LISS1341 Business and Cultural Awareness: Bridging the Gap

Module Syllabus

Module leader: Dr Gideon Azumah
Email: G.Azumah@leeds.ac.uk
Module summary
What do we mean when we talk about culture? How can we describe cultures and what is their importance in business? This course examines the nature of culture, looks at culture at the national level and suggests there are other ways of examining culture. The course seeks to improve the cultural awareness of the participants and help them factor in the role of culture in business situations. The course will consider a variety of cultural influences and examine their manifestation in business behaviour and every day activity. There will be practical exercises and company visits. These and other elements of culture will be used to focus the participants’ understanding through both self-reflection and an examination of various academic approaches to culture. The business context will be examined at a national level and consideration will be made of the impact of globalisation on the need for cross-cultural skills in communication and negotiation. Participants will be encouraged to engage in both a group presentation project and an individual essay that reflects their observations, background and learning in the course. There will be a focus on improving cultural understanding in business. The module will be delivered in a form of lectures and seminars and both of them will include real life examples, participative exercises (role-plays, problem solving exercises) and multimedia.

Objectives
The module introduces the concept of business culture in international business. On completion of the module, students will understand the importance of culture in international business activity and also appreciate cultural differences and how to manage them.

Learning outcomes
With critical engagement for a summer school module, students should be able to:
1. demonstrate an awareness of the importance of culture to business activity;
2. understand the wider meaning of culture and to put into context cultural ‘incidents’ and their significance;
3. understand the differences between culture and how they affect individual behaviour;
4. be able to relate culture to national and other influences and understand the relevance of cultural sites.

Teaching methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delivery type</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Length hours</th>
<th>Student hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On-line Learning</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fieldwork</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Contact</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total hours (100hr per 10 credits)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Private study
Pre-course preparatory work (materials available on the VLE): 15 hours

Private study:
- Reading and research per lecture or seminar or visit: 20 hours
- Case Study and preparation writing: 15 hours
- Presentation preparation: 8 hours

Methods of assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment type</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>% of formal assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group Project</td>
<td>20 minute group presentation</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>1000 word reflective essay</td>
<td>70</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Late Penalties
University rules on penalties for late submission of coursework require 5 full marks to be deducted for each calendar day that passes after the date of required submission. If coursework is not submitted by the end of 14 calendar days following the prescribed deadline, a grade/mark of zero will be returned for that component.

Module outline

Week 1

Monday
9.30 – 11.30: Introduction to the module and self-introduction tasks
11.30 – 12.30: Seminar discussion on the notion of culture

Tuesday
9.30 – 11.30: Lecture: the cultural environment of international business
11.30 – 12.30: Preparation for company visits

Wednesday
There will be visits to two successful international businesses in the Leeds area, where students can learn how these firms navigate cultural differences. More details will be provided later.

Thursday
9.30 – 10.30: Company visit de-brief and lessons learned
10.30 – 11.30: Case study seminar: assessing the possible challenges, from a cultural perspective, for firms entering foreign markets
11.30 – 12.30: Debate: Students will discuss in groups and then debate a business culture issue.

Friday
9.30 – 11.00: The Culture Game: students will play a game where the concepts of fairness and ethical behaviour will be discussed from the perspective of four different cultures.
11.00 – 12.30: Briefing on group presentation and individual assessment requirements. Preparation will begin on the group presentations. The Module Tutor will be available for academic consultation.

**Week 2**

**Monday**
9.30 – 11.30: Cross-Cultural Interaction in Practice: exploring the convergence and divergence arguments of culture in business, along with the practical contexts of cross-cultural interaction - including different business contexts and the Hofstede framework of culture.
11.30 – 12.30: Workshop on practical applications & a cross-cultural interaction simulation game.

**Tuesday**
9.30 -11.30: Cross-Cultural Negotiation: exploring key issues in cross-cultural negotiations and cross-cultural communication, different stages in cross-cultural negotiations and the role of emotions in the negotiation process.
11.30 – 12.30: Workshop on practical applications & a negotiations simulation game.

**Wednesday**
11.30-12.30: **Group presentations**

**Thursday**
9.30 – 11.00 Doing Business in EU (The UK)
This session will focus on the cultural aspects of doing business in the EU via UK covering all areas of business communications.
11.00-12.30 Wrap Up and Q&A

**Reading List**
- Business and Cultural Awareness: Bridging the Gap, LISS 1341 Module Flipboard Magazine, Available on the VLE
- More relevant materials (journals, newspapers, etc) will be made available on the VLE.