SYLLABUS
COMM 561-MULTINATIONAL BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

CLASS GOALS

This course focuses on the communication aspects of multinational businesses, both large and small, particularly directed toward the ways in which culture impacts those communication behaviors.

The coursework will concentrate on the communication behaviors of the multinational leader in her/his responsibilities through multiple cultural settings and with diverse audiences. While identifying and reviewing theoretical bases, class members will apply information to realistic work plans that can become functional in their daily lives.

The course incorporates aspects of student self-directed learning using information and concepts collected through less traditional methodologies, i.e., internet, interactions with active practitioners, personal involvement, etc. Students should immediately begin to identify sources of learning in addition to the standard written texts and utilize them in their writing and thinking. They will also want very quickly to set personal learning and application goals that they intend to achieve during this course.

Another goal of this class consists in providing students the opportunities to practice their writing skills in an academic setting while using applicative and theoretical information and data. Please use the APA Stylesheet, Sixth Edition, for all written work submitted. If you have not used this stylesheet, ask questions and get familiar with the guidelines. Also, check the Course Information section of our web page for specific writing instructions. All students will follow the writing guidelines that appear in Course Information.

Because this class has a relatively small number of students, we will use a seminar format; we will work together to discuss the various topics and students will take major roles in leading the discussions. We will discuss the implications of this format during our first meeting.

The instructor intends that every activity lead toward student mastery of the following specific learning objectives:

1. Understanding the role of culture-general in organizational/business culture;
2. Understanding the role of culture (both general and specific) in the practices of organizational communication;
3. Applying culture general concepts to communication behaviors in various culture specific situations.

Please keep these goals and objectives in mind as you proceed through the various assignments and activities in the course and openly share your ideas and reactions to these activities in relation to reaching your goals and objectives.
TEXT and RECOMMENDED SOURCES:

Required Text


Additional Recommended Sources


The highlighted texts present intercultural communication theory while the others serve as good sources for international business. There are many other sources on international business and students will want to read some parts of them depending on their choices of topics for special study. Students are encouraged to find other good sources and to share them with fellow students and instructor.

CLASS MEETING TIMES

Attendance is NOT optional. If you have problems with the assigned meeting times, talk to me immediately about whether or not you should enroll in this class. If you are not able to attend ALL CLASS MEETINGS as scheduled, you may not expect to receive credit for this class. So if you recognize now that you have conflicts with personal or professional events, drop this class and find another one which will fit your personal schedule better. (Please see the Departmental Position on Attendance at the end of this syllabus--also available on the Department of Communication webpage.)

Since we have relatively few meeting hours and in a very compressed schedule, we will be conducting much work on the internet via our Blackboard site. Please get familiar with the Blackboard facility and become at ease in working with its various capabilities. Call me if you have problems accessing the web site. All students MUST have good access to the internet available to them. Students MUST take advantage of the free email service provided by Western and check their email messages daily. It will be the primary source of communication between meetings from the instructor about assignments, requirements, etc. Because we have scheduled relatively few class meetings, I will be happy to meet with individual students or groups of students at times other than the scheduled class meetings. Let me know if you want to meet with me to discuss anything about the class.

TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Meeting 1
Introduction:

- Discussion of Course Contents, Syllabus, Requirements, etc.
- Concepts of global business, importance of communication in business, impact of leadership and management in business communication
- Cosmopolitan leadership
- Cultural Concepts: Lecture and Discussion on Impacts of Culture on Organizational Communication (meaning of culture, social organization and culture, authority, leadership, time)
- Culture-general Concepts: Role of culture in communication (See Model in Course Documents for examples of concepts and components)
- Hofstede’s categories, GLOBE study, etc.; Hall’s concepts of context, time, space, and synchronicity; Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck’s “Five Basic Questions”; theories of synergy, face, CMM.

I will lead the discussion, taking my references primarily from Schmidt et al. 1; Victor 1; Ferraro 1,2; Adler 1,2; Harris & Moran, Brake et al., Hofstede, etc. It will be helpful if
you have read some of these materials, but it is not required for this class meeting.

**Weekend 2**

**Friday:**
Class discussion on assigned and optional readings and appropriate learning activities.
(crossing cultures via communication)

Topics: The role of culture in language, non-verbal communication, linguistic determinism, linguistic ethnocentrism, sociolinguistics; social networks, social organizations.

**Saturday:**
Topics: The role of communication in: conflict; corporate culture, social media, team building, motivation, decision-making, technology and environment, authority and power.

*Assigned Reading for May 21, 22:*
Schmidt et al. 1,2,3,4,5.
Adler, 6; Lewis 7: Bennett (1-34, 53-67) On-line (check under Course Documents on Blackboard)

*Optional Readings:* Ferraro 3, 4; Hofstede 3, 4, 5; Harris & Moran 1, 2, 4, 5, 6; Brake, Walker, Walker 4. Victor 2, 5, 6, 7; outside readings chosen by student

**Weekend 3**

**Friday:**
Topics: The role of communication in: change, global managerial characteristics, enculturation/acculturation, alliances, performance assessments.

*Assigned Readings for June 18: Schmidt 7; Hall; Rudd; Lewis: On line (check under Course Documents on Blackboard)*

Optional Readings: Ferraro 5, 6; V 4, 8, H&M 3, 7, 8, 9; BWW 5, 6; EH 1; F 7, 8; outside readings chosen by student

**Saturday:**
Topics: The role of communication in: personnel assignments; transitions and relocations; immigration and guest workers; women’s roles; future changes in multinational business; global careers; impacts and adjustments in culture-specific situations (leading employees toward a multinational perspective); closing the gaps.
What Have You Learned? Where Do You Go From Here?

Class discussions, individual reports on target countries and group presentations. Final analysis of communication among cultural groups in the global business community.

Assigned Readings for June 19, 20: Schmidt et al. 8, 9; Lewis 9 on-line (Check under Course Documents on Blackboard)
Optional Readings: outside readings chosen by student.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

May 20
First short written assignment. A three-four page paper based on your readings and understandings of the topic “Cultural Communication in International Business.” This paper must be submitted electronically to turnitin.com (do NOT send as an attachment to email); follow APA stylesheet, include adequate reference page, follow Writing Guidelines (in Course Documents) exactly as they are stated.
Counts 10% of final grade

Papers returned on May 21

May 26
Any rewrites due on turnitin.com

June 4
Second short assignment. A three-four page paper based on your readings and research of the topic “Communication Aspects of Developing Synergy in a Multinational Organization.” This paper must be submitted electronically via turnitin.com and using APA. Follow same guidelines as above.
Counts 10% of final grade

June 11
Third short assignment. A three-four page paper based on your readings and research of the topic “Impact of Technology on Cultural Communication in a Multinational Organization.” This paper must be submitted electronically via turnitin.com and using APA. Follow same guidelines as above.
Counts 10% of final grade
**Individual term project/paper**

Each student prepare a term research paper which relates to his or her target culture. Students will select a target country and a specific type of multinational business. The term project will focus on the ways in which the targeted culture will impact communication in that business in that country. Please consult with me as soon as possible about developing your project/paper topic. You must choose your target country and topic by June 1. At the final session, students will make presentation to the class based on their individual research projects. Counts **25 %** of final grade

**DISCUSSION BOARD ACTIVITIES**

We will use the Discussion Board of blackboard for class discussions and for students to report on their own research activities/ interests and to share their ideas. All discussion board activities (3 in all) will be available as indicated by the schedule below. I will post the topic or a case study (called a Forum), open each session, and close each one off on the indicated date (archive it). Each student is expected to enter the discussions at least five times on different dates during each DB activity. The previous discussion will remain available for viewing but not for contributing after it is archived. I may take part in the discussion of each group during the DB time period.

The Discussion Board activity will count **15%** of the final grade (5 % each). I will post a grading rubric which I will use to grade each DB activity.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE/ LEAD CLASS DISCUSSION**

Each student will post a review of literature based on a selected area of class assignments and lead a discussion on this literature. All students will read the lit reviews of the other students and take part in the class discussion to analyze the materials, assess their value to the topic, relate to other information, etc. Students will post their reviews of literature (ROL) to the appropriate discussion board on BlackBoard. We will make the assignments for these discussions and discuss their posting during the first class meeting. Due dates will depend on topic. This activity will count **15%** of the total grade.

**GROUP PROJECT**

An applied group project will be developed and a presentation made to the class on June 18, 19. Each group will choose one of the geographic areas discussed in the Schmidt et al. text, Unit Four. We will have four groups, each of which will address business communication in one of the following areas: Latin America and the Caribbean; East Asia and the Pacific Rim; Europe; the Middle East; and Sub-Saharan Africa. We will discuss this further on May 15 and group assignments will be made on that day. The group activity counts **15 %** of final grade.
GRADING SCALE

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Term Project/Paper</td>
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<td>Group Project</td>
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<td>Discussion Board (3 sets)</td>
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<td>3 Short Papers (10 each)</td>
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<td>Review of Literature/Leading discussion</td>
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Please note that I will post your grades on the Black Board Grade book but the totals that BlackBoard calculates have nothing to do with your grade. Use the above percentages as the guide for calculating your grades. Talk to me about this if you have questions.

Department of Communication Graduate Program Attendance

"The Department of Communication Graduate Program develops student knowledge and skills through a varied curriculum in applied organizational communication. Our courses are special learning communities where professors and students join together to study course-specific literature in the Communication discipline. Students process and evaluate scholarly work through written and oral presentation of information and ideas. Therefore, attendance and active participation are essential for all students’ success.

Punctual attendance at each class is an obligation of the student. By registering for this course, you are indicating that you will be able to attend classes on time and without early departure on the dates published. A student missing a weekend class meeting or more than one semester-long class meeting should NOT expect to pass the course. Students should have their personal or professional schedules well in mind when they choose courses for the semester. If you know that you will not be available for any scheduled class meetings, do not sign up for the class. Graduate faculty may supplement this departmental attendance policy through specific announcements in each course.”
WRITING INFORMATION/GUIDELINES

Written communication follows patterns designed to meet specific needs or achieve definite goals. Academic writing fits such criteria; its rules and regulations reflect attempts to meet the needs of the readers for clarity, brevity, significant content, explanation, and contemplation. Academic writing differs from other types, such as creative, journalistic, etc., because the communicator intends to share information or ideas with the readers. These ideas extend concepts based on research data of various types or original thoughts which propose theoretical bases previously unknown. Creativity in academic prose comes from the content and analysis rather than from new and novel means of expression.

When you write academically, please remember that the primary purpose of the exercise provides the reader with new information or new approaches to understanding existing information. In the class, I will ask you to follow these rules in the essays which you submit for credit.

1. Follow traditional grammar rules, i.e., subject-verb agreement, noun-pronoun agreement, no introductory relative pronouns, etc.
2. Create paragraphs which focus on a single topic, usually introduced in the first sentence. Every paragraph must have at least three sentences and should not run too long (a relative point but very important). For example, a single paragraph should rarely extend to an entire page.
3. Eliminate all forms of the verb "to be" from your writing (is, am, are, was, were, be, been, being). This precludes use of passive voice and forces the writer to use a direct style for expressing facts or opinions.
4. Develop a general introduction to the paper, introduce the various points you wish to make through the succeeding paragraphs, and finally, compose a closing section that summarizes your content and brings the reader to a feeling of satisfaction with the organization and content.
5. Remember that your purpose always lies attempting to present your ideas, facts, etc., to the reader (the instructor) in a clear, cogent, and convincing manner. Therefore, avoid overuse of stringing prepositional phrases, too many perfect tense verbs, distracting phrasing, etc. Never use the second person (you) in an essay, unless it comes in a direct quotation.
6. Follow APA style in writing (exceptions require personal discussion with the instructor). If you do not know the APA style, find a manual and follow it exactly in every situation.
7. Study word selection carefully. Choose precise words which will indicate/clarify your intended message. Take care with affect/effect and other such troublesome words. Always use a thesaurus when you write.

Painful as this may sound, following these guidelines will contribute greatly to your expertise as an academic writer, a result which forms one of the goals of this class!