INTRODUCTION TO STUDY ABROAD: Class Syllabus
Fall 2006

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Description: This course is designed to help you develop skills and perspectives to enable you to get the most out of your international experience. In addition, it will provide you with information about the study abroad process and the practical aspects of studying abroad. It will not teach you how to live in a specific host country, but it will provide you with the resources necessary to maximize your learning experience both during your time abroad and when you return home. You will do research to tailor this class experience to fit your individual needs in relation to a chosen host culture. General intercultural communication techniques, vital in preparing you for the different views, values, and customs you may encounter will be integrated into class discussion. The class is organized around cross cultural exercises, class discussion, and guest speakers.

Readings:


Study Abroad Workbook (to be completed during the course)

Suggested Readings and Resources:


Armitage, S. (1996) Teaching American Values at Home and Abroad
Studyabroad.com
http://www.medicalresourceusa.com/amervalues.htm
http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itsv/1096/ijse/armi.htm
Course Requirements:

- Class Participation 15 points
- Initial Paper - Expectations 10 points
- Reaction Paper - Values 15 points
- International Student Interview 20 points
- Workbook completion 25 points
- Reflection Paper – Evaluation 15 points

**Class Participation** – Participation in class discussion is an important and vital part of this course. Discussing and processing the weekly topics, understanding and contributing various points of view, mark the beginning of your study abroad experience.

**Initial Paper** – The purpose of this paper is to encourage you to identify your personal expectations for this course and how you anticipate the course will assist you with your study abroad experience. Please discuss the areas where you feel confident about your international experience, as well as apprehensions you may have. Also include what you would like to learn in this class and relate that to your future experience. (1-2 pages, 12-point font, double spaced, standard margins, include your name and a title)

**Reaction Paper: Values** – This paper should relate to some of our class exercises, as well as to the assigned article, “Why Do Americans Act Like That?” You are asked to reflect on your own personal cultural values and assumptions and to discuss how they may affect your experience abroad. You should identify your fundamental values that you believe will not change when they are challenged by different values. How were the values established or learned? How do they reflect what is generally thought of as American values? Can you list at least five? (1-3 pages, 12 point font, double spaced, standard margins)

**International Student Interview** – For this assignment you will need to seek out an international student from the country that will be your host during your time abroad. If you have not yet identified a host country, please speak with a student from a country that you would like to visit. If you cannot locate an international student from the country of your interest, find a student from a nearby country or similar culture. The Study Abroad Office can help you locate a student if necessary. You may use the interview guidelines to structure your conversation; however, you may also add other topics. (Be sure to inform the student about your assignment and the nature of the questions you will ask before you ask him or her to commit to the interview.)

You will share the results of your interview with the class in a 3 – 5 minute presentation highlighting key points. You will be evaluated on your presentation and on the written interview report. Be creative in your presentation format. Students who have chosen the same country may give a group presentation.

**Workbook** – The workbook is your guide to safe and practical living abroad. Its completion is required to pass this course. The purpose of this assignment is to help you prepare for making responsible decisions in your new environment in regard to finances, health, personal security, etc. If you have not yet identified a specific host country, select a country that interests you. Note the due dates of each section in the course schedule. Include your name and the workbook section on each assignment.
**Reflection Paper** – This final paper is due on the day scheduled for the final examination. It should either be turned in to the Study Abroad Office or e-mailed. In order to complete this paper you will need to review your initial paper and look back over your coursework. Please include the most important ideas and concepts that you have gained from this course and how you will apply them during your time abroad. Note the changes that have taken place within yourself and give your views as to how and why this has occurred.

(1-3 pages, 12 point font, double spaces, standard margins)

### Course Schedule

#### Week 1

- **Oct. 17**  
  Introduction to the course. We will get to know each other and discuss the syllabus and expectations for the course.

- **Oct 19**  
  Cultural learning. How we perceive ourselves and others. We will become aware of how our personal and cultural “filters” affect how we view the world.  
  **Due:** Initial Paper - Introduction to Study Abroad  
  Read: “Body Ritual Among the Nacirema”

#### Week 2

- **Oct 24**  
  Defining Cultural Encounters  
  Explore how other cultures might view the U.S.  
  Class Discussion: “Body Ritual Among the Nacirema”  
  **Due:** Workbook, Section I, (Health and Safety)

- **Oct 26**  
  Viewing US Culture from an International Perspective  
  International student panel

#### Week 3

- **Oct 31**  
  Non-verbal Communication  
  We’ll discuss the different ways to communicate without speaking and explore the effect non verbal communication might have on our relationships  
  **Due:** Workbook, Section II, III (Legal Concerns, Immigration Regulations)

- **Nov 2**  
  Non-verbal Communication II  
  We’ll continue our exploration of non-verbal communication  
  Read: Hess, Guide 6  
  **Due:** Workbook IV (Knowledge of Host Country)

#### Week 4

- **Nov 7**  
  Administrative aspects of study abroad  
  We will explore study abroad options, how to apply, how to receive academic credit, and how to arrange for financial aid
Nov 9  Practical Aspects of study abroad
A panel of returned study abroad students will discuss how they
chose their site, identified their courses, found housing made
financial arrangements, packed their bags, kept up with their
courses, and traveled during holidays.

Due: Workbook V (Political Issues)

Week 5
Nov 14  Values and how they are formed
Values Exercise – “Walking Values”
Read: “Why Do Americans Act Like That?”

Nov 16  American Values/Our Values
We will identify our personal values in the context of American values

Due: Workbook VI (Financial Issues)

Week 6
Nov 21  International Student Interview presentations

(Nov 23)  Thanksgiving vacation

Week 7
Nov 28  International Student Interview presentations

Nov 30  Culture Shock and how to use it for learning
Become aware of the adjustment cycle and how to learn from it
Guest speaker

Due: Reaction paper on Values

Week 8
Dec 5  Re-entry Shock
Become aware of the adjustment required for re-entering one’s own
country. Learn how to gain from the re-entry experience.
Guest speaker

Due: Workbook VII (Housing and Meals)

Dec 7  Class Evaluation and wrap-up.
Reflect on previous two sessions and how they apply to the anticipated
study abroad experience

Due: Workbook VIII (Miscellaneous)

Finals Week
Dec 12  Due: Final Reflection Paper
Turn in to the Study Abroad Office or e-mail to gerry.auel@okstate.edu
by 5:00 p.m.