

**MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE ACCOUNTING AND COMMERCE CENTRE
DIVISION OF ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL STUDIES**

BUS854 MANAGING CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN BUSINESS

UNIT OUTLINE

Semester 2 Year 2008

Teaching weeks: August 4 - November 10 2008

TEACHING STAFF

Lecturer in charge: Dr Elizabeth Christopher

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ABOUT THIS UNIT

ASSUMED KNOWLEDGE:

It is assumed that business students 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:

- The sum of individuals' social learning and experience through symbols deliberately perpetuated in a society through its institutions, accepted generally without question: a collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another; passed along by communication and imitation from one generation to the next. Thus culture is communication and communication is culture.

The purpose of this Unit is:

to explore cultural dimensions of management policies and practices, nationally and internationally. Specific objectives are to learn more about:

- 1: The international business environment: political, economic, legal, technological
- 2: Social responsibility and ethics for international managers
- 3: Understanding the role of culture in management
- 4: Communicating across cultures
- 5: Cross-cultural negotiations and decisions
- 6: Strategies for overseas expansion
- 7: Forming global alliances
- 8: Controls for overseas expansion
- 9: Managing workforce diversity
- 10: Motivating and leading

CLASSES

Tuesdays, 10 am - 1 pm, E4B 316

Wednesdays (repeat class), 12 - 3 pm, E4B 316

Face to face study hours: 3 hours per week.

CONSULTATIONS: before or after each session or by appointment.

SET TEXT

Helen Deresky and Elizabeth Christopher, 2008, *International Management: Managing across Borders and Cultures* (Pearson Education Australia)

Obtainable from Macquarie University Coop Bookshop (macq_byr@coop-bookshop.com.au)

Students should have their own copy of this text if possible. There are some copies on the library shelves and in library reserve. Lectures support and add to the textbook but cannot replace it. It is a standard work of reference on cross cultural management, specifically addressed to the Australasian market.

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>

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 STRATEGY

This unit is presented through four learning media:

- 1. A weekly classroom lecture combined with class discussion.**
- 2. Supported online on Blackboard. <http://learn.mq.edu.au>** Lecture notes, assignment details, assessment methods, reading material, case studies and a sample exam paper will be posted.

3. The set text: Helen Deresky and Elizabeth Christopher, 2008, International Management: Managing across Borders and Cultures (Pearson Education Australia): available from University Coop Bookshop.

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 are invited to give a short talk (10 minutes maximum), Weeks 3 through 10, on a specific 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; 20% 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, 15% 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:

- complete all compulsory coursework and gain at least a pass overall to be eligible to sit the exam;
- achieve at least a 50% pass in the final exam (30/60).

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!

TIMETABLE

WK	BEGINNING	TOPIC	TEXT CH
1	Mon Aug 4 2008	Overview	1
2	Mon Aug 11	Going global	1
3	Mon Aug 18	Ethics	2
CULTURAL CONTRIBUTIONS BEGIN			
4	Mon Aug 25	Culture	3
5	Mon Sep 1	Communication	4
6	Mon Sep 8	Negotiation	5
7	Mon Sep 15	Strategies and alliances	6 and 7

TIMETABLE

WK	BEGINNING	TOPIC	TEXT CH
	Mon Sep 27- Oct 3	BREAK	
8	Mon Oct 6	Alliances and controls CASE STUDIES DUE	7 and 8
9	Mon Oct 13	Workforce diversity	9 and 10
10	Mon Oct 20	Leadership, motivation	11
11	Mon Oct 27	Group project summaries	
12	Mon Nov 3	Continued	
13	Mon Nov 10	Examination	

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.

ASSESSMENT TASKS IN MORE DETAIL, INCLUDING WORD LENGTH

1. INDIVIDUAL CLASS PRESENTATION

Each week, beginning Week 3, through Week 10, students are invited to become 'cultural ambassadors' by informing the class of specific 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 about 5 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.

In exceptional circumstances, such as work commitments that prevent students from making a class presentation, the student should discuss an alternative with Elizabeth.

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 15% including class presentation and written report.

Due date for report: Week 12; submission by Blackboard.

Length of report: approximately 2,000 words.

3. INDIVIDUAL WRITTEN CASE STUDY (to be submitted via Blackboard end of Week 10).

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 350 and 750 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. See examples on Blackboard. This assignment is worth 20% of total assessment.

MORE LEARNING MATERIAL

- 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.

4. EXAMINATION: VALUE: 60% max.

Date: Tuesday Nov. 11 and Wednesday Nov 12, in class time: 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.

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%

See Macquarie University Grade Guide online for more details.

The Macquarie experience is designed to lead students to a career in the city and a place in the world. It encourages life-long learning and links teaching to cutting-edge research.

Macquarie seeks to develop generic skills for students, building flexible outcomes for life and for the workplace over a life's career. These skills include:

- *foundation skills of literacy, numeracy and information technology;*
- *self-awareness and interpersonal skills, such as the capacity for self-management, collaboration and leadership;*
- *communication skills for effective presentation and cultural understanding;*
- *critical analysis skills to evaluate, synthesise and judge;*
- *problem-solving skills to apply and adapt knowledge to the real world; and*
- *creative thinking skills to imagine, invent and discover.*

Source: Macquarie University Handbook

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>