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**ABSTRACT**

A discussion of cross-cultural training in the context of business and professional education outlines the need for such training and proposes methods of designing and implementing it within foreign language courses. Four segments address specific aspects of development for such courses. The first looks at procedures used to determine the type of intercultural instruction required. The second lists and explains specific objectives to guide the program, and the third part focuses on themes and topics to be included. The fourth part considers the structure of a special purpose culture component. Appended materials include sample questionnaires for assessing the language and cultural needs of students and professionals and a model cross-cultural syllabus. (MSE)

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**CROSS-CULTURAL TRAINING FOR BUSINESS AND THE PROFESSIONS: RATIONALE AND PROGRAM DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT**

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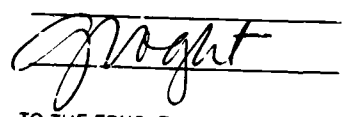
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**Cross-Cultural Training for Business and the Professions**  
**Rationale, Program Design and Development**

Ronald C. Cere

Since the publication of President Carter's Commission on the alarming decline in enrollments and interest in foreign language and international studies in the U.S., American educators, especially foreign language teachers, have begun to take measures to address the problem and improve instruction. Specifically, they have held countless conferences on the reasons for studying foreign languages, emphasizing the latter's importance in an increasingly interdependent world, and they have conducted numerous workshops on ways to globalize curricula and develop innovative teaching strategies and techniques. They have also begun to look at language study from a variety of new perspectives, especially those related to the professions, and they have taken steps to create and use materials that will complement the instructional program as well as give it a more practical and functional focus. Educators and other concerned individuals have even left the classrooms and ventured into the non-academic world to promote language studies and seek support for it and have written numerous articles and books treating all the aforementioned areas of concern. To be sure, they have made considerable progress in the past several years, but they need to maintain and build on their successes. They must improve all aspects of existing special purpose foreign language courses while adopting new ones, and must continue to do research in the field of methodology, materials development and content areas. They must also continue to conduct conferences and workshops that will consider the broad spectrum of issues that concern foreign language education so that a free and continuous flow of information, ideas and opinions can be exchanged about a variety of topics and areas of interest, and they must persevere in forging new bonds of cooperation with individuals within and outside the teaching profession as well as encourage the creative and industrious instructor or trainer to enter into the latter. More importantly, however, they must focus their attention on cross-cultural training or instruction. Often neglected by language teachers, it is the means by which global awareness is much enhanced and understanding and communication among all peoples truly fostered. With this view in mind, the paper which follows will discuss and propose ways of setting up, designing, and implementing a cross-cultural training program as part of a special purpose foreign language course with the focus on international business.

**Cross-Cultural Training for Business and the Professions  
Rationale, Program Design and Development**

In their book, International Business Blunders, Ricks, Fu and Arpan write of the following incident which took place in France some years ago:

In an effort to build up foreign sales, a U.S. manufacturer sent a man to Europe, a man who knew the business thoroughly and had a proven record of ability in the U.S. During his first few years, he performed as expected and sales orders poured in regularly. But the promising beginning soon waned. After a small European company began manufacturing a competitive product, sales of the large U.S. firm plummeted. Later analysis showed that the key to the U.S. manufacturer's problems lay in the attitudes and role perception of their "man in Europe": He felt that as an expert, his role was to tell foreign business associates what to do, but not to listen to them or to seek ways to better satisfy local market needs. Furthermore, he failed to develop a personal appreciation for the environment within which he lived. After living seven years in a French-speaking community, he was unable to say or understand "bonjour," and his superior and indifferent attitude antagonized the distributors. The initial successes can be traced to the strength of the product itself and the lack of competition. Once competition appeared, immediately the U.S. manufacturer suffered; even though the new competitive product was not superior, the obliging and positive business attitude of the competitor literally won over the distributors and swept the market.

It would seem from this occurrence that the U.S. manufacturer's executives had put a great deal of confidence and hope in their sales manager in France and had expected him to increase interminably the profits of their affiliate in that country. They believed that given his proven track record in the U.S., he could not fail to succeed abroad and that he would provide the direction and expertise needed to improve business and make the company viable. Indeed, in the beginning, he performed as anticipated and sales increased and the firm prospered. The company continued to thrive until a European competitor, whose product line was not as good as the U.S. manufacturer's, appeared and began to take away market share

and eventually control it. The Americans were unprepared for this contingency and were unable to reverse the changes it wrought. Company sales plummeted and, with it, the business venture in France. What this firm did not realize, until later, was that in order to succeed with the French, its representative needed to have, in addition to business savvy, a knowledge and understanding of the host country's language and culture. Before or during his stay abroad, this sales manager should have studied French and developed a sensitivity to and an appreciation for the people and environment in which he was living. In this way, he would have functioned more effectively and would have enjoyed and profited from his experience overseas. Unfortunately, he did neither and, consequently, failed to sustain his earlier successes. To be sure, this sales manager and firm were not the only ones to whom, nor France and the commercial sector the only place where such faux-pas have been made. The same authors recount numerous other cross-cultural blunders in the international business world, while other researchers cite similar misunderstandings in the health science and political fields.<sup>2</sup> They attribute these misinterpretations to America's unawareness of linguistic and cultural differences and maintain that the latter could have been corrected if U.S. personnel were more knowledgeable of foreign languages and, especially, more sensitive to cultural differences.

A society's culture has tremendous influence on the lives of its members. It affects how they think, behave and feel, and, along with a common language, it determines what is unique about them. It also provides them with a common identity as well as with a set of shared values and customs, and it gives them a heritage and life-style that bind them together. To be unfamiliar with or insensitive to another culture and its people is detrimental to intercultural communication and can impede friendly, productive and mutually beneficial relations. It can also lead to antagonisms and prejudices among peoples and, in some cases, it can result in violent disputes, including war. Notwithstanding these potentially dangerous consequences, most Americans still have ignored the importance of cross-cultural awareness and sensitivity and have paid even less attention to intercultural training or education, the means by which such knowledge and understanding can be transmitted. They continued to do so until 1979.<sup>3</sup>

In that year, aroused by the gloomy report of President Carter's Commission on the declining status of foreign language and international studies, educators and other concerned individuals began to take steps to reverse the latter situation especially by making the public aware of the need for such studies for an

increasingly interdependent world. Thanks to their efforts, more and more professionals have become aware of the need for bilingual-bicultural and even multilingual-multicultural U.S. national personnel, and many have set up programs that have developed and are developing such a workforce. Indeed, some companies have made language and cultural training available to all prospective overseas personnel, while other firms claim that they have not assigned any of their staff overseas without some type of intercultural orientation.<sup>4</sup> Notwithstanding these commendable actions, many of these programs still use the cognitive-didactic approach to instruction and merely give participants a tourist's knowledge and view of foreign languages and cultures.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, while corporations would like to get out of the training business and turn it over to institutions of higher learning, they find the latter's cross-cultural programs too theoretical and less practical than their own.<sup>6</sup>

The primary aim of this presentation is to propose an intercultural component for special purpose foreign language courses (hereafter designated SPFLCs or SPFLC in the singular) that will meet the language and cross cultural needs of present and future career professionals. It is divided into four parts each dealing with a specific aspect of the program development for such courses of study. The first part treats the procedures used to determine the type of intercultural instruction or training required. The next part enumerates and explains, specifically, the objectives that should guide the program, while the third part focuses on the themes and topics that should be included and developed in the classroom. The last part considers how a special purpose culture component is actually structured, while two appendices—one providing sample questionnaires for assessing the language and cultural needs of both students and professionals and the other providing model syllabus of a cross-cultural program—round out the presentation. With these areas of concern in mind, let us begin with the first part or procedure.

The first step in setting up any intercultural component for SPFLs concerns the making of preliminary program inquiries and determinations. The instructors in charge must obtain information about the latter and make decisions regarding how it is to be designed. They must ascertain the type of intercultural component needed as well as identify the clientele to be served, and they must decide on general and specific program goals. They must also define the professional, linguistic and cultural areas to be included and treated, and they must undertake research that will provide the information and materials necessary to develop the cross-cultural component. In addition, they must state the objectives and con-

tent areas of the latter in a clear and logical manner and set up instructional approaches and techniques. Above all, they must establish program requirements and consider the language ability and learning levels of participants. One of the most effective methods of obtaining this information is via a needs assessment.<sup>7</sup> The latter, when properly conducted, will yield many facts about the type of program that should be developed for SPFLCs. However, rather than explain in detail how this process is undertaken, a sample questionnaire concerning the intercultural needs of professionals has been included in Appendix A. As will be seen, it contains two sets of questions: one directed to professionals and another to students. Both are required to determine the cross-cultural needs of participants and of the professional field.

Once the best questionnaire possible has been designed and administered and the results tabulated, the person or persons conducting the survey should make a report and study of the findings. They should disclose the facts and statistics that they have uncovered and compiled, and they should analyze and discuss how the data can be used to develop the appropriate SP/L intercultural component. Moreover, they should tie the results of the student survey to those of the questionnaire directed to professionals so that a more comprehensive picture of the intercultural communication and career needs of both can be obtained. Unfortunately, to date, no such report nor correlations have been made nor published. Despite this lack of data, inquiries of a more general nature concerning the language and cultural needs of business and other professionals have been undertaken and are cited in various publications.<sup>8</sup> Most of them show the growing importance of foreign languages and reveal an increased demand for a better understanding of foreign cultures. Peggy Schoonover, in her report on the educational needs of the corporate world of Boise, Idaho, for example, states that the company officials she interviewed not only perceived a need for foreign language and cultural training but also attributed their failures in the international sector to a dearth of personnel competent in these two areas. One executive she quotes "wrote that his company 'would be more aggressive' in foreign trade if it had more people with skills in foreign languages and cultures 'simply because we would have people with an appreciation for the thoughts, feelings, culture, habits, customs, and speech of those we deal with.'"<sup>9</sup> Other officials she surveyed expressed similar views about the significance of language and cultures in their work, but those of still another inquiry put even greater stress on culture, especially if training in the latter promoted awareness, understanding, empathy, and sensitivity.<sup>10</sup> If these

and other individuals affirm the need for language and cultural training in their professional fields, what type of instruction, particularly in the cultural area, is beneficial to them?

According to experts and teachers in the intercultural field,<sup>11</sup> it is training that emphasizes those areas of language and culture related to the needs of the career field and leads to improved interpersonal communication between professionals of different backgrounds. More exactly, it is training that 1) provides participants with cultural awareness of themselves, especially from a behavioral and social point of view; 2) focuses on the customs, traditions, values, beliefs, attitudes, concepts, hierarchies, rules, time and space relations as well as on the verbal and non-verbal communication processes of the people of the culture being studied; 3) examines and discusses the practices and behaviors observed in the learner's professional fields; 4) presents and compares geographical, historical, socio-economic and political development and realities of the culture under consideration; 5) makes use of the foreign language being acquired not only as a means of expression but also as a medium for understanding what the people who speak it are like; and 6) it is training that leads to sensitivity and respect for cultural differences. In short, it is cultural instruction of the small "c" variety that seeks to explore and focus on a people's way of living and thinking and that attempts to furnish students with a knowledge, understanding and empathy for the latter. If this is the training recommended, how can instructors provide it? By designing a program that includes these elements.

The actual designing of an intercultural component for SPFLCs is a fairly straightforward process involving several steps, the first and most important of which is a statement of objectives. The persons responsible for preparing the SPFLC must indicate the aims of the cross-cultural segment and they must predict their outcomes. They must indicate the purposes of instruction and learning and they must define their scope, nature and results. They must also determine which aspects of culture should be included and how they are to be integrated into the SPFLC, and they must select those teaching approaches and techniques that will lead to improved participant performance and meet learner needs. This is not an easy task and its realization will depend on many things, especially on the findings of the needs assessment and the ingenuity and pedagogical savvy of the instructor. At present, and as far as has been able to be ascertained, no objectives have been formulated for an intercultural component of a SPFLC.



However, based on the findings of surveys and studies by experts such as Pusch,<sup>12</sup> they should seek to accomplish the following:

- 1) Expand U.S. professionals' awareness of their own behavior and attitudes so they can overcome such negative traits as ethnocentrism, stereotyping, and prejudice, and adopt the more positive ones of impartiality, respect, empathy, honesty, etc.--for all intercultural relations.
- 2) Help professionals acquire an understanding of the similarities and differences between their own and another culture via interactive exercises so they can become more knowledgeable of and sensitive to diverse life-styles and patterns of thinking.
- 3) Familiarize professionals with the foreign culture's socio-economic, political, geographical, historical, and ecological development and realities via multiple learning activities and experiences so they can better understand and accept the culture and its people.
- 4) Improve the intercultural communication skills of professionals through the mastery of the verbal and non-verbal language in the target culture so that they can communicate with greater ease with the latter's members.
- 5) Increase employees' professional expertise through situational and other exercises stressing the needs of the particular career field so they can resolve problems and meet mutual needs and goals.
- 6) Lessen the cultural shock of American personnel assigned abroad by means of simulation of real-life occurrences so they can have a more positive and satisfying experience overseas.

As will be noted, these objectives have some very special characteristics. On the one hand, they are comprehensive. They cover a variety of subject areas, from self and professional awareness to cross-cultural differences, and consider a host of more specific topics, including ethnocentrism, stereotyping, and prejudice. They also emphasize certain instructional approaches, particularly the cognitive and experiential, and intimate the learning activities that need to be carried out. Moreover, they treat the major aspects of intercultural communication and deal with the areas of interest to professionals, especially culture shock and non-verbal language. On the other hand, they are aim and outcome-specific. They

specify the purpose of instruction and learning and indicate the results that are to be achieved. They also point out the aspects of intercultural communication that must be treated, and they indicate what attitudinal changes, if any, will take place regarding professionals' perception of people of other cultures. Moreover, they are student-centered, that is, they focus on students and involve them in all activities, thus making them the benefactors of all instruction and learning. To be sure, these goals disclose little about the specific cultural themes or techniques to be treated and they reveal even less about the criteria for evaluating student performance. These are the concerns of other objectives, those formulated and stated for each task undertaken and which Seelye refers to as performance objectives.<sup>13</sup> Course goals, however, do provide a good indication of the scope, type, and outcome of the training that should be given, and they establish parameters for the other aspects of program development, such as content, structure, materials, resources, strategies, and evaluation. They also set up guidelines and help initiate the next phase of course design: the determination and elaboration of content areas.

The selection and development of course content are important steps in setting up the intercultural component for SPFLCs. They indicate what will be taught and to what extent, and they shape the teaching-learning process. They are governed by several factors. Foremost, and as indicated above, they are guided by course goals. For example, if one of the objectives is to have students acquire a knowledge and understanding of cultural differences, especially as they relate to the behavioral patterns of a certain people, then the content areas selected must reflect and treat these aspects. They must provide information about cultural differences and they must focus on the particular behaviors considered. If, on the other hand, one of the aims is to acquaint participants with the economic or political attitudes of a country, the subject matter must deal with these areas of concern. It must furnish material which will consider the Hispanic views on work and authority, for example, and it must do so according to students' stated needs. Content selection and development also are contingent upon the specific professional area designated for study. If the component is designed for health personnel who are working or who will be working with Spanish-speaking patients, then the content must refer to those aspects of Hispanic culture which meet these professionals' needs. Thirdly, and lastly, the content of the intercultural component depends on its cultural orientation, that is, whether it is "culture specific" or "culture general." If it is "culture specific,"

then the topics will emphasize a specific culture and will be presented in the official language of the latter. They will deal, for example, with the many different attitudes, values, concepts, beliefs, hierarchies, rules and customs of a culture or a country, such as Austria, and they will be presented in the native tongue, in this case, German. If, on the other hand, the course orientation is "culture general," the themes will stress the basic processes and skills of intercultural communication without referring to a specific culture and will be considered in the students' native tongue. They will treat such concepts as perception, awareness, assimilation, biculturalism and multiculturalism as well as focus on the ways in which intercultural relations and communication are developed and enhanced, and they will probably be treated in English. Most non-foreign language cross-cultural courses usually incorporate topics from one of these orientations, although some training programs, especially those organized for Peace Corps volunteers, choose themes from both. The content model listed below for the intercultural component of a SPFLC follows this bilateral format as well as the suggestions of such foreign language cross-cultural experts as Seelye,<sup>14</sup> but it particularly recalls the objectives stated above:

#### POSSIBLE CONTENT AREAS FOR A SPFL INTERCULTURAL COMPONENT

##### I Self-Awareness and the Individual

- A. Dimension of personality, self-concept, perception, growth and development, the unconscious, creativity, prejudice

##### II Cross-Cultural Awareness

###### A. U.S. and foreign cultures

1. Culture: values, attitudes and concepts, customs and traditions, art forms, verbal and non-verbal communication
2. Social Structure: the family, leisure-time activities, education, political and judicial institutions, economy, communications, social stratification and proprieties
3. Geography and Ecology: territorial divisions and characteristics, attitude toward physical and social environment, technology, housing, travel, transportation

##### III Professional Awareness

- A. Concepts, attitudes, customs and behaviors peculiar to the specific pro-

professional field under consideration in the SPFLC with emphasis on foreign and U.S. cultures

- B. History and realities of the foreign culture with respect to relations with the U.S.
- C. Specific intercultural problems and conflicts in the professional area

As can be seen, this content model possesses several distinctive features. First, it is divided and classified according to three types of social consciousness. The first group deals with self-awareness, while the other two treat cross-cultural and professional awareness. Each one is then divided into more specific topics and those in the cross-culture group are separated into subject areas of a still more specialized character. All divisions however, are interculturally related. Secondly, it lists themes appropriate for a SPFL intercultural component. In addition to awareness, it cites such topics as culture, social structure, geography and ecology, and underscores the intercultural concepts of perception, prejudice and family. It also makes comparisons between cultures and highlights subjects of particular relevance to the professional field. Thirdly, each content area stresses elements that will enhance cross-cultural communication. The self-awareness grouping, which emphasizes psychological behavior, concentrates on improving discourse between professionals of different cultures by having participants recognize and overcome their negative perceptions and attitudes of others. The "Cross-Cultural Awareness" section, in turn, builds on the previous one and helps students blend two ingredients essential for effective intercultural interaction: a knowledge of and sensitivity to cultural differences. It examines native and foreign cultures and considers those aspects which influence and condition the outcome of transcultural relations. The last category, "Professional Awareness," studies the behaviors, attitudes and concepts peculiar to the specific career-field and focuses on the problems and realities encountered in cross-cultural contexts. It is this module which makes the SPFL intercultural component unique as well as crucial to the success of the program and its participants.

The content model is also all-encompassing. It indicates the topics that should be covered in a SPFL intercultural component and treats almost all aspects of the cross-cultural communication process. It is also extremely general. It states what the cultural topics are, but it does not give detailed information about them. It does not cite the cultural values to be considered, nor does it indicate the aspects of the physical and social environment to be discussed. It

does not even mention what culture is to be studied. It is "culture general" rather than "culture specific." For it to become "culture specific," and, thus, able to be taught as an intercultural component for SPFLCs, some determinations and refinements have to be made. Instructors have to decide, again based on the needs of their students and the career field, which themes should be selected as well as for which culture or cultures, and they must consider how these topics are to be logically ordered and subsequently presented. They must also resolve the pressing issue of how this component is to be integrated into a SPFLC. In short, they must involve themselves in the next phase of course development.

This phase concerns the actual structuring of the intercultural component for SPFLCs and is the most important stage of program design. It indicates the subject matter to be covered and includes all the other aspects of planning and development of the specific component: the formulation of objectives, the statement and sequencing of content areas, the selecting of instructional materials and strategies and the setting up of evaluation procedures. It also points out the thematic and pedagogical orientations to be adopted for the course of study and lays the groundwork for syllabus preparation, its final written product. It has received the attention of such noted scholars and practitioners as Hoopes, Casse, and Wight, who have focused on the theoretical aspects of the intercultural process and has produced the important works of Nostrand and Ladu, who have provided constructs for general foreign language culture courses.<sup>15</sup> Despite these efforts, no program structure or syllabus has been published nor proposed for a SPFL intercultural component. Consequently, to provide teachers with such a model, an exemplary and self-explanatory syllabus has been incorporated at the end of this article as Appendix B.

As will be noted, the syllabus proposes a comparison of U.S. and Spanish American cultures and complements a Business Spanish course and is presented separately. This is done to focus on the various aspects of the course of study as well as to permit instructors to see how the latter is constructed and developed. While seemingly ambitious in scope and intent, the program outline treats only that subject matter related and applicable to the professional field of study. It includes the three content areas mentioned above as well as the themes to be covered in each and it focuses especially on those aspects of culture directly related to intercultural communication. Moreover, it adopts a modular approach, that is, it presents a specific cross-cultural theme during a fifteen to twenty-minute segment of a class period of Business Spanish and treats those aspects directly or indirectly connected to the business topic under discussion. For example, if the topic being

treated in the business segment of the course is appointments or deadlines in a commercial setting, the intercultural segment would consider the theme of U.S. and Hispanic attitudes towards time and relate it to those areas of concern. More specifically, it would feature a cross-cultural mini-drama or case-study that would dramatize or narrate a possible area of conflict, such as an American businessman's anger upon being kept waiting by his or her Spanish-speaking counterpart for an important meeting and relate it to the former's unawareness of the Hispanic concept of time. After the dramatization of narration was completed, a brief discussion would be conducted and those intercultural aspects that would improve the understanding and communication skills of the participants involved emphasized. Other techniques or strategies could be used and all could be adopted for other SPFLCs. The important thing to bear in mind is that, if possible, the cross-cultural module or segment should coincide with the theme and objectives of the topic being introduced in the career area, as the other segments will indicate.

The various aspects of a possible model intercultural component for SPFLCs have been treated in this presentation. From the items detailed and discussed, it is clear that to set up such a component, definite steps must be taken. These include 1) the conducting of surveys and the reading of literature in the intercultural and career fields to ascertain participant educational needs as well as to gather data useful to program development; 2) the formulation of goals to indicate the objectives, tasks and expected outcomes of the course of study; 3) the selection and elaboration of content areas to define the specific subject matter to be treated; 4) the preparation of syllabi that will state the elements needed to make the component workable and successful; and 5) the determination and development of teaching techniques and strategies to carry out instructional learning process effectively. This process, of course, demands a great deal from SPFL instructors. It demands that they venture into new fields of knowledge and training and that they explore the less well-known areas of foreign and culture studies. It also asks them to put their communication skills to work to foster bonds of cooperation with colleagues and professionals in other fields. Above all, it exhorts them to acquire the same qualities they seek to instill in their students--perseverance, creativity, cosmopolitanism, cooperativeness, awareness, tolerance, empathy, honesty and helpfulness. In short, it asks teachers to become culturally enlightened as well as cultural enlighteners. A difficult and demanding task, it is, nonetheless, one that will greatly benefit and satisfy all who participate in its undertaking.

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## APPENDIX A

## (a) POSSIBLE QUESTIONS TO ASSESS PROFESSIONALS' EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

- 1) What is the name of your employer and how many employees are there?
- 2) What percentage of your employer's total operation is domestic? foreign?
- 3) If any of your employer's operation is foreign, which geographical areas does the latter include?
- 4) What percentage of the staff is based overseas? Where?
- 5) If your employer's operation is totally domestic, do you have clients who are foreign nationals or non-English speaking? What are their countries of origin?
- 6) Which sectors or areas of your employer's operation require a knowledge of foreign languages and cultures?
- 7) Which languages and language skills would be useful to staff employed in these areas and for what purposes?
- 8) If a knowledge of cultures were equally valuable to the staff cited above, which cultures and aspects of culture would be the most important?
- 9) What percentage of the staff has a survival language capability and in which languages?
- 10) What language/culture training, if any, does your employer provide?
- 11) Which of the following instructional-learning approaches would you prefer as a part of intercultural training: a) cognitive/didactic (lecture-discussion), b) affective/personal (behavioral studies), 3) practical/functional (situational) or 4) experiential (a combination of the above approaches)?
- 12) Would your employer be interested in a training program that would meet the language and cultural needs of staff members working in intercultural or intercultural settings?

## (b) POSSIBLE QUESTIONS TO ASSESS STUDENTS' EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

- 1) In what field are you currently seeking a position? If known, what are the tasks and responsibilities of the position you are seeking?
- 2) What language(s), if any, would you use professionally or personally? Which have you studied in the last three years for at least two years?
- 3) Which culture(s) would you like to have a knowledge and understanding of?
- 4) Would you enroll in a foreign language culture course that would complement your professional training?

APPENDIX B

Sample Syllabus - Intercultural Component for Special Purpose Foreign Language Course

Business Spanish: Intercultural Component 3 credits, M,W,F 9-10

Business Across Cultures: Focus: U.S & Spanish America Level: 3rd year

Required Texts : Condon, John C. Interacts: Mexico/U.S. Chicago: Intercultural Press, 1982.

. Mayers, Marvin. A Look at Latin American Life-Styles. Dallas: International Museum of Cultures, 1982.

: Zanger Vogel, Virginia. Exploración intercultural. Rowley, MA: Newbury House Publishers, 1984

Recommended Texts: Miller, J. Dale, et. al. USA-Hispanic South America Culture Capsules. Rowley, MA: Newbury House Publishers, 1979.

\_\_\_\_\_. USA-Mexico Culture Capsules. Rowley, MA: Newbury House Publishers, 1979.

Reindorp, Reginald. Spanish American Customs, Culture and Personality. Macon, GA: Wesleyan College, 1968.

Stewart, Edward C. America Culture Patterns: A Cross-Cultural Perspective. Chicago: Intercultural Network, 1972.

Course Outline

Week

- 1st INTRODUCTION: Overview of course
  - 1. Rationale, objectives, requirements, intercultural terminology
  - 2. Description of the intercultural communication process
- 2nd - SELF-AWARENESS MODULE: Preparing oneself for intercultural communication and interpersonal relations via self-assessment
- 3rd
  - 1. Dimensions of personality: unconscious (needs, drives) vs. super-conscious (what the culture has taught the individual to accept)
  - 2. Concept of self (perspectives from which one view's one's total being
  - 3. Perception (its influence on intercultural communication)



4. Prejudice (emphasis on ethnocentrism and stereotyping with examples from American and Hispanic cultures)
5. Growth and Development (its effect on personality and cross-cultural relations)
6. Creativity (how it is used as a positive tool in transcultural communication)

4th - CROSS-CULTURAL MODULE: U.S. and Spanish America

10th

1. Culture

- a. Value Systems: individualism, regionalismo (patria chica) patriotism and nationalism (role of violence), personalismo, honor, authority, work and leisure, materialism vs. idealism, status, beauty and love (dating customs, piropos)
- b. Underlying Assumptions of Fact: human nature, social relations, man and nature, concept of time and space
- c. Art Forms: fine arts (painting, sculpture, music and dance), theatre and cinema, literature
- d. Language: verbal (cultural idiosyncrasies, associative and affective meanings of words and expressions, idioms and sayings), non-verbal (gestures, special relations, etc.)

2. Social Structure

- a. The family: extended vs. nuclear, compadrazgo system, role of male and female (machismo and marianismo)
- b. Social stratification: social classes, ethnicity, etc.
- c. Social proprieties and other considerations: greeting customs, food, dress, etc.
- d. Religion: traditional and changing role of the Catholic Church and realities of other faiths
- e. Political and Judicial Institutions: centralism, caudillismo, communism, etc.
- f. The Military: violence and golpe de Estado ("coup d'état")
- g. Economy: agrarian vs. industrial (the information age)
- h. Education: Spanish vs. U.S. models, literacy vs. illiteracy
- i. Communications: media, censorship
- j. Recreation: sports, holidays, entertainment, fiestas

3. Geography

- a. Territorial divisions and characteristics
- b. Attitude toward physical and social environment
- c. Travel and transportation
- d. Technology

11th - PROFESSIONAL AWARENESS MODULE: Business

15th

- 1. Business practices in the U.S. and Spanish America
  - a. Bargaining
  - b. Nepotismo
- 2. Concepts and attitudes in U.S. and Spanish American business relations
  - a. Time orientation
  - b. Personalismo (interpersonal and family relations)
  - c. Work Ethic and Authority
  - d. Materialism vs. Idealism
- 3. Areas of conflict and factors involved in U.S. and Spanish American business relations and transactions
  - a. Technical (managerial, marketing, accounting, etc.)
  - b. Linguistic (verbal and non-verbal communication)
  - c. Socio-economic and political realities
  - d. Overseas assignment: culture shock, anomie, etc.

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Description of Component and Requirements

General Description

Given the international character of U.S. business, there is a great need for professionals not only fluent in one or more foreign languages but also knowledgeable and understanding of several cultures. This component is designed to provide you with an awareness of Spanish American culture and the skills necessary to communicate effectively in intercultural settings. It will focus on those areas crucial to successful transcultural communication and interpersonal relations--self awareness, cross-cultural awareness, and professional awareness--and will stress how they affect the general intercultural processes. Moreover, it will be conducted in Spanish and show how language, the highest expression of culture, plays an integral part in all intercultural relationships. On the other hand,

it adopts a modular approach within the business language classroom framework, that is, it devotes 15 to 20-minute segments of class time to an activity or activities relating to one of the aforementioned areas of intercultural communication and awareness. Each activity, whenever possible, is directly or indirectly connected to the business topic under discussion. In this way, a more holistic and integrated course of study is provided which considers all essential elements of business relations and communications in cross-cultural or international contexts.

### Objectives

1. You will become familiar with the basic concepts of culture and communication to understand their role and importance in interpersonal relationships.
2. You will examine your own behavior and learn how it affects the cross-cultural interactive processes so you can overcome negative attitudes and perceptions and develop positive ones.
3. You will become knowledgeable of similarities and differences between U.S. and Spanish American cultures, especially regarding values, attitudes, concepts and customs, to respond with greater understanding and sensitivity in intercultural situations.
4. You will learn about the socio-economic and political realities of Spanish America to help you comprehend the origins, circumstances, problems and needs of that region.
5. You will learn to develop an awareness of the specific values, attitudes, concepts and customs that characterize the Spanish-speaking business world so you can deal with them with greater effectiveness.
6. You will learn to recognize and reckon with some of the main problems of U.S. and Spanish American business relations stateside as well as overseas so you can cope with such negative feelings as culture shock and anomie.
7. You will focus on the cultural idiosyncrasies and associative and affective meanings of words in Spanish to improve your ability to communicate in the latter.

### Approaches, Techniques, Activities

To successfully communicate and interact cross-culturally, you will not only need

awareness of yourself, your profession and U.S. and Spanish American cultures in general, but you will also have to know how to use this knowledge and understanding skillfully and effectively. Consequently, this course will employ the following training and learning approaches, techniques and activities.

1. Cognitive-didactic (acquisition of knowledge): you will begin to acquire knowledge about yourself, your profession and U.S. and Spanish American cultures via readings, lectures—including guest-lecturers—, written assignments, films, oral reports and the use of culture capsules, clusters, assimilators, mini-dramas and case studies.
2. Affective-personal (behavioral skills): you will gain an understanding of what influences your attitudes, behaviors and emotions, and those of Spanish Americans, as well as how they may affect various situations, and you will learn how to recognize and cope with behaviors different from your own via individual conversations, small-group discussions involving Spanish speakers, and affective exercises.
3. Practical-functional (situational): you will learn to confront and deal with the customs, values, etc., characteristic of intercultural communication and situations via simulations involving the recognition and respect of cultural differences.
4. Experiential (combination of the above): you will reflect on your communicative and interpersonal behavior as well as to develop the various skills needed for effective interaction in cross-cultural business and social situations via exercises and techniques entailing critical analysis, problem-solving and simulations of real-life situations.

#### Resources and Materials

To provide you with an effective course of study and valuable intercultural experiences, the following materials will be used as indicated:

1. Required and recommended texts to present a general and specific view of the subject matter to be treated.
2. A brief bibliography to provide additional readings related to self-awareness, U.S. and Spanish American cultures and international business.
3. Films, slides, records, tapes and other audio-visual aids, as well as arti-

cles and selections culled from U.S. and Spanish American newspapers, magazines and other literature, both social and business-related, to give you a more authentic view of life and thought in the U.S. and Spanish America, and other forms of realia (pottery, etc.) and foods to familiarize you with specific items and customs of the two cultures.

**Requirements**

**Entry:** You should undertake all work assigned throughout the semester, but you should be especially willing to submit to the rigors of the course of study including those that will require you to come to grips with the realities and traits of your own personality as well as with your perceptions of other peoples and cultures.

**Exit :** You should plan to do the following:

- a. Read all pages assigned in texts and other sources.
- b. Participate in all in-class and out-of-class activities.
- c. Complete and turn in all requested written assignments.
- d. Take all oral and written examinations and quizzes.
- e. Write and present three short papers.

**Evaluation**

Your performance and work will be evaluated based on the requirements stated above and according to the following classifications, proceedings and grading systems indicated below. There will also be an instructor and course evaluation.

Oral classroom participation	25%	A = 90-100
Three oral/written presentations	30%	B = 80- 89
Examinations	25%	C = 70- 79
Written and other assignments	<u>20%</u>	D = 60- 69
	100%	F = Forget it!



Notes

<sup>1</sup> David A. Ricks, et. al., International Business Blunders (Columbus, OH: Grid, Inc., 1974), p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> Mireya Pérez-Erdelyi, "Cultural and Linguistic Fluency: Spanish for Medical Health Professions," included in Foreign Languages for the Professions: An Inter-cultural Approach to Modern Communications, Proc. of the Conference at Northeastern University, 14 May 1981 (Weston, MA: CIHED, 1981), pp. 88-89.

<sup>3</sup> In her well-documented study of the training needs of U.S. multinational corporations, conducted in the mid-1970s, Margaret Inman indicates that most of the personnel she surveyed did not see the significance of nor received extensive training in foreign languages or cultures (Margaret Inman, "Foreign Languages and the U.S. Multinational Corporation," The Modern Language Journal, 64 [1980], pp. 64-74).

<sup>4</sup> Venecia Rodríguez, "Increasing International Business Opportunities Through Improved Cross-Cultural Training" in Foreign Languages for Business, Proc. of the EMU Conference on Foreign Languages for Business, 7-9 Apr. 1983, Ypsilanti, MI (ERIC ED 239 493), p. 30.

<sup>5</sup> Philip R. Harris and Robert T. Moran, Managing Cultural Differences (Houston: Gulf Western Publishing Co., 1979), p. 79.

<sup>6</sup> Albert Wight, et. al., Guide for Peace Corps Cross-Cultural Training. Part III: Supplementary Readings (Estes Park, CO: Center for Research and Education, 1970), p. 39 (ERIC ED 059 939).

<sup>7</sup> Pierre Casse, Training for the Cross-Cultural Mind, 2nd ed. (Washington: The Society For Intercultural Education, Training, and Research [STIAR], 1980), p. 223.

<sup>8</sup> See Peter A. Eddy, "Foreign Language Skills and Jobs," Pacific Northwest Conference on Foreign Languages, 26, 2 (1975), pp. 41-47.

<sup>9</sup> Peggy Schoonover, "Foreign Languages Desired but Unrequired," ADFL Bulletin, 13 (1982), p. 17.

<sup>10</sup> Michael S. Tang, "On Site Transcultural and Foreign Language Training for Business and Industry" in Foreign Languages for Business, Proc. of the 1983 EMU Conference on Foreign Languages for Business (ERIC ED 239 495), p. 384.



11 Lloyd Baird, et. al., The Training and Development Sourcebook (Amherst, MA: Human Resource Development Press, 1983), p. xiii; Casse, pp. 134 and 223.

12 Margaret D. Pusch, et. al., "Training for Multicultural Education Competencies," in Multicultural Education: A Cross-Cultural Training Approach, ed. Margaret D. Pusch (Chicago: Intercultural Press, Inc. 1981), pp. 86-95.

13 H. Ned Seelye, "Performance Objectives for Teaching Cultural Concepts," Foreign Language Annals, 3 (1970), pp. 566-78.

14 H. Ned Seelye, Teaching Culture. Strategies for Foreign Language Educators (Skokie, IL: National Textbook Co., 1974), p. 33; Debbie Barndt, "The Cross-Cultural Communications Workshop" in David S. Hoopes, et. al., eds. Readings in Intercultural Communication (Pittsburg: Univ. of Pittsburg, 1972), II, 63-111.

15 See Howard Lee Nostrand, ed., Background for Teaching French. 3 vols. (Seattle: Univ. of Washington, 1967) (ERIC ED 031 964; ED 031 989; ED 031 990); Tora Tuve Ladu, et. al., Teaching for Cross-Cultural Understanding (Raleigh: Dept. of Public Instruction, 1968) (ERIC ED 035 335).

16 While originally stated in Spanish, the model syllabus included in Appendix B of this article is given in English to facilitate comprehension and accessibility.