

**Titan Transitions: Eastern Europe Course Module**

Vicki Suehr, Adjunct Faculty

Division of Business, Arts, Sciences, and Technology

Community College of Beaver County

**Course Title:** Titan Transitions, COLL 100

**Course Description**

This is a new student orientation course required for all Community College of Beaver County (CCBC) students. Titan Transitions emphasizes the growth of the individual both academically and personally. Students become part of the learning community at CCBC through an orientation to campus technology and services and by acquiring knowledge of the culture of higher education. The course is a one credit course that is free to students and the book is provided by the Board of Trustees.

**Learning Module Title**

Beyond Your Comfort Zone: Embracing Diversity

**Module Objectives**

Upon completion of this module, students will be able to

* Demonstrate critical thinking when researching first year written assignments.
* Recognize key academic resilience factors and interpret current personal situations utilizing academic resilience factors.
* Work independently as well as part of a group/team.
* Challenge themselves to move beyond their comfort zone and connect with others who are different from them.

**Module Overview**

Diversity refers to differences among and between individuals and is much broader than one may think. Diversity goes beyond ethnicity and race to include culture, economic status, cognitive ablitlities, gender, and age. For many college students, college may be their first time they interact with individuals who are different from them in a variety of ways. One’s own beliefs and biases often prevent them from engaging with others. Interaction with others from different backgrounds can not only enrich the student’s college experience but also serve as an amazing source of resileience. Research shows that diversity experiences have been associated with increased critical thiknking skills (Pascarella, Palmer, Moye, & Pierson, 2001).

The module will consist of 2 assignments. One will be a written assignment based on research conducted by the student. The other assignment will be a discussion post in which the student will share what they found in their research.

**In Class Videos for Discussion during Class Period**

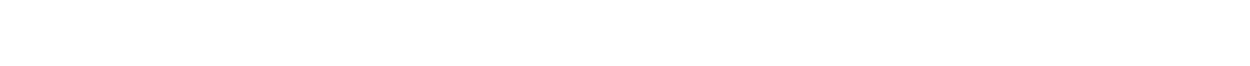
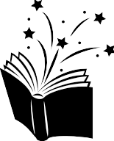
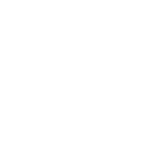
**The European Union Explained**

http://www.bing.com/videos/searchq=video+on+eastern+european+culture&&view=detail&mid=7BB7E44926C26156E3B67BB7E44926C26156E3B6&rvsmid=CDFF38093EFA89BA689DCDFF38093EFA89BA689D&fsscr=-990&FORM=VDFSRV

**European Culture vs. American Culture**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ABfCO87Twhg

**In Class Handout for Group Discussion during Class**



Name\_ Date \_

**Exploring Diversity**

Part 1. Answer the following questions about yourself.

1. What is your ethnic background?
2. Where were your parents and grandparents born?
3. How much education do your parents have?
4. What languages do you speak?
5. What is your biggest challenge this semester?
6. What is one of your hopes or dreams for the future?
7. What do you enjoy most?
8. What is your most important value and why?
9. What is one thing you are proud of?
10. What is one thing people would not know about you just by looking at you?
11. Have you ever experienced discrimination because of your differences? If so, briefly describe this discrimination.

Part 2. Meet with two other students you do not know. Introduce yourself and share answers to the above questions. Your instructor will ask you to share your answers to the following questions with the class.

1. List three interesting things you learned about other persons in your group.
2. Did you change any assumptions you had about persons in your group?

**Written Assignment: Embracing Diversity**

Each student will be asked to think about the classes they are currently taking and any college activities they participate in. Are there individuals that are from different cultural backgrounds than they are from? Are they able to comfortably approach these individuals and have conversations with them?

The written assignment will have the student describe, explain, and rectify a situation that illustrates an intercultural difference within a work, college, or personal environment. The paper should include the following:

A full description of the intercultural difference. Describe the context, the principle players, and the outcome of the situation. Be attentive to verbal and nonverbal components in the experience you describe.

A diagnosis of the intercultural difference. Using two outside sources, research the cultural norms of the principles players involved in the given situation. Explain how these cultural norms may have impacted the situation.

Strategies for dealing with the situation. Using your cited resources and or the text, provide several recommendations that would have prevented an intercultural difference from creating a situation and paved the way for a more effective communication.

This paper should be 1,050 to 1,400 words. Your final paper must include at least two sources (other than the class text) cited properly in the text and with proper reference listings at the end of your paper.

**Instructions for Weekly Discussion**

There is one Discussion Board Topic each week. Discussion Board Topics give students the opportunity to strengthen their ability to communicate effectively in writing. Students should answer the question posted in the Discussion Board Topic and comment on responses made by other students. Students are expected to post contributions that are well thought out, well written, and that apply the principles of effective communication. Student Expectations for Discussion Posts:

(1.) Students are expected to log on and participate in weekly Discussion Board Topics at least twice a week. Participation at least twice a week is necessary if students are to meaningfully interact on topics presented in class (class meetings consist of one hour once a week).

(2.) Post your answer to the Discussion Board Topic by Wednesday/Thursday midnight of each week.

(3.) Post two separate responses to your classmate no later than Sunday night at 7pm.

Your contributions to the Discussion Board Topic are worth 20 points for each week for a total of 30% of your final grade. There is NO MAKE-UP option for participation in the weekly Discussion Board Topics. Students cannot be given "other assignments" or extra credit to "make-up" for not being able to participate.

Your responses to your classmates will be graded on their substance and thoughtfulness, and should reflect appropriate application of emerging knowledge and vocabulary in the topic area. Each posting should add value to the discussion. Adding value to the discussion would include things like a practitioner example, posting a web site, asking a question of your fellow classmates, giving a personal example, bringing in something from the textbook, from a video, or from some outside reading to support your opinion.

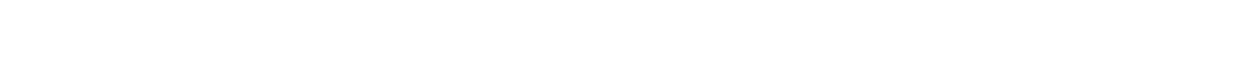
|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The grading of Discussion Board Topics breaks down as follows: **A. Grading Criteria** | **0 points** | **1-5 points** | **6-10 points** | |
| Volume & Frequency  2 times/week:  Post your answer to the Discussion Board Topic by Wednesday/Thursday midnight of each week  Post your response to one classmate no later than Sunday night at 7pm | 0 posts | 1 post | 3 posts | |
| **B. Grading Criteria** | **0 points** | **1-3 points** | **4-6 points** | **7-10 points** |
| Added Value  Uses class concepts and terms | *No* class concepts and | *Limited* use of class terms | *Some* use of class terms and | *Many* uses of class concepts |

**This Weeks Discussion Post**

Write a Discussion Post based on the research you completed for the written assignment which describes a “day in the life,” imagining that you and your family lived in an Eastern European country during a specific time period. Be sure to use primary sources as the foundation for your discussion post. Discuss what features of your “imagined” life are different from your real life, as well as those that are.

**NEXT PAGE:**

**Additional Handout that Student may use for Ideas for Written Assignment and Discussion Post:**



Name\_ Date \_

**Exploring My Culture**

Everyone has a unique cultural background based on many different factors. Answer these questions to explore your unique culture.

1. Describe where you grew up and the school you attended.
2. What beliefs did you learn from your family?
3. What beliefs did you learn from your teachers? How would your teachers describe you as a student?
4. How has your religious training or lack of religious training affected your beliefs?
5. If you are in a relationship, describe how your partner has affected your beliefs.
6. If you have children, how have your values and beliefs changed?
7. Are the beliefs you grew up with right for you today? Why or why not?

**Texts**

*Student Success in College:* *Doing what works*, Christine Harrington, Wadsworth, 2013.

**General Education Policy**

This assignment meets the specifications of CCBC General Education under **Communication Proficiency:** Discussion Posts.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **General Education Requirement #1: Communication Proficiency** | | | |
| **Outcome #1:**  Demonstrate clear and skillful communication methods appropriate to different occasions, audiences, and purposes | **Mastery**  Student consistently demonstrates clear and skillful communication methods appropriate to occasion, audience, and purpose. | **Progressing**  Student generally demonstrates clear and skillful communication methods appropriate to occasion, audience, and purpose. | **Low/No Mastery**  Student does not consistently or generally demonstrate clear and skillful communication methods appropriate to occasion, audience, and purpose. |

References:

Pascarella, E., Palmer B., Moye, M., & Pierson, C. (2001). Do diversity experiences influence the development of critical thinking? Journal of College Student Development, 42(3), 257-271. Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

**Other Optional Videos (Can be Expanded and Updated)**

**Eastern Europe Culture**

http://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=video+on+eastern+european+culture&&view=detail&mid=F1734B4B286BE2598DE4F1734B4B286BE2598DE4&rvsmid=CDFF38093EFA89BA689DCDFF38093EFA89BA689D&fsscr=-990&FORM=VDFSRV

**How do people from Eastern Europe really feel about America**

http://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=video+on+eastern+european+culture&&view=detail&mid=779EE1A3A20609C2D22C779EE1A3A20609C2D22C&rvsmid=CDFF38093EFA89BA689DCDFF38093EFA89BA689D&fsscr=-990&FORM=VDFSRV

**Course Reflection**

Over the course of the Bridging the Cultures sessions, I feel that I have had the opportunity to grow substantially. Through the instructors’ lectures, personal interviews, visit to the Croatian church, and video conferencing, this class has given me a solid foundation regarding Eastern European Cultures. This foundation has allowed me to have not only a historical overview of the history and culture of life in European countries but also an outline of where these countries’ have been, where they currently are, and what the future plans for improvement and or change may be. This is beneficial to my teaching because I am able to take the knowledge I have gained and translate it into actual classroom instruction. I can take a 'buffet approach' by combining different aspects to create dynamic lessons that connect to every learner. Overall, this class has been incredibly beneficial both academically and professionally. This course has given me a good base for which to introduce diversity in my course.