



LM107
Intercultural
Communication



UNIVERSIDAD
NEBRIJA

Centro de Estudios Hispánicos

Intercultural Communication

Hours: 45

Prerequisites: No requirements

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Office hours: to be communicated the first day of class

1. Course Description

Why living peacefully and working effectively in multicultural environments is more important now than ever

The pandemic we are now fighting has revealed itself as an opportunity to learn how to be more flexible, creative and how to deal with uncertain and ambiguous situations. Unfortunately, it has also stoked fear and intolerance against those who are different and, consequently, fractured societies and ideas of segregation may emerge. Collaborating cross-culturally and promoting intercultural understanding is more important now than ever. Therefore, developing intercultural skills in this new global world will be essential to advance and succeed both personally and professionally. These skills enable professionals to work well among various cultures, feel more comfortable doing business internationally, communicate effectively in culturally diverse environments, manage multicultural teams, and resolve all kinds of culture-related conflicts. In this course we will discuss: stereotypes, ethnocentrism, different cultural dimensions, communication styles (both verbal and non-verbal), intercultural and global skills, conflict management and cultural adjustment among others.

2. Learning Objectives

- Create awareness of the importance of living and working effectively in culturally diverse environments.
- Understand how values and beliefs influence the way we behave.
- Develop the ability to document one's own culture and acquire the knowledge and skills to communicate with other cultures.
- Recognize and respect diversity and multiculturalism
- Learn about different cultural dimensions that influence how we make decisions, solve problems, communicate, cope with ambiguity etc.
- Identify patterns related to competitive or collaborative working environments, uncertainty avoidance, views on hierarchy, relationship-, or task-oriented cultures, time management, and verbal and non-verbal communication.
- Avoid stereotypes and wrong assumptions about other cultures.
- Adapt behavior and styles of communication to different cultural environments and develop new strategies that will work better and will be more effective in a new culture.
- Develop flexibility, open-mindedness, cultural empathy, and curiosity about other cultures.
- Learn to identify, prevent, and/or manage misunderstandings and miscommunication among cultures, as well as mediate in intercultural conflicts.

3. Formative Activities

An interactive, task-based and communicative teaching methodology will be used so as to involve students in their own learning processes and make them aware of how their learning strategies develop. There will be a theoretical introduction at the beginning of each session and students will then be required to participate by posing questions, expressing ideas on texts previously read, sharing knowledge, etc. Furthermore, students will be required to carry out a variety of tasks, individually and/or in groups.

- Theoretical-practical sessions: Students will be required to read certain texts on the topic before each session so as to be able to participate and discuss certain issues in class. During each session there will be a theoretical presentation of items and the student will be required to do a wide variety of exercises, individual and in groups.
- Tutorials: Tutorial sessions at the request of students and/or instructors so as to monitor students' development and improvement.
- Student practical activities and assignments: Several individual and group exercises will be required thorough out the course. Students will conduct research on the communication styles of different activities, stating its culture-specific features and the socio-cultural rules governing that specific speech community. Students are required to carry out several oral presentations on different issues. The accurate use of the concepts, skills and strategies learnt in class will be evident in all tasks.

4. Methodology

This course follows the methodological guidelines of the communicative approaches, based on a constructive and process-based conception of learning. This methodology is based on a teaching-learning process centered in the student, whose active participation is encouraged, favoring, at the same time, the development of general and specific competences that show knowledge, abilities and attitudes that can be applied to their future professional careers.

5. Evaluation

The students' learning evaluation is inspired by the principles of formative evaluation. In consequence, a continuous evaluation is applied, which means that every activity or task that is made inside or outside of the classroom is susceptible of being evaluated.

5.1. Grading system

In the Spanish educational system, it is required to quantitatively express the result of each student's evaluation. In order to do so, Nebrija faculty uses different strategies and instruments such as: papers, exams, tests, projects, self-evaluation activities, etc. In order to issue a final grade for the Spanish Plus programs the following scale is established:

- 25 % Attendance and active participation in class
- 25% Daily work
- 15% Midterm
- 35% Final test/ Final projects

Therefore, the final grade is the average between attendance and participation, daily work and exams, presentations, projects and essays.

- Active participation in class is evaluated by means of different activities such as:
- Activities and exercises correction;
- Reflection upon the different contents in the course
- Oral activities (individual, in pairs or in groups). Fluency, correction, adequacy and relevance are taken into account.
- Daily work makes reference to any activity or task that is done inside or outside of the classroom, whether during the class time or at any other time.

Exams/papers/projects

The course includes a midterm and a final written exam on theoretical concepts and course facts. If a student, unjustifiably, does not do or submit an exam, paper or project, it will be graded with a '0'.

* A minimum grade of 5 must be obtained in a final exam/ final project in order to pass the course.

5.2. Attendance, participation and grading policies

5.2.1. Attendance policy

Attendance is mandatory. In case of missing 5 or more sessions in one course, the student will receive a zero in his/her participation and attendance grade. In addition, not attending classes will not excuse the student from handing in in any homework, papers or essays previously assigned.

The following situations must be considered:

- Each session of class will count as an absence.
- Two delays of more than 15 minutes will be considered an absence. The entrance to class will not be allowed after 30 minutes once it has started.
- There are no excused absences. E.g.: Not attending class because of sickness will count as an absence. The student is responsible for catching up with any homework done while absent.
- Exams dates have been officially approved by the University, therefore, they will not be changed.*

*Except for those courses where the professor will set up specific dates and inform the students at the beginning of the program.

5.2.2. Criteria to evaluate participation

Criteria to evaluate participation	Grade
The student participates very actively in the class activities. S/he successfully does the requested tasks. S/he contributes to a good development of the course, encourages his/her classmates and favor debate in class.	8.5 - 10
The student participates actively in the class activities. S/he does the requested tasks and submits them on time. Shows great interest to learn.	7 - 8.4
The student, occasionally, makes interesting remarks, but s/he basically answers when s/he is asked. S/he does not show a clear interest in the course. Misses classes occasionally.	5 - 6.9
The student does not participate unless s/he is asked. S/he has unjustified absences and delays. His/her attitude is not very participative.	0 - 4.9

5.2.3. Criteria to evaluate Daily Work

Criteria to evaluate Daily Work	Grade
The student always does all the work demanded by the professor, not only during the class but also at home. He/she always or almost always meets the deadlines established.	8.5 - 10

The student almost always does all the work demanded by the professor, not only during the class but also at home. Occasionally, he/she submits work after the established deadline.	7 - 8.4
The student occasionally does the work demanded by the professor, not only during the class but also at home. He/she does not normally meet the established deadlines and even occasionally does not submit the work.	5 - 6.9
The student never or almost never does the work demanded by the professor. He/she never or almost never meets the established deadlines.	0 - 4.9

5.2.4. Grading criteria

Number Grade	Letter Grade	Percentage
10	A+	100%
9.5 – 9.9	A	95 – 99 %
9 – 9.4	A-	90 – 94 %
8.5 – 8.9	B+	85 – 89 %
7.5 – 8.4	B	75 – 84 %
7 – 7.4	B-	70 – 74 %
6.5 – 6.9	C+	65 – 69 %
6 – 6.4	C	60 – 64 %
5 – 5.9	C-	5 – 59 %
0 – 4.9	F	0 – 49 %

5.3. Warning on plagiarism

When writing a University paper or essay and reference is made to certain authors, it is mandatory to cite them by means of a footnote or a direct reference. In no case it is acceptable that a student uses a text, no matter how brief it is, written by somebody else without putting it in inverted commas, as this means s/he is trying to make it look as his/her own. This is called plagiarism and in a university context it could be penalized with expulsion.

6. Bibliography

Basic textbook

Liu, S; Volcic, Z. et al. (2015) *Introducing Intercultural Communication*. London: SAGE Publications.

Additional Bibliography

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- Jandt, F. E. (2013) *An Introduction to Intercultural Communication: Identities in a global community* (7th Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
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- Maddux, W. W., Adam, H. y Galinsky, A. D. (2010). *When in Rome... Learn Why the Romans Do What They Do: How multicultural learning experiences facilitate creativity*. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 36(6),731-741
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- Ting-Toomey, S., & Dorjee, T. (2018). *Communicating across cultures*. Guilford Publications.
- Trompenaars, F. y Hampden-Turner, C. (2010). *Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding cultural diversity in Business*. London: Nicholas Brealey.
- Tuleja, E. (2015). *Intercultural Communication for Business*. Indianapolis, IN: Dog Ear Publishing.
- Zapata-Barrero, R. (2019). *Intercultural Citizenship in the Post-Multicultural Era*. SAGE Publications Limited.

7. Lecturer Brief CV

Ana Carballal Broome holds a doctorate from the Universidad Rey Juan Carlos in Intercultural Studies and Management, a Master's degree in European Studies through the University of Amsterdam and a Modern and Contemporary History degree from the Universidad Autónoma in Madrid. Dr. Carballal is a dual national USA-Spain living in Madrid who has also worked for more than 15 years in the field of International Higher Education

8. Office Hours

Tutorial schedule will be confirmed in the first couple of sessions, to guarantee that the time schedule suits the needs of students and instructor. However, it is always advisable to make an appointment with the lecturer beforehand in order to ensure availability.

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9. Course Content

The global world after 2020

- Living in a global society after the COVID-19 pandemic
- The Great Lockdown: the psychological reaction to the crisis
- Avoiding uncertainty and fearing the unknown

Threats, mistrust and cultural challenges in a profoundly changed planet

- Culture shock and anxiety as a result of unfamiliar settings
- In-groups and Out groups: *US vs. THEM*
- Underestimating emotions: extreme nationalism and xenophobia

- From Rejection to Radicalism
- A silent majority: looking the other way

The concept of culture and cultural diversity in a new setting

- The concept of culture: definitions, components and characteristics
- Cultures and subcultures
- Cultural diversity, the concept of “identity” and “ethnicity”
- Personality and culture
- Cultural and national identities: the need for belonging

Managing and mediating in culturally diverse environments

- Coping with cultural differences: moving beyond polarization and cultural minimization
- Information processing: how cultural values shape our perceptions
- Our own multicultural identity
- Small differences, big frustrations: understanding culture and deconstructing stereotypes
- The dimensions of culture: values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors
- One country, many cultures: acknowledging value orientations and cultural patterns
- Verbal and non-verbal communication across cultures
- Mastering communication in culturally diverse contexts, the key to intercultural understanding

Living peacefully and working effectively across cultures

- Global talent and Intercultural skills
- Developing intercultural competence. Working on affective, cognitive and communicative dimensions
- Multicultural Personality: the ability to adapt to multicultural societies
- Interculturally competent generations: open-minded, flexible and culturally empathetic
- *The World of Yesterday*. Stephan Zweig’s peace legacy

The future of intercultural understanding after the pandemic

- The importance of intercultural awareness: towards more interaction and dialogue
- Raising public awareness: understanding the reality of migrants and refugees
- Long term orientation policies: preventing resentment and unmasking hate discourses
- Setting priorities and educating for intercultural understanding
- The 21st century: What is it going to be? Stronger ethnocentrism or more intercultural solidarity?