Cultural Adjustment - U.S. and Classroom Culture

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Your Experiences with Cultural Adjustment

- Changing schools
- Visiting family
- Getting a part-time job
- Starting a new hobby
- Participating in online classes
- Others?

Try this…
The Difficulties in Cultural Adjustment

Communication

The process of making meaning using verbal and nonverbal cues

How easy is this process?

Intercultural Communication

Two or more people, with different life experiences, communicating (trying to make meaning)
Functions of Culture

- Culture helps us to categorize the world around us.
- Culture gives meaning to our observations.
- Culture provides a lens through which we interpret actions, events and interactions.
- Culture allows us to make meaning out of events or give meaning to interactions.
Line Culture
(Professor Yang Liu, Berlin Technical Art University)
Problem Solving Approach
(Professor Yang Liu, Berlin Technical Art University)
Self Expression
(Professor Yang Liu, Berlin Technical Art University)
Social Connections
(Professor Yang Liu, Berlin Technical Art University)
Visible Behaviors

A

B
Values

History

Geography

Environment
FACTS THAT IMPACT CROSS-CULTURAL INTERACTION

Pure communication is impossible, as we all bring prior experience to the communication process.

We communicate in many ways, and much of our communication is unconscious.

We see what we expect to see.

We don’t see what we don’t expect to see.

E We all perceive things differently.
What is this symbol?
What is this symbol?
What is this symbol?

A holy symbol in Buddhism, Hinduism

A symbol of the Nazi Party
FACTS THAT IMPACT CROSS-CULTURAL INTERACTION

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Stereotypes versus Generalizations
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Generalizations
• Chinese people are group oriented.
• American people are individualistic.

Stereotypes
• You are Chinese; therefore, you are group oriented.
• You are American; therefore, you cannot work in a team.
U.S. Classroom Culture

Who are your teachers?

- Professors
- Instructors
- Graduate Teaching Assistants
- Undergraduate Teaching Assistants
- Each other~
U.S. Classroom Culture

Student Centered
• Faculty as coaches
• Students participate
• Lecture, discussion, small groups, experiential activities
• Students present novel ideas

Teacher Centered
• Faculty as experts only
• Students listen
• Lecture-oriented
• Students show learning through memorized information
As a class member

What do you need to do?

- Be an active learner
  - be prepared
    - consider your reading load
  - be ready to ask questions; ask “why?”
  - be ready to give your opinion
    - Your perspective as an international student is important and interesting!
  - be a good observer (passive learning skill)
Let's practice

Question:

• What are the pros and cons of 8:00 am classes?
As a student, generally,

What do you need to do?

- Get to know your instructors
- Become familiar with what is expected on exams
- Become familiar with the type of writing that is expected
- Become familiar with expectations of Academic Integrity
- Keep in touch with your academic advisor
- Take advantage of resources and opportunities
Back in Australia, Laura (from the UK) was excited to settle into life in Sydney, but she also struggled with *homesickness*. “Moving to the other side of the world was quite difficult,” she says now. The couple worked together to put mechanisms in place to make Laura’s relocation easier. They *established a weekly Skype call* with Laura’s mother. They set up *family group chats*. They made sure future vacations and trips were always in *the calendar*. And as Laura started working, she *slowly found a support network.*
AAE 291
Adjusting to
Academic English and Culture

In this class, you will review:
• How to read a syllabus
• How to manage your reading load
• Note-taking strategies
• What type of writing is required and when
• What types of tests you might encounter
• How to be an active learner
• What is your role in team projects
• How to continue building your academic vocabulary
• What is the university expectation regarding Academic Integrity
The ESL Lab provides English language support to international students whose native language is not English.

We can help you to

• Understand class assignments
• Plan and organize your essays
• Revise your essays
• Incorporate source materials effectively
• Improve the grammar and vocabulary in your writing or presentations