

**UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO  
RIO PIEDRAS CAMPUS  
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION  
BUSINESS COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT  
COURSE OUTLINE**

**Mission of the Faculty of Business Administration**

To develop professional and academic leaders, by providing an excellent education and research initiatives that prepare them to serve in business environments.

- A. Program:** **Business Communication**
- B. Title:** **Business communication in multicultural settings**
- C. Course Code:** **INCO 4045**
- D. Credit/ Hours:** **45 Hours (3 credits)**
- E. Prerequisites:** **INCO 4008 or its equivalent**

**F. Course description:**

Values and characteristics of diverse cultural groups in Puerto Rico as they are applied in business communication is the topic under study. A theoretical framework of nonverbal communication and its intercultural variations applied to specific business environments is presented.

**G. Learning objectives:**

The course is designed to help students:

1. To identify factors that characterizes effective communication strategies and business transactions.
2. To describe how social forces shape individual identities in society and influence communication and business transactions.
3. To identify the different verbal and nonverbal transactions that characterizes different ethnic groups.
4. To identify and evaluate biases found in business transactions between different ethnic groups.

5. To define and evaluate communication models and strategies used in multicultural business settings.
6. To gain in overview of values and experiences that characterizes selected groups in the Puerto Rican society and their implications for business transactions.

## H. Course content

Some strategies that emerge from objectives are:	<b>Hours</b>
I. To distinguish premises of business communication in multicultural settings.	<b>6</b>
A. Characteristics of business communication indifferent cultural context.	
B. Types of business communication	
Verbal	
Nonverbal	
C. Multicultural audiences in business communication in the United States and Puerto Rico.	
D. Cultural communication barriers	
Learn about individual differences that affect business achievement, growth, and development.	
The effect of culture and context in business.	
E. Practice developing communication strategies for a pluralistic business setting.	
Practice cooperative team learning (groups of selected novels will be set up.)	
Activities:	
Assigned readings on business communication pluralism in the United States and Puerto Rico. Active oral and written participation of students will be required to reach the established goals.	
II. Understand ethnic communication diversity.	<b>6</b>
A. Distinguish among cultural, institutional, and individual racism.	

B. Define a number of key concepts used in the field of intercultural communication and business.

C. Identify some of the basic core culture values which are predominant in our society.

Socioeconomic Statuses

Gender

Handicaps

Exceptionality

D. Examine your own sense of ethnic identity and how it may have changed.

E. Understand the importance of minority perspectives in business issues through an examination of immigration increase in the 50's, 60's, 70's, and 80's.

F. Learn how to use appropriate interview techniques.

Assigned readings on intercultural communication, immigration, and interview techniques. Readings are required for active oral and written class participation in the discussion of issues.

Research on business issues related to intercultural communication, immigration, and interview techniques.

Write interview questions with your partner. Set up interview with two international students.

III. To use literature as a tool for understanding ethnic minority perspectives and diversity within ethnic groups.

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Identify concepts and themes in your selected novel which relate to course goals. (Study questions will be provided for each novel.)

Activities:

Expert groups discuss novels.

Interviews of international students are due. Discussion of interview findings about the macro culture in our society.

IV. To learn to distinguish intercultural business communication strategy

used by diverse multicultural groups in the United States and Puerto Rico.

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Focus in depth on the values, people, and experiences of at least one ethnic group different from your own.

Explain the following:

1. Significance of intercultural differences in language.
2. Differences in nonverbal communication in the areas of proxemics, kinesics, time, and manners.
3. Strategies for becoming a more efficient intercultural communicator.

Activities:

Multicultural calendar presentations will be given and research paper will be due.

V. To develop business communication strategies for intercultural settings.

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1. Learn about aspects of ethnicity that can serve as a guide for understanding cultural differences in business settings.
2. Develop some management strategies while working with an ethnically diverse community.

Activities:

Prepare a bibliography geared to help corporations design strategies for intercultural communication.

Present in written and oral form management strategies for an ethnically diverse community.

VI. To gain greater insights of the changes in business environment (Demographics through your own personal and ethnic characteristics, as well as your sense of your ethnic identity reflected in Puerto Rico and the United States.

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Activities:

Ethnic group essays are due; class discussion of the essays. Discussion of assigned readings (Megatrends).

To gain insights on how to prepare for a business job interview in a cultural setting different from your own

Activity:

Assigned readings on case studies and conflicting interview situations due to cultural misunderstanding will be discussed.

VII. To learn about different business issues as perceived by diverse cultural groups using movies as the departing point of reflection.

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Activities:

Hand out Final "Take Home Exam"

Movie "The Dollmaker"

(The struggle of an Appalachian family against assimilation into the mainstream macro business society of the United States.)

*Business issue:*

Ethnics in the production of products.

Movie "A! Norte\*

(Hispanic immigrants labor force in the United States).

*Business Issue:*

Economic surplus obtained by the oppressors of illegal immigrants in the United States.

Movie "Gung-Ho"

(Japanese vs. American philosophical perspectives on business strategies)

*Business issue:*

Discussion on the different between Japanese and Anglo perspectives on strategies, roles, and functions of business.

Video "Raíces Dominicanas"

(Dominicans in Puerto Rico and their integration in the world of

business.)

*Business issue:*

The evolution of diversified products and services due to cultural diversity.

**TOTAL** 45

### **I. Teaching techniques**

This Business English course is designed to improve student's business communicative skills and abilities to interact in typical professional situations. Through the study of business cases of current events and discussion of assigned readings, students will engage in group writing, proofreading, peer editing, analyses and evaluation of business documents. Students will receive constant and specific feedback throughout the course. Technology plays a major role in this course since students are encouraged to search for reliable sources and use the information for assignments and special projects.

Although this course will use electronic mail and the Internet for sending and receiving some assignments and communicating with the instructor, regular attendance and participation are essential in communication classes. Students should view class attendance as they would work. Absences and lack of participation may affect the outcome of the grade. Students are responsible for all class activities and assignments missed because of tardiness or absences during the semester including the add-drop period. All written work will be submitted during class on the designated due date.

### **J. Available or required resources**

This course includes coverage of business vocabulary, use of electronic sources, listening and reading material, and a course textbook. Other written materials used come from reference books, articles on assigned topics, and handouts prepared by the professor. The student-centered approach allows students to use their own experience and knowledge, expertise in activities and discussion.

The Business Communication Department will support the Business Communication in Multicultural Setting course with instructional materials prepared by the professor and audiovisual equipment (IN Focus, transparency, projectors, TV set, DVD player, laptop computers and Smart boards).

### **K. Evaluation techniques**

Summary of Requirements/Percent of Grade

Regular attendance and class participation including the required readings, required interviews, and the Multicultural Communication Lectures. (These lectures will be performed by guest scholars.) Attendance will be recorded.

1. *Ethnic Roots Essays* 12 %

In this essay you will be asked to describe your ethnic background in terms of:

- a. Where your ancestors came from, when they arrived in Puerto Rico, and where they settled.
- b. Description of your family in regard to cultural assimilation, accommodation, segregation or separatism, amalgamation.
- c. Application of Longstreet's five aspect of ethnicity to yourself and how your own ethnicity is likely to affect you as a businessperson.
- d. Analysis of your own stage of ethnicity, related directly to business transactions in your community and in the macro society.

2. *International Student Interview* 15 %

During the fourth week of the course, you will work with another class member, or partner, to interview an international student on campus. You will each interview a different international student to discover his/her perceptions of the Puerto Rican culture. One partner will observe and take notes while the other conducts the interview. Roles will be reversed for the two interviews.

3. *Cooperative Learning Teams* 10 %

Based on the reading of a selected novel, you will be grouped into five comparable teams. Teams will work together to analyze the novel and its implications in the world of business. (The novels will be selected from the bibliography.)

4. *Ethnic Group Research* 15 %

Each class member will become part of an "expert group" and research one ethnic group. Each group member will interview two or more members of the ethnic group who live in Puerto Rico and conduct other research in order to develop communication strategies to help avoid misunderstanding as well as contribute to your team's multicultural calendar. An analytical research paper will be expected as well as a formal oral presentation on the topic.

5. *Strategies for business communication* 15%

You will develop five strategies for becoming a more efficient intercultural communicator.

## 6. *Bibliography*

You will prepare a bibliography geared to help corporations design strategies for intercultural communication.

## 7. *Final Take-Home Exam*

33%

A final take-home exam will be handed out a week before the last week classes end. It will test conceptual knowledge gained throughout the semester for individual readings, lectures, and class discussions.

Total

100%

## L. **Special needs**

Our Department complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 and is committed to providing equal educational opportunities to all students, regardless of disabilities. Students with disabilities must seek assistance for accommodations specific to their conditions from the disability resource center (Oficina de Asuntos para las Personas con Impedimento), preferably prior to the start of classes, or as soon as the disability becomes known. The disability resource center (OAPI) determines eligibility and specific accommodation requirements based on verification of disability and assessment of student's educational need. Students who have a documented special need that require academic support services must contact the professor the first week of class so these accommodations can be met.

## M. **Academic integrity**

The University of Puerto Rico promotes the highest standards of academic and scientific integrity. Article 6.2 of the UPR Students General Bylaws (Board of Trustees Certification 13, 2009-2010) states that academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: fraudulent actions; obtaining grades or academic degrees by false or fraudulent simulations; copying the whole or part of the academic work of another person; plagiarizing totally or partially the work of another person; copying all or part of another person answers to the questions of an oral or written exam by taking or getting someone else to take the exam on his/her behalf; as well as enabling and facilitating another person to perform the aforementioned behavior. Any of these behaviors will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the disciplinary procedure laid down in the UPR Students General Bylaws.

## N. **Grading system**

100 - 90	A - 4.00
89 - 80	B - 3.00
79 - 70	C - 2.00
69 - 60	D - 1.00
59 - 0	F - 0

## O. Bibliography

Packed of selected readings from bibliography will be facilitated either through hand-outs or will be read in the library.

Assigned novel. (Novel will be assigned in the first week of class.)

Dozier, E. P. (2002). *Linguistic acculturation studies in the southwest. Ethnolinguistics*. Austin, Texas.

Fishman, j. A. (2001). The sociology of language today. *Review American*, 14:466-01.

Freire, P. (1977). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Herder & He

Haugen, E. (2000). *Language contact and immigrant languages in the US current trends in linguistics*. Mouton: The Hague.

Hofstede, G. H. (1999). *Culture's consequences: International differences in work-related values*. Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publication.

Howard, R. (Director). (1986). *Gung Ho* [Motion picture]. United States: Paramount Home Entertainment.

Longstreet, W. (2000). *Aspects of ethnicity*. New York: Teacher College Press.

Mackey, W. F. (2000). *Bilingualism in the modern world*. Montreal, Canada: Harvest House.

Roth, Robert. *International Marketing Communications*. NTC Publishing Group, Illinois, 1988.

Urdung, Laurence. *Handbook for Multilingual Business Writing*. NTC Publishing Group, Illinois, 1988.