UWP 104A-Section 003 *Business Writing*
Cross Cultural & Intercultural Communication Assignment
Thursday, January 30, 2014

Our university campus is becoming more and more diverse every year, and this diversity is representative of what you can expect in the workplace in terms of intercultural experiences. As we've discussed in class, the term "intercultural communication" involves people from culturally different groups interacting, whereas "cross cultural communication" refers to the comparing and/or contrasting of cultural groups. But with so many opportunities available to you on and around campus to interact with people whose backgrounds and cultures are distinctly different from yours, how many of those opportunities have you actually *seized*? And what types of efforts have you made to really *learn* about cultures that are distinctly different from your own?

According to Carol Kinsey Goman, author of *The Nonverbal Advantage*, "As globalization remains a major factor in business, organizations and customers from a host of different cultures are insisting that we become sensitive to their ways. Professionals who try to negotiate or sell or even interact without that sensitivity will undoubtedly lose business opportunities."

There is great value in learning about and understanding cultures that are different from your own. This assignment, therefore, is designed to accomplish three main goals: First, it will help guide you through the process of connecting with your peers in ways that encourage intercultural awareness. Second, it will allow you to engage first hand in cross-cultural communication activities. And third, this assignment will provide you with the opportunity to present your knowledge and expertise to an audience of your peers. What follows are the guidelines for this 50-point team assignment.

Project Overview
Your team is asked to conduct primary and secondary research on your assigned topic (see page four of this prompt) in an effort to become knowledgeable enough to deliver a 15-minute presentation of your findings to an audience that is made up of your classmates and your instructor. Remember, though, that each of you already has some level of expertise with your assigned topic. For example, if you're presenting on social customs, which is a *very* broad topic, you might research and present on topics like elevator etiquette and personal space expectations in crowded areas. You could certainly look up such topics in publications or on a variety of websites, but your team, being made up of people from different cultures, should also depend heavily on your combined knowledge of and experience with these areas. Remember that one of the goals of this assignment is for you to *learn from each other*.

As you begin this assignment, allow yourselves to engage in honest, open discussions about each other's cultures in terms of your project topics. For example, if your topic is on-campus interaction, you might discuss how each team member interacts with professors in various contexts. *Would you be comfortable borrowing a book from your professor?* Or perhaps you should discuss *expectations* of student conduct in various contexts versus the *reality* of that conduct. *Do all students listen intently and diligently take notes in classes that are held in large lecture halls?*

Assignment Purposes
This assignment will encourage you and your teammates to begin to develop a more complete understanding of the similarities & differences between cultures. By the time you complete this

assignment, you will have gained insight into the reasons people do the things they do, and you will likely be more aware of the value of the cultural diversity to which you're exposed every day.

In addition, you and your teammates will gain valuable, hands-on experience preparing and delivering a structured presentation to a particular audience. The ability to develop and deliver an interesting, informative, and engaging presentation is essential in many professions, and the best way to become a better presenter is to actually go through the process of preparing and delivering good presentations.

Cross-cultural & Intercultural Communication Presentation Guidelines
Your group's oral presentation will be graded based on three major aspects:

Content & Organization
Although you can't be as comprehensive in a timed oral presentation as in a written professional document, you should try to present at least the major aspects of your cross-cultural and intercultural communication research. Of course, you can't present every detail, but some significant details should be included if they are crucial to your audience's understanding of the topic. As is the case in a written professional document, the organization of your presentation should demonstrate a certain logic. In other words, it should be coherent and cohesive in a way that one segment naturally and logically leads to another.

Presentation Demeanor
How you and your teammates conduct yourselves in front of your audience will directly affect your oral presentation. Remember, don't present for presentation's sake; present to educate your audience. Show us your *knowledge*; show us your *confidence*; show us your *enthusiasm*! A dry, boring presentation during which you show no interest or confidence in what you are talking about will educate no audience. Also, avoid doing anything that may distract your audience.

Visuals
Visuals are an important part of an effective presentation. Prepare a visual that will help your audience understand your subject matter and that may help them better understand important aspects of intercultural communication. Besides visuals that present the major content of your research, preparing an introductory visual (in which you introduce the project title and list your group members' names) and an outline visual would be helpful and make your presentation seem more organized. Although you're not encouraged to spend a lot of money on visuals, your visuals should be as professional looking as possible. When designing visuals, keep the following in mind:

- *Make them simple*. Don't try to put too much on your visual. Remember, each visual will be shown probably for no more than one to two minutes. Too much information will overwhelm the audience. On the other hand, too little information will be a waste for the visual.

- *Make them readable*. Make sure the font type is easy to read and the font size is big enough even for people sitting in the back. Take into consideration the size of the room, the lighting, and other physical elements.

- *Make them professional*. Proper use of ornamentation, such as lines, background patterns, color, graphics, and other design elements will add to the professional look of your visuals. Excessive and improper use of these elements, however, will become serious distracting factors.

- *Make them consistent.* Although you should try to avoid making all your visuals look identical, there should be a certain degree of consistency among them. This can be achieved by using, for example, the same background, or the same logo, or another design element throughout.

Miscellaneous Presentation Considerations

In addition to the above, there are several other aspects of this assignment that you should consider as you develop and practice your team presentation:

Time Limit

Your presentation should last approximately 15 minutes. Running slightly long or short (+/- 30 seconds) is acceptable, but running too long or too short can be problematic. Practice effectively and *as a team* to get the timing down. Note: You will have approximately three minutes to respond to questions from your audience after finishing your presentation. The way you handle these questions will have an impact on your presentation grade.

Audience

As you begin your formal presentation, remember to introduce to your classmates what your cross-cultural/intercultural communication topic is. Be sure to explain the real-world applications and/or implications of your topic. Remember also that you're presenting for the audience. Keep them in mind as you develop and rehearse your presentation as well as when you actually deliver your presentation. *Encourage your audience to be active participants in your presentation rather than passive observers.*

Questions & Answers

You need to prepare at least two questions to ask the audience that directly relate to your project. Interaction with your audience is *essential* to maintaining their interest. You may ask your questions whenever you feel they're appropriate during your presentation. At the end of your presentation, make sure you invite your audience to ask questions. Remember that how you handle audience questions is also considered a part of your formal presentation.

Level of Formality

Consider this a formal business presentation. This means you should act as professionally as possible. Although no official dress code will be imposed, remember the impact that looking sharp can have on your credibility. Remember also the impact that unprofessional attire can have.

Presentation Schedule

On the following page, you'll find the schedule for the two presentation days (**Tuesday, March 11** and **Thursday, March 13, 2014**). Please remember that attendance during presentation days is *mandatory*. Any student missing class on a presentation day will receive a letter-grade deduction from her or his presentation grade. Any student missing her or his presentation day will earn a zero on this 50-point assignment. Also, prior to beginning their presentation, each team is required to hand in a copy of the outline from which their presentation will be delivered along with a hard copy of the team's visual aid (e.g., PowerPoint slides printed out). Teams that do not submit these materials prior to delivering their presentation will receive grade deductions.

Project Teams and Topics

Listed on the following page are the teams and topics for this presentation assignment.

Tuesday, March 11, 2014
        Team 1: Team members' names
                Topic: **Project Team Building & Team Interaction**

        Team 2: Team members' names
                Topic: **Nonverbal Communication**

        Team 3: Team members' names
                Topic: **Conflict Resolution**

        Team 4: Team members' names
                Topic: **On-campus Interaction**

Thursday, March 13, 2014
        Team 5: Team members' names
                Topic: **The American Job Interview**

        Team 6: Team members' names
                Topic: **Dining Etiquette**

        Team 7: Team members' names
                Topic: **Social Customs**

        Team 8: Team members' names
                Topic: **On-the-job Interaction**

Presentation Grading Scale
The following grading scale will be used to evaluate your team presentation:

Presentation Content & Delivery   *40 Points*
        Logical organization
        Preparedness
        Evidence of effective team practice & cohesion
        Connection with audience
        Questions for the audience (2 minimum)
        Enthusiastic delivery
        Extemporaneous delivery
        Focus
        Timing
        Professionalism

Visuals   *10 Points*
        Clear
        Understandable
        Professional & appropriate
        Effectively used

Total Points   *50 Points*