



IN395, INTERNSHIP SEMINAR
IES Abroad Milano

DESCRIPTION:

This seminar aims to provide students with the theoretical tools and professional skills necessary to work effectively across cultures. By developing students' competency at cultural analysis and interpretation, communication, problem-solving, and self-reflection, the course enables students to make the most out of their international internships and equips them to excel in future intercultural settings. Through readings and lectures, class discussions and activities, a group research project, and a final paper, the seminar will exercise students' abilities to think critically about cultural values, attitudes, and practices and styles of communication, helping them become more adept at managing cross-cultural interactions and more effective at integrating into foreign cultural environments.

The first half of the course focuses on *cross-cultural awareness*: it explores how social, economic, and political contexts affect cultural attitudes and values by introducing students to theoretical tools for analyzing national and organizational cultures. Lessons encourage students to assess their own cultural profiles and levels of comfort with cultural difference and to perceive, contextualize, and adjust to norms and values shaping professional life in Italy (including those impacting professional relationships, communication, time management, and leadership style). The second half of the class focuses on *intercultural competence*: it examines specific skills that help in the effective navigation of cultural difference (e.g., intercultural communication, relationship building, and conflict management) and helps students assess their own aptitude with regard to these soft skills so as to better market their intercultural competence and international internship experience.

CREDITS: 3

CONTACT HOURS: 22

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

PREREQUISITES: None

METHOD OF PRESENTATION: Lectures, class discussion, in-class activities, student presentations

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Recognize some of their own cultural norms and personal attitudes toward cultural difference.
- Perceive and elaborate key attitudes, values, and facts that shape 21st century Italian and Milanese culture.
- Identify key dimensions constituting organizational cultures and dynamics.
- Compare Italian social and professional life in relation to the U.S. (or their home culture)
- Better adjust their behavioral, communicative, and social practices in relation to the cultural practices and values they encounter.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Sponsor's Report – 40%
- Class Engagement – 15%
- Assignments – 15%
- Group Project – 10%
- Individual Project – 5%
- Final Portfolio – 15%

Sponsor's report

The internship supervisor will use a rubric to assess students' performance in both practical job skills and soft skills at the end of

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their assignment. See Moodle for a sample of the assessment form that will be used.

Class Engagement

Students are expected to come to class prepared—having read assigned readings and completed assignments, ready to actively participate in class discussions and activities. Active participation during the course will be evaluated in terms of attitude, contribution to class discussion, constructive response to others, engagement with instructor's feedback on assignments, and preparation for class. Preparation for class may be monitored by periodic reading quizzes.

Assignments

Students are required to complete the following assignments:

1. Dialogue journal: five (5) journal entries to be submitted on Moodle. Dialogue journals allow students to track their own experiences, cultural observations, and feelings toward their internship over the course of the semester. Deadlines will always be on a Thursday. See Moodle for journal instructions and deadlines.
2. Reading Log: four (4) one-page submissions to Moodle. A reading log allows students to document their understanding and their questions about assigned readings. They serve as a formative assessment at various points throughout the semester. Deadlines will always be on a Thursday. See Moodle for reading log instructions and deadlines.

NB: No late work is accepted unless arrangements with the instructor are made in advance of the deadline. Instead of allowing late work, I will drop the lowest assignment grade before calculating the average.

Group Project

Students will work in groups to conduct a research project on cultural integration. See "Group Project Guidelines" on Moodle for a detailed account of this assignment.

Individual Project

Students will work throughout the semester on an individualized assignment, and they will share their results with the class in a short presentation. See "Chasing Failure" on Moodle for a detailed account of this assignment.

Final Portfolio

Students are expected to submit a final self-assessment that describes how their internship experience has impacted their personal and professional development and what they learned about intercultural communication and engagement of cultural difference. Students will submit artifacts accompanied by analytical description that demonstrate their development along with a short summary description of the impact of the internship experience overall. See Moodle for a detailed account of this assignment.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

As a member of our class community, you are expected to be present and on time every day. Attending class has an impact on your learning and academic success. For this reason, the IES Abroad Milan attendance policy allows for the following number of absences, which are intended to be used for physical and mental health reasons:

- THREE (3) absences in each Italian language course,
- TWO (2) absences in each Area Studies course,
- ONE (1) absence in each seminar course or course meeting 1 day a week,
- ZERO (0) absences in each course of individual music instruction.

Every absence beyond this allowance will automatically result in a penalty of 2 percentage points off the final grade. SEVEN (7) absences will result in a failing grade in Italian language and Area Studies courses. FOUR (4) absences will result in a failing grade in seminars or 1-day-a-week courses. Failure to attend a scheduled exam, test, quiz, or presentation will automatically result in an F grade on that assessment.

- Independent of the seminar contact hours, students who fail to complete the requisite number of hours at their internship placement will earn an automatic grade of "F" for the internship seminar. Please refer to the internship contract for minimum required attendance at the internship.
- A social event will be planned to provide students with the opportunity to practice their networking skills. Attendance at this



networking event is mandatory and counts as a class meeting.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Students are expected to abide by the IES Abroad Code of Academic Integrity. All work submitted by a student for academic credit should constitute the student's own original work. Any work submitted for academic credit may be subject to review by a textual similarity detection service for the detection of plagiarism and AI usage.

CONTENT: (SUBJECT TO CHANGE: SEE MOODLE FOR MOST UP-TO-DATE SCHEDULE)

NB: All readings expected to be completed BEFORE you come to class on their assigned date

Lesson #	Content	Assignments
Week 1	Welcome and Introduction • Outline syllabus and course objectives • Discuss interviews and internship first impressions • "How ethnocentric am I?" – Self-assess using the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)	Reading: • Adaptability as in-demand skill (in class) Assignment: • Journal 1 (due Thursday)
Week 2	Introduction to Ethnorelativism • Outline the Cultural Analysis Toolkit and the difference between individual and national values • What is culture? • Discuss internship impressions and expectations • Italians and Italian-ness (attitudes, values, beliefs)	Reading: • Cultural Analysis Toolkit," pp. 3-34 • David Segal, "Is Italy Too Italian?" The New York Times (July 31, 2010) Assignment: • Complete "Self-Evaluation and Cultural Profile" on Moodle and bring to class • Reading log 1
Week 3	Italian Identity & Citizenship • Discuss Meyer's Affective vs. Cognitive trust • Elaborate the implications of relationship-oriented cultures • Group 1 presentation	Reading: • Erin Meyer, "The Head or the Heart," The Culture Map, pp. 163-173 • Meyer, "Peach versus Coconut," The Culture Map, pp. 174-177 Assignment: • Journal 2

Week 4	Intercultural communication • Discuss implicit/explicit communication styles • Group 2 presentation	Reading: • Erin Meyer, "Listening to the Air," <i>The CultureMap</i>, pp. 29-49 • Early & Mosakowski, "Best Practice: Cultural Intelligence," <i>Harvard Business Review</i>, 2009 Assignment: Reading log 2
Week 5	Italian Economy & Contemporary History • Snapshot of Italy's recent history and current economic situation • Introduce Hofstede's Dimensions of Organizational Culture	Reading: • Selection of contemporary news articles on Italian economic situation • Hofstede on organizational culture (in class) Assignment: • Journal 3
Week 6	Leadership • Discuss cultural differences in leadership • Group 3 presentation	Reading: • Erin Meyer, "How Much Respect Do You Want?" and "Who Decides and How," <i>The Culture Map</i>, pp. 115-159 • How culture affects leadership (Wharton College) available at: https://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/how-cultural-factors-affect-leadership/ Assignment: • Reading log 3
Week 7	Networking event • <u>Check Moodle for details about time and location</u> • <u>Attendance is mandatory and counts as a regular class session</u>	Assignment: • Journal 4
Week 8	Disagreeing • Discuss role of culture in attitudes towards confrontation, expressiveness, and conflict management or resolution • Group 4 presentation	Reading: • Erin Meyer, "Disagreeing Productively," <i>The Culture Map</i>, pp. 195-218 • Andy Molinsky, "Psychological Challenges of Developing Global Dexterity," <i>Global Dexterity</i>, pp. 23-41 Assignment: Reading log 4

Week 9	Cultural stereotypes/biases • Discuss contemporary race, ethnicity, immigration, and gender issues in Italy	Reading: • Selection of contemporary news articles Assignment: • Journal 5
Week 10	Skill Leveraging • Evaluate personal skills developed during internship experience • Resume workshop	Reading: • “Competencies for a Career-Ready Workforce.” <i>National Association of Colleges and Employers</i>, April 2021. Available at https://www.nacweb.org/uploadedFiles/files/2021/resources/nace-career-readiness-competencies-revised-apr-2021.pdf?ref=owls.care Assignment: • Updated resume
Week 11	Making the Most of Your Internship • Present outcomes of Individual Project • Discuss how to integrate your experience abroad into your future goals • Self-assess changes in intercultural competence over the semester • Course and instructor survey and final internship evaluation	Reading: • “How Living Abroad Helps You Develop a Clearer Sense of Self.” <i>Harvard Business Review</i>, May22, 2018. Available at https://hbr.org/2018/05/how-living-abroad-helps-you-develop-a-clearer-sense-of-self Assignment: • Final portfolio (see Moodle for deadline)

REQUIRED READINGS:

- [Adaptability as in-demand skill](#) (in class)
- Cultural Analysis Toolkit," pp. 3-34
- David Segal, "Is Italy Too Italian?" *The New YorkTimes* (July 31, 2010)
- Erin Meyer, "The Head or the Heart," *The CultureMap*, pp. 163-173
- Meyer, "Peach versus Coconut," *The Culture Map*, pp. 174-177
- Erin Meyer, "Listening to the Air," *The CultureMap*, pp. 29-49
- Early & Mosakowski, "Best Practice: Cultural Intelligence," *Harvard Business Review*, 2009
- Hofstede on organizational culture (in class)
- Erin Meyer, "How Much Respect Do You Want?" and "Who Decides and How," *The Culture Map*, pp.115-159
- How culture affects leadership (Wharton College) available at: <https://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/how-cultural-factors-affect-leadership/>
- Erin Meyer, "Disagreeing Productively," *The Culture Map*, pp. 195-218
- Andy Molinsky, "Psychological Challenges of Developing Global Dexterity," *Global Dexterity*, pp. 23-41
- "Competencies for a Career-Ready Workforce." *National Association of Colleges and Employers*, April 2021. Available at <https://www.nacweb.org/uploadedFiles/files/2021/resources/nace-career-readiness-competencies-revised-apr-2021.pdf?ref=owls.care>
- "How Living Abroad Helps You Develop a Clearer Sense of Self." *Harvard Business Review*, May22, 2018. Available at <https://hbr.org/2018/05/how-living-abroad-helps-you-develop-a-clearer-sense-of-self>