
IBUS 331: Cross Cultural Creativity

Instructor: Bruce Heiman, PhD

Office: Sci 350

Office Hours: Tues 10:30-2:30; also by appointment in Palo Alto (email for a day/time).

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Class meets Tu, 3:30-6:20pm, BUS 107

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Overview

Cross-cultural creativity is an increasingly important phenomenon in international business. A precondition of modern competitiveness, the use of multiple cultural perspectives increases students' ability to work in and understand business environments, strategy, and international competition. This course covers the creativity skills needed for managers given the highly competitive dynamics of 21st-century businesses and organizations; locally-oriented as well as highly globalized firms and their associated creativity issues will be discussed in depth.

Important additional objectives include building students' writing, critical thinking, discussion, and presentation skills. A particular emphasis is placed on excellent writing in this course. The course design seeks to foment an environment in which students advance their understanding of and skills with respect to creativity in firms, as well as the economic, political, and social factors affecting successful, far-sighted, and appropriate conduct.

Learning objectives

In addition to refining and expanding research and writing skills, students add substantially to their knowledge of creativity. Following completion of the course, students should be able to demonstrate familiarity with and possibly a degree of mastery over the following skills and knowledge, as demonstrated by their oral and (particularly) written output as assigned:

Individual creativity skills

Group creativity skills

Conceptual blockbusting principles

Barriers to diffusion of design thinking in firms and schools

Managing technological innovation

Introduction to a problem-finding/problem solving perspective.

Issues associated with International aspects of innovation

Required Readings:

(1) Textbooks (both required)

Think, Play, Do (2008)

Mark Dodgson

Conceptual Blockbusting (2001)

James Adams

(2) Articles and papers as assigned by the instructor during the course of the semester.

(3) In addition, students are also expected to review leading business publications such as the Wall Street Journal, Business Week, The New York Times and the Economist for current, application-oriented treatments of creativity-and-business-related topics. This is an important part of the class, as students are expected to develop their own cases and examples for presentation and discussion of readings in class (see below). Additionally, students need to be very up-to-date regarding the present status of any firm, industry or country for which they are responsible in-class or in written submissions. Your performance will be improved with the regular reading (daily) of just ONE additional source as noted above—multiple sources are highly encouraged. Highly recommended: Financial Times, for a Non-US perspective on things.

(4) It is also required to scan the instructor’s web page once per week minimum for announcements. Information critical to the class will regularly be posted there-Students are responsible for reading and acting on these announcements—which may not be repeated in class.

(5) Idea log as provided in the form of a blank sketchbook by the bookstore (bundled with text books).

Evaluation Breakdown: Determinants of the Final Grade

All activities/assignments are graded on a scale of 1-10. The final grade is weighted as follows:

Activity/Assignment:	% weight in final grade	% from Peer Grade
a. Attendance—indiv.	5%	
b. Participation—indiv. (includes idea log)	5%	
c. Readings presentations—Group (1)	12%	33%
d. Final Project Presentation-Group	9%	33%
e. Final Project Paper—Group	9%	33%
f. Critical Note Essays—indiv. (top 3 of 4 count))	30% = 3 x 10% each	
g. Essay Tests—indiv. (top 3 of 4 scores count)	30% = 3 x 10% each	
Total	100%	*

*Note: 10% of the final grade that is based on group work (items c, d, and e, above) is influenced by your fellow group members’ advice to the instructor (10% = 33% of the 30% that is the sum of items c., d., and e.). Again: peer-grades count for 10% of the final grade of each student. The instructor determines the remaining 67% of the group work grades (20% of the final grade).

Also, excessive unexcused absences (more than 1 or 2) will lead to a reduction in the course grade. On the other hand, if you are ill, do NOT come to class! Stay home and get better. Contact me via email to inform me BEFORE class. Catch up on what you missed by working with your group members. You are STILL responsible for any due assignments/graded activities unless arrangements are made with the instructor BEFORE class.

Generally, NO late submissions of any work are permitted.

Hard copy submissions of all writing assignments is required—no email submissions.

Grading Breakdown:

a. 5%: Attendance of individuals. Attendance is taken at the end of each class by each student turning in an index card with name, signature, and an original, unanswered question from the class presentation written on it. Cards are passed out ONLY at the start of class (first 5 minutes) to encourage on-time attendance, and cards are collected ONLY at the end of class—students must turn in their own card each class. The grade is prorated from a 10 based on the fraction of all classes attended.

b. 5% Individual Participation (2% is idea log). Individual participation during others' discussion leadership (when you are in the audience). Ask questions, challenge the presenters if you disagree, offer critical reflections. In every class, oral participation is monitored by the instructor and a sign-up list filled in by students at the end of class. The idea log is part of indiv. Participation, and counts for 2% of the 5%. You need to turn in your idea log at the second-to last class meeting and the requirement is that something is written on every page (single-sided). More about this in class.

c. 12%: In-class reading presentations. Group-based. Your group will present one in-class assigned reading presentation during the semester. These will be discussed extensively in class. Here is the format:

- Reading summary (4-6 minutes)
- Critique of the reading (something(s) your group disagrees with and why—justify your thoughts)
- Case that illustrates one aspect of the assigned reading (may be an example or a counter- example). The case is a story from the real world, not a hypothetical firm or country. Students may use a case from the book, but will receive a higher grade for using outside material (see item 3 in Required Readings above).
- An exercise or activity that creates an ‘experience’ for students based on one of the ideas in the reading.

Regarding when it is your group’s turn to lead the class discussion, you will be graded on the quality of your work (content, presentation), but you will also be graded on how well you stimulate relevant, insightful discussion among other students. This is an important part of the experience in the class—can you lead the other students to participate heavily and remain interested, engaged, and on-topic? See also * under the table above for how peer-evaluations of group-based assignments affect this element of evaluation.

d., and e., 18%: Final Project (Group-based). Presentation (9%) and Paper (9%).

The Final Project consists of a detailed case (a real story, that your group researches in an original manner) that identifies a creativity-related opportunity or problem at a firm (or non-profit) and reports on the potential for exploiting this opportunity by looking at and analyzing the business environment and recommending (based on the readings) strategies for solving/exploiting the problem/opportunity. You must use and cite TWO readings from the reader in your analysis (in-text and in references at the end). Outside readings may be used with the permission of the instructor. Your analysis should be detailed, and illustrate how a specific opportunity, problem or issue is addressed by the creativity tools that you are exposed to during the semester. Having an international dimension to your problem is a huge plus, but since this is the first time the class is offered, it is not required.

THE BEST WAY TO GET A HIGH GRADE ON YOUR PROJECT IS TO GET STARTED WITH YOUR PROJECT EARLY IN THE SEMESTER!

Thought on the Project: I have noticed that many of the best projects shy away from “major” firms everyone has heard of—better (sometimes) to research a small/medium-sized firm and analyze their strategy. Data is often easier to get and you can talk to founders and other top executives. Boutique industries (e.g., Tech. startups, energy drinks, haut couture, antiques, framing shops, restaurants, small hotels, etc.) are often more interesting to your fellow students. That said, the choice of firm remains up to your group. Remember, access to data is an issue, which sometimes is more challenging for smaller firms (but not always).

Written paper (9%): Due last class meeting, start of class. Length: maximum 12 pages double-spaced text (~3500 words). Avoid penalties: Do NOT exceed the length requirements (either number of pages OR number of words). See also * above for how peer-evaluations of group-based assignments affect this element of evaluation.

Presentation (9%): Presentations will take place on the last day of class, and are to be no longer than 10 minutes, plus 5 minutes for student and instructor questions and critical reflections.

f. 30%: Critical notes essays (Individual) (3 x 10%) pertaining to specific readings in the textbooks (and occasional other materials as mentioned in class). Critical notes examine how well the student thinks critically about assigned material before it has been discussed in class. Due: at start of any class, but it is not allowed to turn in a critical note AFTER a given reading has been discussed in class. No exceptions. This suggests a payoff to reading ahead and attacking the critical notes aggressively. Length—3-4 pages double-spaced, Times Roman font, 12 point font minimum, 1 inch margins all around the page (includes references). Yes, that is a very short length—penalties (typically – 1pt.) apply for breaking ANY of these rules. This part of the class is an exercise in writing concisely to enable managers to quickly read and understand your thoughts. Do not submit a fifth page—it will not be read. No title pages, please (though titles are nice).

Individual efforts only for these submissions (do not work together). If you do not turn in the required 3 critical notes, any unsubmitted notes will be graded 0. You may turn in up to 4 critical notes, and only the three highest will be counted in your final grade. See the website for advice in the form of many hints and tricks regarding how to write a good critical note.

AT LEAST ONE CRITICAL NOTE IS REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED AT THE START OF EITHER CLASS MEETING 2 or 3—YOU MAY BE DROPPED FROM THE CLASS FOR FAILING TO MEET THIS REQUIREMENT. This is so I can get some idea as to the level of the class' writing and critical thinking skills. After that, it is up to individual students to decide for which readings they wish to write critical notes (in accord with the rules above), and to manage their workloads.

As noted above, if you are unhappy with your grades for your critical notes (after you have turned in three notes), you may optionally submit up to one extra critical note, and the one lowest grade will be thrown out and your grade will only reflect your 3 highest-graded critical notes. All critical notes turned in under this condition must also meet the other requirements for critical notes stated above (notably, timing). That is, it is very possible to run out of time for submitting four critical notes, since the student is allowed to select the readings for which he/she submits notes—manage your time accordingly.

g. 30%: 4 tests on the readings, in class (Individual)——dates not announced! Be prepared!

NOTE: These tests are essay tests. NO WARNING IS GIVEN AHEAD OF TESTS. ONLY YOUR THREE HIGHEST TESTS WILL COUNT at 10% of your final grade each). This element of the class is designed to create an incentive for doing the readings in a timely manner and for building your writing skills. IMPORTANT: Tests may cover ANY reading up to and including the reading for class the day of the test—you are responsible for ALL readings assigned up to and including the readings for the day of the test.

For the group in-class presentations of readings, each group presents one Part 1 and one Part 2 (in different classes, preferably).

Each group will be assigned (in the first class) their topics for presentation.

Policy on re-grading material.

Any material may be submitted for re-grade (except presentations). The conditions of the re-grade are as follows:

0. Before you submit something for re-grading, you should be aware, that once you submit it for a re-grade, the original grade may go UP OR DOWN. Your original grade is not “safe.”
1. Submit original work with instructor comments on it (if any). Also submit attached to the original work, a 1-page, typed, explanation of why the grade should be changed. No emails, faxes, orals, etc. DO NOT re-do the assignment.
2. Instructor will review materials submitted in this format. No material will be reviewed unless it conforms to this format for review.
3. Instructor will notify you of the results of the re-grade.

Deadlines

The relevant SFSU and College of Business Policies regarding adding and dropping courses are hereby incorporated into this document by reference. Become familiar with these policies to avoid getting a “W” or even an “F” grade. Pay attention to the deadlines for adding and dropping and act accordingly.

Details:

<http://www.sfsu.edu/deptpage/acal4.htm>

Religious Holidays

The SFSU policy on the observance of religious holidays indicates that, “The faculty of San Francisco State University shall make reasonable accommodations for students to observe religious holidays when such observances require students to be absent from class activities....” For your convenience, the following is a link to an Interfaith Calendar which lists “Primary sacred times for world religions”:
<http://www.interfaithcalendar.org/>

Complete details regarding this Policy, including implementation can be found on the Academic Senate Web Page at the following location:

<http://www.sfsu.edu/~senate/policies/F00-212.html>

Student Disability Issues

"Students with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations are encouraged to contact the instructor. The Disability Programs and Resource Center is available to facilitate the reasonable accommodations process."

More info on disability policies:

http://cob.sfsu.edu/COB/portal_faculty/disabilityaccess.cfm

Schedule

<u>Date</u> (mtg. number)	<u>Reading</u> (from reader)	<u>Activities</u>	<u>Comment</u>	<u>Time-permitting—instructor-led ex.</u>	
26 Aug. (1)	None	Introduction to the class, PBL lecture, Group formation, questions	Instructor-led. Attendance at the first class is <u>essential</u> . You <u>may</u> be dropped by Instr. for missing this class.	“There is something there” exercise.	
2 Sep... (2)	Reading A	Summary, critique, case, exercise, possible instructor-led exercise.	Extra credit: +1 for grade if you present this day!	Brainstorming	
9 Sep. (3)	Reading B	Summary, critique, case, exercise, possible instructor-led exercise.	Assignment: Interact (email or brief meeting) with instructor re: final project problem ideas <u>before 25 Feb.</u>	Idea mapping	
16 Sep.. (4)	Readings C	Summary, critique, case, exercise, possible instructor-led exercise.		Sketching I-primitive shapes	
22 Sep. (5)	Reading D	Summary, critique, case, exercise, possible instructor-led exercise.	Final Project update I: State firm, Problem 5 min. cases in Reading presentations (max.)	Sketching II-things (guest)	
30 Sep. (6)	Readings E	Summary, critique, case, exercise, possible instructor-led exercise.		Sketching III-people (guest)	
7 Oct. (7)	Reading F	Summary, critique, case, exercise, possible instructor-led exercise.		Possible: Model making/3D approaches.	
14 Oct.. (8)	Reading G	Summary, critique, case, exercise, possible instructor-led exercise.		Demo of X-cultural questions of importance	
21 Oct. (9) [No class 28 Oct.]	Reading H	Summary, critique, case, exercise, possible instructor-led exercise.	Final project update II—2 min., 1 person, 1 transparency: SHOW PROGRESS vs. 1 st Update OK to have started over w/new firm/problem. 5 min. case (max.)		

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SCHEDULE, continued

<u>Date</u> (mtg. number)	<u>Reading</u> (<u>from</u> <u>reader</u>)	<u>Activities</u>	<u>Comment</u>		
4 Nov. (10) [No class 11 Nov.]	Readings I	Summary, critique, case, exercise, possible instructor-led exercise.	Possible opportunity for groups to consult on final project.		
17 Nov. (optional)	None	Individual and group consultations with Instructor and TA.	Prepare and come with research, presentation, and writing questions.	This is instead of Mtg. 14.	
18 Nov. (11) [No class 25 Nov.]	None	Workshop—Work in groups on project & report to instructor (informal update)	Come <i>prepared</i> to work in your group during class. Report progress by group to instructor.		
2 Dec. (12)	None.	Final Project Presentations I	Turn in final papers, peer evaluations (if ready)	Turn in idea logs (required)	
9 Dec. (13)	None.	Final Project Presentations II	Turn in final papers, peer evaluations— <u>final deadline</u> —start of class)		
11 Dec.	None	Consultation in Office instead of Final Exam	10:30-2:30 pm		

Abbreviations for textbooks:

CB: CONCEPTUAL BLOCKBUSTING

TPD: THINK, PLAY, DO

Readings by letter designation:

- A. CB Ch. 1, 2
- B. CB Ch. 3, 4, 5
- C. CB Ch. 6,7
- D. CB Ch. 8, 9
- E. TPD Ch 1, 2
- F. TPD Ch 3-4
- G. TPD Ch 5
- H. TPD Ch. 6
- I. TPD Ch. 7-8

Possible Extra credit readings (see instructor if interested):
Heiman, Nickerson and Zenger (2008 forthcoming),
Heiman and Burnett (2007)

Additional Possibly Useful Material:

These outlines may help you with your final project. They are **OPTIONAL** (pick and choose what works for you and leave the rest—focus on solving your problem, not using these tools because you think the prof. wants you to use them). From Heiman and Burnett (Copyright, 2007):

Seven Dimensions of Design Thinking.

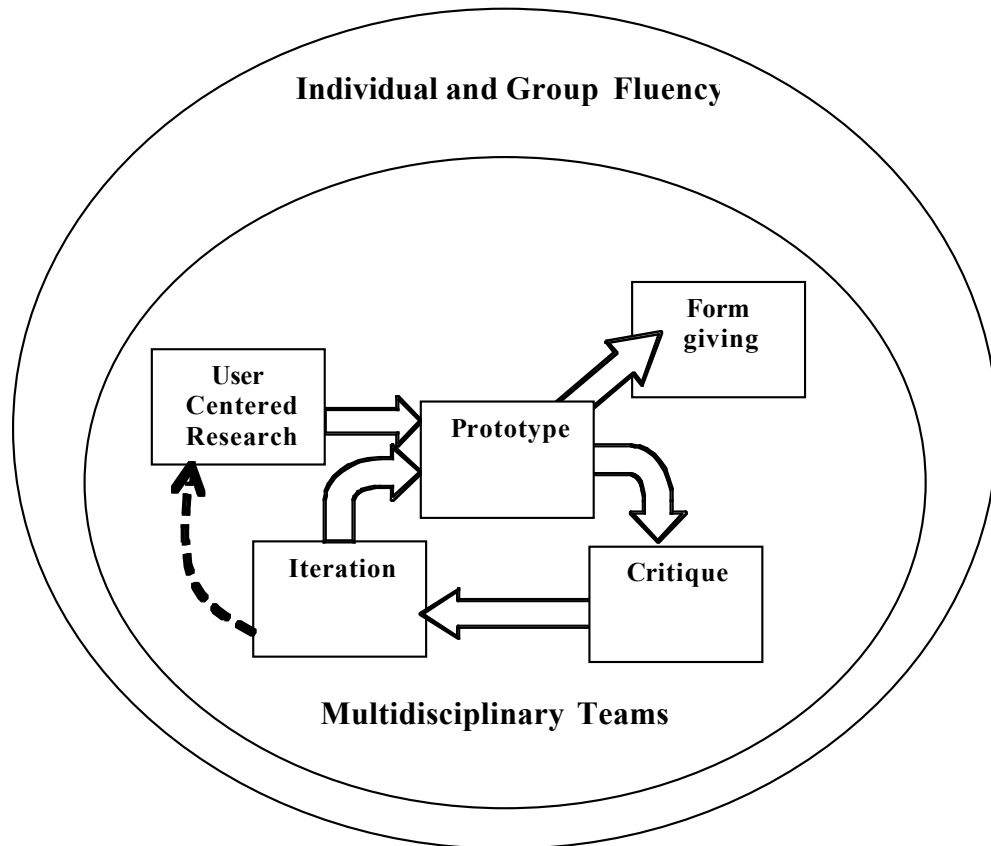


Table 1: Efficacy of Solutions for Various Design Thinking Problems

		-->Increasing importance of group-level interaction issues---->		
Solution Type		Conceptual Blocks	Semantic Gaps	Social Barriers
Pedagogy-based solutions: Management development initiatives	Classes/MBA programs	+++	++	+
	Firm-specific management education	++	+	+++
	Problem-based design thinking orientation	+++	+	++
In-firm-based solutions: Human relations initiatives	Ad hoc	+	+++	++
	In-house design thinkers	+	++	+++
	Designer as top manager	++	+++	+

+ = Low efficacy

++ = Medium efficacy

+++ = High efficacy