



MC GLOBAL HUMANITIES FELLOWSHIP

Recognizing Cultural Differences in International Business Communication

B. Osmond Farrell, PhD

COMM 112: Business and Professional Speech Communication

- **Course Description:** A study of communication theory as applied to business and organizational environments. Emphasis on development of effective communication skills for professional situations including team building, interviewing, public speaking, and accommodating diverse perspectives. Assessment levels: EN 101/101A, RD 120. Three hours lecture each week.

Learners Characteristics

Students who take this course have varied academic interests as often reflected in the declared majors. The majority are aligned to General studies, Business, Linguistics, Some STEM, Health, Criminal Justice, Automotive, Theater, Education, and Communication.



BIG IDEA

I want students to always remember:

Adopting an ethnocentric approach in International Business communication is a recipe for disaster. Therefore, students/employees need to be aware of important "hidden" cultural differences.

SELECTED SLOS FOR PROJECT

- select appropriate channels and networks for effective communication within an organization
- demonstrate how communication lines can be ineffective and develop strategies to prevent such miscommunication
- list and demonstrate sensitivity to different communication styles among gender and ethnic groups and other culturally diverse populations; and to the culture within an organization itself.

Global Humanities Learning Competencies

KNOWLEDGE

Define and identify cultures, co-cultures, and ethnocentrism

Explain how the hidden dimensions of culture affect communication in a culturally diverse workforce

State how people with diverse backgrounds can bring new strengths to a business or group (class)

SKILLS

List four things you are proud of in your culture

List four things you are **not** proud of in your culture

Demonstrate cultural awareness of important international differences in business settings

Apply the guidelines of Communicating across Diversity on pp. 50-52 to describe six (6) specific ways you and others can communicate more effectively in the workplace

Write an essay on an artifact and present three-minute speech about the artifact.

ASSUMPTIONS

Self-awareness and self-esteem about one's own identity and culture

Sensitivity and respect for personal and cultural differences

Display curiosity and openness towards new ideas and ways of thinking

Communicating in an Intercultural Business Environment

Many problems in intercultural communication are caused not by malice but by lack of knowledge



PROJECT ASSIGNMENTS

INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY QUIZ

(Students answer a series of questions to test their cultural sensitivity)

GROUP PROJECT

(Students form diverse groups of 5-6 members)

SELF AWARENESS ASSIGNMENT

(Students list things in their culture they are proud and not proud of)

INTERNATIONAL DIFFERENCES QUIZ

(A quiz testing knowledge of important international differences in key areas)

DYADS

(Role playing ethnocentric and ethno-relative roles)

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT #1

(Short essay analyzing the Caux Roundtable Principles)

SMITHSONIAN ASSIGNMENT

(Short essay and presentation on Smithsonian artifact)

VIDEO ANALYSIS

(Groups analyze examples of assumptions and behaviors that block or promote authentic relations)

What is your intercultural sensitivity?

Following is a series of statements concerning intercultural communication. 49 There are no right or wrong answers.

Imagine yourself interacting **with** people from a wide variety of cultural groups, not just one or two. Record your first impression to each statement by indicating the degree to which you agree or disagree, using the following scale .

5 = strongly agree **4** = agree **3** = uncertain **2** = disagree
1 = strongly disagree

1. I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.
2. I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded.
3. I am sure of myself in interacting with people from different cultures.
4. I find it very hard to talk in front of people from different cultures.
5. I know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures.
6. I get upset easily when interacting with people from different cultures

<https://youtu.be/YIsWtHx1L9s>

MODIFICATION OF COMM 112 CULTURE PROJECT

In order to further enhance students intercultural competencies, several additions have been proposed which will extend intercultural communication related work from two to four weeks. The new areas are:

DYADS

(Role playing ethnocentric and ethno-relative roles)

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT

(Short essay analyzing the Caux Roundtable Principles)

SMITHSONIAN ASSIGNMENT

(Short essay on brief speech on selected Smithsonian artifact)

VIDEO ANALYSIS

(Groups analyze examples of assumptions and behaviors that block or promote authentic relations)