Exploring Cultures, Expanding Perspectives: A Virtual Voyage into each others' Worlds

University of Tübingen, in Cooperation with Oregon State University

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Summer 2022, Syllabus (Version 4/21/2022) , 19:00-20:30 CET / 10-11:30 AM PT

1. Course Description

What makes your culture unique or different? What principles does your culture share with other cultures? How do we reconcile when our perspectives clash with others? Investigate the views, perceptions, and characteristics of your culture and explore those of your classmates. This course is a collaborative online international learning model, that is project-based and student-driven.

Readings from cultural theory will help prepare the foundation for an informed discussion and analysis of cultural patterns in the world, and political trends related to culture.

Students are expected to select from topics such as: National or regional stereotypes; Taboos; Social and group identities; Gender Identity and Sexuality; Religion; Educational and Academic Systems; Underrepresented Groups; Popular and Traditional Culture: Music, Literature, Sports, Media; Historical Perspectives on historical events; Globalization and international politics; or any other approved topic. Students are expected to share and listen graciously.

2. Course Schedule

04/29/2022: Session I: Intro

- Welcome, Syllabus, Format, Assignments
- Self-reflection activity
- Iceberg activity

05/06/2022: Session II: What is Culture

- What do you understand under culture?
- What are central concepts, definitions and theories of culture?

Readings:

- Eley, Geoffrey. "What is cultural history?." New German Critique 65 (1995): 19-36.

- Assmann, Jan, and John Czaplicka. "Collective memory and cultural identity." *New german critique* 65 (1995): 125-133.

- Harro, Bobbie. "The cycle of socialization." *Readings for diversity and social justice* 2 (2000): 45-51.

05/13/2022: Session III: Culture and Geography

- What role does geography play in our understanding of culture?

- How unique are cultures? How much do they interact with each other?

Readings:

- Friedman, Thomas L. "It's a flat world, after all." *The New York Times* 3 (2005): 33-37.

- Huntington, Samuel P. "The clash of civilizations?." *Culture and politics*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2000. 99-118.

- Appiah, Kwame Anthony. "There is no such thing as western civilisation." *The Guardian* 9 (2016).

05/20/2022: Session IV: Culture and History

- What role does history play in our understanding of culture?

- How does your nationality determine your identity? How much is your national identity a social construction?

Readings:

- Datta, Venita. "The Power of History, Language and Culture." 2017. https://www.wellesley.edu/albright/about/blog/3296-power-history-language-culture

- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. Verso books, 2006. Excerpt.

Assignment Due:

- **Response Paper "How does your culture differ from another?", Monday 05/23, by 8 PM Pacific Time**

05/27/2022: Session V: Human Universals

- What is specific to your culture?

- What is human nature?

- How different are we – and how much do we share?

Readings:

- Chappell, Paul. "A New Peace Paradigm. Our Human Needs and the Tangles of Trauma." (2018). https://paulkchappell.com.

- Brown, Donald E. "Human universals, human nature & human culture." *Daedalus* 133.4 (2004): 47-54.

- Brown's Human Universals, List in: *Pinker, Steven. The blank slate: The modern denial of human nature*. Penguin, 2003.

- Bell, Wendell. "The clash of civilizations and universal human values." *Journal of Futures Studies* 6.3 (2002): 1-20.

06/03/2022: Session VI: Cultural Differences Workshop

- How aware are we of cultural differences?

- What role do we play as cultural ambassadors?

Readings:

- Paige, R. Michael, et al. *Maximizing study abroad: A students' guide to strategies for language and culture learning and use*. Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition, University of Minnesota, 619 Heller Hall, 271-19th Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55455., 2002.

- Akli, Madalina. "The Role of Study-Abroad Students in Cultural Diplomacy: Toward an International Education as Soft Action." *International Research and Review* 2.1 (2012): 32-48.

06/10/2022:

no class (Pentecost Break at University of Tübingen)

06/17/2022: Session VII: Cultural Politics

- How does culture translate into politics?

- Is culture collective or individual?

- What role does democracy play in our cultures?

Readings:

- Nye, Joseph S. "Soft power." *Foreign Policy* 80 (1990): 153-171.

- Krasner, Stephen D. "Sovereignty." *Foreign Policy* (2001): 20-29.

- Zakaria, Fareed. "The rise of illiberal democracy." *Foreign Affairs* (1997): 22-43.

06/24/2022: Session VIII: Cultural Relativism, Universalism and Cosmopolitanism + Presentation Session I

- How do different cultures align with understandings of human rights ?

- What is cosmopolitanism? Is it possible? How could it work?

Readings:

- Donnelly, Jack. "The Relative Universality of Human Rights." *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice*. Cornell University Press, 2013. 93-105.

- Appiah, Kwame Anthony. "Global citizenship." *Fordham L. Rev.* 75 (2006): 2375.

- Arendt, Hannah. "We Refugees." *Menorah Journal* 31.1 (1943): 69-77.

- **Assignment 2: Research Presentation, Due June 26**

07/01/2022: Session IX: Presentation Session II

- **Assignment 3: Research Paper, Due July 22**

3. Assignments

- Assignment 1: Response Paper "How does your culture differ from another?", Due Nov 8. 2 pages, 10 points
- Assignment 2: Research Presentation, Due Dec 10. 10 points (TBC)
- Assignment 3: Research Paper, Due End of December (TBC). 20 points

4. Bibliography

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. Verso books, 2006. Excerpt.

Akli, Madalina. "The Role of Study-Abroad Students in Cultural Diplomacy: Toward an International Education as Soft Action." *International Research and Review* 2.1 (2012): 32-48.

Arendt, Hannah. "We Refugees." *Menorah Journal* 31.1 (1943): 69-77.

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Chappell, Paul. "A New Peace Paradigm. Our Human Needs and the Tangles of Trauma." (2018). https://paulkchappell.com.

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Zakaria, Fareed. "The rise of illiberal democracy." *Foreign Affairs* (1997): 22-43.