



SYLLABUS

CROSSCULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS AND CROSSCULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

Contact Hrs: 15

Language of Instruction: Spanish

OVIEDO, SPAIN

Objective:

This course attempts to help you develop basic intercultural skills that will enable you to better comprehend what you experience in Oviedo this term. 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 Spanish 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 Oviedo, 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 people of Oviedo. By actively participating in class, along with Spanish student guests, and the careful writing of short reflection papers, we hope that you will develop your capacity to withhold judgement until you have had a chance to consider the multiple meanings of what you see around you see and experience, not just in Oviedo, but wherever you may go.

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.

Evaluation:

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

- Attendance (12.5%) Attendance is mandatory. It is important for you to be on time.
- Participation in class discussions (12.5%). 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.
- Completion of 3 tasks (total 15%) *handed in personally at the start of class on the due date.*
- Five observation/interpretation papers (10% each, total 50%). 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.
- Final project (10%).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 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
- La Brack, Bruce: "What's Up with Culture?: On-line Cultural Training Resource for Study Abroad." School of International Studies, University of the Pacific

Richardson, Bill. Spanish Studies: An Introduction. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001
 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.

Wattley-Ames, Helen. Spain is Different. Yarmouth, ME. Second Edition. 1999.

Crosscultural Communications and Crosscultural Perspectives

CLASS 1	Morning Session
	Introduction to the Course: 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”. “Dominant American Values”,
Suggested Readings:	Bennett, Milton, J. “Intercultural Communication: a Current Perspective” (pp. 1-34) and Barna, LaRay M. “Stumbling Blocks in Intercultural Communication” pp. 173-189) both in <u>Basic Concepts of Intercultural communication</u> , edited by Milton J. Bennett: Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press Inc., 1998

BREAK

CLASS 1	Afternoon Session
Discussion	Foreign held stereotypes of Americans. Who/What do you think is responsible for this perception? What values, if any, do they represent?
Topic:	Dominant American Values
Handouts	“Dominant American Values” (Kohl) “American & Contrast American Value Orientations” (What’s Up with Culture)
Readings:	Althen: <u>American Ways</u> : Introduction (pp xix-xxxi), Chapter 1 “American Values and Assumptions” (pp 1-31
Assignment: Task 1	Task 1: Pick one or more of dominant American values. 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?

CLASS 2	
Discussion	American Values
Topic for next class	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: <u>American Ways</u> : “The Communicative Style of Americans” pp. 33-54, “Behavior in Public Places” pp 229-234. Wattley-Ames: <u>Spain is Different</u> : “Language and Communication” pp 65-80 Richardson: <u>Spanish Studies</u> . -Communicative Contrasts: Spanish & English” pp. 75-80. (available on demand)
Assignment: Task 2	The class is divided into groups. Groups observe 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.

CLASS 3	
	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, conversation partners?
Topic: for next week	Society and the Individual – Community and Mobility INTRODUCTION TO DIE FORMAT
Handouts	Storti: “Individualists and Collectivists”, “Subjective vs. Objective”, “Attitude towards Uncertainty: High-Low”;
Readings:	Wattley-Ames: <u>Spain is Different</u> : “What is Spain” (pp-1-5), “Spain and Europe: Africa Begins at the Pyrenees (pp. 7-9), “ <i>Spain & the United States</i> ” (pp. 10-20) “Society and the Individual” pp. 23-44, “
Assignment: Task 3	Interview schedule applied to host family or conversation partner that inquires about mobility and their sense of community. See enclosed assignment handout

CLASS 4	
Discussion:	Group discussion of findings. Do the informants conform to the patterns described in the readings? How do these compare with the USA? In what ways do society’s mobility pattern affect other elements of the culture?
Topic: for next week	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, <u>American Ways</u> : “Education” pp 101-118. Richardson: <u>Spanish Studies</u> : “Home and School: Learning to Be a Spaniard.” Pp. 152-164.
Assignment: 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.

CLASS 5	
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?
Topic: for next week	Relationships & Lifestyle
Handouts	Storti: “Individualists and Collectivists”,
Readings:	,Althen: <u>American Ways</u> : “Social Relationships” pp. 141-154, Sports and Recreation” 187-193, “Getting Things Done in Organizations” pp. 221-228, “Business” pp.247-258. Wattley-Ames: <u>Spain is Different</u> “Relationships” pp. 47-62 “Work” pp. 83-106, “Play” pp. 109-118.
Assignment: 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

CLASS 6	
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?
Topic: for next week	Gender and Sexuality
Handouts	None
Readings:	Althen: <u>American Ways</u> : “Male and Female Relationships” pp. 173-186. Wattley-Ames: <u>Spain is Different</u> : “Sex Roles” pp. 54-62. (under “Relationships” Class 6) Richardson: <u>Spanish studies</u> : “Introduction: Love, Sex and Gender”, “El Amor Verdadero lo Puede todo.” pp. 107-115. “Gender Issues in Spain” pp. 121-126
Assignment: 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

CLASS 7	
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?
Topic:	Us and Them: Differentiators in Spanish Society
Handouts	Craig Storti: Source of Status: Achieved vs Ascribed”, Richardson, <u>Spanish Studies</u> “Spanishness: How Spanish are the Spaniards?” pp. 28-40. “Changing Places: Emigration ad Immigration” p 60. “ Youth Culture” p. 164-165
Readings:	Wattley-Ames: <u>Spain is Different</u> : 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) Althen: <u>American Ways</u> pp. “Racial and Ethnic Diversity” pp. 155-171,
Assignment: 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 on Monday,, October 23 rd .

CLASS 8	
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

Topic: for next week	Ethics, Morality and Religion
Handouts	“Personal vs. Societal Responsibility”.
Readings:	Althen: <u>American Ways</u> : “Religion” pp. 119-127. Richardson: <u>Spanish Studies</u> “Faith: What do Spaniards Believe?” pp. 169-180 Wattley-Ames: <u>Spain is Different</u> (see back readings) “The Individual and the Law” pp. 36-41. .
Assignment: DIE 5	Report on the way religion appears to influence the individual and society in Spain through specific examples. Follow the DIE model. OR Describe a moral or ethical dilemma you have experienced here, following the DIE model...

CLASS 9	
Discussion:	Student’s findings. In what ways do Spain and the USA differ with respect to ethics, morality and religion? What the contradictions are present in each culture?
Topic:	Typical stages involved in cultural adaptation. Students access their individual adaptation to living in Spain. Return Culture Shock. Other considerations: Can we maintain our culture while understanding the others’?
Handouts	Bennett handout: Stages of Intercultural sensitivity
Final assignment	TBA RETURN ICC READER TO AHA OFFICE.