

Florida International University
Department of Communication Arts - College of Architecture + the Arts

COM 4731-Cultural Communication Patterns of Europe
A Global Learning, Discipline-Specific Course
Summer C: May 11 - July 31, 2015

Instructor: José F. Rodríguez
Office: DM 233
Telephone: 305-348-6184
Email: rodrigej@fiu.edu
Office Hours: By appointment

SYLLABUS

Course Description and Objectives:

This study abroad course will expose students to the cultural richness of Europe (France, Belgium, and Germany) and engage them in the intricacies of intercultural communication in both business and casual settings. Students will learn about theories of intercultural communication, interpersonal interaction, and organizational communication in international settings. Students will develop their personal intercultural communication competence through experiential assignments that will require them interact with others while abroad. Students will visit culturally significant sites in the three major cities of the trip: Paris, Brussels, and Berlin. Additionally, students will visit with various industries and with government organizations (European Union, etc.)

Specific dates of travel are listed at the end in the section Tentative Itinerary.

Global Learning Outcomes:

Global Awareness- After studying abroad, students will be able to demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of the interrelatedness of local, global, international, and intercultural issues related to communication in business and casual settings.

Global Perspective- Students will be able to develop a multi-perspective analysis that incorporates their knowledge of communication to analyze communication patterns in an international/intercultural setting.

Global Engagement- Students will be able to develop solutions to local, global, international, and/or intercultural problems and be able to articulate the causes and contributions to these problems vis-à-vis the role of communication and culture.

Global Learning Co-curricular Activity

Students will engage in cultural visits that include museums, culturally relevant sites, and other places of interest.

Assignments/Coursework:

The following is meant to clarify the expectations of students in this course.

Late assignments and materials that do not conform to these rules will NOT be accepted.

Creative Video Project:

In a group of no more than three, create a film that addresses any **one** topic that we have discussed in class. The film should be no more than eight minutes in length.

This is a creative project, take license with it and make it your own. You can do a skit, interview people on the street, make a music video, make a documentary...whatever. Go out and talk to people! You must include video from all three cities. You will be graded on how well you are able to integrate the ideas from the class and text into your analysis.

Ideas for the project can include the follow, but you are free to discuss with me your own ideas:

Café Observation: Europe's cafes are world-famous gathering grounds for friends, colleagues, lovers, and tourists to meet and chat. In each city we visit, find a café off the beaten path and hangout for a good hour or more. Carefully observe people's interactions with each other. Take notes about the use of personal space and distance, touching, eye contact, body posture, vocal intonation. What seem to be the "rules of engagement" in their conversations? What makes a local, a local? Even if you don't understand the language, can you make out what they are discussing just by observing their nonverbal behavior? Use what you know about nonverbal communication to draw conclusions and integrate what we've learned about intercultural communication theory and application.

Better Know a Neighborhood: Paris and Berlin are modern-day metropolises teeming with all types of cultures, nationalities, races, and ethnicities. So what does it mean to be Parisian/Berlinian? Interview as many people as possible from various neighborhoods (those around the hotel, the touristy spots, etc). Ask them about everything: what do they do for a living, what they do for fun? what are their impressions of modern French/German society? What ethnicity do they associate with? Do they feel French/German and why? Do they feel European and why? What do they think of tourists, and Americans in particular? How long have they lived in Paris/Berlin, where are they from? I think you get the point. In addition, what's your impression of that particular neighborhood. What is the layout of the land (literally and figuratively)? What are some nearby points of interest and why are they interesting? What does the neighborhood tell you about the character of the people who inhabit it? Use your skills of observation and critical thinking to draw some conclusions...what consequence do you think this has for communication encounters?

Again, these are suggestions for your video project. It is creative, so if you want to take it in a different direction, let's discuss!

Oral Presentation Skills:

Simply visiting a cultural site and seeing a monument doesn't do much for learning about its significance to the culture. In this class, we will be visiting major cultural sites in which the students will take the lead in presenting on the cultural significance of the sites. They will become not just the tour guide, but the interpreters of the cultural messages the monuments and sites represent.

Guide for a day: Students will choose one monument or site from a pre-approved list. For this project, I expect students to do the following:

- 1) Provide a brief overview of the history
- 2) Provide some “fun facts” (however you interpret that)
- 3) Explain the cultural significance of the site or monument. This is where *your* interpretation comes in. What does this place or thing mean to the people of France and what does it mean to you? How do things and places become a part of cultural history and why or why not is that important?
- 4) Submit a two-three page summary of your presentation

All students MUST present on the day they are assigned. There are no make-up presentations.

Required Reading:

Edward T. Hall, *The Silent Language*, Publisher: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, ISBN-13: 9780385055499, available on Amazon from \$11.38

Recommended Reading:

Frommer’s Guide to Europe, Publisher: Frommers 12th edition, ISBN-13: 9781118369074 Available from Amazon.com from \$14.60

Selected readings on intercultural communication and cultural patterns from the following:

Various chapters from COM 3461, Intercultural Communication. May include the following: Ch 2 Intercultural Competence, ch 3 Cultural Biases and Intercultural Contact, ch 5 Nonverbal Communication

Films:

- Amelie
- Goodbye Lenin
- The Lives of Others

Grading/Evaluation:

| <u>Assignment</u> | <u>Weighted Percent</u> |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Movie and Reading Quiz | 20 |
| Guide for a Day | 25 |
| Creative Video Project | 25 |
| Participation | 30 |

Scale

| | | | | |
|-------|----|-------|----|----------|
| + 93 | A | 92-90 | A- | |
| 89-87 | B+ | 86-83 | B | 82-80 B- |
| 79-77 | C+ | 76-73 | C | 72-70 C- |
| 69-67 | D | 66> | F | |

A grades indicate superior work, B good work, C average work.

Attendance Policy:

Since we will be in a foreign country together for a significant amount of time, your attendance during designated class hours is required. On some occasions we’ll be traveling. Failure to

show up at the designated meeting place and time will result in your being left behind. You will need to catch up with the class and will have your participation docked. This course requires student participation and thus attendance. No late assignments will be accepted.

During non-class time, you are encouraged to go out and visit the city on your own. Don't get stuck in your room! However, you are expected to be up bright and early and ready for class the next day!

Academic Integrity:

Students enrolled in this course are expected to maintain the highest levels of academic integrity. Please carefully read FIU's Code of Academic Integrity on the website, www.fiu.edu/~oabp/misconductweb/labmisconductweb.htm. Every student must respect the right of all to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students must adhere to a standard of academic conduct, demonstrating respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. Academic dishonesty of any kind, for whatever reason, will not be tolerated, and persecuted to the fullest extent of FIU policies.

Policy on Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities have the right to receive needed accommodations if their disabilities make it difficult to perform academic tasks in the usual way or in the allotted time frame. If you have a disability and need assistance, please contact the Disability Resource Center (University Park : GC190, 305-318-3332) (North Campus: WUC139, 305-919-5345). Upon contact, the Disability Resource Center will review your request and contact your professors or other personnel to make arrangements for appropriate modification and/or assistance.

Religious Holidays: Any student may request to be excused from a scheduled exam to observe a religious holiday of his/her faith. The student must notify the instructor and arrange to take the exam in advance of the regularly scheduled exam date.

Tentative Itinerary

All dates are tentative and the instructor holds the right to change due dates and presentation dates, providing ample notice to students. Any changes will be announced in class.

Possible Class Meeting in May

Four-Five class meetings:

1. Overview of Communication Theory and Intercultural Communication
2. Review/discuss films
3. Meetings with cultural attaches of the various European consulates
4. Final pre-departure meeting

| | | |
|-------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Day 1 | Sat, 27 June | Depart to Paris |
| Day 2 | Sun, 28 June | Paris |
| Day 3 | Mon, 29 June | Paris |
| Day 4 | Tue, 30 June | Paris |
| Day 5 | Wed, 01 July | Paris (Versailles) |

| | | |
|--------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Day 6 | Thu, 02 July | Paris |
| Day 7 | Fri, 03 July | Paris |
| Day 8 | Sat, 04 July | Paris Free Day |
| Day 9 | Sun, 05 July | Paris Free Day |
| Day 10 | Mon, 06 July | Paris Free Day |
| Day 11 | Tue, 07 July | Paris Free Day |
| Day 12 | Wed, 08 July | Depart to Brussels |
| Day 13 | Thu, 09 July | Brussels (EU visit) |
| Day 14 | Fri, 10 July | Brussels (Museums, Atomium, etc.) |
| Day 15 | Sat, 11 July | Depart to Bruges (overnight stay) |
| Day 16 | Sun, 12 July | Bruges |
| Day 17 | Mon, 13 July | Bruges/Brussels (Free Day) |
| Day 18 | Tue, 14 July | Depart to Berlin |
| Day 19 | Wed, 15 July | Berlin (East/West Tour) |
| Day 20 | Thu, 16 July | Berlin (Bundestag) |
| Day 21 | Fri, 17 July | Berlin Free Day |
| Day 22 | Sat, 18 July | Berlin Free Day |
| Day 23 | Sun, 19 July | Berlin Free Day |
| Day 24 | Mon, 20 July | Berlin Free Day |
| Day 25 | Tue, 21 July | Berlin |
| Day 26 | Wed, 22 July | Berlin |
| Day 27 | Thu, 23 July | Berlin |
| Day 28 | Fri, 24 July | Potsdam Tour and Final Presentations |
| Day 29 | Sat, 25 July | End of program |

Do Not Copy