MACQUARIE
UNIVERSITY ~ SYDNEY

DIVISION OF ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL STUDIES

GRADUATE ACCOUNTING AND COMMERCE CENTRE

BUS854 Managing Cultural
Diversity in Business

Dr Elizabeth Christopher

UNIT OUTLINE

Semester 1, 2008

MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY
Graduate Accounting and Commerce Centre
Division of Economic and Financial studies
BUS854 MANAGING CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN BUSINESS

UNIT OUTLINE
Semester 1 Year 2008, 25 February - 28 June 2008

TEACHING STAFF
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ABOUT THIS UNIT

ASSUMED KNOWLEDGE:
It is assumed that business students at Master's level who enroll in this unit will have a basic knowledge and understanding of management principles.

UNIT DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES
For the purpose of this Unit, culture is defined in its widest sense as:

- Accumulation of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions: acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group behaviour;

- Cultivated behaviour: the sum of individuals' social learning and experience through symbols deliberately perpetuated in a society through its institutions, accepted generally without question and passed along by communication and imitation from one generation to the next: thus culture is communication and communication is culture.

- Cultural symbols such as artifacts, traditions, legends, icons, that represent patterns, explicit and implicit, of distinctive and desirable achievement by members of the relevant group.

- Culture systems are both products of action and conditioning influences on further action: a collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another.

The purpose of this Unit
is to explore cultural dimensions of international management.
Specific objectives are to learn more about:

1- Managing cultural differences in international business environments;
2- Culture-based risks and challenges for international managers;
3- Differences in cultural views of social responsibility and corporate governance in multi-national enterprises;
4- The role of culture in management of diversity;
5- Communicating across cultures: different perspectives on 'reality'
6- Cross cultural negotiation; cultural differences in tactics and manoevres;
7- Cultural bases for strategies in international alliances;

8- Differences in cultural views of control systems and labour relations;
9- Developing international managers;
10-Motivation and leadership in the management of diversity

CLASSES
Class times:
Wednesdays, 9am -12pm in Building E4B Room 316
The class will be repeated on Friday evenings, 5 - 8 pm, E4B 316

Face to face study hours: 3 hours per week.

CONSULTATIONS: before or after each session or by appointment.

SET TEXT
Elizabeth Christopher (editor), 2008, Managing cultural diversity in international business (2nd edition, Pearson Education, Australia): available from University Coop Bookshop.

If students can obtain a cheaper copy of the 1st edition, it will serve; but constant access to the set text is essential, especially for students whose work commitments prevent them from attending every lecture. A copy of the 2nd edition is in Library Reserve.

Lectures support and add to the textbook; also classroom sessions are backed up online with lecture notes, case studies, articles and discussion points on the ten major topics above that make up the content of the Unit.

UNIT WEB PAGE:
Online address for Blackboard: http://learn.mq.edu.au
Users can log directly into the course by using the following URL:
https://learn.mq.edu.au/webct/logon/24268665001

LEARNING OUTCOMES:
After completing this unit students should be able to do the following:

* Sketch the multicultural 'big picture' in which global trade and government forces operate; and summarise the major culture-based challenges faced by international managers (political, legal, economic and technological);

* Present a range of culture-based arguments concerning the need for social responsibility and ethical behaviour in multi-national enterprises;

* Identify major cultural characteristics, including communication styles, that characterise regions, nations, communities, organisations, groups and individuals;

* Discuss a range of culture-based tactics for international negotiation;

* Describe major cultural differences in views on strategy for international alliances, including controls, labour relations and management;

* Present arguments for adopting particular leadership styles in given situations; and for varying motivational techniques depending on circumstances;

* Enhance generic skills (logical argument; critical thinking, leadership and teamwork, writing skills and problem solving).

TEACHING AND LEARNING
This unit is presented through four learning media:

1. A weekly classroom lecture combined with class and small group discussions, quizzes and self-assessment.

2. Supported online on Blackboard: http://learn.mq.edu.au
Lecture notes, assignment details, assessment methods, case studies, reading and reference materials and a sample exam paper will be posted.

3. The set textbook: Elizabeth Christopher (editor), 2008, Cross cultural management: Managing cultural diversity in international business (2nd edition, Pearson Education, Australia)

4. The students themselves.
Nobody wants to listen to a lecture for 3 hrs every week. Much learning will be from peers. Students are expected to attend as many classes as they can and to offer themselves as a learning resource. All students will be invited to give a short talk (10 minutes maximum), Weeks 3 through 10, on a specific (and necessarily very limited) aspect of their culture.

ASSESSMENT:
In order to pass this Unit students will be expected to:

1. Write a case study based on a news item of their own finding (examples and guidelines online; 15% max., approx. 2,000 words);

2. Participate in a group research project, including a class presentation, and submit a written report (examples and guidelines online, 20% max., approx. 2,000 words),

3. Sit a 2-hour end-of-semester written exam (60%, answers should total the equivalent of about 6 A4 pages, i.e. about 2,000 words; sample exam online with answers)

The above items are compulsory. In addition students have the option to make a short presentation to the class on an aspect of their culture. Presentations will begin in Week 3. (5%, no written report required).

Students will need to:
- Obtain at least a Pass overall for all required coursework to be eligible to sit the exam;
- achieve at least a 50% pass in the final exam (30/60).

TIMETABLE

Week	beginning	Topic
1	Feb 25 2007	Overview
2	March 3	Going global
3	March 10	CULTURAL CONTRIBUTIONS BEGIN
		Social responsibility and ethics
4	March 17	GROUPS TO BE FORMED FOR GROUP
		RESEARCH PROJECT
		The role of culture
5	March 24	Communication
6	March 31	Negotiations and decisions
7	April 7	Strategic alliances
Break	April 14	
8	April 28	Monitoring and controlling
		CASE STUDY DUE MAY 2 BEFORE 12 PM
9	May 5	Workforce diversity and international mgt
10	May 12	Leadership and motivation
11	May 19	Group projects: verbal reports begin…
12	May 26	...continued.
		WRITTEN REPORTS DUE
13	June 4 and 6	EXAM (2 hours plus 10 minutes' reading time)

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ASSESSMENT AND LEARNING OUTCOMES
1. Case studies: learning outcomes are to provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate the following:

- Understanding of how theoretical principles can be generalized from a specific, real-life, situation or incident; and ability to explain key concepts;
- Recognition of how the major themes of the chosen news report fit within the discipline of cross cultural studies;
- Ability to combine and collate various items of information in the selected case into an explanatory whole;
- Reasonable and realistic arguments and ability to make clear, logical and organized relationships between different features of the chosen case;
- Ability to conform to correct procedures for writing and presenting academic work.

2. **Group research project, including a class presentation, and a written report: learning outcomes are to provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate the following:**

- Theoretical and practical knowledge of the three major methods for academic research: interviews/case studies; surveys; and unobtrusive or non-intervention methods;
- Ability to work as a member of a task-oriented and multi-cultural team;
- Leadership qualities: the management of workforce diversity;
- Increased ability to write academic reports (based also on experience gained and feedback from the case study assignment).

3. End-of-semester written exam: learning outcomes are to provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate the following:

- They have **learned** something from study of BUS854 (i.e. that they know more now on the topic of managing cultural diversity in business than they did before they enrolled in the unit);
- They **understand** what they have learned, i.e. it was not all rote learning and memorisation;
- They can **apply** this knowledge inductively and deductively through analysis, synthesis and evaluation, to relevant aspects of the management of cultural diversity in real life.

ASSIGNMENT TASKS INCLUDING WORD LENGTH
1. Individual written case study (to be submitted via Blackboard end of Week 8)**.**

Students will find a news item online and explain how it illustrates one or more theoretical principles of cross cultural studies (see examples and "Guidelines for writing cases studies", online). News items are expected to be between 1,000-1,500 words and must be included with the online assignment submission. Students will be expected to write about 2,000 words of discussion of the chosen case.

15% max, due date: Week 8 (week after break).
Submission: by Blackboard.
Length: about 2,000 words excluding news report.

An example of a news item that might be discussed in terms of cultural factors in issues of social responsibility is as follows (about 1,200 words):

> **Should Everest be closed? (**Sunday October 8, 2006 The Observer)
> Tourism is turning the world's highest peak into its biggest rubbish dump, claim conservationists, who are pressing for controls on climbing. But will this cost sherpas their livelihood? Dan McDougall in Kathmandu reports.
>
> It has been described as the highest junkyard in the world. Covered in discarded mountaineering detritus and suffering under thousands of tourists' boots every year, environmental groups are to launch a push for a radical solution - the temporary closure of the world's highest mountain.
>
> Warnings that an ecological disaster is imminent in the area around the mountain have largely been ignored amid years of turmoil in Nepal. But conservationists think that growing political stability in the Himalayan kingdom means that the time has come and that the damage caused every year by thousands of climbers and tourists can no longer be ignored.
>
> Maoist rebels declared a ceasefire with Nepal's government in April after a decade-long insurgency and are negotiating to join an interim government with the country's mainstream political parties. The Kathmandu Environmental Education Project (Keep) said that the relative calm has removed an obstacle in its efforts to persuade the authorities that a temporary closure of the mountain is the only solution to help it repair itself.

Campaigners warn that the price of tourism is discarded rubbish and medical waste and the colonisation of the area by restaurants and internet cafes. A sherpa spelled out the strain being placed on the indigenous population.

'Providing enough electricity and water for the small communities surrounding Everest and the other Himalayan mountains becomes very challenging when there are tens of thousands of additional tourists and climbers in the region competing for these same resources,' he said. 'Nepal is ravaged by water and air pollution caused by industrialisation and increased tourism. Water supplies for local villages, delivered through irrigation systems in the mountains, are being critically depleted and urgent action needs to be taken.'

This year a geological team, sponsored by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), found signs that the landscape of Mount Everest has changed significantly since Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay first conquered the peak in 1953. A primary cause is the warming global climate, but the research party concluded that the growing effect of tourism was also critically taxing the region surrounding the planet's tallest mountain.

According to the survey, the glacier that once came close to Hillary and Norgay's first base camp has retreated three miles in the past two decades. Hillary himself has become outspoken on a situation he believes is turning into an ecological scandal. 'I have suggested to the Nepal government that they should stop giving permission and give the mountain a rest for a few years,' he has said. Elizabeth Hawley, a Kathmandu-based patron of The Himalaya Trust, an environmental charity founded and still run by Hillary, said yesterday that the pioneer remained utterly 'appalled' at the levels and standards of tourism around Everest and the Khumba Valley.

'When Sir Edmund has said he wanted the mountain closed or visits limited, the last thing he wants is for the sherpas to lose their livelihoods, but we in the trust strongly believe that not just Everest but the whole of the Khumba Valley needs a sustained rest. These villages have become enormously wealthy by local standards, but along the trail towards Everest there are now restaurants and cyber cafes and bars, and this just doesn't seem right.'

She added: 'Climate change and the receding glacial waters are global issues and not within localised control, but we are particularly worried about deforestation of the area, much of it to sustain tourism, and our campaigning has helped improve the situation, but it still isn't enough. We feel that we have to start from the beginning in order for the region to recuperate and recycle itself. '

Others have proposed limiting the number of professional expeditions and banning all commercial trips to base camp. Junko Tabei, 66, of Japan, the first woman to reach the summit, said: 'Everest has become too crowded. It needs a rest. Only two or three teams should be allowed in a season to climb Everest, and tourist trips to base camp should be banned altogether. Along the trail to the Mount Everest base camp in Nepal, deforestation is getting worse as locals

cut down trees to heat meals and to provide hot showers for foreign eco-trekkers. The local environment is in danger and the dignity of the mountain is being undermined.'

There are also fears that even 'eco-tourism' is doing more harm than good. The WWF estimates that 'only 20 pence of every £2 spent by an average trekker each day reaches village economies'.

Prakash Sharma, director of Friends of the Earth Nepal, believes that, while many of the Western charity groups who trek to the foot of the mountain may be doing so for honourable causes, they are not considering the environmental consequences. 'The exponential increase in pollution and other negative environmental situations on Mount Everest is a direct result of the massive increase in visitors to the region,' he said. 'The Khumbu region and the city of Kathmandu can comfortably hold about 40,000 people. In the coming months, during peak tourist season in the lower valley, there will be as many as 700,000.

'Twenty to forty thousand of these people attempt, at some altitude, to ascend the mountains of the Himalayas, including thousands who will at least trek to the foot of Everest. There is no infrastructure in this region to cope with the pollution this many people generate, and as a result the Nepali Himalayas have become the highest junkyard in the world.'

Sharma claims that the tonnes of rubbish on Everest include climbing equipment, foods, plastics, tins, aluminium cans, glass, clothes, papers, tents and even discarded electronic equipment such as satellite dishes. Some climbers have reported finding bloody syringes and vials of unlabelled medications. Other campaigners claim the dead body count on the mountain, 188 according to varying estimates, is enough reason to temporarily close it.

But the sherpas who earn their living from the perilous work of guiding adventurers to the summit vociferously oppose any reduction in climbing permits. Ang Dawa, a Sherpa guide in Kathmandu, said: 'For us it is simple. There are tens of thousands of people in the region who solely depend on the trekkers and mountaineers for their income. If they don't come, these people and their families will starve. A sherpa who summits on Everest is looking at making a minimum of £1,600 for 60 days' work. That's a lot of money in Nepal - it can support an entire village.'

Nepalese officials claim, despite the UN report and environmentalist warnings, that they have no immediate plans to close down the mountain. 'All climbers are welcome as long as long as they are willing to pay,' a government spokesman said. Critics say it is no surprise that the Nepali authorities have no plans to scale back tourism in the region. To even set foot on the slopes of Everest, each team of seven climbers must pay a royalty of £50,000 to the Nepalese government.

OUTLINE OF APPROPRIATE DISCUSSION OF CASE
See Topic 3 readings in set text; also references such as:
"Jobs vs Environment" http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/26/068.html
"Not in Whose Backyard?" New York Times Sep 2 2007:
http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/02/magazine/02wwln-essay-t.html

The case illustrates some of the moral complexities of globalisation; i.e. international tourism benefits developing economies but also may threaten their national environments: jobs vs environmental degradation. To what extent should organisations accept social responsibility for the unintended but harmful side-effects of their international business enterprises? To what extent is government intervention in private enterprise justified if it is to protect the environment?

2: GROUP RESEARCH PROJECT.
Groups of 3-4 people should be formed by Week 4. Each group will be provided with its own private chat room on Blackboard so Elizabeth can keep track of all groups. Guidelines and examples of former reports that earned high grades will be provided online. After reading some literature on research methods for the social sciences (see http://www.managementhelp.org/research/research.htm and further references provided online) groups will each seek answers to a specific research question, based on assumptions derived from their study of the Unit.

One or more members of each group will summarise its research to the class, in a presentation of about 15 minutes' duration, beginning Week 11 and continuing in Week 12. Full written reports must be submitted online by the end of Week 12 for comments & grades to be returned before the exam. Reports should conform in style and content to academic standards for report writing.

This assignment is worth a total of 20% including class presentation and written report.
Due date for report: Week 12; submission by Blackboard.
Length of report: approximately 2,000 words.

INDIVIDUAL CLASS PRESENTATION
Each week, beginning Week 3, through Week 10, student(s) are invited to become 'cultural ambassadors' by informing the class of aspects of their cultural heritage.

In Weeks 1 and 2 a list of presenters and dates will be compiled and some examples provided of presentations by former students. Each presentation is expected to last between 5 and 10 minutes and no written report is required.

(**This assignment is not compulsory but every student who responds will gain 5% for their cultural contribution to the Unit learning**)

ALSO there are readings online for general interest, not part of assessment for this Unit.

Lecture notes will be on Blackboard each week. Each week's topic goes with the relevant section of the textbook.

NOTE: Students may be penalised if they do not submit each item of required coursework by the due date, including work required for class.

If Elizabeth does not acknowledge any personal communication from any student within 24 hours, she has not received it!

EXAMINATION
VALUE: 60%
Date: last week of classes (Week 13): 2 hours (plus 10 minutes' reading time).
Part A: Case study; 3 questions 10 marks each (30 marks total);
Part B: 2 short discussions on any 2/6 topics (15 marks each).
Sample exam paper online. Dictionaries are not permitted in the exam.

Students must sit the exam during their allocated class period.

The only exceptions to sitting the examination at the designated time will be because of documented illness or unavoidable disruption. In these circumstances students may consider applying for Special Consideration. Information about unavoidable disruption and the special consideration process is available at http://www.reg.mq.edu.au/Forms/APSCon.pdf

Students are advised that it is Macquarie University policy not to set early or delayed examinations for individuals or groups of students. All students are expected to be available until the end of the teaching semester, i.e. the final day of the official University exam period, and can attend the exam at the designated time and place.

PLAGIARISM
The University defines plagiarism in its rules: "Plagiarism involves using the work of another person and presenting it as one's own." Plagiarism is a serious breach of the University's rules and carries significant penalties. Students should read the University's practices and procedures on plagiarism. These can be found in the *Handbook of Postgraduate Studies* or on the web at:
http://www.student.mq.edu.au/plagiarism/

The policies and procedures explain what plagiarism is, how to avoid it, the procedures that will be taken in cases of suspected plagiarism and the penalties for students found guilty. Penalties may include a deduction of marks, failure in the unit, and/or referral to the University Discipline Committee.

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON GRADING
Grades will be awarded using the standard Macquarie University scheme:

HD	High distinction	85-100%
D	Distinction	75-84%
Cr	Credit	65-74%
P	Pass	50-64%
PC	Conceded pass	45-49%
F	Fail	0-44%

An Incomplete (I) grade will only be awarded under exceptional circumstances. W indicates the student has chosen to discontinue the unit after the HECS census date and up to the end of week 10. Students who receive an "I" grade should contact Elizabeth immediately to discuss the reasons, and to find out what to do to complete the requirements of the Unit.

High Distinction (HD: 85-100) denotes performance which meets all unit objectives in such an exceptional way, and with such marked excellence, that it deserves the highest recognition
Distinction (D: 75-84) denotes performance which clearly deserves a very high level of recognition as an excellent achievement in the unit.
Credit (C: 65-74) denotes performance which is substantially better than would normally be expected of competent students in the unit.
Pass (P: 50-64) denotes performance which satisfies unit objectives.
Pass Conceded (PC: 45-49) denotes performance which meets unit objectives only marginally.
Fail (F: 0-44) denotes performance which does not meet the unit objectives.

SUMMARY: Students' work will be awarded a high grade to the extent to which it shows:
- Excellent understanding of the relevant principles and all key concepts;
- Discussion showed insight and was innovative; use of authorities and references was excellent; clear and logical statements were made and conclusions were sound and interesting.
- Reflection, obvious investment of time and effort;

For more information on grading guidelines, see Blackboard for the Unit.

Academic Senate has a set of guidelines on the distribution of grades across the range from fail to high distinction. Students' final results will include one of these grades plus a standardised numerical grade (SNG). On occasion the raw mark for a unit (i.e., the total of marks for each assessment item) may not be the same as the SNG received by the relevant students. Under the Senate guidelines, results may be scaled to ensure that there is a degree of comparability across the university, so that units with the same past performances of their students should achieve similar results.

It is important that students realise the policy does not require that a minimum number of students must fail in any unit. The process of scaling does not change the order of marks among students. Those who receive higher raw marks will also receive a higher final scaled mark. For an explanation of the policy see http://www.mq.edu.au/senate/MQUonly/Issues/Guidelines2003.doc or http://www.mq.edu.au/senate/MQUonly/Issues/detailedguidelines.doc.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES
Macquarie University provides a range of Academic Student Support Services. Details of these services can accessed at http://www.student.mq.edu.au