



Intercultural Communication Course Syllabus

COURSE NAME: EURA 257 / 557 INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION (1.0 UNIT*)

**One Bryn Mawr unit is equivalent to four undergraduate semester hours or five graduate semester hours.*

General Program and Course Overview

This course advances students' critical thinking, intercultural communication skills, cultural awareness and global understanding through reflection, journal writing and feedback sessions. It explores perceptions, assumptions and expectations both at home and abroad and the way those challenges present themselves in social interactions, at the workplace and in everyday life. The course also focuses on strategies and skills needed to successfully manage these challenges in a broad variety of engaging cross-cultural contexts.

Program Expectations

Participants are required to attend your internship. In addition to your internship, students are required to complete the following activities and assignments that will form the basis of their academic credit for the program:

Weekly Reflection Meetings: Students are required to meet with an American Councils contact person on a weekly basis. Each meeting will include a discussion that corresponds with each weekly assignment. During the meeting, students will discuss the internship and the written assignments. Attendance at weekly mentoring meetings is mandatory.

Weekly Written Assignments: Each week, students are required to complete a written assignment on a particular topic as outlined further below in this document. The assignments are designed to help participants reflect on their internship experience and provide a framework in which to consider their own initiative and growth during the program.

Weekly Skills Survey: Each week, students are also required to complete a Skill Log to track their internship tasks and the skills utilized and developed during that week. The Skill Log will be a great resource at the end of the program when students reflect on their professional development during the internship.

Final Paper and Presentation: Students are required to write a final paper (5 pages or more) that describes their internship experience and knowledge/skills acquired over the course of the program. During the last week of the program, students are required to deliver a 10-minute presentation that describes their internship experience and knowledge/skills acquired over the course of the program.

GRADING AND ASSESSMENT

Students are expected to come to weekly reflection meetings on time and be prepared to discuss the week's assignment and topic. Feedback will be collected from the internship providers to confirm that students are attending regularly and contributing to the organization.



Timely completion & submission of weekly assignments:	20%
Attendance at weekly reflection meetings:	10%
Discussion at weekly reflection meetings:	20%
Final presentation/project:	15%
Final paper:	15%
Feedback from internship organization:	20%

PROGRAM ASSIGNMENTS

Pre-Program Assignment: Expectations and Self-Reflections

During the pre-departure orientation, we will discuss expectations and goals through several exercises.

Note Expectations: Write some of your expectations and assumptions about the upcoming experience and your host organization. Be free and creative – do not censor yourself. The idea with this activity is to have a basis of what you were thinking **before** the program. Later, we will return to this list and reflect upon it.

1. Brainstorm a list of words that come to mind when you think of the internship.
2. What do you think about being a U.S. citizen living and working in the host country at this point in time? What are some apprehensions you have about the internship? What are some possible opportunities?

Define Goals: Think about the desired outcomes of your internship in light of your academic background and the skills that you would like to acquire. Keep in mind that, in many instances, the most important and lasting skills may have to do with the so-called “soft skills” – skills that are sometimes difficult to measure, but which play a critical role in global careers. Thinking about the skills you hope to develop will help you better understand your own objectives and articulate them effectively to internship hosts. Come prepared to discuss your answers and thoughts about your goals.

Week 1: First Impressions

1. Write your sensory experience right upon arrival. Sights, sounds, smells, initial feelings, and impressions. Be as descriptive as possible. Do not analyze, just observe and record. Did you learn anything about the host country that you did not know before arriving or, based on a previous trip there?
2. Describe your first impressions of the host organization. Did you notice any differences between American and host country office culture in terms of overall work environment, personal space, communication manner, attire, etc.? Is there anything you did not expect from your work environment?
3. What questions do you have based on what you have seen and experienced so far? What opportunities and/or resources do you think are available to you?



Week 2: Internship Host

Imagine that you are writing a cover letter to a job recruiter to brief them on your internship. Please use the following guiding questions while describing your experience.

1. What have you learned about the institution/organization where you are working – its history, current mission, services it provides, vision for the future, etc.?
2. What professional skills do you share with your colleagues? Are there any challenges that are new for you?
3. What contributions are expected of you? What additional contributions can you make to the institution/organization? What steps do you need to take to make these additional contributions?
4. What questions do you have based on what you have seen and experienced so far? What opportunities and/or resources do you think are available to you?

Week 3: Culture Pie Exercise:

Create a visual, pictorial description of the strengths, values, and interests that constitute who you are. Think about your history, experiences, memberships, values, education, foundation, challenges, influences, family/friends and more. You can draw this as a pie with different size slices. Then answer the questions below.

1. Draw a circle and identify 5-10 different slices of the pie as different aspects of your individual culture and identity. Think about how much space each item takes up in the pie. Different size slices (larger or smaller) represent how much that trait or attribute defines your identity.
2. Looking at your “pie”, what are your values and where did they come from? What is most important to you in life? What do you struggle with the most? What values are important in your host country?
3. As you look at your culture pie, think whether there are any values that you consider universal and can apply to your host country as well? What do values to perceive to be the greatest difference between you and your host country?

Week 4: Cultural and Professional Values

Create a photo essay of 6-7 photos to illustrate your understanding of the following questions. Please include captions or descriptions of the photos used.

1. What are some of the most striking cultural differences you have noticed and/or experienced for the last few weeks – give a specific example? What types of things do you appreciate in the host country culture? How are these cultural differences / similarities reflected in your workplace environment?
2. Reflect on privileges you feel you have as a citizen of the U.S. – make a list. Has this experience helped you understand others’ perception of the U.S.?



3. Are there aspects of your personal, professional, or civic goals you discovered during your living and working in the host country?

Week 5: Ethnographic Survey

Interview someone in your workplace who you have enjoyed spending time with or someone you have wanted to know better. You can interview more than one person. Please feel free to create your own interview questions. In your summary of the interview, please address the following questions:

1. What have you learned about the internship host from the interviewee?
2. What have they shared about their career path? What were their motivating factors that led them to be in their current position? What makes them proud?
3. What advice would they give to people with limited knowledge about the host country wanting to start a career there, or work in cross-border teams with locals from the host country?
4. What determines a professional network in the host country? What creates communities of influence?

Week 6: Globalization

Select a news article from local media published in the last week that covers a recent event in your host country and has some relation to your workplace, or area of interest. Please use reputable English language news sites.

Write a 1 – 3-page editorial discussing the relevance of this event locally, regionally (with neighboring countries) and globally.

Week 7: Reflection

Revisit your master list from the pre-program assignment and write down what you have learned that challenged your assumptions or deepened your understanding of the host country. Is there anything that was missing or needs adjustment?

Week 8: Final Presentation

Prepare a 10-minute presentation that describes your internship experience as well as lessons and skills you learned over the course of the program. You can supplement your presentation with a PowerPoint, photos, videos, props, etc. Feel free to be creative!

Week 9: After You Return (Optional)

Update your Resume: Now that you have completed your internship, it is important to think about how you will incorporate this international and professional experience in your resume. Create a sample entry for your resume listing your internship and describing your tasks and responsibilities. Show how you will include any new skills developed into your current resume.

FINAL PAPER

In 5 pages or more, describe your internship experience and what you learned over the course of the program.



Questions to consider for your final paper:

1. Initial vs. final impressions: Is there anything you did not expect?
2. What have you learned about the institution/organization where you are working – its history, current mission, services it provides, vision for the future, etc.?
3. Describe some of the tasks you performed on daily basis. What projects did you work on? What professional skills do you feel you developed during the internship? Were there any tasks that were new and challenging for you? What contributions were expected of you?
4. What are some of the most striking cultural differences you have noticed and/or experienced? How are these cultural differences / similarities reflected in your workplace environment?
5. What were the biggest lessons you learned about yourself during the program? What new insights did you gain into the broad concept of culture, your own understanding of the world, or new approaches to cross-cultural understanding?
6. How will this experience influence your long-term goals? How will you use the skills you learned during the internship when you return home?
7. What do you most want to share with others about your experience?