

## **PMA10 - MULTINATIONAL BUSINESS COMMUNICATION**

### **UNIVERSITY OF AIZU**

3rd Quarter 20\_\_

Instructor: Debopriyo Roy, Ph.D.

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Class Webpage: <http://moodle.u-aizu.ac.jp/moodle/login/index.php>

Office Hours: On Appointment or Drop-in

### **COURSE GOALS**

This course focuses on the communication aspects of multinational businesses, both large and small, particularly directed toward the ways in which culture impacts those communication behaviors. The coursework will concentrate on the communication behaviors of the multinational leader in her/his responsibilities through multiple cultural settings and with diverse audiences. While identifying and reviewing theoretical bases, class members will apply information to realistic work plans that can become functional in their daily lives. The course incorporates aspects of student self-directed learning using information and concepts collected through less traditional methodologies, i.e., internet, interactions with active practitioners, personal involvement, etc. Students should immediately begin to identify sources of learning in addition to the standard written texts and utilize them in their writing and thinking. They will also want very quickly to set personal learning and application goals that they intend to achieve during this course. Another goal of this class consists in providing students the opportunities to practice their writing skills in an academic setting while using applicative and theoretical information and data. All students will follow the writing guidelines that appear in Course Information. Because this class has a relatively small number of students, we will use a seminar format; we will work together to discuss the various topics and students will take major roles in leading the discussions. We will discuss the implications of this format during our first meeting.

### **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The instructor intends that every activity lead toward student mastery of the following specific learning objectives:

1. Understanding the role of culture-general in organizational/business culture;
2. Understanding the role of culture (both general and specific) in the practices of organizational communication;
3. Applying culture general concepts to communication behaviors in various culture specific situations.

Please keep these goals and objectives in mind as you proceed through the various assignments and activities in the course and openly share your ideas and reactions to these activities in relation to reaching your goals and objectives.

## REFERECE TEXT and RECOMMENDED SOURCES:

**Note: Students will NOT be required to buy any of the following textbooks. These are for more in-depth reading purposes only. Students will be provided with hard and softcopies of all readings required during the course.**

Schmidt, W.V., Conaway, R. N., Easton, S. S. & Wardrope, W. J. (2007). *Communicating globally: Intercultural communication and international business*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

### **Additional Recommended Sources**

Adler, N.J. (2002). *International dimensions of organizational behavior*. Cincinnati: Southwestern.

**Bennett, M. J. (1998).** *Basic concepts of intercultural communication*. **Yarmouth, Me.: Intercultural Press.**

Brake, T., Walker, D.M., & Walker, T. (1995). *Doing business internationally*. New York: McGraw Hill.

Edfelt, R. B. (2010). *Global comparative management: A functional approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Elashmawi, F., & Harris, P. R. (1998). *Multicultural management 2000*. Houston: Gulf.

Ferraro, G. P. (2006). *The cultural dimension of international business* (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall.

**Gannon, M.J. (2001).** *Understanding global cultures: Metaphorical journey through 23 nations*. **Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.**

Hampden-Turner, C., & Trompenaars, F. (2000). *Building cross-cultural competence*. New Haven: Yale.

Harris, P.R., & Moran, R. T. (2001). *Managing cultural differences* (5th ed.). Houston: Gulf

Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions, and organizations across nations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

*\*\* The highlighted texts present intercultural communication theory while the others serve as good sources for international business. Students are encouraged to find other good sources and to share them with fellow students and instructor.*

## **CLASS MEETING TIMES**

Attendance is NOT optional. If you have problems with the assigned meeting times, talk to me immediately about whether or not you should enroll in this class, or if we can negotiate a mutually convenient meeting time. If you are not able to attend ALL CLASS MEETINGS as scheduled, you may *not* expect to receive credit for this class.

Since we have relatively few meeting hours and in a very compressed schedule, we will be conducting much work on the internet via our Moodle course website. Please get familiar with the Moodle LMS facility and become at ease in working with its various capabilities. Call me (or send me an email) if you have problems accessing the web site. All students MUST have good access to the internet available to them. Email and Moodle will be the primary sources of communication between meetings from the instructor about assignments, requirements, etc. I will be happy to meet with individual students or groups of students at times other than the scheduled class meetings. Let me know if you want to meet with me to discuss anything about the class.

## **TOPICS**

### **WEEK 1: BASIC ISSUES IN MULTINATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Class:**

Introduction:

- Discussion of Course Contents, Syllabus, Requirements, etc.
  - Concepts of global business, importance of communication in business, impact of leadership and management in business communication
  - Cosmopolitan leadership
  - Cultural Concepts: Lecture and Discussion on Impacts of Culture on Organizational Communication (meaning of culture, social organization and culture, authority, leadership, time)
- Culture-general Concepts: Role of culture in communication

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> Class:**

- Secrets of doing business in Japan, India, China, and countries of Europe: The Cultural Issues
- Hofstede's categories, GLOBE study, etc.; Hall's concepts of context, time, space, and synchronicity; Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's "Five Basic Questions"; theories of synergy, face, CMM.

### **WEEK 2: COMMUNICATION IN MULTICULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS**

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Class:**

Class discussion on assigned and optional readings and appropriate learning activities. (crossing cultures via communication)

Topics: How to start a business in Japan, India, China, Brazil and USA: Working with Multiculturalism

**2<sup>nd</sup> Class:**

Topics: Addressing Communication Issues when Managing Multicultural Teams

<http://hbr.org/2006/11/managing-multicultural-teams/ar/1>

**WEEK 3: GLOBALIZATION IN MULTINATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

**1<sup>st</sup> Class:**

Topics: Multinational Organizations

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/higher/business\\_management/business\\_enterprise/business\\_contentemporary\\_society/revision/13/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/higher/business_management/business_enterprise/business_contentemporary_society/revision/13/)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Class:**

Topics: Japanese Global Companies: The Shift from Multinationals to Multiculturals

**WEEK 4: INTERCULTURAL BUSINESS COMMUNICATION**

**1<sup>st</sup> Class:**

Managing Multicultural Virtual Teams; Multicultural Effects in Global Virtual Teams; Negotiating in a Multicultural Business Environment

**2<sup>nd</sup> Class:**

Case Study Workshop # 1

**WEEK 5: ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION**

**1<sup>st</sup> Class**

Conflict in Multicultural Teams: Negotiating Globally  
Trust Building in Organizations and Working in Virtual Teams

**2<sup>nd</sup> Class**

Case Study Workshop # 2

## **WEEK 6: BASIC CONCEPTS IN MULTICULTURAL MARKETING**

### **1<sup>st</sup> Class**

The value of multicultural advertising and marketing: Case Study Discussions  
Creating a multicultural marketing strategy: Discussions

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Class**

Case Study Workshop # 3

## **WEEK 7: E-COMMERCE STRATEGIES**

### **1<sup>st</sup> Class**

Discussion of general strategies for effective e-commerce practices  
Case study analysis of how Amazon, Craigslist, e-bay run their business  
Designing Multinational Corporation Websites

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Class**

Case Study Workshop # 4

## **WEEK 8: IN-CLASS FINAL EXAM**

## **WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS**

### **Reflection Paper # 1 – 10%**

First short written assignment. A three-four page paper will be based on a specified reading and understandings of the topic “Cultural Communication in International Business.” This topic must then be reflected against the following published article.

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/community/2007/03/27/issues/multicultural-japan-remains-a-pipe-dream/#.Us3y99IW3To>

This reflection paper must be submitted electronically to turnitin.com and then to Moodle (do NOT send as an attachment to email); follow APA style sheet, include adequate reference page, follow Writing Guidelines (in Course Documents) exactly as they are stated.

### **Reflection Paper # 2 – 10%**

Second short assignment. A three-four page paper based on your readings and research of the topic “Communication Aspects of Developing Synergy in a Multinational Organization.”

This paper must be submitted electronically via turnitin.com and using APA. Follow same guidelines as above.

### **Reflection Paper # 3 – 10%**

Third short assignment. A three-four page paper based on your readings and research of the topic “Impact of Technology on Cultural Communication in a Multinational Organization.”

This paper must be submitted electronically via turnitin.com and using APA. Follow same guidelines as above.

### **Week 4 Case Study Workshop # 1 – 15%**

Each student prepares a term research paper which relates to his or her target culture. Students will select a target country and a specific type of multinational business. The term project will focus on the ways in which the targeted culture will impact communication in that business in that country. Please consult with me as soon as possible about developing your project/paper topic. You must choose your target country and topic by a specified date. At the final session, students will make presentation to the class based on their individual research projects.

### **Week 5 Case Study Workshop # 2 – 15%**

Part # 1: Each student studies a scholarly article discussion about a case study on informal communication network within an organization. Students will do their own research to compile notes on how this typical organization works, and then research another organization of their choice (e.g., IBM, Microsoft, Toyota, Fujitsu etc) and write a detailed scholarly report on how the organization of their choice supports informal communication network.

Part # 2: Students will write a discussion report on the following paper based on Hofstede’s theories of organizational culture. The paper is titled “Cultural variance as a challenge to global public relations: a case study of the Coca-Cola scare in Europe”.

### **Week 6 Case Study Workshop # 3 – 15%**

Part # 1: Each student studies a scholarly article discussion about a case study on multicultural marketing in Australia. Students will do their own research to compile notes on how multicultural marketing in Australia works, and then study another multinational Japanese retail brand such as 7-11, Family Mart or Uniqlo to study how they do business in South-East Asian countries such as Vietnam, Thailand or Cambodia. Based on their research, students will write a detailed scholarly report on how the organization of their choice supports multicultural marketing in a culturally diverse society.

Part # 2: Working as a brand manager in a multinational corporation in Tokyo, Japan, the student has been asked to develop a working relation with a company in USA. What would be some of the multicultural marketing strategies that the student would use and why? This paper will be

based on the details of the company the student works for, the details of the company in USA, the details of the product to be sold, and an evaluative summary of the strategies to be used.

### **Week 7 Case Study Workshop # 4 – 15%**

Students will study the following website: <http://jane.or.jp/english/>

Students will then make an in-class professional presentation in power point about the purpose, corporate structure of the organization, membership details, e-commerce market in Japan, and advertising expenditure in the Japanese e-commerce market.

The presentation will also include a detailed overview of the Japanese Smartphone market, advertising strategies by Smartphone companies, etc.

The presentation will be submitted in the Moodle and a public link will be available from [www.slideshare.net](http://www.slideshare.net).

- A detailed design of the presentation will be discussed in the class.

*\*\* There could be minor changes to the assignments or lectures, as is deemed necessary during the course.*

### **FINAL EXAM – 10%**

This exam will cover all the course content discussed in class, and completed as part of reflection papers and workshops.

### **DOCUMENTS TO BE WRITTEN AS PART OF THE ASSIGNMENTS:**

- Business Reports
- Recommendation Reports
- Commercial Brochures
- Business Proposals
- Websites

*\*\* Students will have the choice of documentation when completing each assignment, thereby providing them with the flexibility to approach the assignment from their own perspective.*

### **GRADING SCALES**

- Reflection Papers 1 – 3: 10% each
- Workshop Assignments 1 – 4: 15% each
- Final Exam: 10%

## **WRITING INFORMATION/GUIDELINES**

1. Follow traditional grammar rules, i.e., subject-verb agreement, noun-pronoun agreement, no introductory relative pronouns, etc.
2. Create paragraphs which focus on a single topic, usually introduced in the first sentence. Every paragraph must have at least three sentences and should not run too long (a relative point but very important). For example, a single paragraph should rarely extend to an entire page.
3. Eliminate all forms of the verb "to be" from your writing (is, am, are, was, were, be, been, being). This precludes use of passive voice and forces the writer to use a direct style for expressing facts or opinions.
4. Develop a general introduction to the paper, introduce the various points you wish to make through the succeeding paragraphs, and finally, compose a closing section that summarizes your content and brings the reader to a feeling of satisfaction with the organization and content.
5. Remember that your purpose always lies attempting to present your ideas, facts, etc., to the reader (the instructor) in a clear, cogent, and convincing manner. Therefore, avoid overuse of stringing prepositional phrases, too many perfect tense verbs, distracting phrasing, etc. Never use the second person (you) in an essay, unless it comes in a direct quotation.
6. Follow APA style in writing (exceptions require personal discussion with the instructor). If you do not know the APA style, find a manual and follow it exactly in every situation.
7. Study word selection carefully. Choose precise words which will indicate/clarify your intended message. Take care with affect/effect and other such troublesome words. Always use a thesaurus when you write.

Painful as this may sound; following these guidelines will contribute greatly to your expertise as an academic writer, a result which forms one of the goals of this class!