ANG 5711 CULTURE AND INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

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SECTION 8633
Thursday Periods 9-11
2318 Turlington move to Grinter seminar
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COURSE DESCRIPTION: The course explores the opportunities and challenges of the global economy from an anthropological and business perspectives. Students will develop a more complete understanding of the complex cultural and economic issues that determine the success of international ventures. Culture and International Business begins with a conceptualization of “business” and “anthropological” notions of terms like culture, communication, social organization, value, wealth, trade, and labor. Next it explores the politics of the global market, the role of entrepreneurship across cultures, the evolution of multinational businesses, and how business, marketing, and advertising practices vary around the world. The course concludes by examining some of the more controversial issues in globalization (e.g., wages, the environment), and inquiring how these are shaped by different concepts of the roles and responsibilities of governments and corporations. Cross-cultural concepts of gender and how these can affect international business activities are discussed throughout the course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Students are expected to attend all classes and have read the readings in advance (10%). The following are the course assignments:

1. A team project comparing and contrasting the anthropological and business aspects of international business. (30%)
2. Several short (2-3 page) papers on cases that address the unique business and cultural issues found in different regions of the world. (30%)
3. An individual paper that explores a relevant issue in a country or region of the student’s choosing (abstract or outline must be approved before writing it). (30%)

REQUIRED TEXTS:
3. Reader of Articles. (Available at Custom Copies)

TOPIC 1: Introduction to Basic Concepts

I. Introduction: Why understanding culture is important in international business
II. Culture: Anthropological vs. other definitions
Basic anthropological concepts: Cultural relativity, Business culture, Real and ideal behavior
Corporate culture, Emic vs. etic, Intercultural management, etc.
READINGS:
*Ferraro, Chapters 1 and 2.

III. Business: What is a “business”? Ownership issues in business, Production, The proper role of the state in the economy, Distribution, Public vs. private ownership of the means of production, Marketing, Market equilibrium allocation of resources, Controls on economic activities or on allocation of value created

VIDEO: “Cultural Awareness in Business”

TOPIC 2: Communication
I. Forms of Communication: Language, Gender and language, Language diversity, Non-verbal behavior
II. Language and business communication: Different concepts of the verbalized, written, and body language. The importance of “face”

VIDEO: “The Cultural Environment of International Business”

READINGS:
*Ferraro, Chapters 3 and 4.

TOPIC 3: Concepts of “Value” and “Wealth”
I. Definitions of “Value”
Temperaments cross-culturally and by gender. Attitudes and ideals cross-culturally. Attitudes toward time, work, wealth, consumption, achievement, change, and risk. Considerations of gender and culture. Role of the leader. View of life and approach to the world: scientific method, karma, que sera sera, etc.

Business definitions of “Value”: Creating value, not maximizing “profits” is what counts
The Risk/Return relationship

READINGS:
*Ferraro, Chapter 5.

II. Definitions of “Wealth”
Wealth can mean different things to different people. For whom do businesses create wealth? Stakeholders and Shareholders; Companies versus governments; Are government or corporations responsible for addressing social issues? Globalization debates, the living wage, the environment, etc. What are the implications of corporate altruism?

READINGS:

[**TOPIC 4: Social Organization of Societies and Businesses**]

I. Anthropological Concepts of Social Organization and Related terms:
Family and kinship; Networks and Associations; Roles, norms, and achieved versus ascribed status; Gender considerations; Societal social organization; Corporate social organization, cross-culturally; Patriarchy and Paternalism: role of company in family life; Status of various occupations

II. Corporate Social Organization:
What is so special about the modern corporation? Forms of business organization; What the modern corporation does; How the modern corporation differs from the 19th century corporation

READINGS:
III. Religion and Society: Religion and Values; Religion and economic development, business; Islamic prohibitions on interest and Judeo-Christian concept of interest; Asian Belief Systems

READINGS:

TOPIC 5: Practical and Political Factors in a Global Market

I. Why do people Trade? Acquire commodities, scarce goods, exotic goods, status goods; Build and nurture alliances; Maintain social relationships

READINGS:

II. Why do Countries Trade? For many of the same, basic reasons people have always engaged in exchange; Mercantilism; Absolute Advantage; Comparative Advantage; Assumptions of theories of specialization

READINGS:

III. Anthropological Considerations of Trans-Cultural Trade: Influence of policies on economic activities; Legitimized versus non-legitimized power; Policies: Business enablers and constraints

READINGS:

**IV. Concepts of Labor and Capital:** First and Third worlds; Multinationals

**READINGS:**


**TOPIC 6: Entrepreneurship and Business**

Definitions; Cross-cultural variation; Formal and informal sector; scale and size, characteristics; Local versus global; Gender considerations in entrepreneurship across cultures

**READINGS:**


**TOPIC 7: The Evolution of Multinational Businesses**

Traditional and Modern Corporations:

Evolution of Western Corporations; What a modern corporation does; Forms of business organization; Non-western corporations, past and present; Why the rise of multinational enterprises? Product life cycle; Internalization; Value chain management

**READINGS:**


*Titterud. XXXX* “The Sociocultural Impacts of Multinational Corporations in Third World Countries”
TOPIC 8: How Business Practices, Marketing, and Advertising Vary Across Cultures

I. Business Practices:
Structure of corporations in other cultures; Management practices in other cultures; Decision-making in other cultures; Performance evaluations in other cultures

READINGS:

II. Marketing and Advertising
Considerations of culture and gender; Marketing to urban and rural/peasant markets

READINGS:

TOPIC 9: Issues in Globalization:
Global level, country level, and multinational corporations; The development cycle: Can countries skip stages of economic development? Economic power; Political power; Sovereignty; Dependency; Comparative Advantage

READINGS: