



Intercultural Competence Course Syllabus

January Term 2008

Culture Adventures- China

Course Description

This course focuses on introductory Intercultural Competence (ICC) vocabulary, theory and concepts designed to build personal, academic and professional skills for those seeking to become more effective intercultural leaders in our increasingly interconnected society. The course is intended to link students' real-time cultural interactions and experiences with formal academic theory of intercultural competence. Coursework, experiential activities and reflection will support students' exploration of ICC applications and implications as they move towards shaping their own cultural-identity and world views.

Course Methods

This course consists of five broadly defined learning schemas: in-class intensive, student-centered, teacher-guided exploration of fundamental cultural learning and core competencies; culture-general and culture-specific learning modules; readings, discussion and lectures; hands-on participation in community-based service projects; independent culture study through observation and reflection.

Course Definition of Intercultural Competence

Intercultural Competence can be measured by desired external and internal outcomes. Desired external outcomes are behaving and communicating effectively and appropriately (based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes) to achieve one's goals to some degree. Desired internal outcomes include informed frame of reference shifts through adaptability, flexibility, ethnorelative view and empathy.

-Deardorff, D.K. (2006) Identification and assessment of intercultural competence as a student outcome of internationalization. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, Fall, 240-266.

Intrax Study Abroad's Intercultural Competence curriculum is supported by additional programmatic design including language study, community-based learning, travel, independent research and reflection. This curriculum design is intended to be interwoven and deliberately linked through experiential learning to ALL Intrax's study abroad activities.

Course Goals

- Define culture and its relationship to intercultural competence
- Apply frameworks that help assess and monitor the development of one's own intercultural competence
- Provide a safe, engaging and experiential learning environment for intercultural competence skill acquisition
- Explicitly extract the cultural learning of the study abroad experience inside and outside of the classroom
- Connect intercultural competence theory to intercultural competence practice through classroom work and hands-on experience, observation, and reflection
- Examine diversity and commonalities among people of various backgrounds
- Become familiar with relevant concepts of culture and intercultural interaction, such as individualism / collectivism, high and low context cultures, activity orientations, monochronic and polychronic time, verbal and nonverbal communication

- Explore effective intercultural competence skills as it applies to future work-settings in regards to cross-cultural communication, conflict-resolution and team/relationship building
- Connect course content and program experience with students' personal, academic and professional goals

Course Purpose and Learning Objectives

The purpose of the course is to develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness positively contributing to students' intercultural identity, study, work and leadership in diverse environments.

Through language coursework, curricular modules, community-based projects, cultural case studies and critical incidents students will:

- Be able to identify and articulate their own cultural "self"
- Identify a personal working definition of culture and intercultural competence
- Be able to identify and articulate the process of acculturation during an experience abroad, including culture-shock, adaptation and re-entry orientation
- Increase knowledge of theories influencing intercultural relations across and within cultures
- Heighten skills of observation, reflection, critical analysis, conflict resolution and problem solving as they relate to intercultural situations
- Acquire and articulate internal monitoring skills and attributes such as adaptability, flexibility, ethnorelativity, humor and empathy when navigating cross-culturally
- Learn and be able to demonstrate the following skills for working effectively in a diverse working and/or learning environment:
 - Intercultural communication
 - Intercultural conflict resolution
 - Building relationships/team building
- Be able to identify and articulate specific transferable skills acquired during the study abroad experience and intercultural competence coursework for future career planning – resume incorporation, interviewing strategies, job searching resources

Course definitions

Culture:

"Culture refers to values, beliefs, attitudes, preferences, customs, learning styles, communication styles, history/historical interpretations, achievements/accomplishments, technology, the arts, literature, etc. – the sum total of what a particular group of people has created together, share, and transmit."

-Michael R. Paige's definition extracted from:

Paige, M.R. (2002) *Maximizing Study Abroad 2nd* ed. Minneapolis, MN: CARLA, University of Minnesota.

Intercultural Competence:

Intercultural Competence is "the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes."

-Darla K. Deardorff's definition extracted from:

Deardorff, D.K. & Hunter, W (2006). Education global-ready graduates. *International Educator*, 15 (3), 72-83.

Global Competence:

Global Competence is "having an open mind while actively seeking to understand cultural norms and expectations of others, leveraging this gained knowledge to interact, communicate and work effectively outside one's environment."

-William Hunter's definition extracted from:

Deardorff, D.K. & Hunter, W (2006). Education global-ready graduates. *International Educator*, 15 (3), 72-83.

Requirements

Enrolled in accredited U.S. college or university

2.5 GPA

Pre-approved credit transfer form from home institution for those students seeking academic credit

Evaluation

| | |
|---|-----|
| Attendance and participation in discussions | 25% |
| Learning Agreement | 10% |
| Journals | 20% |
| Writing Assignments | 10% |
| Independent study project and presentation | 20% |
| Final portfolio | 15% |

Assignments Defined

Learning Agreement:

Students will be responsible to complete and follow a Learning Agreement. Students will:

- **Increase academic competencies.** Students will expand their knowledge and skills in intercultural competence, language and community-based service work along with their ability to apply academic theory to practical experiences.
- **Expand professional skills.** Students will acquire necessary skills in today's diverse and global work environment including oral and written communication, problem solving and decision-making, teamwork, and interpersonal and cultural competencies.
- **Encourage personal development.** Students will gain clarity in their academic and career directions, clarify personal values, assess developmental needs, and attain a greater sense of global responsibility.

http://www.hamline.edu/hamline_info/offices_services/student_relations/studentaffairs/cdc/faculty/faculty_guide_to_internships.html

Independent Study Project: Students will be responsible for choosing one specific concept or issue related to the field of intercultural competence and conduct an independent study project. The project includes but is not limited to interviews, field research, a critical incident, a case study, web-based research, current event research etc. Students will be required to write a 4-6 page paper on their topic and do a 20 minute presentation for the group.

Final Portfolio: Students will be responsible for documenting all their work on program. The final portfolio is a collection of all students' writing assignments, journal entries, cultural photographs, tests, mementos and any other medium that demonstrates students' learning. The final project is the culmination of the academic program and includes students' work conducted during language studies and community-based service projects. The portfolio will be assessed by the ICC facilitator and will be an excellent illustration of students' work on Intrax Study Abroad's program. Students will be able to share their portfolio with their home institution upon return to the United States.

Journals: Students are responsible for maintaining an ongoing narrative of experiences, reflections, questions and observations in the form of a journal. This task is intended to provide students with a space for working through issues raised during class discussion, assigned readings, service project work, host-culture interactions and in-country experiences of daily life. Much of the work done in students' journals will be applicable to the Learning Agreement, Independent Study Project and Final Portfolio.

Recommended Course Reading List

1. Chapter: "What is Culture Anyway?"
In Paige. M (2006) *Maximizing Study Abroad*. Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition, University of Minnesota. Minneapolis, MN.

2. Article: Out of House and Home
Condon, J. & Yousef, F. (1975). "Out of House and Home." *Toward Internationalism: Readings in Cross-Cultural Communication*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House Publishers.
3. Chapter: "Strategies for Developing Intercultural Competence"
In Paige, M (2006) *Maximizing Study Abroad*. Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition, University of Minnesota. Minneapolis, MN.
4. Chapter 5: "Important Values Orientation for the Sojourner"
Cornes, A. (2004). *Culture from the Inside Out*. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

| |
|------------------------------|
| Total Contact Hours: 25 hrs. |
|------------------------------|