

**Ramon Llull University, IQS School of Management, Barcelona**

**University of New York in Prague (UNYP)**

Summit Global Education Program

**Course Syllabus**

**COM 327:  Cross Cultural Communications in the European Union**

**Purpose**:

* This course is designed for students with a focus on communicating across cultures.  It is open to students of all majors looking for an understanding of the principles of cross cultural communications, with specific emphasis placed on the European Union.

**Introduction:**

* In an ever-globalized world, students will face an increased pressure to effectively communicate across cultures.  Interaction among members of different cultural groups in an increasingly common aspect of everyday life, especially for students as they enter the global marketplace.  As more people travel, work overseas, and visit cultures other than their own, it becomes more and more valuable to learn how to effectively communicate across cultures. The risks of misunderstanding are great, but effective communication across cultures can be greatly enhanced if students develop a reasonable degree of cultural self-awareness, and awareness of how those cultural differences might clash with other cultural preferences.  No matter their chosen career path, students will find that the ability to communicate effectively across cultures is a critical skill that will not only help them in the job market, but also minimize potential conflicts within their local communities.

**Course Description:**

* This course is designed to increase students understanding of other cultures, and to improve their ability to work with people from other places.  We will explore European and international aspects of cross-cultural communication including how culture shapes values, beliefs, world-views and behaviors, and impacts interpersonal communication as well as political conflict. Other topics will include the dynamics of both verbal and nonverbal communication; ethnic, racial, and other identity movements; cross-cultural conflict resolution and reconciliation; and cross-cultural adaptation.  We will be using the Cultural Orientation Indicator, and the concepts of hierarchy, power-distance, space, time, and other orientations to help students to first understand their own cultural preferences, and then to identify key cultural gaps with classmates, and with people and cultures as we travel across Europe.
* During this course, we will look at the history, evolution and current challenges facing the European Union, with an emphasis cultural, political and business related issues. It focuses on the economic and political rationale for closer integration, on the difficulties of reconciling sharply different cultural, legal and political traditions, on the stresses caused by immigration and enlargement, and on the recent challenges presented by the global economic and financial crisis.  The course will include visits to leading European companies and international organizations in which different aspects of the topic will emerge through presentations and conversations with company executives. In this way, the students will be able to see the practical relevance of the concepts covered in class.
* Through practical case-studies, team projects and visits to leading European companies and organizations, the students will be exposed to the actual implementation of the topics covered in class.  Students will learn about the European Union both through professional and cultural visits.  Experiences from these visits will then be discussed during our "Introduction to the EU" sessions.

**Course Objectives:**  
Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Understand the key differences and commonalities in interpersonal and business communications across various cultures and subcultures in Europe and around the world
2. Improve their interpersonal and group communication skills across cultures by understanding their own (and others) verbal and non-verbal thought and communication patterns.
3. Increase their cultural intelligence and cross-cultural communication skills
4. Appreciate the regional differences in Europe in terms of culture and perspectives on the role and future of the European Union.
5. Understand the behaviors and communications styles of various European communities
6. Acquire a deeper understanding of their own cultural biases, and how these cultural preferences affect their communications with others
7. Apply major concepts and principles of inter-cultural knowledge and communication by developing and completing various in- and out-of class assignments
8. Identify and utilize a variety of literature sources to further broaden understanding and improve personal and professional skills in culturally diverse environments.
9. Understand how to use the Cultural Orientation Indicator, and the concepts of hierarchy, power-distance, space, time, and other orientations to understand their own cultural preferences, and to identify key cultural gaps with others

**Students:**

* All majors are welcome!
* UNDERGRADUATE or GRADUATE level students are welcome to apply.

**Prerequisites:**

* This course assumes that students have a desire to work with people across cultures.  It is not required, however, for students to take any prerequisite courses before taking this class.

**Course Requirements:**

* The course requires active student participation.  Students are expected to read the assigned textbook chapters, cases and articles before every class.  There will be a midterm exam, a final exam, case studies and a team project. Students are required to attend professional visits.

**Teaching Procedures and Methodology:**

* Teaching methods used in this course include lectures, case discussions, group assignments and professional visits. Learning in this course requires the student’s constructive participation and active involvement in both class discussions and small group discussions.  Small group discussions, in particular, are a key mechanism for facilitating learning from other team members. Thus, it is essential to attend all group activities inside and outside classes.  The professional visits will expose the participants to different aspects of the class and will highlight the practical relevance of the concepts learned. The visits will be accompanied by individual or group assignments.

**Recommended Readings:**

* “Cultural Intelligence: Living and Working Globally”, by David Thomas and Kerr Inkson, Berrett- Koehler Publishers, 2009

**Supplementary Readings:**

* “Understanding the European Union”, by John McCormick, Palgrave Macmillan, 5th Ed., 2011
* Additional readings will be assigned by the professor.  These readings are designed to acquaint students with core paradigms in Europe, as well as some of the most well known or well done empirical studies.  Additional recommended readings and websites each weak will supplement the required readings.

**Term Projects:**

* During the first week of the course, students will choose their teams for the group project  (with the option to work with 2 or 3 students per team).  The teams are expected to develop a Term Paper looking at cultural issues related to the ongoing crisis in Europe.  Studying geographic locations visited in Europe, students will investigate cultural, ethnic and political tensions across the region.
* The objective of the Paper is to analyze the Cultural, and as applicable the Religious, Racial  and/or Ethnic aspects of these tensions;  to describe how such tensions have impacted the current political issues in Europe;  and to describe how parties have reconciled or are seeking to reconcile their differences, while your team is expected to creatively add suggested steps for reconciliation.   Note that this project is foremost about the CULTURAL origin of the conflicts, not just about describing the current political issues.  To research this project, students will be asked to interview and interact with locals in each country we visit, and to identify the cultural differences that might be leading to political or social tensions within the European Union.

**Term Project - Deliverables:**

* The team members are required to provide the instructor with regular and frequent updates on the progress of their project. The instructor will consequently provide on-going feedback to each team.  Throughout their time abroad, students will be working on their team project.  The following is a list of assignments that students will need to turn in for this project:

1. Project updates: Each group has to submit a total of two project updates in order to demonstrate their progress. The instructor will provide timely feedback to ensure that each group is on target.
2. Written Report: The report should be 6-8 pages in length (single-sided, typed, double-spaced, in 11- 12 point font, Times New Roman), excluding the cover page, table of contents, list of references, and appendices.  Key cross-cultural concepts discussed in class should be deeply incorporated into the term paper.  In addition to the main content, all written reports must include a cover page, a table of contents, page numbers, a list of current references (minimum of 10), and an appendix of key figures, charts, and the like. References should be written in American Psychological Association (APA) or Harvard Reference format. If you are not familiar with these formats, consult manuals in the library or Internet.
3. Presentation: In the last week of class, each team will hold a 10 minute concise, informative and creative presentation, highlighting the key points of their project report. Creativity is strongly encouraged in all presentations.
4. Peer review:  At the end of the project, students will be asked to submit a peer-review; grading their fellow teammates with regards to their participation.  Individual grades will be adjusted based upon these reviews.

**Components of Final Grade:**

* Midterm exam 20%
* Final exam       30%
* Team project   20%
* Participation    10%
* Introduction to the EU 20%

**Grading Scale:**

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

**Useful Websites:**

* BBC Word News: www.bbc.com
* The Economist: http://www.economist.com
* Wall Street Journal: http://online.wsj.com/public/us
* Financial Times: http://www.ft.com
* Business Week: http://www.businessweek.com
* Global Edge: http://globaledge.msu.edu
* World Fact Book: http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook
* European Union: http://www.europa.eu.int
* Note: Recommendations from students regarding additional websites of interest are encouraged.

**Credit Transfer:**

* Courses are designed in order to facilitate the acceptance of credits by U.S. based and international universities.
* Our courses are designed to be 300-level courses, adequate for undergraduate students, upper division level (The courses are designed to be specific and in-depth, and would usually be taken in the last two years of a traditional four year degree program).  Each of the courses is worth 3.0 U.S. semester credit hours (6.0 ECTS and Australian credits).  Each 3.0 credit course will include 48 academic hours, composed of in-class instruction and technical visits to local companies and organizations.

**Host University:**

* Global Summit Barcelona: [IQS School of Management](http://www.summitstudyabroad.com/university-partners.html) is a century-old university center, founded by the Jesuits, with great tradition and prestige in the industrial and business world. IQS is a founding member of the Ramon Llull University.  The IQS School of Management is recognized as one of the best undergraduate schools for Business Administration in Spain, and stands out for its specific Masters' programs, and for the integral education of its graduates and their capacity to manage industrial and technological organizations. It has been recognized by the [AACSB](http://www.aacsb.edu/accreditation/AccreditedMembers.asp" \o "" \t "_blank) (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, USA) for its undergraduate, masters, and doctorate programs in Business Administration.
* Global Summit Prague:  University of New York in Prague (UNYP) in cooperation with State University of New York/Empire State College is an accredited private higher education institution in Prague.  Since 1998, UNYP has been offering English-language higher education in Central Europe, with a focus on Business Administration, Communications, Finance, IT Management, Marketing, International Economic Relations, and more. UNYP is the largest and leading English language higher education institution in the Czech Republic. UNYP offers accredited Bachelor's, Master's, MBA, and PhD programs in English as an officially recognized higher education institution in the Czech Republic, and in partnership with prestigious international universities in the United States and Europe.

**Academic Integrity:**

* Both IQS and UNYP 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.

**Schedule of Classes and Professional Visits:**

* The detailed schedule of classes and professional visits for each session is available online at www.SummitStudyAbroad.com

**Course Outline:**  
All of our courses are designed with a modular format. Students should expect to cover at least 80% of the content per module, depending upon the Session selected.  
  
Module 1

* Introduction to cross-cultural communication
* The globalization of business and people in the 21st century
* Understanding culture and cultural differences
* Components of cultural intelligence
* Key cultural values and concepts
* How culture affects behavior
* Switching off cultural cruise control
* Class Discussion: Examining our cultures, norms and behaviors
* Cultural differences between the countries in the European Union

Module 2

* Developing cultural intelligence: Stages, process and supporting activities
* National and global cultures explored
* Decision-making models across cultures
* Goals, motivation and ethics in decision-making
* Cross-cultural communication failures
* The cross-cultural communication process
* Verbal language, codes and conventions
* Non-verbal communication
* Negotiating styles in the European Union
* Focus: Cultural characteristics of European Union countries

Module 3

* Raising your cultural intelligence: knowledge, mindfulness and behavior
* Leadership across cultures: styles, expectations and examples
* Culturally intelligent leadership
* Working in multi-cultural teams: concepts, processes and performance
* Culturally intelligent team management: skills and strategies
* Creating cultural competence: the international experience
* Workshop: Negotiations and team management training
* Focus: Cultural characteristics of key countries within the European Union

Module 4

* Toolbox for understanding and solving ethical dilemmas of international executives
* Managing international careers: challenges and opportunities for the 21st century
* Putting it all together: knowledge, mindfulness and behavioral skills
* Workshop: Individual cross-cultural management skills inventory and scorecards
* Team projects: findings and discussion
* Case study: becoming a global manager

Module - Introduction to the European Union

* Students will visit European companies and organizations and will engage in cultural visits. These visits will be integrated back into the classroom during our daily "debrief" sessions called "Introduction to the EU". Topics to discuss may include:  Regional differences within Europe, Immigration, History of the European Union and the Eurozone, Key European Institutions, and the ongoing economic and political crises in Europe
* Upon the completion of this course students will be able to:
* Understand the main issues surrounding the ongoing political and economic crisis in Europe
* Appreciate the regional differences and tensions within the European Union (EU) in terms of culture and perspectives on role and future of the EU.
* Develop an understanding for the complexity and purpose of the various EU institutions.
* Understand the history of conflict in Europe that led to the creation of the European Union, and the role that the EU plays in maintaining and promoting peace.
* Be familiar with the various stages of economic and political integration that has taken place within the European Union.
* Understand the challenges (and benefits) of the Euro currency union
* Witness firsthand how the current ongoing crisis in Europe appears different to the citizens of the countries we will visit:  Spain, France, England, Germany, Czech Republic, Austria and Hungary