



LM107
Intercultural
Communication



UNIVERSIDAD
NEBRIJA

Centro de Estudios Hispánicos

Intercultural Communication

Hours: 45

Credits: 6 ECTS

Prerequisites: No requirements

Instructor name: Ana Carballal, Ph.D.

E-mail: acarball@nebrija.es

Office hours: to be communicated the first day of class

1. Course Description

Why living peacefully and working effectively in multicultural environments is more important now than ever

Collaborating cross-culturally and promoting intercultural understanding and effective communication is more important now than ever. The pandemic has revealed itself as an opportunity to learn how to be more flexible, creative and how to deal with uncertain and ambiguous situations. Unfortunately, it has also stoked fear and intolerance against those who are different and, consequently, fractured societies where ideas of segregation may emerge. Therefore, developing intercultural skills in this new global world will be essential to advance and succeed both personally and professionally. These skills enable professionals to work well among various cultures, feel more comfortable doing business internationally, communicate effectively in culturally diverse environments, manage multicultural teams, and resolve all kinds of culture-related conflicts. In this course, we will discuss stereotypes, ethnocentrism, different cultural dimensions, communication styles (both verbal and non-verbal), intercultural and global skills, conflict management and cultural adjustment, among others.

2. Learning Objectives

- Create awareness of the importance of living and working effectively in culturally diverse environments.
- Understand how values and beliefs influence the way we behave.
- Develop the ability to document one's own culture and acquire the knowledge and skills to communicate with other cultures.
- Recognize and respect diversity and multiculturalism
- Learn about different cultural dimensions that influence how we make decisions, solve problems, communicate, cope with ambiguity etc.
- Identify patterns related to competitive or collaborative working environments, uncertainty avoidance, views on hierarchy, relationship-, or task-oriented cultures, time management, and verbal and non-verbal communication.
- Avoid stereotypes and wrong assumptions about other cultures.
- Adapt behavior and styles of communication to different cultural environments and develop new strategies that will work better and will be more effective in a new culture.
- Develop flexibility, open-mindedness, cultural empathy, and curiosity about other cultures.
- Learn to identify, prevent, and/or manage misunderstandings and miscommunication among cultures, as well as mediate in intercultural conflicts.

3. Formative Activities

An interactive, task-based and communicative teaching methodology will be used so as to involve students in their own learning processes and make them aware of how their learning strategies develop. There will be a theoretical introduction at the beginning of each session and students will then be required to participate by posing questions,

expressing ideas on texts previously read, sharing knowledge, etc. Furthermore, students will be required to carry out a variety of tasks, individually and/or in groups.

- Theoretical-practical sessions: Students will be required to read certain texts on the topic before each session so as to be able to participate and discuss certain issues in class. During each session there will be a theoretical presentation of items and the student will be required to do a wide variety of exercises, individual and in groups.
- Tutorials: Tutorial sessions at the request of students and/or instructors so as to monitor students' development and improvement.
- Student practical activities and assignments: Several individual and group exercises will be required thorough out the course. Students will conduct research on the communication styles of different activities, stating its culture-specific features and the socio-cultural rules governing that specific speech community. Students are required to carry out several oral presentations on different issues in class using the English language as the only means of communication. The accurate use of the concepts, skills and strategies learnt in class will be evident in all tasks.

4. Methodology

This course follows the methodological guidelines of the communicative approaches, based on a constructive and process-based conception of learning. This methodology is based on a teaching-learning process centered in the student, whose active participation is encouraged, favoring, at the same time, the development of general and specific competences that show knowledge, abilities and attitudes that can be applied to their future professional careers.

5. Evaluation

The students' learning evaluation is inspired by the principles of formative evaluation. In consequence, a continuous evaluation is applied, which means that every activity or task that is made inside or outside of the classroom is susceptible of being evaluated.

5.1. Grading system

In the Spanish educational system, it is required to quantitatively express the result of each student's evaluation. In order to do so, Nebrija faculty uses different strategies and instruments such as: papers, exams, tests, projects, self-evaluation activities, etc. In order to issue a final grade for the Spanish Plus programs the following scale is established:

- 30 % Attendance and active participation in class
- 30% Daily work
- 40% Exams/presentations/essays

Therefore, the final grade is the average between attendance and participation, daily work and exams, presentations, projects and essays.

- Active participation in class is evaluated by means of different activities such as:
- Activities and exercises correction;
- Reflection upon the different contents in the course
- Oral activities (individual, in pairs or in groups). Fluency, correction, adequacy and relevance are taken into account.
- Daily work makes reference to any activity or task that is done inside or outside of the classroom, whether during the class time or at any other time.
- Exams/papers/projects

The course includes a midterm and a final written exam on theoretical concepts and course facts. If a student, unjustifiably, does not do or submit an exam, paper or project, it will be graded with a '0'.

*** A minimum grade of 5 must be obtained in a final exam/ final project in order to pass the course.**

5.2. Attendance, participation and grading policies

5.2.1. Attendance policy

Attendance is mandatory. The maximum number of absences allowed is 6. In case of missing 7 or more sessions in one course, the student will receive a zero in his/her participation and attendance grade. In addition, not attending classes will not excuse the student from handing in any homework, papers or essays previously assigned.

The following situations must be considered:

- There are 8 sessions of class per week. Each session of class will count as an absence.
- Two delays of more than 15 minutes will be considered an absence. The entrance to class will not be allowed after 30 minutes once it has started.
- There are no excused absences. E.g.: Not attending class because of sickness will count as an absence. The student is responsible for catching up with any homework done while absent.
- Exams dates have been officially approved by the University, therefore, they will not be changed*

*Except for those courses where the professor will set up specific dates and inform the students at the beginning of the program.

5.2.2. Criteria to evaluate participation

Criteria to evaluate participation	Grade
The student participates very actively in the class activities. S/he successfully does the requested tasks. S/he contributes to a good development of the course, encourages his/her classmates and favor debate in class.	8.5 - 10
The student participates actively in the class activities. S/he does the requested tasks and submits them on time. Shows great interest to learn.	7 - 8.4
The student, occasionally, makes interesting remarks, but s/he basically answers when s/he is asked. S/he does not show a clear interest in the course. Misses classes occasionally.	5 - 6.9
The student does not participate unless s/he is asked. S/he has unjustified absences and delays. His/her attitude is not very participative.	0 - 4.9

5.2.3. Criteria to evaluate Daily Work

Criteria to evaluate Daily Work	Grade
The student always does all the work demanded by the professor, not only during the class but also at home. He/she always or almost always meets the deadlines established.	8.5 - 10

The student almost always does all the work demanded by the professor, not only during the class but also at home. Occasionally, he/she submits work after the established deadline.	7 - 8.4
The student occasionally does the work demanded by the professor, not only during the class but also at home. He/she does not normally meet the established deadlines and even occasionally does not submit the work.	5 - 6.9
The student never or almost never does the work demanded by the professor. He/she never or almost never meets the established deadlines.	0 - 4.9

5.2.4. Grading criteria

Number Grade	Letter Grade	Percentage
10	A+	100%
9.5 – 9.9	A	95 – 99 %
9 – 9.4	A-	90 – 94 %
8.5 – 8.9	B+	85 – 89 %
7.5 – 8.4	B	75 – 84 %
7 – 7.4	B-	70 – 74 %
6.5 – 6.9	C+	65 – 69 %
6 – 6.4	C	60 – 64 %
5 – 5.9	C-	5 – 59 %
0 – 4.9	F	0 – 49 %

5.3. Warning on plagiarism

When writing a University paper or essay and reference is made to certain authors, it is mandatory to cite them by means of a footnote or a direct reference. In no case it is acceptable that a student uses a text, no matter how brief it is, written by somebody else without putting it in inverted commas, as this means s/he is trying to make it look as his/her own. This is called plagiarism and in a university context it could be penalized with expulsion.

6. Bibliography

Basic textbook

Liu, S; Volcic, Z. et al. (2015) *Introducing Intercultural Communication*. London: SAGE Publications.
Additional Bibliography

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- Bennett, Milton J., (1998) *Basic Concepts of Intercultural Communication*. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, Inc.
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- Davis, F. (1995): *La comunicación no verbal*, Madrid: Alianza Editorial.
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- Lázaro, Juan (2011) *Gente con clase*. Madrid: Editorial Reino de Cordelia.
- Llobera, M. et al. (1995): *Competencia comunicativa*, Madrid: Edelsa.
- Nees, G. (2000) *Unraveling an Enigma*. ME: Intercultural Press, Inc., Yarmouth.
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- Samovar, L.A. et al (2005) *Intercultural Communication: A reader (with info Track)*. New York: Wadsworth Publishing.
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- Sercu, L., et al (2005). *Foreign Language Teachers and Intercultural Competence*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Spencer-Oatey, H. (ed.) (2008). *Culturally Speaking. Culture, Communication and Politeness Theory*. 2nd edition. London: Continuum
- Wenzhong, H. & y Cornelius G. (1999) *Encountering the Chinese: A guide for Americans*, 2ª ed., ME: Intercultural Press, Inc., Yarmouth, 1999.

7. Lecturer Brief CV

Ana Carballal Broome is specialized in the development of intercultural competence in international working environments. She holds a PhD in Business Economics from the University Rey Juan Carlos in Madrid and a Master’s Degree in European Studies from the University of Amsterdam (UvA). Her bachelor’s degree is in Modern and Contemporary History from the Universidad Autónoma in Madrid (UAM).

She is a lecturer at Universidad Nebrija in the field of Intercultural Studies and Global Skills where she teaches both international and Spanish students. She also works as an intercultural trainer for companies and organizations specifically regarding cultural diversity management and the development of intercultural skills. Dr. Carballal is a dual national USA- Spain living in Madrid with broad experience in the field of International Higher Education.

8. Office Hours

Tutorial schedule will be confirmed in the first couple of sessions, to guarantee that the time schedule suits the needs of students and instructor. However, it is always advisable to make an appointment with the lecturer beforehand in order to ensure availability.

Campus Madrid Princesa
Phone: 91 452 11 00, ext. 5544
E-mail: acarball@nebrija.es

9. Course Content

Introduction to intercultural communication. Living in a global society. The concept of “globalization” and “cultural” diversity. Global talent and Intercultural skills. Living and working in multicultural contexts. Intercultural competence for professional settings.

The concept of Culture. Definitions and components of culture. Characteristics of Culture. Identifying types of subcultures. Cultural diversity, the concept of “identity” and “ethnicity”. Personality and culture.

The dimensions of culture.

Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions: Individualism vs. Collectivism, Masculinity vs. Femininity, Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Long-term vs. Short term Orientation. Hall’s high and low-context cultural dimensions.

Kluckhohn and Stodtbeck's Value Orientations: man-nature orientation, activity orientation, time orientation, human nature orientation and relational orientation. F. Trompenaars' cultural patterns.

Culture and identity. Social categorization and identity. In-groups and out-groups.

Types of identity: gender identity, ethnic identity, cultural identity, national identity.

The role of identity in intercultural relationships. Developing an intercultural identity.

Communication styles and culture.

What is communication? Defining communication: Verbal communication: components and characteristics. The models of communication: linear model and the interactive model. Levels of communication: intrapersonal, interpersonal, group, organizational, and mass communication. "The Accommodation Theory"

Non-verbal communication. Time and space.

Culture and perception. Sensing and its limitations. Perceiving: its stages: selection, organization and interpretation. Reviewing the concept of "high and low context". The concept of "face". Culture and language. The Politeness Theory and language face threatening acts.

The influence of culture on perception. Perception and intercultural communication: Ethnocentrism, stereotypes, prejudice, racism.

Barriers to intercultural communication and culture shock.

The six stumbling blocks: (1) The assumption of similarities, (2) Language as an intercultural barrier. (3) Nonverbal misinterpretations (4) Preconceptions and stereotypes, (5) Tendency to evaluate and (6) High anxiety and culture shock. Acculturation and culture shock: stages and tips on how to avoid it. Sharing our personal experiences.

Becoming an effective intercultural communicator. Intercultural competence: components and strategies to develop it. Sympathy and Empathy.