



MGT 542

Cross-Cultural Management

Module III, 2025-26

Course Information

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Classes:
Lectures: Monday & Thursday 15:30-17:20
Venue: PHBS Building, Room—To be determined

1. Course Description

1.1 Context

In today's global economy, leaders must not only work across cultures but also manage the tensions and misunderstandings that cultural diversity and geopolitical uncertainty create. As globalization increasingly coexists with fragmentation, digital collaboration, and shifting power relations, cross-cultural management has become a core managerial capability rather than a peripheral skill. This course treats cultural difference as a practical management challenge—one that, when handled skillfully, can enable learning, innovation, and effective collaboration across borders. (ChatGPT 5.2)

Globalization remains a fundamental force in the contemporary world economy, characterized by interconnected, interdependent, and technology-driven relationships. As Jack Ma stated at the 2018 World Economic Forum, "No one can stop globalization, no one can stop trade. If trade stops, the world stops." This sentiment reflects the ongoing reality that globalization has eroded the ability of corporations to operate exclusively within their own national borders. Today, commercial activities, media content, and travel transcend nation-state boundaries, creating a world where organizations form mergers, acquisitions, joint ventures, foreign investments, and strategic alliances across cultures and geographies.

In this context, multinational corporations (MNCs) play a pivotal role in the global economy, requiring managers to engage with clients, employees, and stakeholders from varied cultural backgrounds. Effective cultural competence and intercultural communication skills are essential for success in this environment. Nowhere is this more apparent than in projects such as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which exemplifies the scale and scope of cross-border collaboration.

Chinese corporations, in particular, have demonstrated remarkable international growth over the past several decades. In 2025, the Fortune Global 500 list featured a total 130 Chinese organizations from Mainland China (124), Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan, spanning multiple industries and generating approximately \$10.7 trillion in revenue (26% of total revenue of **ALL** 500 companies). Nearly all of these corporations have significant international operations,

investments, and/or holdings. According to the International Monetary Fund, China accounted for 19.63% of the global GDP based on purchasing power parity (PPP) in 2025. This reflects China's continued economic significance, even amidst slight changes in rankings and economic metrics.

This growth trajectory indicates Chinese corporations continue to play a significant role in international business, with the BRI further accelerating the need for culturally competent managers. Whether working domestically or abroad, these managers will be crucial to fostering integration and achieving success in an increasingly multicultural world.

Course overview:

This course examines the major theoretical perspectives and critical issues in cross-cultural management through a multidisciplinary lens. Students will gain insight into the complexities of management in a variety of cross-cultural settings.

Course structure:

According to one study, around 78% of companies worldwide were employing AI technologies in 2025. (www.hostinger.com/uk/tutorials/how-many-companies-use-ai#Top_statistics_on_companies_using_AI_in_2025)

Classes will employ a case study approach, with students working in management or consulting teams to identify, analyze, and resolve disruptive challenges arising from cultural differences. While theoretical bases will be examined, the course emphasizes practical application, enabling students to address real-world scenarios effectively.

A central feature of the course is the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a tool to support problem-solving in cross-cultural management. Students will learn to harness AI to identify, evaluate, and apply established theoretical frameworks, with a focus on discerning accurate information and recognizing misleading data (i.e., "hallucinations"). Additionally, students will develop skills in crafting, evaluating, and refining effective prompts to enhance AI-driven analysis, gaining hands-on experience in leveraging AI to address complex cultural management issues.

The course will be dynamic in nature with the potential for short-notice changes in the schedule as class needs and student interests' dictate. Moreover, the class is expected will be highly interactive, with students discussing and critiquing the results from AI research

1.2 Textbooks and Reading Materials

There are no required materials for the course, but various readings may be posted on CM or provided in class. Subject course materials will be taken from works by Geert Hofstede, Fons Trompenaars, Richard D. Lewis, E.T. Hall, and Stella Ting-Toomey, the GLOBE Study, M.J. Gelfand, the World Values Survey, etc., in addition to numerous cross-cultural and international business textbooks.

Information will also come from *Cross Cultural Management*, *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, *Cross-Cultural Management Journal*, *Cross Cultural and Strategic Management*, and other management journals.

2. Learning Outcomes

2.1 Intended Learning Outcomes

Learning Goals	Objectives	Assessment
1. Our graduates will be effective communicators	1.1. Our students will produce quality business and research-oriented documents.	Students will be required to read, analyse, and prepare written and oral reports on cross-cultural management case studies
	1.2. Students are able to professionally present their ideas and also logically explain and defend their argument.	
2. Our graduates will be skilled in	2.1. Students will be able to lead and participate in group for projects, discussion,	Students will be assigned to work in groups for cross-

team work and leadership	and presentation.	cultural case studies and in-class activities
	2.2. Students will be able to apply leadership theories and related skills.	
3. Our graduates will be trained in ethics	3.1. In a case setting, students will use appropriate techniques to analyze business problems and identify the ethical aspects, provide a solution and defend it.	Ethical variations across cultures in the business context will be explored in both theory and application
	3.2. Our students will practice ethics in the duration of the program.	Students will demonstrate academic integrity through a comprehensive understanding of plagiarism and how to avoid it
4. Our graduates will have a global perspective.	4.1. Students will have an international exposure.	Course materials will present management issues impacting business in varied international contexts
5. Our graduates will be skilled in problem-solving and critical thinking.	5.1. Our students will have a good understanding of fundamental theories in their fields.	Problem solving and critical thinking will be developed by analysis of case studies addressing cross-cultural management issues impacting international and domestic corporations.
	5.2. Our students will be prepared to face problems in various business settings and find solutions.	
	5.3. Our students will demonstrate competency in critical thinking.	The use of GAI will play a central role in the development of course content, case analysis, and presentations of findings.
	5.4 Students will demonstrate a capability to productively employ Artificial Intelligence (AI) and evince skills in discerning false and misleading data (i.e., "hallucinations")	

2.2 Course specific objectives

Primary Objectives

- Provide an organizing framework for recognizing and analyzing cross-cultural influences in an organizational context.
- Learn to understand, accommodate, and benefit from cultural differences in multicultural environments
- Gain an appreciation for using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to assist in resolving cross-cultural issues in a business environment
- *Gain experience in critically examining and evaluating AI derived information.*

Specific objectives

- Understand contemporary theoretical foundations that explain varied cultural worldviews, intercultural communications, and cross-cultural practices in commercial environments.
- Recognize how diverse culturally based value systems impact business operations.
- Understand how culture influences the principal contexts of corporate management—e.g. leadership, decision making, negotiations, conflict management, etc.
- Learn how:
 - employee motivations vary across cultures.
 - to acquire and apply intercultural competence in cross-cultural settings.
 - to lead, and interact with, multicultural workgroups in commercial contexts.
- Obtain the intercultural competencies requisite to successfully live and work in a multicultural environment.
- Understand how cultural perceptions affect the marketing and service industries.

- Gain awareness of culture’s role in expatriate relocation, adjustment, and adaptation.
- Learn the cultural values and business behaviors of selected countries in Asia, the Americas, Europe, and the Middle East.
- Gain experience in:
 - using AI to derive solutions to simulated cross-cultural management challenges.
 - *critically examining the uses, limits, biases, and risks of using AI tools*

2.3 Assessment/Grading Details

Activity	%	Description
Class Attendance*	10	
Class Participation	10	Actively contributing to class discussion/ exchanges
Course Exam	60	Comprehensive, objective examination
Final Case Analysis	20	Individual analysis of a case study
Total	100	

Grades throughout the course, as well as the final course grade, are EARNED NOT GIVEN. All work will be evaluated based on clearly defined criteria; strengths and weaknesses will be marked and explained.

2.4 Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

It is important for a student’s effort and credit to be recognized through class assessment. Credits earned for a student work due to efforts done by others are clearly unfair. Deliberate dishonesty is considered academic misconducts, which include plagiarism; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; or altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying of data, research procedures, or data analysis.

All assessments are subject to academic misconduct check. Misconduct check may include reproducing the assessment, providing a copy to another member of faculty, and/or communicate a copy of this assignment to the PHBS Discipline Committee. A suspected plagiarized document/assignment submitted to a plagiarism checking service may be kept in its database for future reference purpose.

Where violation is suspected, penalties will be implemented. The penalties for academic misconduct may include: deduction of honour points, a mark of zero on the assessment, a failing grade for the whole course, and reference of the matter to the Peking University Registrar.

AI tools requirements:

Using AI tools to complete assignments or assessments without the approval of the course instructor will be regarded as an act of academic dishonesty. Depending the severity of the situation, penalties will be implemented in accordance with the provisions of the Peking University Graduate Student Handbook.

For more information of plagiarism, please refer to *PHBS Student Handbook*.

3. Topics, Teaching and Assessment Schedule

The selection and schedule of topics for this course is, by design, dynamic. Student input will influence the direction and content of classes. **Therefor the course calendar is subject to adjustment provided that fair notice is given to the class.**

Week	Class 1	Class 2
1 02 & 05 Mar	Introduction of course and instructor.	Introduction to AI (Understanding and application)

2 09 & 12 Mar	Culture Simulation; AI Searches and comparisons of definitions of seminal course themes	Cultural Values Typologies
3 16 & 19 Mar	Cultural Values Typologies	Cultural Values Typologies
4 23 & 26 Mar	GLOBE Study; World Values Survey;	Leadership & Management Styles; Employee Motivation
5 30 Mar 02 Apr	Cultural Transitions	Simulated Business Meeting
6 08 & 09 Apr	Conflict, Negotiation, & Decision Making	Multicultural Workgroups/Teams; Global HR; Gender
7 13 & 15 Apr	Case Study Video	Analysis/Discussion of Case Study Video
8 16 & 20 Apr	Case Study/Developed Topics	Case Study/Developed Topics
9 23 & 27 Apr	Comprehensive course critique	Case Study(s)

4. Miscellaneous

This course will employ a case-study pedagogy (教育学), with limited lecture time. Students will work in teams and use AI to identify, understand, analyze and discuss cross-cultural management issues. Therefore, class attendance and interactive participation takes on added significance.