Course Description

The purpose of this course is to increase skills and knowledge of American culture among international students and enhance their integration into the university community. Throughout the course, students will gain an understanding of both national and local culture. In addition, students will be introduced to campus resources and strategies that will help them to be academically successful and to enhance their study abroad experience. The course will provide opportunities in and out of class for students to navigate a variety of social scenarios, participate in conversation practice activities, apply critical reading skills, and practice written communication.

Core Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to

- Develop, interpret, and express ideas through effective written communication
- Locate campus resources to solve problems/answer questions
- Gather, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information relevant to American culture and academic life

Course Objectives

- Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing
- Learning how to find and use resources for answering questions or solving problems
- Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view

Grading Policy

- 4 Journal Assignments (10% each) 40%
- Campus Activity 10%
- 2 summaries (10% each) 20%
- Cultural Presentation 15%
- Class Participation / Quizzes 15%

Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90 – 100</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>80 – 89</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>70 – 79</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>60 – 69</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>59 and Below</td>
<td>F</td>
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Late Work Policy

- Ten points will be deducted for each class day that a written assignment is late
- Class activities and quizzes cannot be made up in the event of an absence
**Absence Policy**

**Excessive absences, (more than FOUR absences FOR ANY REASON) will automatically result in a failing grade in the course.**

- Students are expected to attend all classes, conferences, and required Writing Center activities unless prevented from doing so by illness, bona fide emergencies, or circumstances beyond their control.
- **Should a serious illness, emergency, or other crisis occur, it is the student’s responsibility to contact the Student Life Office immediately so that professors may be informed.** It is also the student’s responsibility to stay in touch with instructors in order to keep up with the work.
- If a student misses class for any reason, it is that student’s responsibility to check with a classmate and Blackboard for the class assignment and handouts for that day.
- If a student is absent, it is the student’s responsibility to make up the work missed **BEFORE** the next class meeting so that the completed homework can be brought to the next class meeting.
- If a student is aware of an absence that will occur, it is that student’s responsibility to contact the professors **in advance** and to complete assigned work **in advance of the absence.**

**Course Activities**

- **Summaries** – Students will write TWO summaries of assigned articles throughout the course. The first summary will consist of multiple drafts and a required visit to the Writing Center. The second summary will be an in-class timed writing assignment.
- **Reflections** – Students will write four brief reflection pieces in which they describe and respond to the experience of FOUR required off-campus outings. These off-campus outings include eating at a sit-down restaurant, going to a large grocery store, going to a cultural event, and attending an ASU football game. Prior to each of these outings, the instructor will discuss with students appropriate and inappropriate behaviors.
- **Campus Activity** – Students will be required to participate in ONE activity on campus that lasts at least one hour. Students must provide documentation that they attended the activity and describe the event.

**Required Materials**

- Access to Ramport, Blackboard, and Microsoft Word
- In addition, you will be required to attend outings which may necessitate transportation off campus.

**Course Readings**

- “25 Foods Texas Does Better Than Anywhere Else” from Buzzfeed.com
- “101 Characteristics of Americans / American Culture”
- “Adjusting to College Life” from the International Student Guide to the USA website
- “Adventures in US Culture and Values” by Marian Beane
- “American Culture: Traditions and Customs of the United States” by Kim Ann Zimmermann
- “Cultural Immersion: Getting Involved in Your New Community” from the International Student Guide to the USA website
- “How to Understand Texan Culture” by Adam Groffman
- “Learning About U.S. American Culture and Values” by John Dickson
- “Preserving the Mohair Trade” by Caitlin Richards
Academic Integrity
Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding the Academic Honor Code, which is contained in both print and web versions of the Student Handbook.

American Disability Act
Persons with disabilities which may warrant academic accommodations must contact the Student Life Office, Room 112 University Center, in order to request and implement academic accommodations.

Religious Holy Day
A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence.

Syllabus

DAY 1:
Introduction to course
Campus scavenger hunt activity (map provided)

DAY 2:
PowerPoint tour of San Angelo
Assign Campus Activity (Due at end of course)
Assign Journal #1

DAY 3:
Discuss steps for critical reading (handout)
Practice critical reading as a class (“Adjusting to College Life”)
Homework: Watch Video 6 of the Information Literacy module in Blackboard and answer the 5 quiz questions that follow the video; watch Video 7 and answer the 5 quiz questions that follow the video

DAY 4:
Reading quiz
Due – Journal #1 (grocery store)
Guest speakers – tutors, multicultural center
Homework: Critically read “Adventures in US Culture and Values” (handout)

DAY 5:
Group conversation about reading assignment
Report to class on your group’s discussion
Video – “American Culture Shock” (YouTube)
Assign Journal #2
Homework: Critically read “How to Understand Texan Culture”

DAY 6:
Reading quiz
Discuss restaurant etiquette
Video – “Restaurant Etiquette – Glove and Boots”
MEXICAN FOOD DAY!
DAY 7: Due – Journal #2 (restaurant)  
Guest speaker: UCPC (discuss campus activities, programs, and service projects)  
Read “Cultural Immersion: Getting Involved in Your New Community” in class  
Assign Journal #3

DAY 8: In class, critically read “American Culture: Traditions and Customs of the United States”  
Discuss steps for writing an effective summary (handout)  
Homework: Compose first draft of summary

DAY 9: No class – conference with me or Writing Center tutor about summary draft

DAY 10: Due – final draft of summary  
Assign American culture presentation  
Homework: Meet with partners to plan presentation

DAY 11: Due – Journal #3 (cultural event)  
Homework: Critically read “Preserving the Mohair Trade”

DAY 12: Compose Summary #2 in class (Class will meet in a computer lab.)

DAY 13: Assign Journal #4  
American Culture Presentations

DAY 14: American Culture Presentations

DAY 15: Due – Journal #4 (football game); Campus activity documentation  
Course evaluation  
CLASS BAR-B-Q