

Essentials of Cross-Cultural Competence

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 several components:

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. The students will go on guided excursions in the Stuttgart area visiting museums and other places which are either important to Germany in general and to Baden-Württemberg in particular or which are related to intercultural issues, respectively.

Methods

- lectures
- discussions
- group work
- role plays
- films
- excursions
- interviews

Schedule

8 hours per week from Mondays until Thursdays

ECTS-Credits: 4