



UNIVERSITÀ  
CATTOLICA  
del Sacro Cuore



**Franklin University Switzerland  
Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore  
Forum-Nexus Program  
Course Syllabus**

**Cross-Cultural Management**

**Introduction**

In an increasingly globalized and flat world, the ability of companies and individuals to be effective internationally has become a key ingredient for commercial and personal success. This course will develop the students' cross-cultural interpersonal skills and offer a hands-on learning experience that will greatly benefit them personally and professionally.

**Course Description**

The course introduces a way of thinking that will enable participants to function effectively in any culture, and in particular acquire experience dealing with cultural differences in Europe's workplace. It presents essential concepts of national and global culture and examines key differences in management, facilitating the correct interpretation of a wide variety of cross-cultural situations and laying the foundation for necessary behavioral adaptations. Other important topics include working effectively in multi-cultural teams, cross-cultural negotiations, and international careers.

The course puts a strong emphasis on practical applications in real world business and professional situations. This practical dimension will be enhanced through exercises, videos, and visits to leading international companies and organizations.

As a graduate-level course, students will sit in on the undergraduate-level lectures and complete additional readings and assignments in addition to the undergraduate requirements, in-line with expectations of graduate students.

**Course Objectives**

Upon the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Exhibit a high degree of cultural intelligence
2. Acquire a sharper understanding of their own culture and how it impacts their behavior in a multicultural setting
3. Interpret behavior, attitudes, and communication styles of people from different cultures correctly
4. Become familiarized with the key cultural characteristics of the major European countries, and the most crucial differences among them
5. Use a repertoire of behavioral skills appropriate for different intercultural situations

6. Deal with ambiguity in an ever-changing and unpredictable context that results from the globalization of business and people
7. Exhibit a high degree of effectiveness when working in culturally diverse groups

### **Course Requirements**

The course requires active student participation. Students are expected to read the assigned textbook chapters and other readings before every class. Punctual attendance is required. There will be a midterm exam, a final exam, a team project, and a final presentation. Each student is required to participate in professional visits and cultural visits, as well as the International IQ Seminar.

### **Teaching Procedures and Methodology**

Teaching methods used in this course include lectures, discussions, assignments, and professional and cultural visits. Learning in this course requires the student's constructive participation and active involvement in both class discussions and small group discussions. The professional visits will expose the participants to different aspects of the class and will highlight the practical relevance of the concepts learned. Cultural visits enhance the students' understanding of the history and culture of the country.

### **Attendance Policy**

Students are permitted to miss class only once, due to illness, injury, or another appropriate reason. Missing more than once may result in a letter grade deduction for every additional absence.

### **Participation in "Europe Today: An International IQ Seminar"**

All students also attend **Europe Today: An International IQ Seminar**, a daily session conducted by the Academic Director, Dr. Edward Gray, with occasional distinguished guest lectures. In this seminar, students learn about the culture of each country visited, gain an understanding of essential European geography and current events, discuss their experiences and cross-cultural interactions, get language tips, and identify ways to have an even more immersive study abroad experience. The material covered in the seminar complements the syllabus for this course, and there will be some exam questions based on the seminar. Knowledge from and participation in the International IQ Seminar is factored into the grade for this course.

### **Required Books**

#### **Cultural Intelligence: Surviving and Thriving in the Global Village**

by David Thomas and Kerr Inkson

Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 2017

(Paperback or Kindle edition recommended)

### **Additional Reading**

#### **Additional Readings**

1. **Rockstuhl, T., et al. (2011).**

*Beyond general intelligence (IQ) and emotional intelligence (EQ): The role of cultural intelligence (CQ) on cross-border leadership effectiveness.*

Journal of Social Issues, 67(4), 825–840.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.2011.01730.x>

2. **Groves, K. S., & Feyerherm, A. E. (2011).** *Leader cultural intelligence in context: Testing the moderating effects of team cultural diversity on leader and team performance.* *Group & Organization Management*, 36(5), 535–566.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1059601111415664>
3. **Mangla, N. (2021).** *Working in a pandemic and post-pandemic period – Cultural intelligence is the key.* *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, 21(1), 53-69.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/14705958211002877>
4. **Alexey V Semenov and Arilova Randrianasolo (2024).** An Extended Conceptualization of Cultural Intelligence, *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, Vol. 24,  
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/14705958241268289>

Additional articles covering current international business may be distributed by the instructor throughout the course.

## **Assignments**

### **Essays**

Students will be required to submit five 1500 words essays selected from the following:

#### **1. Theoretical Integration**

Compare and contrast Hofstede's cultural dimensions, the GLOBE study, and Cultural Intelligence theory. To what extent does each framework explain the effectiveness of intercultural leadership in global organizations? Use examples to support your analysis.

#### **2. Strategic Application**

Imagine you are consulting for a U.S.-based tech firm planning to acquire a mid-sized company in the Netherlands. Design a strategic cultural integration plan that addresses leadership style, team communication, and decision-making practices. Justify your recommendations using course readings and field observations.

#### **3. Critical Reflection**

Reflect on your own cultural identity and experiences during the Forum-Nexus program. How did your cultural assumptions influence your interactions and leadership preferences? Apply at least two theoretical models (e.g., CQ, Bennett's DMIS, or Trompenaars) to interpret your reflections.

#### **4. Leadership in Multicultural Teams**

Evaluate the challenges and opportunities faced by leaders managing multicultural virtual teams. What strategies should leaders use to foster inclusion, productivity, and innovation? Cite at least two academic studies and one professional case discussed during the course.

#### **5. Negotiation Across Cultures**

Analyze a failed or successful international negotiation (real or hypothetical) through the lens of cultural intelligence. What role did high- or low-context communication, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance

play in the outcome?

## 6. Ethical Leadership and Cultural Diversity

Discuss the ethical dilemmas that arise when global leaders impose “universal” values in culturally diverse settings. How can cultural intelligence help resolve these tensions? Provide examples from at least two European countries explored in class.

## 7. Organizational Change and Cultural Agility

In times of crisis (e.g., economic downturns, pandemics, geopolitical conflict), organizations must adapt quickly. How can cultural intelligence serve as a resource for leading organizational change across borders? Illustrate your argument with both theory and recent examples (2020–2025).

### PowerPoint Presentation

Each team will also deliver a presentation highlighting the main points of their manual. Each presentation will last about 15 minutes.

### Components of Final Grade

Five essays	50%
Final Exam	20%
Presentation	10%
Class participation	10%

### Grading Scale

A	93-100 %	B-	80-82.9 %	D +	67-69.9 %
A-	90-92.9 %	C +	77-79.9 %	D	63-66.9 %
B+	87-89.9 %	C	73-76.9 %	D -	60-62.9 %
B	83-86.9 %	C-	70-72.9%	F	Below 60 %

### Course Outline

- 1 Introduction: Globalization and Cultural Intelligence**
  - Evolution of globalization and multicultural workplaces
  - Definition and components of CQ (motivational, cognitive, behavioral, and metacognitive)
  - Comparative overview: cultural intelligence vs. emotional intelligence
- 2 Cultural Frameworks and Dimensions**
  - Hofstede's dimensions and critiques
  - GLOBE study and universal leadership attributes
  - Trompenaars' cultural value orientations

- Application in leadership practice

3 **Cultural Identity and Self-Awareness in Leadership**

- Culture as a mental programming
- Intercultural sensitivity models (e.g., Bennett's DMIS)
- Bias, stereotyping, and ethnocentrism

4 **Spain: Leadership and Hierarchies**

- Spanish corporate etiquette and hierarchical expectations
- Personalismo in professional interactions
- Spanish attitudes toward time, deadlines, and formality

5 **Mindfulness and Adaptability in Cross-Cultural Settings**

- Cross-cultural adjustment and cultural shock
- Mindfulness as a tool for intercultural agility
- Resilience and ambiguity tolerance

6 **Italy: Family Business Culture and Communicative Styles**

- Relationship building and loyalty in Italian firms
- High-context communication in professional settings
- Balancing tradition and innovation

7 **Cross-Cultural Negotiation Strategies**

- Strategies and styles across cultures
- Negotiation failures: case examples
- French and German models vs. U.S. models

8 **France: Centralization, Formality, and Professionalism**

- French emphasis on intellectualism and formality
- Role of education (Grandes écoles) in elite networks
- Feedback culture and power distance

9 **Cultural Leadership and Motivation**

- Motivating culturally diverse teams
- Power distance and participative decision-making
- Leadership prototypes across cultures

10 **The Netherlands: Egalitarianism and Directness**

- Dutch workplace egalitarianism and blunt communication
- Flat organizational structures
- Role of consensus in decision-making

11 **Multicultural Teams and Organizational Behavior**

- Groupthink, cultural friction, and in-group/out-group dynamics
- Leadership in diverse virtual teams
- Case study: failures and successes in cross-cultural teams

12 **Strategic Cultural Intelligence in Practice**

- Mergers and acquisitions: cultural integration challenges
- Building global leadership pipelines
- Designing inclusive global strategies

13 **Capstone Presentations and Reflective Synthesis**

- Student presentations of integration projects
- Reflective discussion of key leadership insights

- Connecting theory to personal professional goals

### **Academic Integrity**

The Forum-Nexus program places a high value on the integrity, good conduct, and academic honesty of all students. Students are expected to maintain high standards of academic integrity at all times. Any instance of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will result in a grade of F for the course.