



SYLLABUS

Cross-Cultural Business Communication

Instructor: Eric Boggs

Language of Instruction: English

UO Credits: 4

Contact Hours: 40

Summer 2020

SINGAPORE

COURSE DESCRIPTION

All over the world organizations are finding themselves increasingly engaged in cross-cultural communication, whether they are doing business in another country, sourcing products from abroad, managing an increasingly multicultural workforce at home, or appealing to customers from a variety of cultural backgrounds. As a result, intercultural communication skills are not a distant need for the future, but a real need right now in the workplace. Singapore has a particularly vibrant community that provides us the insight and experience to interact with a culturally-potent business environment.

This course develops an awareness of cultural priorities and intercultural communication skills and applies them to practical business communication and professional contexts. **All business is international. And how you communicate makes a world of difference.**

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The objective of this course is to develop students into effective business communicators through honing skills of cultural intelligence and cultural competency.

Student Outcomes

Students who successfully achieve the course objectives will:

- Examine a range of theoretical approaches to understanding value dimensions across cultures
- Analyze the potential impact of cultural variables on business interactions
- Recognize potential barriers to communicate and how to minimize them in spoken and written business discourse
- Conduct research using a variety of culture-specific and culture-general information resources on business communication
- Demonstrate self-awareness of the mix of cultures that combine to determine one's own values, beliefs, and attitudes
- Recognize the common strands that link all cultures

- Acquire culturally transferable strategies to minimize misunderstandings stemming from cultural differences
- Gain an understanding of communication styles, business interactions, and the presence of subcultures of Singapore and Southeast Asia

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY

Course Organization

Many of the assignments in this course are of a collaborative nature. Writing in the workplace is a collaborative effort in which group members contribute constructively throughout all steps in the document process. Furthermore, given that a major focus of this course is on communication between cultures (of which national culture is only one), it makes sense that individuals have the opportunity to practice their communication skills through group work in the course.

We will be working together to compile a *cross-cultural training manual* to assist those of you who are currently working or traveling internationally, as well as those who will do so in the future. This training manual will provide a helpful guide to the impact of culture both inside and outside the workplace. It will be comprised primarily of our country-specific cultural profiles.

Assignment Classifications

#1. Cross-Cultural Research & Reflection Assignment (Individual): Assignment on Canvas. The assignment builds your “Cultural Intelligence” and introduces you to resources that will be valuable for your Subculture-Specific Singapore Profile assignment.

#2. Subculture-Specific Singapore Profile (Team Project): Assignment on Canvas. We will examine a theoretical model to use when asking questions about a culture’s system of values, beliefs, and attitudes. These subculture-specific Singapore profiles will be included in our “Cross-Cultural Training Manual: Singapore Edition”.

#3. Personal Cultural Profile (Individual): Assignment on Canvas. Knowing your own personal value preferences and evaluating your personal cultural background is a key element of “Cultural Intelligence”. You’ll delve extensively into how your experience in Singapore has impacted your personal background and communication styles.

Class Participation and Preparation

This course involves reading, writing, and class/small group discussion. *The pace of the reading assignments picks up as the course progresses.* You will need to read and absorb the material in our textbook outside of class. It is essential that you come to class **well prepared and ready to discuss the focus questions (on Canvas) and the reading assignments intelligently**. You are responsible for information in the reading assignments even if we haven't discussed a particular point in class. I expect you to arrive at class prepared to deeply reflect on assigned readings. For example, I expect you to be able to draw connections between course concepts and assigned readings and to connect readings to your personal experiences. When homework includes surveys or questionnaires, I expect you to come to class with the questionnaires completely filled out and scored.

Students are expected to share their experiences and thoughts related to the readings in class discussions as well as in small group discussions. Effective oral participation will be reflected in the individual score for Participation Performance.

You will be graded on attendance, prompt arrival, active participation in class and in virtual activities, and professional conduct in the course, including your body language in class and your electronic communications.

Attendance

While students are here in Singapore, attendance in class is critical. *You are expected to be on time and attend every class except for one excused absence cleared with me in advance.* If you miss more than one class without an allowable reason, you are responsible for contacting me to propose a suitable make-up assignment within one week of the additional absence. Tardiness and unexcused absences will result in escalating point deductions from your professionalism grade, beginning with 15 points for an unexcused absence.

If you miss more than one class and wish to make up the points, contact me with an idea for a makeup assignment. This will be the student's responsibility. I won't track down the students about makeups. Makeup assignments might consist of writing a 1-2 page critical analysis on a magazine or online article relevant to our class, attending a relevant event and completing a write up about it, etc.

Illness Policy

If you have a severe respiratory or flu-like illness you must avoid attending class until you are without fever for 24 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medication. If you have absences related to severe respiratory or flu-like illness you will be given the opportunity to make-up your assignments and class content without penalty. It is your responsibility to notify the instructor, in advance, when absent due to influenza.

Course Readings

All assigned course readings should be completed by class time on the date indicated.

Required Books:

Beamer, Linda, and Iris Varner. *Cross-Cultural Business Communications*. N.p.: McGraw-Hill, 2018. Print.

Course Packet Book provided via the courses.

Harvard Business Publishing – *Global Collaboration Simulation: Tip of the Iceberg*. \$15 – you must pay when you log on to the link: <http://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/77316895>

Supplementary readings, videos, and questionnaires will also be posted on Canvas – TBD.

Standard citation needs to include: APA

METHOD OF EVALUATION (GRADING)

Deliverables & Late Work

Unless specified, all deliverables will be due at the start of class. All course assignments must be word-processed. **Late submissions will not be examined and will be given zero points**

unless you have made prior arrangements with me. Specific and detailed assignment instructions will be posted on Canvas.

How Your Grade Will Be Determined

The Lundquist College of Business has adopted grading standards to ensure consistent student evaluations. The average GPA for class should fall within a range of 3.2-3.5. Some of you may be encountering these grading standards for the first time. Remember that everyone in this class has met the rigorous GPA requirements to be admitted as a business major, and therefore getting an A in business major courses could be much more difficult than in previous classes. As in the professional business world, receiving a top rating (A) requires exceptionally and consistently high performance.

Grading:

“Day at Work” Discussion Board Postings [5]

#1. Cross-Cultural Research & Reflection Assignment (individual project) [20]

#2. Subculture-Specific Singapore Profile (group project/individual participation pts) [30/5/5]

#3. Personal Profile (individual project) [30]

3 Exams and unannounced quizzes (actual number of points will vary) [115]

Participation Performance [20]

(Silent attendance will not earn full credit.)

Approximate Total: [230]

Grading Scale

Here is an outline of the letter grade criteria in this course. Final grades are earned according to the percentage of possible points available from all categories and instructor discretion, if necessary, to meet LCB grading guidelines. Successful students in this course devote a minimum of 2.5 hours outside of class to every hour in class.

Percentage for the Course	Letter Grade
90-100%	A range
80-89%	B range
70-79%	C range
60-69%	D range
0-59%	F & below

An “incomplete” grade is **not available** barring an emergency of some kind.

Communicating with the Instructor

You can email the instructor at boggs@uoregon.edu. Instructors will offer open office hours every week. All written assignments should be uploaded to Canvas.

As communication among project team members and with the instructor will often occur via e-mail, timely communication is a key business and professional skill.

COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNMENTS

The following is a projected schedule of course topics and assignments to help you plan for the term. Daily activities and specific reading assignments may vary and will be announced in class. The ability to intelligently analyze and critique **what we do in class is dependent upon you keeping up with the background reading schedule**. Be sure to ask about anything you find unclear or problematic in the reading. *For all class reading assignments, be prepared to respond to focus questions, summarize the main points, and relate them to your own experiences. This will be reflected in your participation score for the class.*

Note: Each reading assignment has **Focus Questions**, which you will find on our Canvas site. You are responsible for answering these Focus Questions in preparation for our class discussion each day. They will not be collected, but serve as excellent discussion and exam preparation tools.

Week 1: *What is Culture and how does it integrate itself in Business?*

8/4 Course Introduction

- What is Culture?
- Developing Cultural Curiosity

8/5 Exploring the Business Environment in Different Cultures

- Culture & Communication
- Cultural Intelligence (CQ)

Assignments:

- 1) Post on our Canvas Discussion Board a 1-2 page description of a “day at work” in your culture **before** the day’s class; read and respond **thoughtfully** to at least **2 postings** by other classmates.

For your analysis, select a workplace that you are familiar with and consider the following: what does the “office/workplace” look like (open/close space); who works in what position (gender differences); how many hours do people work (work week); and other key issues related to levels of hierarchy, greetings, dress, formality, vacations, prayer times, etc. Note the differences between “on-stage” culture and the underlying “backstage” cultural preferences and how they’ve changed over the years. Be prepared to share thoughtful analyses in class.

- 2) Chapter 1 (excluding pages 31-38)
- 3) Begin your Cross-Cultural Research/Reflection Assignment. Available on Canvas.

8/6 Culture Shock

- Culture & Reverse Culture Shock
- Strategies to Overcome It

Assignments:

- 1) Chapter 1, continued

8/7 Culture Values

- Simulation
- A Cultural Values Framework
- Team Project Introduction: A Subculture-Specific Singapore Profile

Assignments:

- 1) Progress the Cross-Cultural Research/Reflection Assignment

Week 2: *From Language to Specific Cultural Differences***8/11 Language**

- Role of Language
 - Selection of country for Subculture-Specific Singapore Profile Project
- Assignments:
- 1) Chapter 2

8/12 Specific Cultural Profiles

- Project Team Meeting: A Subculture-Specific Singapore Profile
 - Connect with Cultural Informants
 - Exam #1** [Ch. 1 & 2, Focus Questions, and Lectures]
- Assignments:
- 1) Meet with your team and begin your research project: A Subculture-Specific Singapore Profile

8/13 Part I: Values and Belief Systems

- Exploring the Value Spectrum
 - Culture-Specific Investigations
- Assignments:
- 1) Chapter 3
 - 2) Work on team research project: A Subculture-Specific Singapore Profile

8/14 Values and Belief Systems

- Further Application of Part I: Values and Belief Systems
- Assignments:
- 1) Chapter 3, continued
 - 2) Submit by 5:00 PM: Cross-Cultural Research/Reflection Assignment
 - 3) Work on team research project: A Subculture-Specific Singapore Profile

Week 3: *Values, Belief Systems, and Country-Specific Cultural Profiles***8/18 Part II & III: Values and Belief Systems**

- Finishing Exploration of Values and Belief Systems
- Assignments:
- 1) Chapter 4
 - 3) Work on team research project: A Subculture-Specific Singapore Profile

8/19 Culture & Communication

- Communicating Across Cultures
 - Organization of Messages
 - Team Meeting: Subculture-Specific Singapore Profile
 - Personal Cultural Profile
- Assignments:
- 1) Chapter 5

- 2) Work on team research project: A Subculture-Specific Singapore Profile
- 3) Start working on Personal Cultural Profile

8/20 Exploring Specific Country Project

-Exam #2 [Chapters 3 – 5, Focus Questions, and Lectures]

-Team Meeting: Subculture-Specific Singapore Profile

Assignments:

- 1) Work on team research project: A Subculture-Specific Singapore Profile
- 2) Work on Personal Cultural Profile

8/21 Nonverbal Communication across Cultures

-Communicating Across Cultures: The Nonverbal Dimension

-Team Responsibilities for the Training Manual

-Team Presentation Expectations: Subculture-Specific Singapore Profile

Assignments:

- 1) Chapter 6
- 2) Submit by 5:00 PM: Team Project, Subculture-Specific Singapore Profile
- 3) Ready Team Presentations for Subculture-Specific Singapore Profile
- 4) Work on Personal Cultural Profile

Week 4: Training Manual, Team Presentations, and Cultural Conclusions

8/25 Engagement and Team Work

-Variable Rules of Engagement

-Global Collaboration Simulation, Harvard Business Publishing

-Team Meeting: Presentation on Subculture-Specific Singapore Profile

Assignments:

- 1) Chapter 7
- 2) Turn in team-specific responsibilities for the Training Manual, **come prepared**
- 3) Ready Team Presentations for Subculture-Specific Singapore Profile
- 4) Work on Personal Cultural Profile

8/26 Cultural Intelligence

-Exam #3 [Chapters 6 – 7, Canvas Readings, Focus Questions, Lectures]

-Team Meeting: Presentation on Subculture-Specific Singapore Profile

Assignments:

- 1) Compile Training Manual
- 2) Ready Team Presentations for Subculture-Specific Singapore Profile
- 3) Work on Personal Cultural Profile

8/27 Team Presentations

-Team Presentations

-Team Meeting: Presentation on Subculture-Specific Singapore Profile

Assignments:

- 1) Team Presentations, **come prepared**
- 2) Work on Personal Cultural Profile

8/28 Team Presentations & Conclusion

- Team Presentations
- Course Conclusion
- Q & A reflection session

Assignments:

- 1) Team Presentations, **come prepared**
 - 2) Submit by 5:00 PM: Personal Cultural Profile
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Academic Misconduct

The University Student Conduct Code (available at conduct.uoregon.edu) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express permission from the instructor. Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the students' obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act. Additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available at researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism.

Prohibited Discrimination and Harassment Reporting

Any student who has experienced sexual assault, relationship violence, sex or gender-based bullying, stalking, and/or sexual harassment may seek resources and help at safe.uoregon.edu. To get help by phone, a student can also call either the UO's 24-hour hotline at 541-346-7244 [SAFE], or the non-confidential Title IX Coordinator at 541-346-8136. From the SAFE website, students may also connect to Callisto, a confidential, third-party reporting site that is not a part of the university.

Students experiencing any other form of prohibited discrimination or harassment can find information at respect.uoregon.edu or aaeo.uoregon.edu or contact the non-confidential AAEO office at 541-346-3123 or the Dean of Students Office at 541-346-3216 for help. As UO policy has different reporting requirements based on the nature of the reported harassment or discrimination, additional information about reporting requirements for discrimination or harassment unrelated to sexual assault, relationship violence, sex or gender based bullying, stalking, and/or sexual harassment is available at [Discrimination & Harassment](#).

The instructor of this class, as a Student Directed Employee, will direct students who disclose sexual harassment or sexual violence to resources that can help and will only report the information shared to the university administration when the student requests that the information be reported (unless someone is in imminent risk of serious harm or a minor). The instructor of this class is required to report all other forms of prohibited discrimination or harassment to the university administration.

Specific details about confidentiality of information and reporting obligations of employees can be found at titleix.uoregon.edu.

Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

UO employees, including faculty, staff, and GEs, are mandatory reporters of child abuse. This statement is to advise you that your disclosure of information about child abuse to a UO employee may trigger the UO employee's duty to report that information to the designated authorities. Please refer to the following links for detailed information about mandatory reporting: [Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect](#).

Students with Disabilities

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center in 360 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu.