1. Course Objective and Description
The course examines the mutual interdependence between social structure and culture, focusing on the ways in which belief, faith, knowledge, symbol, ritual and the like both produce and are products of social organisation. It intends to give supporting measures to students in order to help them adapt to German life and society and to reflect their new cultural experience more consciously.

2. Course Overview
Objectives:
• getting theoretical knowledge for a more conscious interpretation of cultural differences the students could be faced with during their studies;
• becoming more sensitive to the fact that one’s own perception and interpretation of the world is culturally bound, depending on one’s own cultural standards, which may lead to misunderstandings and misinterpretation of what is happening in the other culture.
• Giving reasons for misunderstandings which may occur between Americans and Germans and
• Providing strategies for avoiding them. Contents:
• culture: definitions and cultural standards
• problems of perception in a new culture - perception training
• stereotypes and stereotyping
• understanding cultural differences – structures of culture
• manifestations of cultural differences in symbols, heroes, rituals and values
• comparing values, behaviours, institutions across nations (Hofstede’s Dimension of Culture)
• areas in which communication problems and misunderstandings between Americans and Germans may occur
• methods of avoiding misunderstanding in other cultures
3. Methodology
Methods how to reach these aims, are:

- reading and discussing theoretical texts from the field of cultural anthropology and sociology to get some knowledge about describing cultural differences
- exercises and discussions in order to become aware of intercultural rich points in university life
- working on strategies to cope with these intercultural rich points
- perception training in real life situations (mini projects) and discussion of what was perceived and why it was perceived in that way.
- discussion of experiences in everyday life in Dresden
- **writing a log-book (project work):** Students are asked to write weekly notes about intercultural rich points, such as things or people’s behaviour they noticed as strange, funny or odd. They should write about non expected behaviour of people and about misunderstandings that occurred. They should also write a short summary about what they have learnt in class.(8 – 10 pages total)

4. Required Reading  
**Additional** materials will be provided by the course instructor.

5. Grading Criteria  
Attendance and Participation: 10 %  
Log-book preparation: 10 % (8-10 pages)  
Midterm exam: 20%  
Final Exam: 20%  
Essay  
( ca. 12 pages on a topic chosen from the themes of the course): 30 %
### 6. Chronology
All sessions will be held as seminars.

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<th>Session</th>
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| #1      | What is culture? - Definitions of culture and cultural standards Cultural Standards and stereotypes
          Reading: Material will be provided by the course instructor |
| #2      | Reasons for stereotyping and how to avoid it;  Reading: Material will be provided by the course instructor |
| #3      | Germany – a Patchwork Country
          Reading: Greg Nees: Germany: Unraveling an Enigma. - Intercultural Press 2000, pp. 1 – 33.  Additional Assignment: Material provided by the course instructor |
| #4      | Major German Cultural Themes
| #5      | Areas in which communication problems and misunderstandings between Americans and Germans are possible
| #6      | Areas in which communication problems and misunderstandings between Americans and Germans are possible – discussion of some Dresden experiences with the help of some log book entries
| #7      | **Midterm Test** |

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| #8      | Understanding Cultural Differences: Underlying Structures of Culture (Hall)
          Reading: Edward T. Hall and Mildred Reed Hall: Understanding Cultural Differences. – Intercultural Press, Inc. 1990 ff., p. 3 – p. 31 |
| #9      | Differences. – Intercultural Press, Inc. 1990 ff., p. 137 – p. 154
          Understanding Cultural Differences: The Americans (time, space, mobility, communication style ...) (Hall);
          Reading: Edward T. Hall and Mildred Reed Hall: Understanding Cultural |
| #10     | Understanding Cultural Differences: The Germans (time, space, order, communication style ...) (Hall)
          Reading: Edward T. Hall and Mildred Reed Hall: Understanding Cultural Differences. – Intercultural Press, |
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| #11 | Manifestations of cultural differences in symbols, heroes, rituals and values  
Additional Assignment: Material provided by the course instructor |
| #12 | Cultural dimensions (Hofstede): Power Distance Index; Uncertainty Avoidance Index  
| #13 | Cultural dimensions (Hofstede): Individualism ; Masculinity; Long-Term Orientation  
| #14 | **Final Exam** |

### 7. Terms & Conditions

Students are expected to attend all lectures and excursions; students have to sign up for each session. Up to two excused absences are allowed.

The **deadline for the essay is binding**.