

Universidad de Costa Rica  
Sistema de Estudios de Posgrado  
Escuela de Lenguas Modernas  
Posgrado en la Enseñanza del Inglés como Lengua Extranjera  
Maestría Profesional en Enseñanza del Inglés como Lengua Extranjera  
Modalidad: Virtual

### **Proposed Course Syllabus**

Name: Teaching Culture	Pre-requisites: None
Code: PF-0300	Co-requisites: None
Credits: 4	Cycle: I
Total hours: 12 Synchronous hours: 2 Asynchronous hours: 10	Classification: Open to students admitted to the MA/TEFL Program
	Modality: virtual

#### **I. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is designed to train teachers to understand the concept of culture and its power and rightful place in the ESL/EFL classroom. The course explores the role of culture in the study of language in order to enrich the language-learning experience. Discussion and analysis are focused on the following main components:

1. Theoretical considerations in the fields of Intercultural Communication and Second/Foreign Language Learning.
2. Exploration of cultural differences and their implications for the language learning process.
3. Evaluation of the cultural component in textbooks and language lessons and design of activities to teach cultural skills and topics.

#### **II. OBJECTIVES**

Over the course of the semester, the students will:

1. Demonstrate a clear understanding of the connection between language and culture and of the importance of integrating culture in the foreign language classroom.
2. Become acquainted with key concepts in the study of culture and apply this knowledge to the processes involved in the language classroom.
3. Develop a framework for the analysis of differences in values, attitudes, and underlying cultural assumptions.
4. Carry out a series of culture learning projects and tasks designed to increase their own awareness and sensitivity to the issues discussed.
5. Carry out a research project to evaluate the cultural component of an EFL class in Costa Rica and its English textbook(s).

6. Develop a set of criteria for the selection of topics, texts, and activities aimed at teaching culture in the EFL/ESL classroom.
7. Design and present a culture unit to teach a specific cultural skill or topic to a well-defined population of English language learners.

### III. CONTENTS

#### **Culture in the language classroom**

- Cultural content for the language classroom
- Culture teaching frameworks

#### **Culture-related concepts**

- Language/culture
- Polychronic and monochronic time
- High-context and low-context messages
- Cultural practices and perspectives

#### **Communication across cultures**

- Culture-specific communication patterns
- Cross-cultural fatigue

#### **Teaching culture**

- Culture learning goals and outcomes
- Criteria for assessing the cultural component of language classes
- The culture learning process
- Criteria for teaching culture in the language classroom
- Teaching culture through cultural dialogues
- Providing culturally sensitive feedback
- Performance objectives

### IV. METHODOLOGY

The course will include a combination of lectures, experiential workshops, and individual or group presentations by students. Reading assignments will form the basis of each lesson. Homework must be completed on time. Active participation is expected during presentations, class discussions, lectures, and other online activities.

**The course will be run 100% virtually through the institutional platform *Mediación Virtual*, the teleconferencing platform Zoom, and other digital tools.**

### V. EVALUATION

Grading will be based on the following criteria:

Written reflections (three) .....15% (5% each)  
 Textbook evaluation report (in groups).....20% (15% report; 5% oral presentation)

Quizzes (2) .....	20% (10% each)
Culture teaching unit (in groups).....	20%
Final project (in groups).....	25% (20% report; 5% oral presentation)

## VI. Important notes

1. Students are expected to attend class regularly, study the material assigned in preparation for every class, and participate in all synchronous and asynchronous activities.
2. Contributing to class discussions by reacting to comments, asking questions, giving meaningful feedback to classmates, and providing pertinent insights are key components of this course.
3. The use of language will be evaluated in all oral and written assignments and will represent 30% of each grade. A rubric for the grading of language performance will be part of the guidelines for each assignment.
4. **No late assignments will be accepted.**
5. **Academic integrity and plagiarism**

### **Reglamento de Orden y Disciplina de los Estudiantes de la Universidad de Costa Rica**

#### **ARTICULO 4.** Son faltas **muy graves**:

- g) Utilizar, con conocimiento de causa, documentos falsificados, para cualquier gestión universitaria administrativa, académica o de cualquier otra índole.
- j) Plagiar, en todo o en parte, obras intelectuales de cualquier tipo.
- k) Presentar como propia una obra intelectual elaborada por otra u otras personas, para cumplir con los requisitos de cursos, trabajos finales de graduación o actividades académicas similares.

#### **ARTICULO 9.** Las faltas serán sancionadas según la magnitud del hecho con las siguientes medidas:

- a) Las faltas muy graves, con suspensión de su condición de estudiante regular no menor de seis meses calendario, hasta por seis años calendario.
- b) Las graves con suspensión de quince días lectivos a seis meses calendario.

## VII. COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY

### **Textbooks**

Hall, E. (1989). *The dance of life*. Doubleday.

Moran, P. R. (2001). *Teaching culture: Perspectives in practice*. Heinle Cengage Learning.

Richard-Amato, P. A. & Snow, M. A. (1992). *The multicultural classroom: Readings for content-area teachers*. Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

Seelye, N. H. (1984). *Teaching culture*. National Textbook Co.

Storti, C. (1994). *Cross-cultural dialogues*. Intercultural Press, Inc.

Wintergerst, A. C., & McVeigh, D. J. (2011). *Tips for teaching culture: Practical approaches to intercultural communication*. Pearson Longman.

### **Additional resources**

Damen, L. (1987). *Culture learning: The fifth dimension in the language classroom*. Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

Gill, S., & Cankova, M. (2002). *Intercultural activities*. Oxford University Press.

Hall, E. (1989). *Beyond culture*. Doubleday.

Hinkel, E. (Ed.). (1999). *Culture in second language teaching and learning*. Cambridge University Press.

Hofstede, G. (n.d.). *The 6-D model of national culture*. Geert Hofstede.  
<https://geerthofstede.com/culture-geert-hofstede-gert-jan-hofstede/6d-model-of-national-culture/>

Hoffman, E. (1989). *Lost in translation: A life in a new language*. Penguin Books.

Kramsch, C. (1993). *Context and culture in language teaching*. Oxford University Press.

Seelye, N. H. (Ed.) (1996). *Experiential activities for intercultural learning*. Intercultural Press, Inc.

Storti, C. (1999). *Figuring foreigners out: A practical guide*. Intercultural Press, Inc.

### **VIII. TENTATIVE TIMETABLE (Dates and assignments are subject to change. Assignments are for the following week.)**

<b>Week/Date</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
<b>Week 1</b> <b>March 17</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course overview</li> <li>• Cultural content: what to teach</li> <li>• Introduction to culture teaching frameworks and course methodology</li> </ul>	<b>Reading assignment:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kramsch: Introduction (pp.1 – 14)</li> <li>- Moran: Chapters 1 – 3 (pp. 1 – 33)</li> </ul>
<b>Week 2</b> <b>March 24</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs assessment (?)</li> <li>• Defining culture</li> </ul>	<b>Reading assignment:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Moran: Chapter 4 (pp. 34 - 47)</li> <li>- Hall: Chapter 3 (pp. 44 – 58)</li> </ul>
<b>Week 3</b> <b>March 31</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language-and-culture.</li> </ul>	<b>Reading assignment:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Moran: Chapter 6 (pp. 57-73)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monochronic and polychronic time.</li> <li>• Preliminary guidelines for research project (Part I: textbook evaluation; Part II: classroom observation)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hall: Chapter 4 (pp. 59-77)</li> </ul> <p><b>Written assignment: Reflection 1</b></p> <p>Start exploring topics for research project (aspects of culture to serve as the focus of classroom observations)</p>
<b>April 7</b>	Easter Holiday	
<b>Week 4 April 14</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural practices</li> <li>• High-context and low-context messages</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reading assignment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Moran: Chapter 7 (pp. 75 – 89)</li> <li>- Hall: Chapter 7 (pp. 108-123)</li> <li>- Hofstede: The 6-D Model of National Culture (text and video): <a href="https://geerthofstede.com/culture-geert-hofstede-gert-jan-hofstede/6d-model-of-national-culture/">https://geerthofstede.com/culture-geert-hofstede-gert-jan-hofstede/6d-model-of-national-culture/</a></li> </ul>
<b>Week 5 April 21</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural perspectives</li> <li>• Culture indexes</li> <li>• Communication across cultures: how culture shapes communication</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reading assignment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Moran: Chapter 10 (pp. 107-121)</li> <li>- Seelye: Chapter 3 (pp. 48 - 59)</li> <li>- Seelye: Chapter 8 (pp. 141-155)</li> </ul>
<b>Week 6 April 28 *Semana U</b>	<p><b>*Asynchronous pending confirmation of “UCR-employee day”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture learning goals and outcomes</li> <li>• Developing criteria to observe and assess the cultural component in the language classroom/materials.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reading assignment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Moran: Chapter 11 (pp. 122-135)</li> </ul> <p><b>Written assignment: Reflection 2</b></p> <p><b>Assignments :</b> Formulate preliminary research question(s) for the classroom observation project.</p> <p>Prepare preliminary outline of review of literature.</p>
<b>Week 7 May 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The culture learning process.</li> <li>• Preparing for classroom observations</li> <li>• Feedback on research question(s) and outline of literature review</li> </ul>	<p><b>Assignment:</b> Study for Quiz 1.</p> <p>Revise research questions and outline of literature review.</p>
<b>Week 8 May 12</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quiz 1 (in-class)</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Assignment:</b> Prepare textbook evaluation report and oral presentation.</p>

		Conduct class observations. (Finish no later than June 2.)
<b>Week 9 May 19</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Oral reports on textbook evaluation</b></li> <li>• <b>Students hand in textbook evaluation report</b></li> <li>• Final feedback on research question(s) and outline of literature review</li> </ul>	<b>Reading assignment:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Moran: Chapter 12 (pp. 136-155)</li> <li>- Storti: Chapter 1 (pp. 1-11)</li> <li>- Storti: How to write a dialogue (pp. 133-136)</li> </ul>
<b>Week 10 May 26</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching culture</li> <li>• Criteria for developing a culture teaching unit.</li> <li>• Teaching culture through cultural dialogues</li> </ul>	<b>Reading assignment:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Seelye: Chapter 4. (pp. 60-77)</li> <li>- Wintergerst &amp; McVeigh: Chapter 3 (pp. 53 – 76)</li> <li>- Richard-Amato &amp; Snow. Providing culturally sensitive feedback. (pp. 126-141)</li> </ul>
<b>Week 11 June 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defining performance objectives</li> <li>• Providing culturally sensitive feedback.</li> <li>• Preparing for culture teaching units</li> </ul>	<b>Reading assignment:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wintergerst &amp; McVeigh: Chapter 4 (pp. 77 – 98)</li> </ul> <b>Assignment:</b> Prepare oral report on classroom observation.  <b>Written assignment: Reflection 3</b>
<b>Week 12 June 9</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Oral reports on classroom observations</b></li> </ul>	<b>Assignment:</b> Prepare first draft of culture teaching unit.  Study for Quiz 2
<b>Week 13 June 16</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback on proposed culture teaching units.</li> <li>• <b>Quiz 2</b></li> </ul>	<b>Assignment:</b> Prepare culture teaching unit and oral presentation.
<b>Week 14 June 23</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Culture unit presentations and reflection</b></li> </ul> <b>3 groups:</b>	
<b>Week 15 June 30</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Culture unit presentations and reflection</b></li> </ul> <b>3 groups:</b>	
<b>Week 16 July 7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Culture unit presentations and reflection</b></li> </ul> <b>3 groups:</b>	<b>Assignment:</b> Prepare final research report

<b>Week 17</b> <b>July 14</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Students hand in final research reports.</b></li> </ul>	
<b>Week 18</b> <b>July 21</b>	<b>FINAL GRADES</b>	