

LAURIER

Business & Economics



WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY
Waterloo, Ontario

BUSINESS 438H

Cross-Cultural Management

COURSE OUTLINE

Spring 2009

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Office Hours

By Appointment

Students with disabilities or special needs are advised to contact Laurier's Special Needs Office for information regarding its services and resources. Students are encouraged to review the Calendar for information regarding all services available on campus.

Course Objectives

This course is designed to address the dilemmas and opportunities that managers face in multicultural and international work environments. The main purpose is to improve effectiveness in identifying, understanding, and managing cross-cultural situations through:

Increased cultural awareness - The course is designed to add to your understanding of what culture is and how it affects organizational and business practices.

Improved cross-cultural communications skills - The course is also designed to advance your understanding of common cross-cultural communication problems and to develop skills that facilitate more effective cross-cultural communication.

Improved cross-cultural transition skills - Another important objective of the course is to augment your understanding of the issues involved in working and living in a foreign culture and to use this understanding to develop strategies for successfully managing cross-cultural transitions.

Enhanced knowledge of specific cultures and related business practices - Lectures, use of the Internet, discussions, films, and class projects will enable you to become more knowledgeable about specific cultures and related business and management practice

Required Text

Deresky, Helen. International Management: Managing Across Borders and Cultures. Sixth Edition.

Method of Instruction

A combination of lectures, class discussions, use of the Internet, experiential learning exercises, readings and video/DVD material will be used. You are expected to participate actively and regularly in all class discussions and activities...and please consider this as an open invitation to do so. We may also have guest speakers depending on their availability.

If the majority of you have web cameras and microphones, we will also try to carry out at least one virtual class.

Course Requirements

NOTE: ALL SUBMISSIONS SHOULD BE SENT ELECTRONICALLY

Class attendance, participation, and preparation

Class attendance and participation are integral parts of this course. While readings are assigned, classroom time will be devoted primarily to extensions, and discussions of the assigned readings. Your insightful comments and questions about the readings and cases will enhance the learning of the entire class. Thus, class attendance and punctuality are extremely important, and absences will negatively affect your grade. If you must be absent, please be sure to have a classmate obtain for you the notes you would have missed. Please remember that absences from class do not excuse you from any scheduled assignment. Any assignment turned in late, without **prior** permission, will have one letter grade deducted for each day it is late. Please call me on the telephone, or inform me via email, if you expect to be away from class for any session.

We will try as much as possible to discuss the assigned questions, but this may be superseded by the exigencies of time, and the presence of guest speakers.

Participation

Participation encompasses the following:

1. Attending every class
2. Adding value to a discussion based on your reading of the text and outside research, as opposed to “bluffing” your way through by sporadically contributing ideas related to spur-of-the-moment thinking.

Summaries

You are also expected to be familiar with the assigned material for each class and to participate intelligently and actively in the discussion of the material. A member of your group will be expected to complete a one-page summary –about 300 words- highlighting the main points of the chapter and your own attendant research. Such summaries should be sent via email to the instructor by 10:00pm at night before the class. Please note that these will not be returned, but will be used by the instructor in evaluating your progress.

Format of the Summary

The summary should not merely be a condensation of the chapter. Instead, I would request that you find an article on the Internet, a newspaper, news magazine, academic journal or other similar source, which relates to the particular issue for the presentation. The article you find should be summarized such that its relation to the issue under discussion for that day is clear.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Some of the topics to be covered, and the order in which they will be covered, are dependent on the availability of outside resources. As such, participants should be prepared for some flexibility in the timing of assignments and the distribution of readings. Every effort will be made to assure that participants have sufficient time to adequately prepare for classes.

COURSE PROJECT AND CASES

Each participant will be assigned to a project team. This is done both to simulate the kinds of assignments that you can expect to get in work organizations, and to construct groups in such a way that a variety of cultures and backgrounds will be represented in each group.

TERM PROJECT - WRITTEN AREA CULTURE REPORT

Each team will be assigned to do an in-depth analysis of the culture of a particular country or area. The scenario is as follows:

You are a member of a top special projects team for Spectra Enterprises. Spectra has business units involved in a range of products, including such things as Web Page Design, Computer Software and Public Relations activities. Although the firm has expanded over the years into other countries, some serious blunders have been made as a result of not understanding the people and culture of the country. Spectra is now going to make a major, multi-line expansion into another foreign country. This project is extremely important to the firm, and if successful will serve as a model for future international expansion. Because of its current financial position the firm simply cannot afford to make a mistake.

Your mission as a team of consultants is to determine in which country Spectra should invest.

If your group had selected Brazil (as an example), you will have SAMPLE headings as follows. This does not mean that you are restricted to the titles shown here. You can omit or add titles as you see fit.

There will be an eight (8) page limit to your report. This limit does not include the cover page and exhibits. The report should be written in 12 pitch, Arial font. There will also be a maximum of three (3) exhibits. All reports should be sent in on the final day of classes.

AREA CULTURE REPORT

CROSS-CULTURAL MANAGEMENT AREA CULTURE REPORT: COUNTRY PROFILE: BRAZIL

Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Brazil: An Overview

2.1 History and Culture

2.2 Government

2.3 Economy

2.4 Infrastructure and Industry Sectors

2.5 Relations with Canada

3.0 Setting up Business in Brazil

3.1 Benefits of locating in Brazil

4.0 Business Culture in Brazil

4.1 Business Etiquette

4.2 Negotiation

5.0 Cultural Differences

5.1 Power Distance

5.2 Uncertainty Avoidance

5.3 Individualism

5.4 Masculinity

6.0 Business Culture Theory
6.1 Perceived Cultural Context
6.2 Cultural Differences towards Race

7.0 Intercultural Communication
7.1 Official Language
7.2 Body Language and Proxemics
7.3 Kinetics
7.4 Hello's and Goodbye's
7.5 In Conversation
7.6 Humour
7.7 Avenues for Communication
7.8 Artifacts
7.9 Chronemics

8.0 Ethical Standards
8.1 Gifts

9.0 Conclusion

10.0 Exhibits

References

The numbering system is for your benefit and does not have to be included as shown. I have presented them to give you a suggestion for the structure.

Remember that these are only suggestions for headings. You may not have the same and through your originality, may think of other headings. Include what YOU think is relevant. Please use the APA citation method for all your references.

ALTERNATIVE PROJECT: COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING. (CSL).

Instead of the Area Culture study you will have the option of undertaking a "community service-learning" assignment involving one of Laurier's community partners such as the K-W Multi-Cultural Centre. This Centre has the following opportunity: (as described on their website: www.kwmc.on.ca)

One-on One Volunteer Tutor Program

This is a program, which is geared to help newcomers learn the English Language. There are many reasons why people cannot attend an English As Language class, for example, young children at home, employment, or just uncomfortable in a classroom setting.

This program provides the opportunity for newcomers to be coached privately one-on-one, by community volunteers. The tutor and student meet once a week for approximately two hours for a minimum of four months. However, most of the matches last much longer than that. The volunteers, who give so generously of their time, have indicated that it is a very rewarding experience to watch the improvement made by each individual student."

The deliverable for a group in the course that selects this option become community volunteers. Your Oral PowerPoint Study/Presentation would then be a reflection of the experience by answering questions such as the following:

- (1) Based on prior reading (e.g. Internet searches), what assumptions did you have about this newcomer's culture which were either reinforced or changed by your experience in helping this newcomer learn English?
- (2) What attitudes about the culture of this newcomer did you have which were either reinforced or changed because of your experience in helping this newcomer learn English?
- (3) Based on this experience, what are your perceptions of how the culture of the newcomer differs from the culture in Canada, and what a Canadian manager should take into account for effective communication with an individual from this culture?"

Please let me know the option you have selected as a group, as soon as those groups are announced. I will form them and let you know the composition via email or during the second class session. Groups which use this option will not be required to do the Written Area Culture Study, but will be expected to do a PowerPoint Presentation.

ORAL POWERPOINT BASED PRESENTATION

You will be required to present your report in PowerPoint format. This will involve all members of your group. Evaluation will be based primarily on the strength of delivery and audience impact. **Please send me a copy of your PowerPoint presentation via email on the day that you present.**

SUGGESTIONS FOR YOUR RESEARCH IN BOTH THE WRITTEN AND ORAL CULTURE STUDIES

First, do your research. You should make use of whatever secondary data sources (such as articles, books, novels, movies, etc.) are available.

Second, because personal observations and background may be extremely important to your understanding of the foreign culture, you will need to interview a number of business people who have had experience in that country, and who can help you understand the culture, and the differences between that culture and Canada. You will be expected to establish a business contact through the Internet. Your team should do at least two sets (2-3 people each) of interviews (each team member should interview at least one subject), as follows:

- Interviews with business people from the country being investigated. You should get these people to describe their country, its culture, and business practices, and get their perceptions of how their culture differs from Canada
- Interviews with Canadian who have spent time working in the foreign country. What are their perceptions of the differences. How do the perceptions of cultural differences of the two groups differ?
- Use the Internet to your advantage. The Internet is an invaluable repository of vast information. It also allows you the opportunity to make and maintain contact with people in other countries. We will have segments of a session devoted to the understanding of the Internet as well as one focused on the use of PowerPoint.

The PowerPoint presentations should be sent to me via email on the evening following your presentation.

Format of the projects

I expect an appealing presentation which will highlight the country you have selected as you present your findings to the management team (the class) that will be leading this venture.

Your Oral/PowerPoint Presentation Area Culture Study to the management team will last **THIRTY (30) minutes**, to be followed by a question and answer period. These presentations should be thorough, informative, and original. You are encouraged to use whatever media (overheads, slides, music, food) you think are appropriate. Please use the APA style of citations for your references.

Evaluation of the Projects

The template for evaluation is shown below:

ORAL POWERPOINT-BASED PRESENTATION

Components	REQUIREMENTS	COMMENTS	GRADING SCHEME	GRADE ASSIGNED
Topic Coverage	Covers the essential aspects of the country in a manner that imparts information in a lively and memorable manner		20	
Cultural Sensitivity	The class should understand what is germane about the country. Members should be enlightened about the strengths and problematic issues in the country.		20	
Creativity	Did the group create an atmosphere that brought the topic alive in the classroom? Did the group use effective multimedia to garner audience interest?		5	
Analysis/Integration	Groups have to bring to life the essentials of the country and relate them where possible to previous information. Groups should also provide new information where possible.		30	
Execution/Delivery	Was there overt synergy between the group members? Were conclusions easy to follow along? Were the team members reading cue cards? Were the team members convincing?		15	
Question/Answer	Did the group do a good job fielding questions? How well did they defend their conclusions?		10	
Final Grade Totals			100	0
Grade out of 10				0

WRITTEN SUBMISSION

Your written Area Culture Study will be evaluated on the quality, depth and professionalism of the report.

Interim Status Appraisal

To assure that you are getting a proper start, teams will be required to send to the professor during the **fifth week of class** a clear project design, assignment of tasks to team members, and time-frame for the project. This can be sent in Word format, via e-mail

Mid Term Examination

This will be carried out in class, and will consist of 60 Multiple Choice questions to be done in 60 minutes.

Grading

Projects will be graded on the thoroughness of description, depth of analysis, overall understanding of the culture investigated, and clarity of arguments and style of presentation. Evaluation of oral presentations will also consider originality, style, and clarity of the presentation.

NOTE: All team members are expected to contribute to the presentation of the project.

Timing

Each presentation should be no longer than thirty minutes. In addition, there will be a ten-minute Question and Answer period.

Radio Presentation

You will be required to do a radio show. It will be one half hour in duration, and will consist of twenty (20) minutes of talking and ten (10) minutes of music. The topic should be based on your area culture study. Choose a country about which you are passionate and mix appropriate, local music into the show. Your program will be broadcast on WLURTV Radio, which has 5, 000 listeners at the time of writing this

course outline.

I will demonstrate how to produce the show and get it ready for broadcast. Remember to check not only your sound quality, but your diction, modulation, pronunciation and quality of music you select. **All shows should be handed in to me in MP3 format during Session 5.** Please bring your recorded shows to class on a CD or USB stick. Your grade will be based primarily on the listenership over a period of one week, plus my own assessment of your program.

DETERMINATION OF COURSE GRADE

Your course grade will be based on the following:

Oral PowerPoint Area Culture Presentation	10	
Written Area Culture Study		10
CSL Option (10%)		
Radio Show	10	
Mid Term Examination	35	
Final examination	35	

Readings

Links to the main readings for the course will be found at:

<http://www.wlu.ca/~wwsbe/faculty/ramsoomair/438.htm>

GENERAL NOTES

- The course outline is your contract with me to abide by the requirements. Acceptance of the course outline means that you agree to do the readings and to be thoroughly prepared for classes. Summaries as indicated would be necessary.
- Exercises are not shown in the course outline. These, which will be of an experiential nature, along with selected videotapes, will be part of certain sessions. The expectation from you will be that of interpolation and extrapolation from the experiential material.
- Please purchase an I Clicker from the Bookstore. This instrument will be used in various exercises, including answering of multiple choice questions
- Communication is a concept of immense value in our course. I urge you to call, e-mail or visit me if you have issues to discuss. Don't let them rest on your mind for days, while waiting for the next week's class.

Plagiarism

Please note that as with any course, plagiarism will be treated in a very serious light. Plagiarism is best described as using the work of others to represent it as your own.

SCHEDULE

SESSION	TOPIC
1:	INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE
2:	CHAPTER 1: ASSESSING THE ENVIRONMENT –POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, LEGAL, TECHNOLOGICAL CHAPTER QUESTIONS WILL BE ASSIGNED TO EACH GROUP ON THE DAY OF CLASS, YOUR GROUP WILL BE GIVEN TIME TO DISCUSS THEM. FOLLOWING THIS, EACH GROUP SHOULD ASSIGN A SPOKESPERSON TO ADDRESS THE QUESTION. PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE SHOULD BE A DIFFERENT SPOKESPERSON EACH WEEK. PLEASE ALSO NOTE THAT THIS ASPECT OF THE SESSION WILL BE CARRIED OUT, TIME PERMITTING
3:	CHAPTER 2: MANAGING INTERDEPENDENCE: SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ETHICS PLEASE READ:-Case: Nike's CSR Challenge
4:	CHAPTER 3: UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF CULTURE
5:	CHAPTER 4: COMMUNICATING ACROSS CULTURES PLEASE READ- Case: Elizabeth Visits GPC's French Subsidiary
6:	CHAPTER 5: CROSS CULTURAL NEGOTIATION AND DECISION-MAKING
7:	CHAPTER 6: FORMULATING STRATEGY
8:	CHAPTER 7: GLOBAL ALLIANCES AND STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION <u>MID TERM EXAMINATION-IN CLASS (MULTIPLE CHOICE)</u>
9:	CHAPTER 8: ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND CONTROL SYSTEMS PLEASE READ- Case: ASEA Brown Boveri (ABB), Sweden, 2007: What Went Wrong?
10:	CHAPTER 9: STAFFING, TRAINING AND COMPENSATION FOR GLOBAL OPERATIONS
11:	CHAPTER 10: DEVELOPING A GLOBAL MANAGEMENT CADRE
12:	CHAPTER 11: MOTIVATING and LEADING