

ADV 4930: Culture – Australia

Summer 2013

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Class hours: TBA

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Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office before we leave for Australia. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

Academic Honesty: Academic honesty is important at the University of Florida. All students are expected to practice the University of Florida Honor Code: “We the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.” For all work submitted for credit, including homework, in-class assignments and examinations, the following pledge is implied, "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

Course Description: The purpose of this class is you help you develop the global critical thinking essential to living and working in the international marketplace. Through the coursework and experiences in this class you will feel a closer link to and understanding of the international business world; and therefore, you will then see how you can participate in it. In addition, by integrating international perspectives (brief though it will be), you will learn how to apply your domestic knowledge to more global cultural situations.

This course is designed as a broad overview of the field of international culture – specifically Australian culture. Over the next few weeks we’ll be learning and discussing issues in this rather broad and unique field so that you will begin to understand:

- The culture of Australia
- “American culture”
- The popular culture of Australia
- The international marketplace
- Economy of Australia
- Regulatory and political environment
- Media of Australia

This course is designed around a lecture/discussion format. Since we are conducting it as a seminar, it is expected that you will have done a careful, critical reading of all items assigned for each week, and will be ready to participate in class discussion. In other words, this will be a highly interactive environment and is based on cooperative learning. For each week, the most relevant readings have been assigned. However, I encourage you to step outside of these readings and acquaint yourself with the body of literature on

the history and people of Australia. Also, hopefully you'll be developing supportive relationships among your classmates as we work through the issues in the field.

Class Operating Policies

1-Assignments will be due on the dates indicated in the syllabus. NO LATE PAPERS OR ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED – NO EXCEPTIONS.

2-YOUR ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY FOR EACH CLASS – as is the case with all classes in this program, one full letter grade is deducted for each miss!

3-Tardiness (more than 5 minutes late) to class means one half of a letter grade deduction for each occurrence.

4-Prepare ahead of time for class.

5-Participate!

6-If you have a cell phone on the trip, turn it off in class unless there is an emergency.

7-When you're working on your projects, class readings and anything associated with this class, doing just what is expected, to me, is "average" and warrants a "C." To earn an "A" means your work in all aspects and on all assignments is exceptional. Skating through or last-minute work almost always results in a low grade.

8-Some projects can be conducted in groups. Your participation is very important for these, especially because, in this case, not only will you have to attend class with your team members, but you'll be living VERY close to them, traveling together and spending long hours on planes, boats and buses. So it's doubly important that you are a strong team member. Work as hard as you can to earn respect from your team! **You will be conducting peer evaluations at the end of the final assignment.**

Required Books/Readings/Movie (must be read/watched before we leave):

1-*In a Sunburned Country* by Bill Bryson

(available at Amazon.com and half.com, bookstores, etc)

2-"Rabbit-Proof Fence;" movie (rentable, or for purchase cheaply at Amazon.com); a true story about the Aboriginal children in the Stolen Generation (I have a copy if anyone wants to borrow it)

3-<http://geert-hofstede.com/national-culture.html> read this overall review of the 4 main dimensions (omit the long-term orientation dimension); then click on countries and call up Australia and the United States. Study the meanings of the four dimensions and be sure you understand them.

(this is for the first assignment)

Assignments (3 assignments: 2 when we're there, one when we get back)

Geert Hofstede Project **Due May 15**

Culture is a poorly understood concept. International marketers and business people have continually faced profitability problems by ignoring local (in this case, meaning individual countries) culture's influence and differing value systems, and assuming a global culture that translates across many countries.

This is an individual assignment.

- Go to <http://geert-hofstede.com/national-culture.html> and read about Hofstede's cultural dimensions.

- Make sure you completely understand those dimensions first.
- Then click on “countries.” Look at the scores for Australia and contrast them against those of the U.S.
- What evidence of each of the four dimensions do you see in American culture? Provide some specific examples.
- What evidence of each of the four dimensions do you see in Australian culture? Provide some specific examples.
- Do the dimensions of Australian culture match up with your preconceptions of it? What does? What does not?
- Be specific about where and when you observed the examples you provide.
- This paper should be about five typed pages.
- We’ll also be discussing these in class on the day it’s due (May 15th).

Paper specifics:

1. Start with a discussion of the definitions of the dimensions
2. Take each dimension separately and address the questions above, adding your observations/examples, readings, etc
3. Discuss your level of agreement or disagreement with the dimensions as Hofstede presented them, providing a rationale for each
4. End with an honest assessment of what you learned and if the dimensions seemed helpful to begin to understand the culture

Trust Paper Due May 20

Trust has been studied extensively across diverse fields such as: cultural studies, social science, psychology, business, economics and political science; but it’s still not well understood. Trust is particularly important when we are abroad, because American students, in general, are a very trusting group. And people (not just Americans or students) overall, use some very “untrustworthy” methods to assess trust, like faces, attractiveness, assessments of altruism, emotions, etc. So, in short, we end up giving trust to the wrong people. And, on a broader scope, we sometimes use the premise that “the more similar the cultures are, the more you will use your same evaluation criteria and trust people more in a more similar culture.” The purpose of this paper is for you to examine trust on a number of levels: on a cultural level and on a personal level.

Understanding the assumptions we make about trust as Americans and as humans will hopefully help you assess your future decisions about who and why we trust.

So, think of a time when you trusted someone that you shouldn’t have trusted. This might be very tough to re-examine. But you’ll be writing a paper about this instance. Here are the steps and the questions to answer:

1. What is trust? How do you know when or how to trust someone? In other words, what cues have you used in the past?
2. On a cultural level: as Americans are we trusting? Are we trustworthy? Why do you believe this?
3. What cues have you used to decide someone is not trustworthy?
4. Now the incident. Describe the person and the incident.
 - a. What cues were present to make you think you could trust this person?

- b. What were your own motivations to trust this person? In other words, why were you ready to trust this person?
- c. Did you think this person had your best interests at heart? Did you feel strongly this person could be trusted? Why or why not?
- d. What trust-like behaviors did they exhibit?
- e. What things that you saw did you choose to ignore?
- f. Did you ever detect selfish objectives on the part of this person?
- g. Did others warn you about this person's trustworthiness?

This will be discussed in class. I'm going to ask for volunteers to discuss your "incident," so be sure it's something you are willing to share. Or, let me know you are NOT willing to share this incident to your classmates.

Final Project Due June 21 (via email) (this can be done in pairs)

- Using your own observation diary (discussed below), travelogue, interviews, videos, **readings**, library research etc, construct an Australian culture lesson for your employer – an editor, creative director, public affairs director, CEO, etc – about Australian college-aged males and females. The idea is that your company will use this information to understand this target group's "culture" to be able to operate their media-related business in Australia. For example, you may be working for an ad agency whose client is considering expanding to Australia and marketing its food or clothing item there; however, the agency is woefully uninformed about the Australian college-aged market. Conversely, your editor might want you to educate the editorial and travel staff about this group to be able to write a feature series for your travel magazine. You pick your position! So here's what you'll do:
 1. First you will need to provide a detailed explanation of your new position and the nature of the company.
 2. Next, provide a definition or definitions of culture (in general) that you find useful, and all the dimensions and interpretations; this must naturally include references to pop culture as well (these must be legitimate sources to find definitions)
 3. Then you need to categorize the dimensions of culture you find most important to make your employers understand. Make sure you provide plenty of examples and explanations listed in the first bullet item for this option.
 4. Relate this all to the readings assigned (using standard reference format) and any others that you find relevant. NOTE: don't just re-create one of the other assignments here, but you can reference what you learned from assignments and discussions
 5. Include reference page properly formatted to the reference style you are using
 6. Include observations diary discussed below to flesh out the project to include popular culture:

***Diary Observations* (this is part of your final paper, so take detailed notes so you don't forget; we will also be discussing these in class)**

If you are working with another classmate on the final paper, you should do this together. You can begin to learn much about the culture of the country through a semiotic (the theory and study of signs and symbols) look at common activities, landmarks and buildings, among other things. Think of this project as a scavenger hunt of sorts. For the “shopping” and “club” portion of this assignment, sit in an unobtrusive place and start watching, taking pictures and notes. Look for the things listed below BUT not just these. Look through your eyes initially. And keep a diary while we’re there....(I understand that this is just a glimpse at “the culture” of the country, and in no way encompasses the entire country or even the regions we will be visiting.)

A couple of rules: First, try to suspend your culture and don’t judge what you see, just take note of it. Second, take immediate note of things that strike you *before* you start answering the questions listed. In other words, look *into* the setting and really see it from *your* perspective before you answer my questions. Then, write down things that indicate what you see and what I’m asking you to see.

A-Clubs- (**note: this is NOT a participant observation assignment, merely observational.**) The bars/nightclubs in a many countries truly reflect their dominant culture that is why I am asking you to observe there, not drink there. In fact, for this assignment, you are strictly prohibited from drinking. (If you would prefer not to go into a club, choose a restaurant instead and proceed with the assignment)

Club/restaurant itself: What is the décor? Flooring? Lighting? Sound level? Is there music? Live? What is the volume? Is it at a level designed for entertaining or talking? Are people dancing? What about the seating? Does it suggest function or looks? Do people rearrange the chairs? What do these observations tell you about Greek and Spanish culture?

B-People- (do this during the day please)

You can’t learn more about the people of a country than by talking to them! As we’ll discuss, employment and future prospects are looking pretty good for people your age in Australia. Talk to them, find out what it’s like to live in Australia. What are *their* aspirations? What do *their* families want for them? How far in advance are they setting *their* goals? Where do they live? Where do they see themselves in five years? Ten years? Twenty years? What are they expected to contribute to family life? Try to assess their level of happiness, resignation, their values.

C-Beaches

Go to one of the two main beaches in Sydney and walk around. Is it mostly families? Young people? Is it mostly tourists? What are you noticing? Picnicing?

Keep a diary and see how your reactions, feelings and meanings change as we travel to different parts of Australia.

If you want to add more to your diary, watch television in Australia, look at magazines, go to galleries, listen to their music, etc.

If you worked in pairs on the final paper, a peer review also will be conducted assessing your attitude, participation, contributions, quality and amount of work and the like. Students not contributing their fair share will have project and peer evaluation points deducted. Peer review form attached.

Grading Criteria for Final Project

These criteria will be used, among others, in determining your grade on this project (not presented in any particular order):

- Quality of writing, editing
- Content
- Quality, scope, currency and appropriateness of research
- Integration and synthesis of knowledge learned
- Focus and organization
- Clarity in relating knowledge learned about the culture as reflected in the ads
- Your participation in the final assignment as reflected by peer evaluations

Grading Policies

Class Participation and discussions	25%
Hofstede project and class discussion	25%
Trust paper and discussion	20%
Final project/presentations and peer review (if applicable)	30%

Schedule of classes (dates of classes are a moving target based on room availability in Australia)

Class 1: May 10 Introduction

Introduction, introduce selves, syllabus discussion, assignment discussion, group discussion exercise (personal and family culture)

Class 2: May 13 American Culture – a more broad look than class #1; US Popular Culture

Group discussion

- What does being American mean to you?
- What are some “American characteristics?”
- What does it mean to you to be patriotic?
- What explains the simultaneously attractive and hated view of the U.S.?
- What does freedom in America mean?
- Are there universal standards of human rights, or does that notion suggest one culture imposing its morality on other cultures?

A highly controversial book, *What's so great about America*, written by Dinesh D'Sousa in 2002, makes some pretty strong statements about foreigners' beliefs about American culture that he believes explain why so many people from Middle Eastern countries dislike us so strongly.

Think about and be ready to discuss and agree or disagree with the following statements made in this highly controversial book:

- America is special.
- The American system is unique.
- Americans are not like other people.
- There is no better life available than in the U.S.
- America has generated a lot of material prosperity at the expense of moral and social decline.
- Americans are unsure of who they are, what their priorities should be and whether they are truly happy.
- Americans in general have never really paid attention to the happenings in the rest of the world.
- American popular culture shapes the general tone of society.
- “Americans cannot fight a war and say they are doing it for strategic advantage or for oil. Instead they have to be convinced, or convince themselves that they are fighting to expel a tyrant, or to secure democracy or ensure human rights.”

*TTT

Class 3: May 15 Hofstede discussion

Hofstede assignment due; be ready to discuss this assignment and the questions I asked you to address above.

Hofstede paper due

*TTT

Class 4: May 16 *In a Sunburned Country* and “Rabbit Proof Fence”

After reading this book you will understand much about the culture of Australia (and every type of wildlife to be aware of in Cairns). You’ll learn how hard it was to survive in the country, the indigenous Aboriginal culture (book and movie), the people and their outlooks, etc.

Discussion questions (be ready to discuss):

1. Bryson writes in some detail about Australia having “more things that will kill you than anywhere else,” from spiders, snakes, jellyfish, fish, caterpillars, seashells, sharks, crocs, to plants (and flies, although not deadly, they are the size of submarines and NEVER give up). Let’s talk about your concerns.
2. Bryson does not seem overly fond of Sydney. Agree so far?
3. What did you learn about Australians as a people from the book? From the movie? What characteristics does he ascribe to Australians? Do you agree so far?
4. What did you learn about the Aborigines from the book and movie? What are their lives like? What challenges do they face now? How do Australians treat them today?
5. Bryson talks about a lawyer named Jim Brooks who works with the Aboriginal people to “give them a voice.” What are your thoughts on the solutions and issues?
6. Did any of the facts or anecdotes surprise you in the book?
7. In Chapter 16, Bryson talks about Alice Springs: “On our way into town, we passed strip malls, car dealerships, McDonald’s and Kentucky Fried Chicken

outlets, banks and gas stations...my room had a balcony where I could watch the setting sun flood the desert floor and burnish the golden slopes of the MacDonnell Ranges beyond...or at least I could if I looked past the immediate sprawl of a Kmart plaza across the road.” Reaction? Comments?

8. Other observations?

*TTT

Class 5: May 20 Trust as a cultural value

Discussion of paper.

Trust paper due

*TTT

Class 6: May 22 World Values Discussion; Australia vs US

Class discussion and group exercise

*TTT

Class 7: May 23 Interpreting Culture

Picture interpretations; gestures; class exercise

*TTT

Class 8: May 24 Guest Speaker

Dr. David Waller, Professor, University of Technology, Sydney

Class 9: May 29 Wrap up – diary discussion, final questions

***TTT winners!

*TTT: Treise Trivia Time (a ridiculous trivia game that just allows me a way to award even more ridiculous prizes for the winning trivia masters at the end of the trip)

(to be completed for each assignment if you are working in teams; do not evaluate yourself)

Note: On a separate sheet please type comments justifying your evaluations. Be sure to indicate how each member can improve his/her performance.

EVALUATION-Member Evaluations

Your Name: _____

Team Member 1: _____

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Unacceptable</i>
1. Commitment to our common purpose:	<input type="checkbox"/>				
2. Efforts in accomplishing group tasks:	<input type="checkbox"/>				
3. Willingness to work:	<input type="checkbox"/>				
4. Work products:	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5. Attitude, friendliness, and respectfulness:	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Agency Member 2: _____

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Unacceptable</i>
1. Commitment to our common purpose:	<input type="checkbox"/>				
2. Efforts in accomplishing group tasks:	<input type="checkbox"/>				
3. Willingness to work:	<input type="checkbox"/>				
4. Work products:	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5. Attitude, friendliness, and respectfulness:	<input type="checkbox"/>				

(don't evaluate yourself please)

(Use for any/all group assignments)