



Cross-Cultural Management

Academic Year: **2016/2017**

Semester: **1st Term**

Instructor(s): **Nazli Bhatia**

Course Description:

“In 2005, Thomas Friedman declared, *The World Is Flat* (Friedman, 2005), delineating how most commerce now consists of complex global supply chains spanning multiple countries and cultures involving different parties from around the world. Moreover, many organizations are themselves multinational, comprised of employees from many different cultures, some of whom may be in teams that are co-located, others working in teams that are geographically dispersed.” (Tinsley, Turan, Dillon, & Weingart, 2011). The obvious implication of the increasingly global nature of business is a need for managers and employees to develop cross-cultural literacy.

This course aims to provide you with the tools to develop such cross-cultural literacy. Specifically, we will focus on the fundamentals of cross-cultural differences, cross-cultural considerations in decision-making, leadership, and negotiations as well as the challenges of working in a global environment.

Course Objectives:

1. To develop an understanding of cross-cultural differences in organizational settings
 2. To learn to think across cultural differences
 3. To experiment with different ways of acting in cross-cultural situations
 4. To reflect on the cultural foundations of organizational practices
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Grading:

The principal requirements for the course are class attendance and participation (25%), a group project (25%) and a final exam (50%).

Attendance and Participation

I have structured this class to have as much input as possible from you. In a lot of the classes, we will be doing an exercise or a case, which is intended to enhance your understanding of the concepts covered in the lecture. I will also rely on your feedback when we debrief these exercises so your classmates can also learn from your experiences. That, of course, means that it is crucial that you come to class. To make sure this is the case, my attendance policy is that you automatically lose 3 points out of the 25 allocated for attendance and participation for each unexcused absence. For me to be able to excuse an absence, you need to contact me at least 24 hours before class and present a valid excuse.

I value your contributions to class greatly. I am hoping that they will raise relevant points and move the conversation forward in a constructive and thoughtful manner. Simply talking when it does not contribute in a positive way to the topic under discussion does not represent a contribution to class discussion. But you should certainly feel free to question what I say or the conclusions I draw. Your criticisms, questions, and suggestions are positive contributions to class discussion, especially when you can offer evidence from your own experience or from research.

Group Project: Living Diversity

Your group project will be due the last day of class. You will complete this assignment in groups of about 3 or 4 and present it in class to me and your classmates. The assignment is worth 25 points. A part of this grade will be based on your team performance. Each team member will receive the same grade for this portion. Another portion of the grade will be for your individual performance in the presentation and team members can receive different grades for this portion. Detailed information about this assignment is provided at the end of this syllabus and more information about the grading procedure will be provided in class.

Final Exam

Your final exam will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions.



Notes:

All readings and class slides will be available on the course website on Moodle. Slides will be available immediately after class. In all the assignments you submit for this class, I expect you to abide by the university's Code of Conduct, which has strict policies against plagiarism.

SCHEDULE

Week 1: Introduction and course overview

- What is culture and why is it important?
- Systematically comparing cultures
- Debates around research on culture

Reading:

- Hofstede, G. (1993). Cultural constraints in management theories. *The Academy of Management Executive*, 7(1), 81-94.

Week 2: Cross-cultural negotiation 1

- Introduction to negotiation
- Basic negotiation concepts
- How to prepare for a negotiation

Reading:

- Galinsky, A. D. (2004). Should you make the first offer? *Negotiation*, 7, 1-4.

Week 3: Cross-cultural negotiation 2

- Cross-cultural communication process
- Negotiation process and behavior
- Cultural dimensions and negotiation

Reading:

- Brett, J. M., & Gelfand, M. J. (2005). Lessons from abroad: When culture affects negotiating style. *Negotiation Newsletter*, 8, 3-5.

Week 4: Motivation and leadership across cultures

- Theories of motivation across cultures
- Western leadership theory
- Non-western theories of leadership

Reading:

- Javidan, M., Dorfman, P. W., De Luque, M. S., & House, R. J. (2006). In the eye of the beholder: Cross cultural lessons in leadership from Project GLOBE. *The Academy of Management Perspectives*, 20(1), 67-90.



Week 5: Global Management Challenges

- Multicultural work groups
- International organizations
- International assignments

Reading:

- Polzer, J. T. (2008). Making diverse teams click. *Harvard Business Review*, 86 (7), 20-21.

Week 6: Group Presentations and Wrap-Up.

LIVING DIVERSITY ASSIGNMENT

Imagine you are a team of consultants asked to prepare a training session for a multinational company, which is about to open a new subsidiary in country **X**. Your audience is about 40 employees who are going to be relocated to this country or will work in virtual teams with the nationals of the given country. You know that much of the information can be found online, but the client specifically asks for unique insights for their staff and that is the added value they want you to provide. Your job is thus to describe 2-3 most insightful culture specific insights. Try to explore the paradoxes of the culture you are investigating and include examples to illustrate your points.

Your presentation should be structured in the following way:

- Intro and overview of the country (including a brief summary of the cross-cultural dimension research on that country)
- Overview of the methodology and data collection
- 2-3 selected, most relevant culture-specific insights (include business examples that illustrate your arguments)
- Learning points (please, avoid the does and don'ts, which can be listed in a simple handout and focus on more sophisticated and careful considerations). Think about insights that that will help your viewers in their day-to-day interactions (what should I do when confronted with...)
- Mention 2 key readings that you would recommend to your colleagues (with the explanation why these, rather than other readings best reflect the culture of the country). At least one of the readings should be an academic article.

Guidelines:

- I will be assigning you to your groups.
- You cannot pick a country which a team member is from. For example, if there is a member from France, you cannot pick France as your country to present.
- You are required to interview at least 2 representatives of the country you pick. These can be fellow students, (no team members), expatriates or people living in the given



country, preferably with a background in business. Be creative in selecting and finding your respondents. Please make sure you approach and treat your potential respondents respectfully. Include a full name and an e-mail address or telephone number of your interviewees. We will randomly contact some of them to check if they have participated in your research (this is to prevent students from “creating” some of the respondents).

- Each team member has to participate in the presentation.

The presentation will be graded on:

- Meeting the objectives of the assignment
- Depth of the analysis
- Quality of the research
- Sophistication of your analysis and presentation
- Structure
- Relevance of included material
- Quality of the presentation (are you able to keep your audience’s attention?)
- Creativity and uniqueness (what innovative tools, methods, resources and approaches did you include?)

Make sure that your presentation is interesting, lively and attention grabbing – but above all: informative – for the audience.

Checklist Deliverables:

- Last slide of your presentation should include names and contact details of your respondents Maximum presentation time is 10 minutes.
- Presentation should consist of slides (powerpoint, prezi, pdf etc. and if applicable additional files that can be run with Windows Media Player)
- Include your team name and student numbers on the cover page of the slides.
- If you have embedded other media directly in your presentation, make sure these will run on another computer.
- If you have multiple files, put these files in a zip folder along with your presentation.

Contact(s) and Office hours:

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Office hours: Tuesday 2 pm-4:30 pm or just drop by my office.

Teaching assistant: Ana Teixeira, ambspt@gmail.com
