Intercultural Communication in Business English
Bachelor course (ECTS: 6)
9.30 – 12.00

Course leader:
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Aims and objectives of the course:
The general objective of the course is to raise the awareness of cross-cultural differences and to increase intercultural communication competence in English. The course aims to sensitize students to the interdependence of culture and communication and enable them to better understand both their own cultural patterns of communication and behavior as well as those of people from different cultures, predominantly British, American, Slovenian and their own. Various aspects of American and British cultures together with English language usage will be discussed from a non-native speaker’s perspective. The culture of Slovenia as the host country and students’ own cultures will be given due attention. The course will focus on the basic theory of communication and culture, discuss dimensions and layers of national culture(s) and address various aspects of cross-cultural communication in the general and business context. As a result, students will better identify and avoid possible misunderstandings, better interpret verbal and nonverbal messages conditioned by cultural differences, develop their intercultural awareness as well as increase their overall cultural competences.

Course syllabus:
1. Introduction to the course
   o Presenting in a multicultural environment
   o Instructions for paper

2. What is communication?
   o Encoding and decoding messages
   o Verbal v nonverbal communication
   o Communication noises (internal/psychological, semantic, cultural)

3. What is culture?
   o Culture as mental programming
   o External and internal manifestations of culture
   o Symbols, heroes, rituals and values
4. Dimensions of national cultures
   - Different aspects and theories (Hall’s concept of time and space, Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner’s seven dimensions, Hofstede’s and Minkov’s cultural dimensions, Lewis’ cultural types)
   - General cultural elements (economic, political, legal system, technological know-how, socio-cultural variables, work processes and attitudes)
   - Stereotypes

5. Language and culture
   - Interdependence of language, identity and culture
   - Low vs high context cultures
   - Linguistic politeness and conventions across cultures

6. Corporate culture
   - Hierarchical order, superiors v subordinates, the use of titles, levels of formality, working time, men v women, punctuality, the dress code and decision-making

7. Multinational working environment, corporate entertaining and business etiquette
   - Meetings and advertising blunders
   - Greetings and forms of address, personal space, eye contact, social chit chat and taboo topics, corporate gifts, local knowledge
   - Wining and dining

8. Signs and symbols
   - Status and wealth, the cycle of life, birth and death, veneration of the dead, colours, numbers and the concept of beauty

9. Traditions and customs
   - Festivities, holidays, dating and weddings, birthdays and anniversaries

10. Roles and relationships, myths and traditional storytelling

Course materials/List of readings:
PowerPoint slides, exercises prepared by the lecturer, worksheets, authentic texts related to the topic, video clips.

Teaching methods:
Lectures, workshops and discussions supported by audio-visual materials. Students will actively participate in in-class activities (discussions, group and pair work, presentations, language skills practice), carry out field studies and do the required home assignments.

Evaluation method and grading scale:
Active class cooperation: 20%
PowerPoint presentation: 20%
Paper: 20%
Written test: 40%
**Prerequisites for attending the course:**
No prerequisites.

**The maximum number of participants at the course will be limited to 25.**