Intercultural Issues: INST 3355 N / 5355 N
University of St. Thomas
Center for International Studies
Tues/Thurs 2:10PM – 3:25PM
Jerabeck 202
SPRING 2018

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"I encourage all students to be bold in their thoughts, moderate in their actions, and courageous in their pursuit of truth— wherever it is and however it can be known."
(In Memory of Dr. Ross M. Lence)

Course Overview
We live in an increasingly interconnected world where ones' values and actions influence and are influenced by others. If we look at the spread of information, ideas, media, capital, cultural artifacts we can see the boundaries and borders that have historically separated one country or one group from another are becoming more and more penetrable. As people come together from different backgrounds, understanding how all societies are based around fundamental patterns of culture becomes essential at all levels of human interaction, from the interpersonal to the international.

Course Objectives
INST 3355 is a survey of world cultures. The course has two main aims: First, to unpack the concept of culture. Drawing on insights from anthropology, psychology, business communication, political science and international relations, we will explore the different ways to answer the question, "What is culture?" This will introduce students to various dimensions and processes of culture like values, perspectives, traditions, interpretations of time and space. Second, to discuss in which manner and to what extent culture is an explanatory variable within the context of topics like gender and race, politics, conflict and negotiation, learning, communication, patterns of thinking and behaving. Throughout, students will be asked to engender critical thinking, curiosity, and empathy, while advancing intercultural understanding.

By the end of a course, students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the main categories and theoretical concepts in cultural studies. They will be familiar with basic tools for the analysis of cultural objects and processes. Students also will be introduced to the academic debates on the factors that distinguish cultures and learn how to integrate a cultural perspective in an analytical framework for exploring the impact the distinctions have at the personal, intranational, and international level.
“Well, Ralph, what did you learn in school today? Did you learn how to believe or did you learn how to think?” (Ralph Nader's father)

Course Format and Assessment
The course will proceed in the form of a lecture on Tuesday followed by a roundtable discussion on Thursday where students will present ideas and arguments drawn from the required readings. Because this course is marked less by a perfection of consensus than by a refinement of debate, students will have the task of addressing points and questions arising out of the readings and will be expected to actively participate in discussions. You can only meaningfully contribute to the discussion if you complete the readings prior to each class meeting. Attendance is not related to participation. You can have a perfect attendance record but if you remain silent, you are not participating.

Student work will be assessed as follows:

- **Beyond Culture- Discussion Assignment**: 5%
- **Midterm Exam**: 20%
- **Weekly Talking Points (Participation)**: 20%
- **CultureGram--Group Project (Written & Oral)**: 25%
- **Final Exam**: 30%

Students will write a *five-talking points* paper that covers the weekly readings. A talking point is something that invites a discussion or argument. It ought to reflect reaction to or question of the required readings. These can be critical (expressing disagreement) or supplementary (adding what you think is missing). There are 10 possible assignments. Students will choose any 6 to turn in for a grade. Students must submit papers to Blackboard by 12 PM on Thursday. Include your name, course, topic, and date. Late submissions will not be accepted. Students are expected to read the articles for every week and be prepared to explore the core arguments the authors put forward regardless of whether or not they submit talking points.

**Grading Scale**: 100= perfect; 95= very good; 85= good; 75= okay; 65= poor; 0= late submission or missing the point.  
(Credit for *Talking Points* idea goes to Professor Dylan S. McLean, University at Buffalo-SUNY).

Important Dates:
- **Book Chapter Discussion Assignment**: February 20. Edward T. Hall's, Beyond Culture. (Handout)
- **Midterm Exam**: Tuesday, February 27.
- **CultureGram Proposal Paper**: March 1. (Handout)
- **CultureGram Group Project**: May 1 & 3. Each student will be assigned to a team to produce a research paper and give an in-class presentation on a cultural group. (Handout)
- **Final Exam**: Thursday, May 10. 3:00 – 5:30PM
University of St. Thomas Policy on Disabilities: Any student with a disability requiring accommodations in this course is encouraged to contact me after class or during office hours. Additionally, students will need to contact Counseling and Disability Services in Crooker Center. This office can be reached at (713) 525-6953 or 3162.

University of St. Thomas Policy on Academic Honesty:
Every offense against academic honesty seriously undermines the teaching-learning process for which the University exists, and such offenses will be dealt with expeditiously according to the following criteria.

Definition: Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to:
1. Cheating on an examination or test, for example by copying from another’s paper or by using unauthorized materials before or during the test; or by divulging the contents of an exam to students who still must take the exam;
2. Plagiarism, which represents as one’s own work the work of another, whether published or not, without acknowledging the precise source;
3. Knowing participation in the academic dishonesty of another student even though one’s own work is not directly affected;
4. Any conduct which reasonable persons in similar circumstances would recognize as dishonest in an academic setting.

Penalty: The penalty for an incident of academic dishonesty is, at the discretion of the professor, either a mark of zero for the work in question or the grade of “F” for the course.

International Studies Departmental Policy: Late Work:
The acceptance of late projects and subsequent penalties is subject to the International Studies Department policy. If unable to submit assigned work on time due to medical or serious family circumstances, the student must contact the professor promptly via email, office visit or telephone and provide a description of the circumstances (faculty confirmation receipt reply required). The professor’s decision based on merits of request will be communicated to students via email.

If an extension is not granted by the professor late work is subject to the following penalties:
1) One letter grade (10 pts.) within the first 24-hour period.
2) An additional letter grade for the period after 24 hours late and prior to the end of the seventh day late.
3) After a total of seven days late (including weekends), the required assignment will not be accepted and a "0" will be assigned for that assignment.

Required Reading:
Reading Materials:
Handouts provided by the instructor.
All other readings will be available via Blackboard.

No Cell Phones & No Text Messaging
Students are asked turn off their cell phones before coming to class. Emergency calls may be handled outside of the classroom.

Revision of the Syllabus:
The instructor reserves the right to revise this syllabus at any time during the semester. Materials may be added or subtracted after the start of the term. It is also important that you check your stthom.edu email account daily and before class as this is the email address I will use to inform you of any updates or changes to the syllabus.

"Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values." Kroeber & Kluckhohn, (American anthropologists) 1952.

Part I: Unpacking Culture— big C & little c

Week 1: (January 18)
Course Introduction
• Review course syllabus

Week 2: (January 23 & 25)
Initiating a Conceptual Overview—The Role of Perception
* EXTRA CREDIT (2 pts/midterm): Reaction Paper (2 pages)- NYT article, "Can't Place That Smell? You Must be American: How Cultures Shape Our Senses." (BB)
“Culture ... is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.” Edward B. Tylor (British anthropologist) 1870.

Week 3: (January 30 & February 1)

**Culture: The Invisible Framework for Patterns of Behavior**
- Gannon and Pillai, Preface and Chapter 1.

Week 4: (February 6 & 8)

**Cultures Creating Mindsets: Identity**
- Gannon and Pillai, Chapters 34 & 35: Spanish/Portuguese Bullfight.

Week 5: (February 13 & 15)

**Intercultural Communication**
“Culture is man’s medium; there is not one aspect of human life that is not touched and altered by culture.”
(Edward T. Hall)

• "A Risky Language or Actions Speak Louder than Words" (BB)
• EXTRA CREDIT (2pts/midterm): Reaction Paper (2 pages)-Gannon and Pillai, Chapter 11: Irish Conversations.

Week 6: (February 20 & 22)
Book Chapter Assignment due
• Discussion on Edward T. Hall's, Beyond Culture.
• Midterm Review Session

Week 7: (February 27 & March 1)
Tuesday Mid Term Exam. All material covered up to this point.
Thursday Culture Gram Project Proposal Due/Project Discussion

“The political culture of a society consists of the system of empirical beliefs, expressive symbols, and values which defines the situation in which political action takes place.”

Part II: Parameters and Processes of Culture

Week 8: (March 6 & 8)
Culture: A Dynamic Variable of Politics
Week 9: (March 13 & 15) No Class
Spring Break

Week 10: (March 20 & 22)
Culture: Conflict and Negotiation

Week: 11: (Tuesday, March 27)
No class on Thursday. Easter Break.

Week 12: (April 3 & 5)
Culture and Gender
"Culture will be, as it always has been, of critical importance in deciding the relative fortunes of the major world economies. Those institutions and organizations that recognize and articulate this fact will have the lead on those that neglect it." John Viney, (British CEO & author) 1997.

Week 13: (April 10 & 12)

**Culture and Race**
- Thomas Sowell, "Crippled by Their Culture: Race doesn't hold back America's 'black rednecks.' Nor does racism." *Wall Street Journal*, (April 26, 2005). (BB)

Week 14: (April 17 & 19)

**Culture and Economy**
- Gregory Clark, "The Universal Culture of Progress [reaction to Harrison]," *CATO Unbound*, (December, 2006) (BB)
- Gannon and Pillai, Chapter 15: American Football

Week 15: (April 24 & 26)

**Culture and Work**


• Gannon and Pillai, Chapters 10 & 21: The German Symphony / The Italian Opera

Week 16: (May 1 & 3)

Culture Gram Team Presentations
This class may be a little longer so that all teams can present on the same evening. All papers are due. Note: I do not accept late papers for any reason—do not procrastinate. Front page of paper should be signed by all team members indicating that each has read the final paper and approves its submission

Thursday, May 11.
Final Exam
3:00-5:30