



## Internationalizing the Curriculum Project

Maricopa Community Colleges  
Office of International & Intercultural Education  
2411 West 14th Street, Tempe, AZ 85281  
1+480-731-8250

### GBS 233 Internationalizing Business Communication —3 Credits

- James H. Boyle  
jboyle@student.gc.maricopa.edu
- Glendale Community College
- Course Description: Internal and external business communications including verbal and non-verbal techniques. Prerequisites: ENG 101 or ENG 107 with a grade of 'C' or better (or permission of department).
- Required Text: *Business and Administrative Communication*, K.O. Locker. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Irwin-McGraw/Hill.

### International Component Summary

#### Content Areas Which Include International Material/Components

Communicating Across Cultures, Beliefs and values, Working and Writing in Groups, Managing conflicts/stress, Team Building and Making Oral Presentations.

#### Description of Material and How Integrated In Course

Materials are integrated throughout the text and course as time and application allowed. I made every effort to make this process 'seamless', as though it were part of the standard approach for this particular course. Handouts were used, new vocabulary (in English and Spanish) as nouns/verbs were introduced, verbs were conjugated, and several cases introduced.

#### Special Assignments and Activities

Several assignments included use of the Internet, team analysis and teamwork, problem solving and cultural diversity. Examples: A) a case in international ethics (copy attached), B) oral presentation by each student re: language/customs of another country/region, C) the conjugation of 1 verb pre week in the present tense, D) the introduction of 3 nouns (in Spanish) pre week, E) Internet research of -at least- one (1) social practice common to the U.S. and a country of their choice, and - F) after receiving several simple sentences in English, having the students write them in Spanish.

#### Special Challenges and Successes

Noteworthy were 1) the assimilation of students with diverse backgrounds to work (required) on a project(s) together, then realizing that many had more in common than previously assumed, 2) that real communications with others (esp. of another culture) is more challenging than previously thought, and 3) that (with some effort by the course instructor) this could be a permanent on-going process for the GBS-233 course. The only 'down-side' to this effort is the instructor must, of course, have some command of the language - in this case - Spanish.

Challenge(s): Preface-These efforts consume X% of the 40 hours of time allowed for the course in a semester. Consequently, assignments of an international slant must be woven into the course fabric very carefully. The only real challenge that I encountered was giving students any additional reading whether it was international or not.

Suggestion(s): that because Spanish – aside from English – is so dominant in the southwest part of the U.S., that an instructor for this course could ‘blend in’ an international segment/portion to this course without losing sight of the original course description. Not to mention that it makes for a more interesting course for all, a better prepared student that understands assimilation and – eventually – a better employee.

### Case Problem: Ethics

You have recently been hired as a buyer for a large multinational corporation. Your job entails the purchase of furniture for 200 stores in the organization and requires you to travel to the furniture trade shows in Europe and the Far East to look over new furniture and place orders. You are to receive a straight salary of \$45,000 a year plus fringe benefits to start, with a promise of increase if your performance proves satisfactory. You are replacing a John Smith who has recently retired from the job at 45 years of age giving “bad health” as the reason for his early retirement.

Last week you attended a large trade show in Italy. While talking to the Vice-President of a large manufacturer of living room furniture you become impressed with the quality and style of his products and low competitive prices that he is quoting. It would appear that the products could be sold with a minimum of advertising and the profit margin for your company would be higher than normally obtained of living room furniture, you decide to place an order with this company for \$60,000 of furniture to be delivered within thirty days.

The Vice-President of the furniture company handles your order personally and completes all of the contract forms. After completing the paper work and obtaining your signature on the contracts, the officer mentions that the company will give you the same deal as your predecessor, John Smith. He says that you will receive a check in the mail for 5% of the purchase order – namely \$3,000 – as a gift from the manufacturing company and that further gifts will be given as you place future orders. Checking around with other buyers at the trade show you find that this kick-back routine is a fairly common procedure and is offered by most international manufactures who will not reduce the price of the furniture in billing your company, but will, pocket the extra savings themselves.

Directions: Indicate how you would react to this situation. Justify your position on the basis of your own personal ethical position. How would you justify your position if your employer learned that you were accepting these gifts?