



## SYLLABUS

### **CROSSCULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS AND CROSSCULTURAL PERSPECTIVES**

**Instructor: Carmen Arrue & Silvia Pérez**

**Contact Hrs: 20**

**Language of Instruction: English**

**OVIEDO, SPAIN**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will help students develop basic skills that will enable them to better process their intercultural experience in Oviedo. This will be accomplished by first making students aware of the cultural baggage they have brought with them and the implicit assumptions that they use in understanding Spanish life and culture as it is lived around them day by day. Students will be compelled to make observations on various aspects of life in Oviedo, and be asked first to interpret them from the perspective of their own culture and then to challenge their interpretation by asking themselves what meaning they may have to the people of Oviedo. By actively participating in class, through guided cultural observations and the careful writing of short reflection papers, students will develop their capacity to withhold judgement until they have had a chance to consider the multiple meanings of what they see and experience around them not just in Oviedo, but wherever they may go.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Students who successfully complete this course will:

- Learn about themselves as cultural beings.
- Learn about the elements of culture such as value orientations, non-verbal communication and communication styles that inform daily life.
- Learn about the levels of cultural awareness, intercultural sensitivity and cross-cultural adjustment.
- Practice and develop cultural observation skills.
- Develop knowledge and skills that are both culture-specific (pertinent to the host culture) and culture general (relevant to all intercultural experience.)

### **INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY**

- The first class will introduce you to the basic concepts of intercultural communication.
- Successive classes are based on class discussions and or small group work. The suggested readings provide important background information for the homework assignments and the discussions.

### **METHOD OF EVALUATION (GRADING)**

Grades (A-F) will be based on the following components

- Participation in class discussions (15%). If you are absent on any given day, your participation will be considered “0” for that day. You are expected to engage actively in the discussions and exercises which will be based on the assigned tasks and readings. You will be issued a Reader composed of selected readings which provide important background information keyed to each weekly topic from the perspective of American and Spanish culture. Students must return the Reader to AHA at the end of the term. Total 15%.
- Two reflection papers on Dominant American values and how they apply to you (at the beginning of the term) and on the role your culture has played on your adaptation during the term (at the end of the term) 10% each. Total 20%.
- Intercultural Assessment Questionnaire and two observation tasks (“Café Ethnography” & “Non-Verbal Communication”) *Individual notes handed in personally at the start of class on the due date.* (5% each). Total 15%
- Five observation/interpretation papers. Each paper focuses on one small incident that you have personally observed/experienced related to that week’s topic and will be handed in at the start of class on the due date. Detailed instructions will be provided in a separate handout for the content and format of these papers. Follow these guidelines carefully. The reflection papers will be returned to you (with comments/feedback) on the following week. 10% each. Total 50%.
- You may substitute one of the DIE papers for commentary (from an intercultural perspective) regarding a film from a selected list of films from our library that related to the weekly topics.

## COURSE OUTLINE

### CLASS 1 90 Minutes

Lecture	<b>Introduction to the Course:</b> Overview of course organization and expectations. The Intercultural toolkit: main concepts. Theoretical Framework: The culture general approach.
Handouts	Main Concepts”, “High context/Low Context cultures”.
Suggested Readings:	Bennett, Milton, J. “Intercultural Communication: a Current Perspective” (pp. 1-34) and Barna, LaRay M. <u>Basic Concepts of Intercultural communication</u> , edited by Milton J. Bennett: Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press Inc., 1998 (in Reader)
Homework	Task 1 Conduct observation of a Spanish café
	Turn in completed Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (assigned during orientation)

### CLASS 2 Class meets for 90 minutes

Discussion	Debriefing “Café Ethnography” observation task
Lecture:	The Intercultural Effectiveness Scale: Understanding your Score
Readings:	IES Feedback Report
Homework:	Task 2: Identify areas where you need or would like to improve/develop intercultural skills and design a Personal Development Plan for this term. (Due at the beginning of Class 3.)

### CLASS 3 Class meets for 90 minutes,

- Lecture: **Introduction to Non-Verbal Communication and Communication Styles**
- Handouts: Non-verbal communication & Communication Styles. Handout (Craig Storti) on orientation to time (concept of time/time and other people). Orientation to space (public and private space)  
Handout (Craig Storti) on “high/low context”, “degree of directness”, “importance of face”.
- Readings: Althen: American Ways: “The Communicative Style of Americans” pp. 33-54, “Behavior in Public Places” pp 229-234.  
Wattley-Ames: Spain is Different: “Language and Communication” pp 65-80  
Richardson: Spanish Studies, “Communicative Contrasts: Spanish & English” pp. 75-80. (available on demand)
- Homework: Task 3 The class is divided into groups. Students observe and report in groups on various aspects of non-verbal communication (time, space, personal distance, touching and eye contact) and compare these to Americans patterns. See assignment handout for further instructions.  
*Due at the start of class 4*

#### **CLASS 4 Class meets for 90 minutes**

- Discussion: Groups report their findings. What patterns emerge? How do these ways compare with American patterns? What problems can result?  
Application of findings: How can you apply this new awareness in communicating with your host family, professors, and conversation partners?
- Lecture: Core Cultural Values and Culture Mapping. Core US American Cultural Values
- Handouts: “Dominant American Values” (Kohl) “American & Contrast American Value Orientations” (What’s Up with Culture)
- Readings: Wattley-Ames: Spain is Different: “What is Spain” (pp-1-5), “Spain and Europe: Africa Begins at the Pyrenees (pp. 7-9), “*Spain & the United States*” (pp. 10-20) “Society and the Individual” pp. 23-44, “  
Althen: American Ways: Introduction (pp xix-xxxi), Chapter 1 “American Values and Assumptions” (pp 1-31
- Homework:: Reflection Essay: Pick one or more of dominant American values from Kohl’s list and write a short essay addressing the following questions: Do you think it/they hold true for your own variant of American culture? Why do you think this is/isn’t so? What about for the majority of Americans that you know? *Due at the start of class 5*

#### **CLASS 5 Class meets for 90 minutes**

- Discussion: Exploring US Culture: Work in groups to select 10 to 15 topics that you would teach in a short course for foreigners on US culture. Be prepared to explain why you have chosen each topic
- Lecture: Culture Shock and Culture Adjustment. Phases of Cultural Awareness & A Model of Intercultural Sensitivity Introduction to the DIE format
- Handout: Culture Shock. The Phases of Cultural Awareness. A Model of Intercultural Sensitivity.

#### **CLASS 6 Class meets for 90 minutes....**

- Becoming American or Spanish. Socialization: formal and informal**
- Handouts Comparison US and Other Cultures (from UO Resident Director's Handbook for Overseas Study) "Educational Systems and Academic Expectations", "Some Differences in Learning Styles"
- Readings: Althen, American Ways: "Education" pp 101-118.  
Richardson: Spanish Studies: "Home and School: Learning to Be a Spaniard." Pp. 152-164.
- Homework: DIE 1: Reflect on the interactions you have observed between adults and children in public places Where and at what times do you see children in public (parks, street, cafés, etc.)? Who is minding the children? How are children indulged or disciplined? How are they dressed? Are these different than what you are used to seeing at home? Make sure you follow the DIE model, distinguishing between description, interpretation and evaluation.  
Due at the start of class 7

**CLASS 7 Class meets for 90 minutes**

- Discussion Students report on their observations. What Spanish values to these practices reflect? How does the formal socialization system mirror other aspects of the culture? How do these compare to pattern in the US?
- Lecture **Society and the Individual: Community and Mobility affect Family, Relationships & Lifestyle**
- Handouts "Individualists and Collectivists",
- Readings: Althen: American Ways: "Social Relationships" pp. 141-154, Sports and Recreation" 187-193, "Getting Things Done in Organizations" pp. 221-228, "Business" pp.247-258.  
Wattley-Ames: Spain is Different "Relationships" pp. 47-62 "Work" pp. 83-106, "Play" pp. 109-118. AHA library: Hopper (2006) Chapter 11.
- Homework: DIE 2: Describe an incident or experience that has surprised, angered, pleased you related to this weekly topic. Follow the DIE format: describe, interpret and evaluate  
*Due at the start of class 8*

**CLASS 8 Class meets for 90 minutes**

- Discussion: How do Spaniards and Americans pursue and maintain close relationships? How do the patterns reported in the readings or observed by you, differ between the two cultures? What kinds of misunderstanding could result? How are these patterns consistent with other aspects of the culture? How would Spanish patterns of forming relationships help or hinder the acceptance of a foreigner/outsider in their community? What difficulties have you encountered as a foreigner in establishing relationships with Spaniards outside of your host family?
- Lecture: **Gender and Sexuality**
- Handouts None
- Readings: Althen: American Ways: "Male and Female Relationships" pp. 173-186.  
Wattley-Ames: Spain is Different: "Sex Roles" pp. 54-62. (under "Relationships" Class 6)

Richardson: Spanish studies: “Introduction: Love, Sex and Gender”, “El Amor Verdadero lo Puede todo.” pp. 107-115. “Gender Issues in Spain” pp. 121-126. AHA library: Hopper (2006) Chapters 9 and 10.

Homework: DIE 3: Describe a situation or incident you have experience here in which you have felt surprised/perplexed/angered/threatened/pleased as a woman or as a man. Be careful to follow the guidelines in the handout, distinguishing between: description, interpretation and evaluation  
*Due at the start of class 9*

### **CLASS 9 Class meets for 90 minutes**

Discussion: What are the general expectations of men and women in Spain? What about sexuality? Are these different from the U.S.? How are behaviours and expectations concerning gender and sexuality changing in Spain? What specific observations have you made concerning the roles of males and females and towards sexuality since you have been here? What are the similarities with the US? Are these really similar? What are the differences?

Lecture: **Us and Them: Differentiators in Spanish Society**

Handouts: Source of Status: Achieved vs. Ascribed”,

Readings: Wattley-Ames: Spain is Different: See back readings: “What is Spain” (pp-1-5), “Spain and Europe: Africa Begins at the Pyrenees (pp. 7-9) “Class” (pp 28-30), “Minorities and Immigrants” (pp. 31-32), “Confianza: Trust in Spanish Society” (pp. 41-44), “Strangers versus People you Know” (pp 71-72) “Hierarchy” (pp 95-96), Authority and Respect” (pp 96-97). Richardson “Spanishness: How Spanish are the Spaniards?” pp. 28-40. “Changing Places: Emigration and Immigration” p 60. “ Youth Culture” p. 164-165  
Althen: American Ways pp. “Racial and Ethnic Diversity” pp. 155-171. AHA library: Hopper (2006) on Spanish identity and nationalism and immigration, Chapters 16-21.

Homework: DIE 4: Write about a situation or incident that you have observed or experienced that points out the way society in Spain either includes or excludes people, Make sure you follow the DIE model, distinguishing between description, interpretation and evaluation Due after you return from spring break. If you travel to other regions of Spain or other European countries, see if you can notice any differences between these and Asturias regarding this topic.  
*Due at the start of class 10*

### **CLASS 10 Class meets for 90 minutes**

Discussion: In what ways is cultural diversity in Spain different than it is in the US? How are Spaniards coping with the recent move from a racially homogenous society to a multi-ethnic one? How is social status measured in Spain? In what concrete ways do Spaniards demonstrate deference to authority, status and rank? What are some of the symbols that denote social status? How do Spanish notions of unequal status contrast to American egalitarianism

Lecture: **Ethics, Morality and Religion**

Handouts: “Universalism/Particularism

Readings: Althen: American Ways: “Religion” pp. 119-127.

Richardson: Spanish Studies “Faith: What do Spaniards Believe?” pp. 169-180  
Wattley-Ames: Spain is Different (see back readings) “The Individual and the Law” pp. 36-41. AHA library: Hopper (2006) Chapter 8.

Final assignment      Final Reflection paper on the role your cultural self awareness has played in your adaptation to Oviedo.

**Out of Class Activities:**

- ✓ Visit to the Museo Etnografico Pueblo de Asturias (2 hours)
- ✓ Visit to the Cider Museum (2 hours)
- ✓ Visit to the Shrine of Covadonga (2 hours)
- ✓ Opportunities to observe regional differences during scheduled on overnight program excursions to other regions of Spain such as Cataluña, Basque Country and Galicia (will vary each term) (4 hours)

SELECTED FILMS FROM OUR LIBRARY

(See Library Booklet for synopsis)

WEEKLY TOPICS:

**Us and Them (immigration, emigration, Spanish regional differences, racism, ex-pats)**

Al Sur de Granada, Flores de otro mundo, , Cartas de Alou, Un franco, 14 pesetas, Lobo, Una casa de locos, Los lunes al sol, La lengua de las mariposas, Todo sobre mi madre, Tasio

**Gender & Sexuality (gender abuse, sex roles, sexuality, gay/lesbian)**

Princesas, Te doy mis ojos, Solas, La casa de Bernarda Alba, Yerma, Jamon, Jamon, Al otro lado de la cama, Tapas, Reinas

**Socialization (familias, childhood, and adolescence, formal education)**

Secretos del Corazon, El bola, Barrio, El viaje de Carol, El florido pensil, Familia, La comunidad

OTHER:

**Set in Asturias:**

Luz de Domingo, El Portero, Silencio Roto, Historia de un beso, Carne de gallina

**Food and Culture:**

What’s Cooking?, Tortilla Soup, Un toque de canela, Deliciosa Marta

**Cross Cultural Differences: (US & other)**

Crash, Babel, House of Sand & Fog, In America, Bienvenido Mr. Marshall, Los años barbaros, El Americano.

**COURSE READINGS**

- Althen, Gary. American Ways: A Guide for Foreigners in the United States. Second Edition. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 2003.
- Bennett, Milton (Ed.). Basic Concepts of Intercultural Communication. Yarmouth, ME, Intercultural Press, Inc. 1998
- Hopper, John: The New Spaniards London: Penguin Books. Second Edition. 2006
- Richardson, Bill. Spanish Studies: An Introduction. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001
- Wattley-Ames, Helen. Spain is Different. Yarmouth, ME. Second Edition. 1999.

**Note:** The readings contain a wealth of information about Spanish culture, history and society. Our AHA/NCSA library also has a number of titles on intercultural communication and other cultures as well (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Indian, Latin American, Eastern Europe) to suit the ethnic backgrounds of some of our students. Please consult us if you are interested in further readings on this subject.

### OPTIONAL SHORT BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arrue, Carmen (2008) *The Eye of the Beholder: Study Abroad in Spain Viewed Through Multi-Cultural Lenses*. In V. Savicki (ed) *Developing Intercultural Competence and Transformation: Theory, Research and Application in International Education*. Sterling, Virginia: Stylus Press.
- Bennett, M. (Ed.). (1998). *Basic Concepts of Intercultural Communication*. Yarmouth, ME, Intercultural Press.
- Bennett, J. M., Bennett, M. J., & Stillings, K. (1977). *Description, Interpretation, and Evaluation: Facilitators' Guidelines*. Retrieved from [www.intercultural.org/resources.html](http://www.intercultural.org/resources.html)
- Fowler, Sandra and Monica Mumford (eds) (1995) *Intercultural Sourcebook: Cross-Cultural Training Methods, Vol 1*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press.
- \_\_\_\_ (1999) *Intercultural Sourcebook: Cross-Cultural Training Methods, Vol 2*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press, Inc.
- Hall, E. T. (1969). *The Hidden Dimension*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.
- Hall, E. T. (1973). *The Silent Language*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.
- Hall, E. T. (1977). *Beyond Culture*. Garden City, NY, Doubleday.
- Hall, E. T. & Hall, M. R. (1987). *Understanding Cultural Differences*. Yarmouth, ME, Intercultural Press.
- Kohls, L. R. (1984). *The Values Americans Live By*. (1984). Retrieved from <http://www.uri.edu/mind/VALUES2.pdf>
- Kohls, L. R. and J. M. Knight (1994) *Developing Intercultural Awareness: A Cross-Cultural Training Handbook*. Second Edition. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press.
- La Brack, Bruce: *What's Up with Culture?: On-line Cultural Training Resource for Study Abroad*. Retrieved from: <http://www2.pacific.edu/sis/culture/>
- Mikk, Barbara Kappler, et al. (2009) *Maximizing Study Abroad: An Instructional Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota, Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition.
- Stewart, Edward and Milton J. Bennett. (1991) *American Cultural Patterns: A Cross-Cultural Perspective*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press.
- Storti, C. & Bennhold-Samaan, L. (1998). *Culture Matters: The Peace Corps Cross-Cultural Workbook*. Washington, DC: Peace Corps Information Collection and Exchange, 1998.

- Stringer, Donna and Patricia Cassiday, (2003) *52 Activities for Exploring Values Differences*.  
*Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press.*
- La Brack, Bruce: “*What’s Up with Culture?: On-line Cultural Training Resource for Study Abroad.*” School of International Studies. University of the Pacific
- Storti, Craig. Figuring Foreigners Out: A Practical Guide, Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1999.
- Storti, Craig and L. Bennhold-Samaan. Culture Matters: The Peace Corps Cross-Cultural Workbook. Washington, DC: Peace Corps Information Collection and Exchange, 1998.