



Cross-Cultural Communication

Lecturer: Verena Brenner

The accelerating pace of globalization has made cross-cultural competence an indispensable qualification for today's university graduates. This seminar introduces students to different approaches of comparing cultures and their value systems as well as to the principles of intercultural communication. It familiarizes them with the concepts and methods developed by intercultural anthropologists for analyzing cross-cultural misunderstandings and therefore look for a deeper understanding of different cultures.

The class contains two components:

I. A culture-general section giving a global overview of the major areas where cultures differ with special focus on the cultures of the participants as well as the German culture. Case studies, simulation games, role plays and short films provide concrete illustrations and make students aware of their own cultural moorings. Topics include: stereotypes and prejudices, ethnocentrism, individualism/collectivism, status, gender roles, concept of time and space, verbal and non-verbal communication styles as well as conflict resolution.

II. The participants will also explore cultural differences between their own cultures and the German culture by doing their own case studies in specific areas of interest through interviews, observation of selected situations, and a photo excursion.

Methods:

- Lectures
- Discussions
- Group Work
- Excursions (self-guided)
- Presentations
- Interviews
- Films

Cross-Cultural Competence does not only include knowledge about (other) cultures, countries and languages, but also self-reflection, communicative awareness, tolerance of ambivalence, change of perspective, and empathy. Thus, the academic assessment of the course reflects these multiple competences that will be needed by being involved in group work, discussions, and presentations.



Course Schedule:

45 contact hours/4 ECTS, Class Time 9:30 pm – 11:45 pm German time

Date	Topic
Tues., Nov. 9	Introduction to class & cross cultural competence
Wed., Nov. 10	Culture and values
Sat., Nov. 13	Global Learning & Sustainable Development
Mon., Nov. 15	Photo Excursion
Wed., Nov. 17	Presentation of results of Photo Excursion
Thur., Nov. 18 Tues., Nov. 23 Wed., Nov. 24 Thur., Nov. 25	Cultural similarities and differences, part 1-4
Sat., Nov. 27 Tues., Nov. 30 Wed., Dec. 1	German History, part 1-3
Tues., Dec. 7	German Political System
Tues., Dec. 14	Migration and Cultural Change
Wed., Dec. 15	Anti-Bias Training & Closing Session

Course requirements & grade:

participation (50%), presentations (50%), equivalent to 4 ECTS

This class will be held virtually.