



Study abroad.

## **SYLLABUS**

### **CROSS-CULTURAL INDUSTRIAL/ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY IN ARGENTINA**

**Instructor: Victor Savicki**

**Contact Hrs: 52**

**Language of Instruction: English**

**ROSARIO, ARGENTINA**

#### **Course Description**

Organizations are moving from domestic to multinational and beyond to trans-national or global strategies. Thus they must account for cultural differences such as underlying values toward work, orientation toward gender relations, emphasis on groups versus individuals, ideas about personal development, leadership, and family. Ignoring culture can lead to misunderstandings and conflict. Industrial/organizational psychology applies psychological findings to work in organizations (usually business, education, government and non-profits). Organizations in all countries share the need to enhance productivity and to foster innovation and commitment from their employees. This course will illustrate how culture in Argentina and beyond affects basic organizational functions.

#### **Course Objectives**

Upon completion of the course students will be able

- a) to demonstrate an understanding of the underlying methodologies used in Industrial/Organizational psychology,
- b) to identify and explain the range of topics covered by the field,
- c) to define and explain the significance of several dimensions of work values upon which nations differ,
- d) to identify and explain significant concepts in cross-cultural psychology,
- e) to integrate cross-cultural and work value concepts in the explanation of functioning of multinational organizations.

#### **Instructional Methodology:**

##### **1. Attendance**

Attendance at all classes and excursions is required. Much of the class time will be spent in lecture, interactional activities, speakers, and discussion. Most of the information about industrial/ organizational psychology will come from lectures. Of course, excursions are vital. Points will be deducted for unexcused absences.

## 2. Written assignments

Unless you bring a computer and printer or typewriter with you, your written assignments may have to be handwritten. These must be legible. Plan on a bit more time in writing these assignments so that you can exercise care in writing. Also, points will be deducted for late assignments.

### Guidelines for Required Assignments:

#### Analysis of Home Culture

In this assignment the object is to get an idea of one's own "home" culture so that you can be more alert to facets in cultures other than your own. A firm understanding of one's home culture also helps to avoid the pitfalls of ethnocentrism.

1. Determine your ethnic origin. This can be done by asking family members and/or by doing a family tree. You should state when (what year) and from where (from what country) your recent ancestors immigrated. Studies have shown that ethnic influences persist up to three generations from the time of immigration. Many of us have quite mixed ethnic heritage. Focus on more recent origins. And focus on what origins your family has emphasized. That is, is there a family preference in defining its origins. For some people ethnic origins are in the misty past and are difficult to resurrect. If so, focus on your US culture as passed on to you by your nuclear and extended family.
2. Determine how your family of origin has influenced your cultural beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. Answer the questions below in relation to what you learned growing up. Families are the greatest transmitters of culture. You have learned how to be a person of your culture, to a large extent, through the efforts of your family. You don't have to go into great detail in answering the questions, but try to capture the essence of what you learned was "appropriate" from your family's point of view.
3. Read chapter, "Culture and Self" to be distributed the first day of class.
4. Compare your understandings about your ethnic origin(s) as gained in Step #2 within the context of the Culture and Self chapter (Step #3). Write an analysis of how well some of the information in the chapter you read in Step #3 agrees with your findings from your own family in Step #2. There will probably be points of agreement and disagreement. At the end, write a synthesis of what you have learned from the two sources that briefly describes your home culture (i.e. final summary should be 1-2 pages in length).

Questions to consider in identifying how your family has influenced your cultural identity:

Respond to the following items with brief answers. Be prepared to discuss your answers with others in a class.

Messages I got growing up from my mother about being a member of my family and/or of an ethnic group.

Messages I got from my father about being a member of my family and/or of an ethnic group.

Messages I got growing up from my extended family about socializing with or belonging to the dominant group or community.

Messages I got growing up from my extended family about marrying outside of my social or ethnic group.

Messages I got from my family about surviving in life as a member of my family and/or as an ethnic person.

Other messages, values about specific issues that may have come from your family and/or ethnic group background

- The foods my group/family eats
- My group/family's favorite music
- The way my group/family dances
- How to dress in my cultural group/family
- Child-rearing patterns in my group/family
- My group/family's feelings about older persons
- The thinking of my cultural group/family regarding outsiders
- The role of women in my group/family
- The roles of men in my group/family
- The sexual values of my cultural group/family
- My group/family's opinion about homosexuals
- My group/family's thinking about race
- The political preferences of my group/family
- Things my group/family considers as group/family secrets
- My group/family's feelings about its place in society

#### Journal Guidelines:

The goal of writing a journal is to record, over the course, your experiences both in and out of class that have been meaningful to you in regard to your learning about culture and I/O psychology. The journal becomes a motion picture capturing passing time in words for you to replay as you wish to give you perspective, objectivity, and integration in your present. The journal is meant to increase your awareness of how you experience some of the concepts that we will be learning about in class and how you demonstrate some of those concepts in action. Because the principles we discuss can generalize to almost all human interactions, you can begin to recognize them in your everyday experience as well as in more focused "psychologically oriented" relationships. Most entries should incorporate a) a class concept we discussed or you read about, b) a cultural awareness, and c) your personal reactions. Please use the journal as an opportunity to expand your awareness of ideas and ways of relating that you judge to be important to you. Ideally, at the end of the term you will be able to look back over your journals and discover that your ways of thinking, perceiving, and behaving have changed significantly in a positive direction. In the future, you may take for granted abilities and knowledge that you now may not even know that you need to learn about. Keeping track of your development in the field of psychology is a life-long process that you can use in a more systematic way by using the journal as one method.

In-class chapter synopsis, and discussion leadership:

This total activity should take approximately 10 minutes during the designated class period. The first component is a brief review of the content of the assigned chapter. The second component is the development of three broad questions for the rest of the class to discuss. These discussion questions should tap key issues identified in the chapter. Their phrasing should be open-ended, thus promoting contributions, ideas, and opinions by other class members.

### **Optional Tasks:**

1. Leadership of in-class activity
  - a. Interview guidelines brainstorm and construction  
week 4 (25)  
week 9 (25)
  - b. Job design and motivation group activity (25)
  - c. Group decision making activity (25)

### **Method of Evaluation (Grading)**

Grades will be calculated via a point system. Successful completion of tasks will earn points. Points will then be accumulated to earn a specific grade following the formulae below.

A = 400, B = 300, C = 225, D = 150, F < 150

1. In-class synopsis, and discussion leadership of assigned chapters for class period reading (20 each)
2. Weekly journal (see guidelines) (50) Journal entries should be turned in at the first class session of each week and will be returned at the second session of the same week. See the guidelines attached. Start you journal entries on the plane flight to Argentina.
3. Home culture analysis (see guidelines) (50) You should be prepared to discuss your analysis on the first day of class. The actual paper is due at the second class session of the first week of class.
4. Observation assignment (to be developed in-class) (50)
5. Interview and write-up with someone of a different culture about cultural issues (interview guidelines to be developed in class) (50)
6. Interview with an employee of an organization based in Rosario about organizational issues (interview guidelines to be developed in class) (50)
7. Final exam: Final paper synopsis and class review based on journal and other experiences (50). This paper should integrate all of the in and out-of-class, formal and informal learning experiences. It should integrate class concepts, cultural experiences, and personal reactions/changes. More than a mere listing of activities, the paper should identify themes, major learnings, and individual changes in attitude, perspective, belief, feeling, and behavior related to the overall theme of the course.

### **Course Reading**

1. Adler, N. J. (2002). *International Dimensions of Organizational Behavior*, South-Western College Publishing: Cincinnati, OH.
2. Muchinsky, P.M. (2000). *Psychology Applied to Work*. NY: Brooks/Cole.

## Course Schedule

	Day 1	Day 2
1	Introductions, Goal setting exercise, discussion of Home Culture exercise, Intro lecture	Brief history of I/O as a profession, Overview of cross-cultural dimensions, Cross-cultural exercise, M-1
2	Paradigm shift lecture, Video of organizational vignettes, M-2	Work motivation theory review (assign case for panel discussion). Further elaboration of cross-cultural dimensions as related to organizations. M-11
3	Cultural communication in I/O Video: World without borders Communication, reports, A-3, 7	Panel comparing theories of work motivation, brainstorm effects of worker motivation. Observation assignment, M-3
4	Video: Trading attitudes, reports A-4, 6	Organizations, stress and coping, M-4, 10, A-2
5	Excursion: Camara de Comercio Exterior de Rosario	Leadership, M-12
6	Observation assignment debrief Interview assignment: brainstorm interview questions	Personnel process overview, M-6 Mid-term goals review,
7	Psychological testing and assessment, M-5 Prepare for the John Deere trip	Excursion: John Deere of Argentina (Rosario)
8	Testing standards and cases, Performance appraisal, M-7 Debrief the interview assignment	Assign organizational interview, Training and socialization—cross-cultural comparisons
9	Job design, In-class exercise on job design and motivation, M-13	Guest speaker: Organizational consultant
10	Groups in organizations, M-8, A-5	Job satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, Burnout Research review and self assessment, M-9
11	Cross-cultural burnout research, effects on turnover, absenteeism, etc.	Joint excursion: Board of Trade
12	Debrief organizational interviews M-16, 11 A-8, 9, 10	Final paper discussion and class evaluation