First Year Seminar
Linda Edwards
Purpose

- First-Year Seminar courses help new students transition intellectually and socially into University life by participating in a class with a small number of students led by a faculty member they can get to know personally.
Benefits of First Year Seminars

- Small class environment
- Engagement with faculty and professional staff instructors, building life-long learning skills
- Opportunity to learn about a topic that might be outside the traditional degree plan
- Encourages active participation, through critical inquiry, listening skills and discussion
- Reading broadly from research sources
- Writing original works
Raising Your Cultural IQ

**Course Description**

“Cultural awareness is a waste of time!” After all, deep down we are all just alike so what is the point? Have you ever heard this statement... or have you said something like it yourself? In this class, you will learn why it is important to be culturally competent and how to transfer those skills in school, workplace and community environments. You will learn about your culture, how we judge the behavior of others based upon our culture and how to interact with people from other cultures while avoiding cross-cultural clashes.
Raising Your Cultural IQ

**Course Objectives**
- To help the student be able to identify their own culture
- To help the student be able to articulate (verbally and in writing) how their culture differs from others
- To help the student understand how culture influences behavior
- To help the student be able to identify some verbal and non-verbal communication elements that may differ across cultures.
Objectives continued

- To help the student be able to identify cultural values that impact communication processes.
- To help the student apply skills he or she has learned to case studies and real cross-cultural situations they may encounter.
- To help the student develop an appreciation for other cultures.
- To help the student foster a deeper awareness of several forms of cultural diversity.
More Objectives

- To help the student think critically about how cultural differences impact one-on-one and group interactions
- To learn to work cooperatively and collaboratively with students of other countries
- Communicate effectively in class and with others who are different than me
Figuring Foreigners Out: A practical guide

- Text Book by Craig Storti uses building blocks
- Step one - learn about your own culture
- Step two - compare your own values to those of others
- Step three – identify areas that may cause miscommunication opportunities
- Step four – learn how to adapt for success
- Engage in a high impact activity
Additional Materials

- Handouts to bring in other theorists on the subject – Edward T. Hall, Geert Hofstede, Richard D. Lewis, Brooks Peterson and others
- Articles that give insight into the study of Culture such as the Arizona Emigration Law, “Angela Merkel: German multiculturalism has utterly failed” and other types of examples
- Movie Review
Case study Format

- A case study begins with a real life situation.
- The misunderstanding should not be obvious, but highlight one or more of the values we have studied.
- It should not involve some obscure knowledge that freshmen would not know.
- There should be clues to the difference (which one sees when pointed out.)
Sample Case study

- Break into small groups.
- Read the case study
- Look for the origin of the misunderstanding
- Look for ways that the actors in the case study can both learn to adapt for better cross-cultural communication
International Advisory Board Participation

- Highlighted syllabus schedule
- Guest speakers:
  - October 1 – Case study involving the values in building block one – How I view myself, time, and responsibility in society
  - October 29 – Case study on Communication styles – verbal and non verbal
  - November 19 – Case study on Culture in the Workplace
Contact:

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