norms.
- (b) A description of current practices that American firms use to train professionals for assignments in abroad. Students should draw on available resources (case studies, research, interviews with managers, etc.).

Each group will present their report to the class.

Internship Analysis (20%; due at end of internship)

Students will prepare a 3-page written analysis of their internship. The analysis should not only summarize of what happened during the internship, but should also address the following:

- Did you encounter any problems or opportunities during your internship?
- Were the problems or opportunities related to intercultural communication or something else?

- What was done to fix the problem or pursue the opportunity?
- In your opinion, should anything else have been done?

Class Participation (10%)

Students are expected to complete readings prior to class and to participate actively and constructively in class discussions.

Internship Journal (10%)

Students must maintain a daily journal