



UNIVERSITÀ
CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore



**Ramon Llull University, IQS School of Management - Barcelona
Catholic University of the Sacred Heart - Milan
Franklin University Switzerland - Lugano
Forum-Nexus Program
Undergraduate Division**

Course Syllabus

**COM 389-02
Cross-Cultural Communication:
Understanding Cultural Differences in Europe**

Introduction

In an increasingly globalized and flat world, the ability of companies and individuals to be effective internationally has become a key ingredient for commercial and personal success. Set in the highly multicultural environment of the European Union, this course will develop the students' cross-cultural interpersonal skills and offer a hands-on learning experience that will greatly benefit them personally and professionally.

Course Description

The course introduces a way of thinking that will enable participants to function effectively in any culture, and in particular acquire experience dealing with the numerous cultural differences among European countries. It presents essential concepts of national and global culture and examines key differences in communication, facilitating the correct interpretation of a wide variety of cross-cultural situations and laying the foundation for necessary behavioral adaptations. Other important topics include working effectively in multi-cultural teams, cross-cultural negotiations, and international careers.

The course puts a strong emphasis on practical applications in real world business and professional situations. This practical dimension will be enhanced through exercises, videos, and visits to leading European companies and organizations.

Course Objectives

Upon the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Exhibit a high degree of cultural intelligence
2. Acquire a sharper understanding of their own culture and how it impacts their behavior in a multicultural setting
3. Interpret behavior, attitudes, and communication styles of people from different cultures correctly

4. Become familiarized with the key cultural characteristics of the main countries in the European Union and the most crucial differences among them
5. Use a repertoire of behavioral skills appropriate for different intercultural situations
6. Deal with ambiguity in an ever-changing and unpredictable context that results from the globalization of business and people
7. Exhibit a high degree of effectiveness when working in culturally diverse groups

Course Requirements

The course requires active student participation. Students are expected to read the assigned textbook chapters, cases, and articles before every class. Punctual attendance is required. There will be a midterm exam, a final exam, a team project, and a final presentation. Each student is required to participate in professional visits and cultural visits, as well as the International IQ Seminar.

Teaching Procedures and Methodology

Teaching methods used in this course include lectures, discussions, assignments, and professional and cultural visits. Learning in this course requires the student's constructive participation and active involvement in both class discussions and small group discussions. The professional visits will expose the participants to different aspects of the class and will highlight the practical relevance of the concepts learned. Cultural visits enhance the students' understanding of the history and culture of each country.

Attendance Policy

Students are permitted to miss class only once, due to illness, injury, or another appropriate reason. Missing more than once may result in a letter grade deduction for every additional absence.

Participation in "Europe Today: An International IQ Seminar"

All students also attend **Europe Today: An International IQ Seminar**, a daily session conducted by the Program Director, Dr. Hugo Hervitz. In this seminar, students learn about the culture of each country, gain an understanding of essential European geography and current events, discuss their experiences and cross-cultural interactions, get language tips, and identify ways to have an even more immersive study abroad experience. The material covered in the seminar complements the syllabus for this course, and there will be some exam questions based on the seminar. Participation in the International IQ Seminar is factored into the grade for this course.

Required Textbook

Cultural Intelligence: Surviving and Thriving in the Global Village

by David Thomas and Kerr Inkson

Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 3rd Edition, February 2017

(Paperback or Kindle edition recommended)

Assignments

Team Project

Working in teams, students will develop a training manual for U.S. companies sending employees on assignment to Europe (with a focus on England, France, Germany, and Italy). The purpose of this manual is to give American employees a hands-on professional survival guide to facilitate their cultural adjustment and to reduce culture shock. Students will use what they learn in class as well as their own observations in personal and professional settings as they travel throughout Europe.

Students will form teams at the beginning of the course. They will provide progress reports periodically throughout the course as they experience and learn about each country. Students must identify at least 2 additional sources for each country in addition to the required text.

The final project should include the following components/sections:

1. Introduction of the concepts (1-2 pages)
2. Guide for England (2-4 pages) - Communication and behavioral characteristics for personal versus business settings, tips, and considerations
3. Guide for France (2-4 pages) - Communication and behavioral characteristics for personal versus business settings, tips, and considerations
4. Guide for Germany (2-4 pages) - Communication and behavioral characteristics for personal versus business settings, tips, and considerations
5. Guide for Italy (2-4 pages) - Communication and behavioral characteristics for personal versus business settings, tips, and considerations
6. Conclusions (1-2 pages)
7. References

The manual should be 10-20 pages long, double-spaced, size 12 font, and include a list of references used.

PowerPoint Presentation

Each team will also present one of their guide sections from their manual in a visual format (PowerPoint or other). Sections to present will be determined during the formation of teams.

In your presentation, share the content of your guide for your designated country. Plan for your presentation to last 10-15 minutes.

Components of Final Grade

Midterm exam	20%
Final exam	20%
Team project	30%
Presentation	10%
Class participation	10%
International IQ Seminar	10%

Grading Scale

93-100 %	A
90-92.9 %	A-
87-89.9 %	B+
83-86.9 %	B
80-82.9 %	B-
77-79.9 %	C+
73-76.9 %	C
70-72.9%	C-
67-69.9 %	D+
63-66.9 %	D
60-62.9 %	D-
Below 60 %	F

Course Outline

Module 1: Introduction

- Living and Working in the Global Village
- Cultural Knowledge
- Mindfulness and Cross-Cultural Skills

Module 2: Britain

- Communication behaviors
- Cultural characteristics
- Personal vs professional interactions

Module 3: France

- Communication behaviors
- Cultural characteristics
- Personal vs professional interactions

Module 4: Working with People from Other Cultures

- Making Decisions across Cultures
- Communicating and Negotiating across Cultures
- Motivating and Leading across Cultures

Module 5: The Netherlands

- Communication behaviors
- Cultural characteristics
- Personal vs professional interactions

Module 6: Germany

- Communication behaviors
- Cultural characteristics
- Personal vs professional interactions

Module 7: Case Studies: Cross-Cultural Communication in Practice

Module 8: Italy

- Communication behaviors
- Cultural characteristics
- Personal vs professional interactions

Module 9: Working with Multicultural Groups and Teams

Module 10: Cultural Intelligence

- Developing Cultural Intelligence in an Interconnected World
- The Essentials of Cultural Intelligence

Module 11: Greece

- Communication behaviors
- Cultural characteristics
- Personal vs professional interactions

Module 12: Case Studies: Cross-Cultural Communication in Practice

Schedule of Classes and Visits

The detailed schedule of classes, professional visits, and suggested cultural visits for each session is available online at www.forum-nexus.com/schedules.

Please note that this course will be offered as a Section 02 class.

Students who participate in a program session other than A1 will supplement their class lectures with some projects completed through supervised independent study segments.

Academic Integrity

Ramon Llull University, Franklin University Switzerland, and the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart place a high value on the integrity, good conduct, and academic honesty of all students. Students are expected to maintain high standards of academic integrity at all times. Any instance of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will result in a grade of F for the course.