

## Management Across Borders

**BIC Course Number:** MG 310

**Language of Instruction:** English

**Contact Hours:** 45

**Instructor name:** César Duch

### **Description:**

The focus of the present syllabus is the analysis of how a business must adapt to different cultural contexts. For this purpose, we study the interaction between the culture and the company's structure, processes and human resources. In this way, the student will be able to understand strategies used to optimize such interaction.

The general objective of the course is to learn the main business practices in different cultures, through the analysis of the differences in various countries. This will provide the background to understand and identify threats and opportunities to do business in a global context.

The specific objectives are as follows:

1. To learn the general characteristics of different cultures.
2. To understand the effect of cultural differences when doing business.
3. To review the strategies used to optimize cultural diversity in a company.

Based on the definition of culture, this course provides students a broad understanding how to deal with international cultural issues. The course focuses on the main approaches in intercultural management and cross-cultural management research (Theories of Geert Hofstede, Fons Trompenaars and Edward T. Hall).

### **Course Objectives:**

- to realize the characteristics of their own culture as a starting point for understanding other cultures
- to develop cross-cultural awareness and learn how to transfer this knowledge this to real business situations
- to learn the different concepts of measuring intercultural differences, how to collect this data and how to transfer this into their daily work
- to develop a better understanding within cultural differences more goal-oriented negotiation in business situations with partners / customers from a different cultural background (e.g. Russia, USA, Saudi Arabia, Germany and Mexico)
- to reduce prejudices and train openness for different values and behaviour

### **Methodology:**

Through videos, exercises, case studies, the students will become aware of their own cultural background, intercultural differences and learn via case-studies how to manage real business situations.

**Evaluation:**

Attendance to classes and field trips is mandatory; poor attendance will affect the final grade of the student as well as the everyday participation grade.

The final grade consists of four different parts: class participation, a midterm written exam, a final written exam, and a final project. The breakdown of grades is made up as follows:

15% Class participation

25% Assignments/class work

25% Mid-term exam

25% Final exam

10% Quizzes

Class participation:

Participants of the class are expected to have the willingness to work in intercultural groups, do develop cross-cultural emphasis and work or are willing to work in an international environment.

Final exam:

The final exam consists of a project about a country on which the student is interested. The topic is not assigned by the teacher; however it should be approved in advance, since it should integrate as many relevant aspects covered throughout the class. Both written and oral presentation will be considered for the final grade.

Students will use the Microsoft PowerPoint Program to give their final exam presentations. Presentations have to be sent by e-mail to the professor.

**Attendance Policy:**

Students are allowed THREE absences throughout the semester without penalty. Starting with the fourth absence, the student's FINAL GRADE will be lowered by a fraction of a letter (1/3 of a letter grade). For example, if a student has 4 absences and a final grade of B+, the grade will be lowered to a B, if 5 absences the grade is lowered to B-.

There are NO excused absences. If a student misses class because s/he is sick, that counts as one of the allowed absences. No excused absences and no excuses.

Quizzes, exams and participation points that are missed because of an absence cannot be recuperated.

## Content: Managing Across Cultures

Session	Topic	Class Content/ Activities	Student Assignments
Class 1	Introduction to the course and revision of the syllabus	Video: "Mosuo Song Journey" – Documentary about the only matriarchal country in the world	Write a short essay about stereotypes, using a country as an example
Class 2	Unit 1: Cultural Advantages	Competitive advantages that can be generated from cultural diversity	For the same country used in the previous homework, investigate about its greeting rituals, forms of address and dress codes  Reading list: Managing Across Cultures, pp 1-17, Schneider, Susan. 2003. FT Prentice Hall. (The undertow of culture)
Class 3	Unit 2: Cultural Patterns	Basic cultural dimensions	Reading list: Managing Across Cultures, pp 20-33, Schneider, Susan. 2003. FT Prentice Hall. (Exploring culture)
Class 4	Unit 2: Cultural Patterns	What are underlying cultural assumptions?	Investigate about "corporate culture" using a multinational corporation as an example  Reading list: Managing Across Cultures, pp 34-48, Schneider, Susan. 2003. FT Prentice Hall. (Exploring culture)
Class 5	Unit 3: Spheres of culture	Interaction and influence of culture on industries, companies, professions and regions	Homework for the next class – for the same company of the previous homework, analyze its organizational structure.  Reading list: Managing Across Cultures, pp 51-77, Schneider, Susan. 2003. FT Prentice Hall. (Interacting spheres of culture)
Class 6	Unit 4: Organizational structure and processes	Evidence of the cultural impact on the structure and processes of a company	Write a short essay based on the case: "Southwest Airlines", addressing the question "what made Southwest Airlines a case the principal force behind fundamental changes?"  Reading list: Managing Across Cultures, pp 85-114, Schneider, Susan. 2003. FT Prentice Hall. (Culture and Organization)

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Class 7	Unit 5: Strategy	How culture can influence on the decision process of a company	Investigate what are job application and selection practices in a country of interest and compare them to those in the country of origin.  Reading list: Managing Across Cultures, pp 118-138, Schneider, Susan. 2003. FT Prentice Hall. (Culture and Strategy) An Introduction to Intercultural Communication, pp 360, Jandt, Fred. 2010. Sage.
Class 8	Unit 6: Human Resources	How culture can influence job selection, training, compensation and promotion in a company	Reading list: Managing Across Cultures, pp 148-177, Schneider, Susan. 2003. FT Prentice Hall. (Culture and human resource management)
Class 9	Unit 6: Video – “The Company”	How big corporations use different processes for selecting personnel	
Class 10	Group Work	Evaluate personal skills that will influence the international experience	
Class 11	Unit 7: The international manager	Who are considered “international managers” and what qualifications they should have	Write a short essay based on the reading: “U.S. Americans and Mexicans Working Together: Five Core Concepts”, addressing the question “in which ways an American manager misinterpret Mexican workers behavior?”  Reading list: Managing Across Cultures, pp 185-212, Schneider, Susan. 2003. FT Prentice Hall. (The International manager) Intercultural Communication, pp 280-285, Samovar, Larry. 2006. Thomson Wadsworth.
Class 12	<b>Guest Speaker: Managing Across Cultures</b>	Textile and Fashion Sector	
Class 13	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>		

Session	Topic	Class Content/ Activities	Student Assignments
Class 14	Unit 7: The international manager	Cultural adaptation	<p>Write a short essay based on the reading: "The Role of Dialogue in Managing Intergroup Conflict", addressing the question "what solutions do you believe would be more effective than dialogue?"</p> <p>Reading list: Intercultural Communication in Contexts, pp 302-325, Martin, Judith, Nayakama, Thomas. 2007. McGraw-Hill. (Intercultural Communication Applications) Intercultural Communication, pp 379-386, Samovar, Larry. 2006. Thomson Wadsworth.</p>
Class 15	Unit 8: The multicultural team	How to optimize cultural diversity	<p>Investigate about a success case, as an example, of one of the strategies presented in the text book to manage cultural differences.</p> <p>Reading list: Managing Across Cultures, pp 216-243, Schneider, Susan. 2003. FT Prentice Hall. (The multicultural team)</p>
Class 16	Unit 9: The global organization	Strategies used to manage when there are cultural differences	<p>Write a short essay based on the reading: "Business Ethics and Intercultural Communication: Exploring the overlap between Two Academic Fields", addressing the question "would you be willing to fight for intercultural tolerance and consensus ethics?"</p> <p>Reading list: Managing Across Cultures, pp 253-284, Schneider, Susan. 2003. FT Prentice Hall. (The global organization) Intercultural Communication, pp 430-437, Samovar, Larry. 2006. Thomson Wadsworth.</p>
Class 17	Unit 10: Ethics and Social Responsibility	The debate between ethics and profit, in a cultural context	<p>investigate about one of the following cases: Nestlé Infant Formula, Union Carbide in Bhopal, ITTs participation in Chiles politics.</p> <p>Reading list: Managing Across Cultures, pp 216-243, Schneider, Susan. 2003. FT Prentice Hall. (Citizens of the world: business ethics and social responsibility)</p>

Session	Topic	Class Content/ Activities	Student Assignments
Class 18	Unit 10: Ethics and Social Responsibility	Analysis of Cases	<p>Write a short essay based on the reading: "Public Speaking Patterns in Kenya", addressing the question "what is the major difference between people in the United States and those in Kenya with regard to their fear of public speaking?"</p> <p>Reading list:            Managing Across Cultures, pp 216-243, Schneider, Susan. 2003. FT Prentice Hall. (Citizens of the world: business ethics and social responsibility)            Intercultural Communication, pp 238-244, Samovar, Larry. 2006. Thomson Wadsworth.</p>
Class 19	Unit 11: Communication in a second language	Cultural variations in language	<p>Write a short essay based on the reading: "Mexican Dichos: Lessons Through Language", addressing the question "how does the study of familiar sayings help us understand some of the important values of a particular culture?"</p> <p>Reading list:            Intercultural Communication in Contexts, pp 218-226, Martin, Judith, Nayakama, Thomas. 2007. McGraw-Hill. (Intercultural Communication Processes)            Intercultural Communication, pp 246-249, Samovar, Larry. 2006. Thomson Wadsworth.</p>
Class 20	Unit 11: Communication in a second language	What is the difference between translation and interpretation	<p>Prepare a ten-minute presentation about a topic related to the class</p> <p>Reading list:            Intercultural Communication in Contexts, pp 232-239, Martin, Judith, Nayakama, Thomas. 2007. McGraw-Hill. (Intercultural Communication Processes)</p>
Class 21	Unit 11: Communication in a second language	How to improve oral presentations in a second language	<p>Reading list:            They don't like my accent, Beaver, Dennis. 2006. Banking Journal.</p>
Class 22	Unit 12: Corporate Culture and International Human Resource Management I	The Company's View	<p>Reading list:            Fons Trompenaars: Understanding Cultural Diversity in Business            Corporate Culture – Which Culture fits?            Major Facts that influence Corporate Culture – from Managers to Environment            Case Study: IHRM I – The Company's View on Internationalization and HRM</p>
Class 23	Unit 12: International Human Resource Management II	The Employee's View	<p>Group-Presentations            Case Study: IHRM II – Employee's View, Applying, Selection</p>

Session	Topic	Class Content/ Activities	Student Assignments
Class 24	Unit 13: Cultural Awareness	Culture Matters – How to deal with different cultures Cultural Awareness – Culture as “Software of the Mind” Lecture, Case Study	Test your intercultural fitness: Self-administered test
Class 25	<b>FINAL EXAM</b> Written and oral presentation of a country of interest to the student, in which the topics reviewed in this course are covered		

**Required readings:**

*For the first part the reading of different chapters of the books from Hofstede Geert & Gert Jan (chapter 1), Hofstede Geert (chapter 3, 4, 5, 6, 7), and Trompenaars (chapter 3, 11) is required. For part two the reading of on chapter 1 of Briscoe/Schuler is required. Additional material / case studies, etc. are given in class.*

Hofstede, Geert; Hofstede, Gert Jan (2005): “Cultures and Organizations – Software of the Mind”. Revised and Expanded 2nd Edition; ISBN: 978-0071439596

Hofstede, Geert (2001): “Culture’s Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations across Nations”, ISBN: 978-0803973244

Trompenaars, Fons (2010): “Riding the Wave of Culture – Understanding Cultural Diversity in Business”. 2nd Edition, ISBN: 978-1857881769

Hall, Edward T. (1976): “Beyond Culture”, ISBN: 978-0385124744

Briscoe, Dennis; Schuler, Randall (2008): “International Human Resource Management: Policies and Practices for Multinational Enterprises. 2nd Edition, ISBN: 978-0415773515