

CAS IP 400 – Intercultural Communication, Spring

Instructor's Name: Dr. Ulrich Zeuner

Time: once a week for 180 minutes, for 6 weeks from Mid February through March

1. Course Objective

Being and living in another country does also mean being in another culture and having to adapt to this culture and to go through a process of intercultural learning. A certain amount of knowledge and a conscious reflection of what is happening in the host culture is an important condition for the learning process in such situations in which an experience of strangeness may arise. So, intercultural learning might take place without supporting measures, but supporting measures will help to increase intercultural awareness more effectively and to deal better with strange situations and culture shock in the foreign culture. This Intercultural Communication Course with focus on intercultural awareness intends to give such supporting measures to the students in order to help them to adapt more quickly to German life and society and to reflect their new culture experience more consciously.

2. Course Overview The course **aims** at:

- Arising cultural awareness
- Reflecting situations in which an experience of strangeness arises
- Reflecting new culture experiences
- Giving reasons for misunderstandings which may occur between Americans and Germans and
- Providing strategies for avoiding them. **Contents** of the course:
- problems of perception in a new culture - perception training
- stereotypes and stereotyping
- culture shock; strategies against culture shock
- questions of acculturation
- methods of avoiding misunderstanding in other cultures

3. Methodology

Methods how to reach these aims, are:

- exercises and discussions in order to become aware of intercultural rich points
- 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.
- **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.

Writing a log book:

1. Please write down your observations and experiences in Germany every day: What was new, interesting, odd, unexpected, annoying for you? What do you think: why do Germans things as they do them?
2. Write also down a short summary of what you learnt in each session of this course.

4. Required Reading

Will be provided in the course as handouts

5. Grading Criteria

Attendance and Participation: 20 %

Presentation in class: 20 %

Log-book preparation: 30 %

Test: 30 %

6. Chronology

All sessions will be held as seminars.

Session #	Contents
1	Course Overview Cultural Shock Cultural Shock – discussing own experiences
2	Discussing log book entries Perception and interpretation Perception Training
3	Discussing log book entries How to ask for meanings of artefacts or situations. Exercise: Asking for meanings
4	Discussing log book entries Stereotypes and where they come from: Americans about Germans/ Germans about Americans
5	Discussing log book entries Misunderstandings in German – American communication
6	Discussing log book entries Misunderstandings in German – American communication Test

7. Terms & Conditions

Students are expected to attend all lectures.