



SYLLABUS

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS AND THE GREEK CULTURAL MOSAIC

Contact Hrs: 15

Language of Instruction: English

ATHENS, GREECE

Objective:

This course offers you the chance to develop intercultural skills that will enable you to better comprehend what you will experience in Greece. We hope to do this by first making you aware of the cultural baggage that you have brought with you and the implicit assumptions that you use in understanding Greek life and culture as it is lived around you day by day. You will be compelled to make observations of various aspects of life in Greece, and asked first to interpret them from the perspective of your own culture and then to challenge your interpretation by asking yourself what meaning they may have to the Greek people. Thus, we hope that you will develop your capacity to perceive and understand the multiple meanings of what you see around you, not just in Greece, but wherever you may go.

CLASS SESSION I:

- Overview of course organization and expectations
- Introduction to the main concepts of intercultural communication.
- Reading: Broome, Chapters 1 and 2

CLASS SESSION II:

- Group discussion of findings on Greek cuisine
- Topic: Summary of the main periods of Greek History
- Observation Assignment 1: Observe ways in which people in Greece express a connectedness with each other and with the past. (*see assignment handout*)
- Reading: Broome, Chapter 3

CLASS SESSION III:

- Round table discussion of Observation Assignment 1
- Discussion on the Mediterranean Diet: Wine- Dionysus
Bread- Demeter
Olives- Athena
- Reading: Broome, Chapter 4
- Observation Assignment 2: Greek cuisine and habits concerning food. (*See assignment handout*)

CLASS SESSION IV:

- Round table discussion of Observation Assignment 2
- The Greeks and their religion: Lecture on the customs of Easter
- Reading: Broome, Chapter 5
- Observation Assignment 3: Religion in daily life. Easter. (*See assignment handout*)

CLASS SESSION V:

- Round table discussion of Observation Assignment 3
- Discussion on entertainment, Greek music and dances.
- Reading: Broome, Chapter 6

CLASS SESSION VI:

- Discussion on architecture, interiors, town planning, neighborhood, organization as expression of communication. The role of the family in the U.S. and in Greece.
- Reading: Broome, Chapter 7

CLASS SESSION VII:

- Discussion on Gender and sexuality, roles of males and females, similarities and differences with the U.S.
- Observation Assignment 4: Describe a situation of incident that you have experienced in which you have felt surprised/ angered/ threatened/ pleased, as a woman or a man. (*See assignment handout*)

CLASS SESSION VIII:

- Round table discussion of Observation Assignment 4
- Discussion on adults' and children's relationships
- Topic: US and Them: How are the Greeks coping with the recent move from a racially homogenous society to a multi-ethnic one? The Greek Diaspora.
- Reading: Summary of Broome's "Exploring the Greek Mosaic". What impressed you the most positively or negatively?

CLASS SESSION IX:

- Topic: Social Status in the U.S. and in Greece
- Discussion on the preparation of the Final Performance

CLASS SESSION X: FINAL PERFORMANCE

Our class ends with a final performance, in which all students collaborate and take part. This is your chance to act out some of the definitive moments that helped you capture the uniqueness and meanings of Greek Culture, especially those that differ with "the normal U.S. way". Draw on the experiences you already have had and your daily interactions for humorous and telling cases studies. Try to be insightful, funny and culturally specific!

READING: Broome, *Exploring the Greek Mosaic*

REQUIREMENTS: Class attendance; text readings as outlined in this syllabus and as may be assigned in class; four group Observation Assignments and one Final Performance.

PROCEDURE: The entire group meets for class sessions. For the Observation Assignments, the group divides into teams of 5 or 6 students. Each team will receive one grade (all members of the team get the same grade) for each of the Observation Assignments and for the Final Performance.

ATTENDANCE: Attendance at all classes is mandatory. Promptness is essential. Active participation in activities and discussions. You are expected to engage with the topic of each session and contribute to discussion and assigned tasks.

GRADING CRITERIA:

Students will be graded as follows:

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| ○ Attendance and active participation | 30% |
| ○ Four Observation Assignments | 50% (team grade) |
| ○ Final Performance | 20% (team grade) |

OBSERVATION ASSIGNMENTS

They intend to develop your skill in observing, interpreting and eventually challenging your interpretations from a CROSS- CULTURAL perspective. They also aim to encourage you to proceed more deeply in your cross-cultural Greek adventure.

Each observation assignment should follow the DIE model (Description, Interpretation, Evaluation).

- a. **Description:** the first part consists of a careful description of the assigned event or topic. Your goal here is to capture what you have observed. Choose your vocabulary carefully to avoid judgmental language and interpretation. Be sure to include descriptive detail about any aspect that you felt was meaningful for your understanding.
 - b. **Interpretation:** In this second part, interpret the cultural meaning and significance of the situation or event observed. Your purpose here is to discuss the subtle meanings involved in the interaction *from your American point of view*. Later, in class, you will be able to share your *American* interpretation. Be sure to save your personal for the third part.
 - c. **Evaluation:** Add a final comment about your own reaction, or some thoughts that this observation gave you. Now you can voice your personal reactions, surprise, wonder, disappointment, enthusiasm, criticism etc.
- ❖ Feel free to ask the instructor for advice if you have questions or trouble selecting a focus.