MGMT 461: MANAGEMENT IN DIFFERENT CULTURES

Instructor: Jerry Yen  Semester: Spring 2007
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Office: 342 Markstein Hall  Units: 4 units
Hours: By appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

From the CSUSM General Catalog 2006 - 2008 course description for MGMT 461 Management in Different Cultures:

“Examination of the impact of culture on managerial decisions. Key management decisions in a number of industries and countries are examined to highlight the complexities of management in a global environment. Prerequisites: All lower-division pre-business core, and either MGMT 302 or SSM 304.”

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course has been designed to help you understand the impact of culture on business management, and help you succeed professionally in a culturally diverse international or domestic business context.

Specific objectives include:
1. Knowledge of cultural frameworks to understand diverse behaviors in different cultures;
2. An understanding of how cultural norms and perceptions affect management practices in cross-ethnic and cross-cultural contexts;
3. Guidance in meeting the challenges involved in managing yourself and others in international assignments and within the multicultural firm.

This course will include class discussions, exams, team projects, papers, interviews, and personal assessments. Your questions, insights, experience, and observations will add to your own learning as well as enhance those of your classmates. Relevance to the “real world” will be our guiding principle.

Similar to any dynamic business environment, please note that this course syllabus is subject to change.

COURSE TEXTBOOK AND RESOURCES


Global Competency Inventory
https://www.kozaieducation.org  Group ID: Jerr_0001
You will need an email address and a password. This survey evaluates your strengths and weaknesses in cross-cultural contexts (i.e., working and living abroad; working with multicultural teams)

Supplementary reading: For further understanding, you are encouraged to apply frameworks to articles from The Wall Street Journal, BusinessWeek, Harvard Business Review, and online sources.
**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Grades will be based on the following point allocation (subject to change):

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A 95 – 100  A- 90 - 94  
B+ 87 – 89  B 84 – 86  B- 80 - 83  
C+ 77 – 79  C 74 – 76  C- 70 – 73  D 60 – 69  F < 60

**Class Attendance / Participation / Assignments**

Managing across diverse cultures requires strong communication and team collaboration. Thus, your participation in team projects and presence in the classroom learning process is critical.

Attendance: As in all things in life, you cannot succeed if you don’t show up.

1. Attendance is taken at the start of class – please ensure that I’ve signed you in if you are late!
2. Excused absences include advance notice for medical appointments or health reasons, as well as documented job interview appointments.
3. Excused absences do not include work or Senior Experience (unless your professor indicates that attendance at the final presentation is required and conflicts with our class time).

Participation: As in the real world, be prepared! Your manager expects that you have done your research and can answer questions. Your subordinates expect that you have read their reports and can provide knowledgeable insight. You’ll either meet expectations – or you won’t. As always, the choice is yours.

Complete your assignments prior to class so that you can gain from classroom discussions and contribute to the learning process. Your class participation and assignments will be graded.

**Exam**

The exam will cover cultural frameworks and cross-cultural management, and will consist of two parts. The in-class portion will be closed book and closed notes, and will require a scantron sheet.

The take-home essay will follow these guidelines:

1. The essay will be handed out in class on the day of the exam
2. A video may be played in the class
3. You may take notes during the video and use them in completing the essay
4. You may not discuss the essay with your classmates until after the due date
5. Please email your completed essay by the due date

Your take-home essay should be **TYPED, DOUBLE-SPACED, SINGLE-SIDED, 11 OR 12 PT FONT, WITH 1 INCH MARGINS**. Grammar, spelling, and flow will affect your grade. Please email an electronic copy by the due date.

**Individual Paper**
Your papers should be **TYPED, DOUBLE-SPACED, SINGLE-SIDED, 11 OR 12 PT FONT, WITH 1 INCH MARGINS.** Please place charts / figures in an appendix. Grammar, spelling, and flow will affect your grade. Please submit a paper copy and email an electronic copy by the due date.

Students will need to satisfy a University writing requirement of at least 2,500 words. In this course, this requirement will be satisfied by exams, a personal paper, and team presentations.

**Team Presentations**
All presentation decks should be on **POWERPOINT SLIDES.** You may leverage charts, graphs, tables, and other media. Please email an electronic copy by the due date.

Each team member should have a chance to speak during your presentation. Be concise, compelling, convincing, and creative! Ideally, your presentation should be both informative and interesting.

**Team Evaluations**
Peer assessment provides an important evaluation of your management and communication performance.

1. **Please email your evaluation by 5 PM of the due date.**
2. Allocate 100 points to all team members, including yourself.
3. Evaluate your team members on the basis of their contribution in a) team learning; b) timeliness and organization; c) content and delivery.
4. Include any open-ended comments, if you wish.
5. A lack of team evaluation will be counted against your personal grade.
6. These evaluations do have impact on your grade! Don’t get voted off the island.

Here are a few suggestions to help support successful team interaction:

1. Pick/rotate leadership – if the group drifts, perhaps it’s time for a new leader. Or if multiple members want to lead, rotate. Or manage by consensus without a leader. Just decide quickly.
2. Manage fairly – but hold each other accountable for attendance and deliverables. Reassign tasks if necessary. Be specific – no one leaves until everyone knows who is doing what by when.
3. Communicate! Have regular meetings – cover for someone, but then return the favor!
4. This is not a popularity contest. Teammates that work hard to keep the team focused and on time are always well-respected.

This is a management class – put theory into practice and actively manage your time, your commitments, yourself, and your peers.

**General Comments**
- **Analysis:** Your analysis will be evaluated based on substantive content, insights leveraged from assigned reading and class discussions, and strength of presentation. As in the real world, you AND your deliverable must be convincing to succeed. Also, team members share team scores.
- **Timeliness:** Late work will not be accepted. If you cannot meet a deadline or make an exam, please see me at least 1 (one) week in advance of the due date to make other arrangements.
- **Prerequisites:** The instructor reserves the right to administratively drop, at any point, any student who has not met the prerequisites.
- **Withdrawal:** Students choosing to withdraw from this course are responsible for doing so according to university procedures and deadlines. In order to withdraw from a course after the add/drop deadline, a student must obtain the signature of the instructor and the Associate Dean.
- **Incomplete:** “Incomplete” grades or make-up exams are typically not available.
Integrity
As described by the Student Academic Honesty Policy:
“Students will be expected to adhere to standards of academic honesty and integrity, as outlined in the Student Academic Honesty Policy. All written work and oral presentation assignments must be original work. All ideas/material that are borrowed from other sources must have appropriate references to the original sources. Any quoted material should give credit to the source and be punctuated with quotation marks.

“Students are responsible for honest completion of their work including examinations. There will be no tolerance for infractions. If you believe there has been an infraction by someone in the class, please bring it to the instructor’s attention. The instructor reserves the right to discipline any student for academic dishonesty, in accordance with the general rules and regulations of the university. Disciplinary action may include the lowering of grades and/or the assignment of a failing grade for an exam, assignment, or the class as a whole.

“Incidents of Academic Dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Students. Sanctions at the University level may include suspension or expulsion from the University.”

Bottom line: I have faith in this honor code that relies on your professionalism and integrity. Thank you for upholding that faith.

Students with Disabilities
Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations must be approved for services by providing appropriate and recent documentation to the Office of Disabled Student Services (DSS). This office is located in Craven Hall 5205, and can be contacted by phone at (760) 750-4905, or TTY (760) 750-4999. Students authorized by DSS to receive reasonable accommodations should meet with me during my office hours in order to ensure confidentiality.
INDIVIDUAL US CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

Working with “different” cultures will require more than just knowledge of “their” customs. Effective business relationships often start with an understanding of their perceptions of you.

In this paper, you will describe an integrated perspective on American culture as seen through both your own eyes as well as those of others.

Deliverable DUE AT THE START OF CLASS
1. Title page (including your name and email address).
2. Interviewee Description: 1 page detailing information on at least 2 interviewees – name, email / other contact info, age, country of origin, time in the U.S., primary occupation/status in the U.S.
3. Introduction: 1 paragraph that briefly mentions your themes to describe American culture.
4. Themes: The body of the paper should elaborate on at least 3 themes. Each theme should have its own heading and at least one concrete example (e.g., spiritual, suspicious, optimistic, collectivist). This should be 4 PAGES LONG, TYPED, DOUBLE-SPACED, SINGLE-SIDED.
5. Conclusion: 1 paragraph briefly describing what you learned from this. What surprised you, if anything? How do you think it will help you manage cross-cultural business relationships? What behavior change, if any, might you incorporate into your future business interactions?
6. Please email a soft copy BEFORE class and deliver a hard copy at the start of class. NO LATE PAPERS ACCEPTED.

Interviews
You will need to conduct interviews with “external” individuals to understand their candid perception of American culture.

Please do NOT simply reiterate their comments. You should integrate their insights into your own observations to establish some themes that you think best describe American culture. For instance, you could leverage these perspectives to describe what you believe is a “family-oriented”, “interdependent”, “values-driven”, “highly contextual” society.

Please support your themes with tangible examples from your interviews and your own experiences. Feel free to draw upon news articles and current events to support your theme.

Please write in a clear, concise manner. Do not focus on an “objective” look at American culture; rather, state your opinions and conclusions from a thoughtful, analytical, observations-based perspective.

Interviewees
Please interview 2 foreign-born persons who fit these criteria:
1. Both interviewees have been in the U.S. for over 3 months but less than 5 years.
2. The interviewees should be different from your own national origin.
3. At least one of your interviewees must be a non-student.
4. If you have NOT lived in the U.S. for at least 14 years, then 1 of your 2 interviewees must be American-born.

Theme Development
1. Consider your own impressions of American culture at this time. Consider past and current events, business-government-society interactions, stereotypes about Americans, personal experiences, and so on. What themes come to mind? Avoid “focusing” on stereotypes.
2. Use your interviews to “test” these themes AND to ask questions that “assume nothing.” Develop a list that drives deeper understanding. Example questions include:
a. If you were to describe Americans in 3-5 words, what words would you use? Why? Can you give any examples you’ve observed or experienced personally?

b. What was the image you had of Americans/U.S. before you came to the U.S.? How has that changed (if at all)?

c. How does the U.S. differ from your own country based on your experiences here? Can you give some specific examples? Why are those differences important to you?

d. What are the advantages and disadvantages of living in the U.S.? How has your behavior changed, if at all? How have your beliefs or opinions changed, if at all? How has your communication style changed?

3. Conduct your interviews in a relaxed atmosphere where there will be few interruptions.

4. After your last question, always ask if there is anything else the interviewee would like to add.

5. After completing your interviews, review your notes. Compare and contrast interviewee perceptions from your own thoughts. Do you agree with the interviewee – why or why not?

6. Integrate your analysis of these interviews and your own thoughts to develop a final "list" of themes (3 to 5) that you believe describes the essence of American culture.

7. Select at least one good example to support each theme.
TEAM PROJECT: THE GLOBAL APPRENTICE

The “D” is at it again. He is hunting for a team to lead his resort expansion – this time, on the world stage. His advisors last semester established strong market entry strategies & positioning plans. The “D” knows that strategically, the world market is ready. What he needs now is execution.

He expects two deliverables from your team: 1) a clear and concise cultural briefing to prepare for new market entry; and 2) tangible implementation scenarios. He needs confidence that your team will leverage cultural understanding to plan and execute this project.

He understands that you will develop a stronger understanding of the “real” complex issues involved in applying cultural frameworks. He knows how this experiential approach prepares you to mitigate conflict and successfully manage toward strong cross-cultural execution.

Moreover, he supports a team approach, which represents 2 key real-world practices: 1) diversity of thought that generates stronger execution; and 2) division of labor that allows for faster completion.

The “D” has appointed me as your point of contact to support you in this important endeavor.

Speed is of the essence – he has set clear deliverable milestones:
1. Form teams of 4 to 5 students. **SUBMIT NAMES TO ME BY THU 2/6.**
2. Cultural Briefing. **SUBMIT PAPER COPY & EMAIL DECK BY 4/10 OR 4/12.**
3. Implementation Scenarios. **SUBMIT PAPER COPY & EMAIL DECK BY 5/8 OR 5/10.**
4. Deliverables must meet written work & presentation guidelines and cite sources for credibility.

Your performance will determine whether he elevates your team into senior management and global glory – or whether he points his finger straight at you, and utters those dreaded 2 words.

**GOOD LUCK AND HAVE FUN!**

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CULTURAL BRIEFING

Your team must select a culture and “go deep.” Leverage the frameworks discussed in class, and reference cultural characteristics relative to American culture. Remember that this occurs in a business context – what potential challenges and pitfalls may occur? How do you plan to mitigate these risks?

**Deliverable: 20 min TEAM PRESENTATION DECK**
1. **Title slide** with the names of team members and respective email addresses
2. **Research Overview:** Several slides detailing country & culture data
3. **Potential Conflict:** Several slides comparing, identifying, and prioritizing potential conflicts with American culture; several slides detailing methods to mitigate conflict
4. **Potential Alignment:** similar to #3
5. **Conclusions:** 1 slide detailing key actions to mitigate risk and maximize alignment
6. Please email a soft copy BEFORE class and deliver a hard copy at the start of class. **NO LATE PAPERS ACCEPTED.**

**Gather Research**
Your team should leverage all available resources – online, local community groups, newspapers, local businesses with international dealings, cultural videos from the library. You can interview executives involved in joint ventures; community members who have lived outside of the US for a period of time (not for leisure); or professionals who interact in a business context with international partners. You can also access any of the “Doing Business in …” videos in the campus media library. I encourage you to watch and take notes on behavior and comments that correspond to Hall and Hofstede dimensions. Focus on areas of conflict – and alignment – within a business context.

**Highlight Key Areas of Potential Conflict and Potential Alignment**

You should spend most of your time discussing areas of potential conflict and alignment. How does this culture differ from American culture? How (and why) would you prioritize these differences? Leverage the cultural frameworks to categorize the data and drive toward analytical insights.

**Conclusions**

The data should tell a story – describe the culture, compare with the US, and identify conflict / alignment. How do you plan to mitigate risks? What are the 3 or 4 key actions that your negotiation and implementation plan must contain to minimize risk and maximize alignment?

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**SCENARIOS & ROLE PLAY**

Your team must create **TWO** scenarios to demonstrate deep understanding of the cross-cultural challenges before you. Create – and bring to life – one of the 2 detailed “real-world” scenarios that maximize successful negotiation and execution.

Focus on the travel & entertainment industry – the “D” envisions creating a large, multi-venue tourist resort. Leverage the professional development and cultural frameworks discussed in class – as well as your own cultural briefing.

**Deliverable: 20 min TEAM PRESENTATION DECK**

1. Please confer with me regarding your scenarios and role play PRIOR to the due date.
2. Title slide with the names of team members and respective email addresses
3. Two Implementation scenarios: Several slides comparing, identifying, and prioritizing potential conflicts with American culture; several slides detailing methods to mitigate conflict
4. One Role Play: Enact at least ONE of your two implementation scenarios.
5. Please email a soft copy BEFORE class and deliver a hard copy at the start of class. NO LATE PAPERS ACCEPTED.

**Sample scenarios**

**Staffing example** – this is an example of how to “approach” these scenarios

Start with the negotiation phase. Consider the characteristics of the US negotiating team & the other culture’s negotiating team. What do you anticipate each of their approaches to be? How would you direct the American negotiating team to react? How should they interact? Where do conflicts occur – and how do you resolve them? How would specific deal terms develop? How would the two cultures differ in their approach? Assuming that a deal is possible, what will it look like? Now you can describe specific differences & alignments based on real deal terms.

Now consider the implementation phase. After the paper deal is done, what actually happens? How would each tactical team proceed based on their cultural differences / similarities? What local cultural (versus business) challenges would you expect? What specific areas of miscommunication should you
carefully monitor – and how would you specifically mitigate that risk? How can you leverage these areas of alignment? Where do specific conflicts occur – and how do you resolve them?

Other examples include:
- Financial terms of construction – US wants local culture to foot the bill, but local culture wants massive marketing spend from US
- Oversight – local resort wants complete autonomy while US wants substantial authority
- Timelines for development; allocation of revenues
- Launching the resort by hiring local staff and establishing reporting processes
- Resolving a conflict between the resort and US headquarters regarding revenue performance
- Developing an ad campaign – how are advertising campaign messaging & positioning developed

*Role plays*
Act out one of your scenarios. Remember, you create the situation specifics – and therefore, control the story you want to tell. Speak in your own conversational tone (no affected accents, please!), but your words and behavior should reflect local cultural attitudes and norms. Make your point quickly – remember, you only have 20 minutes total!

Have fun with this final presentation. The key here is to establish highly specific details – and create your own “real” story of cross-cultural business interaction. This “envisioning” process will enable you to consider as many details as possible and apply the frameworks in an integrative fashion.
COURSE OUTLINE (Subject to change)

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