



COMILLAS

UNIVERSIDAD PONTIFICIA

ICAI

ICADE

CIHS

Syllabus
2026 - 2027

TECHNICAL SHEET OF THE SUBJECT

Data of the subject	
Subject name	Cross-Cultural Management
Subject code	IBS-MBA-621
Main program	Official Master's Degree in Business Administration - MBA
Involved programs	Máster Universitario en Administración de Empresas (MBA) [First year] Máster Universitario en Ingeniería de Telecomunicación y Mást. Univ. en Administración de Empresas [Second year] Máster Universitario en Ingeniería Industrial y Máster Universitario en Administración de Empresas [Second year]
Level	Posgrado Oficial Master
Quarter	Semestral
Credits	3,0 ECTS
Type	Optativa
Department	Departamento de Gestión Empresarial
Coordinator	José Manuel López García-Silva (jose.lopez@icade.comillas.edu)
Schedule	Contact by email
Office hours	Contact by email
Course overview	In today's business environment, marked by increasing globalization, interconnection, and market diversity, the effective management of cultural differences is a determining factor for organizational performance and competitiveness. This course provides students with a rigorous conceptual and methodological framework for analyzing the impact of cultural differences on business strategy, decision-making processes, and team management. It examines the main theoretical frameworks in the field, including those proposed by Geert Hofstede and Erin Meyer, applied to the analysis of real cases related to work in international and multicultural contexts.

Teacher Information	
Teacher	
Name	María Paloma Bilbao Calabuig
Department	Departamento de Gestión Empresarial
Office	Alberto Aguilera 23 [OD-413]
EMail	pbilbao@icade.comillas.edu
Phone	2453
Teacher	
Name	José Manuel López García-Silva
Department	Departamento de Gestión Empresarial
EMail	jose.lopez@icade.comillas.edu



COMILLAS

UNIVERSIDAD PONTIFICIA

ICAI

ICADE

CIHS

Syllabus
2026 - 2027

SPECIFIC DATA OF THE SUBJECT

Contextualization of the subject

Contribution to the professional profile of the degree

The Cross Cultural Management course enables students to understand the importance of managing cultural differences in organizations operating in international environments, both from a strategic standpoint (identifying business opportunities, innovation, and the development of international projects) and from an operational standpoint (effectiveness and efficiency in multicultural work teams).

During the course, students learn and apply tools for analyzing and managing cultural diversity that enable the development of competitive advantages based on organizational capabilities such as the configuration of multinational teams, the management of such teams, innovation, communication, vertical and horizontal management, the development of social capital, and the management of organizational/corporate cultures.

The course also enables participants to begin developing intercultural competencies (cultural intelligence, working in multinational teams, communication and reporting, etc.) that will be useful for their future professional careers in international environments and multicultural work teams.

Prerequisites

It is important to have taken courses in the fundamentals of organizational behavior, human resources management, and strategic management.

This subject is also closely related to other courses in strategic management (Strategy in Action, Consulting) and organizational behavior (Leadership and Change, Negotiation and Conflict Management).

Competencies - Objectives

Competences

GENERALES

CG02	Management of data and information as key elements for decision-making and for identification, formulation and resolution of business problems.
CG03	Problem-solving and decision-making skills at a strategic, tactic and operational level with regard to a business, considering the interrelationship between the different functional and business areas.
CG05	Ethical commitment with a behaviour based in moral principles and those principles of the organisation when facing moral dilemmas and corporate social responsibility issues.
CG08	Initiative, creativity and entrepreneurship when applying management techniques and related knowledge to management and development of business organizations.
CG09	Knowledge, understanding and handling of tools for diagnosis of the competitive position of a company, and designing and executing the company's strategic plan.



ESPECÍFICAS DE OPTATIVIDAD

CEO03-COOR

Reconocer y valorar los beneficios y retos de la gestión de la multiculturalidad en el lugar de trabajo, y en las operaciones y estrategias de la organización.

THEMATIC BLOCKS AND CONTENTS

Contents - Thematic Blocks

Content - Topics

TOPIC 1 : CULTURE

- 1: The concept of culture. Determinants of culture.**
- 2: Impact of cultural differences on business. Diversity. Diversity management.**
- 3: Ethical considerations from the perspective of Ignatian leadership in managing cultural differences.**

TOPIC 2: NATIONAL CULTURAL DIFFERENCES - HOFSTEDE

- 1: National cultural differences.**
- 2: Methodological framework and analytical tools of the Hofstede Institute.**
- 3: Application to real case studies and specific situations in the international business environment.**

TOPIC 3: NATIONAL CULTURAL DIFFERENCES - MEYER - THE CULTURE MAP

- 1. Impact of cultural differences on managerial behaviors and activities (building trust, persuasion, communication, decision-making, team leadership, managing disagreement, evaluation)**
- 2. Methodological framework and analytical tools of Erin Meyer**
- 3. Application to real case studies and specific situations in the international business environment.**

TOPIC 4: CORPORATE CULTURES

- 1 Definition of corporate culture.**
- 2 Cultural dimensions of organizations. Hofstede's framework. Other frameworks used in the organizational consulting industry.**
- 3 How to qualitatively profile an organization's cultural profile. Case studies.**
- 4 Ethical considerations related to compatibility (or lack thereof) with an organization's culture.**

TEACHING METHODOLOGY

General methodological aspects of the subject

A variety of teaching methodologies aligned with the specific learning objectives will be used in the course, including:



- Theoretical lectures by the professor.
- Research conducted by students on specific topics and geographies/countries of particular interest to them, followed by their presentation to the rest of the class.
- Monitoring and analysis of current news regarding internationally prominent companies.
- Analysis of case studies and day-to-day situations typical of multinational environments.
- Talks by guest speakers with experience in the geographies/countries of particular interest to the students.

Individual work will be combined with teamwork, and class discussion will be encouraged, without neglecting the ethical considerations arising from Ignatian leadership that we expect will inform the decision-making of students, as future managers, in the management of people of different nationalities whom they will undoubtedly be responsible for, or with whom they will work, in the not-too-distant future.

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE:

Level 2 of the AI Assessment Scale (Perkins, Furze, Roe & MacVaugh, 2024), corresponding to the AI Planning category, will be applied. This means that the use of artificial intelligence tools (ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, LM Notebook) is authorized exclusively in specific, initial phases of the various individual or group work processes, related to preliminary information searches, the management of large volumes of content, the comprehension of complex texts, or the structuring and design of presentations for communicating the results of students' research and analysis.

The professor may require partial submissions of the assignments/learning activities, as well as their oral defense, in order to verify the actual authorship of the content and the students' contribution. The use of AI to create complete assignments or substantial parts thereof, without citing the source or the tool, or without it being expressly permitted in the assignment description, will be considered plagiarism and will be regulated in accordance with the University's General Regulations.

For tasks in which the use of AI is permitted, students must clearly and thoroughly document: the name of the tool used, the prompt or query submitted, the section of the assignment in which the AI was used, how the generated content was reformulated or reworked, and the value added by the student (conclusions, implications, learning).

IMPORTANT: AI-generated text may not be incorporated directly into final deliverables subject to evaluation. AI may be used as a support tool during the drafting process, but it cannot replace students' own academic work, critical judgment, or decision-making.

In-class Methodology: Activities

Lectures. Lectures will be combined with group discussion about topics. The students' preparedness about issues and readings assigned for each session is essential. The instructor will introduce the basic concepts and will facilitate students' understanding of the materials prior to the discussion in class.

CG02, CG03, CG05,
CG08, CG09

Cases and exercises (individual and in groups). The instructor will assign different cases to be analyzed and resolved by the students in class. The cases will allow the collaborative application of theoretical knowledge discussed. Every student is responsible of preparing adequately the materials planned for every class session.

CG02, CG03, CG05, CG08

Work-shops. There will be activities scheduled around real (professional) materials (if not possible, the materials will be adapted). In some occasions, those activities will require the previous work of students with specific surveys. The goal of this task is the practice of cross-cultural skills through the development of cultural awareness and the discussion of real issues in organizations. The students will experience and react to the diversity of responses, building their own dictionary of cultural reactions to everyday challenges.

CG02, CG03, CG05, CE06



Guest speaker talks. The professor will invite as speakers' executives who have developed part of their careers in the geographies of particular interest to the students, so that they can share their experience with them, validate or nuance the theoretical content covered in class and the insights derived from the methodological frameworks used (Hofstede and Meyer), and enrich the students with their advice on how to conduct themselves in those geographies should they be transferred there.

CG02, CG05, CG08, CG09

Non-Presential Methodology: Activities

Individual Reading and preparation of materials by the students.

CG02, CG03, CG05,
CG08, CG09

Office Hours Attendance. Instructors will be available to solve doubts, clarify topics, elaborate on tasks, or give feedback.

CG02, CG03, CG05, CG08

Reading and preparation of cases and business situations for their active discussion in class.

CG03, CG08

SUMMARY STUDENT WORKING HOURS

CLASSROOM HOURS		
Lectures of an expository nature	Analysis and resolution of cases and exercises, individually or collectively	
20.00	10.00	
NON-PRESENTIAL HOURS		
Analysis and resolution of cases and exercises, individually or collectively	Individual study and organized reading	Collaborative learning
10.00	15.00	20.00
ECTS CREDITS: 3,0 (75,00 hours)		

EVALUATION AND CRITERIA

The use of AI to produce full assignments or substantial parts thereof, without proper citation of the source or tool used, or without explicit permission in the assignment instructions, will be considered plagiarism and therefore subject to the University's General Regulations.

Evaluation activities	Evaluation criteria	Weight
Class participation, case discussions, business situations analysis and discussion, questions asked to guest speakers.	Individual evaluation of both the frequency and quality of interventions.	20 %



COMILLAS

UNIVERSIDAD PONTIFICIA

ICAI

ICADE

CIHS

Syllabus 2026 - 2027

Individual or team research exercises	Individual and team exercises within the classroom. Assessment of the quality of the content, the research/documentation carried out, and the conclusions reached by applying the concepts and methodologies covered in the sessions. In evaluating individual and group assignments submitted in writing, consideration will be given to students' use of AI tools, such as ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, etc., and the value they add beyond the AI-generated content.	30 %
Final exam	Individual evaluation of a final exam	50 %

Ratings

Students will have to pass (get a mark of 5 or higher) each and every assessment activity shown in the table above (except for the "Class participation" and "self-evaluation and co-evaluation" activities).

Re-sits

In case of failure, students can re-sit each failed activity (except for the "Class participation" activity). The final grade weighting will be kept. Re-sits are usually scheduled at the end of the academic year.

Students with attendance waiver

For this subject, class attendance is paramount. If exceptionally and with the agreement of the School Direction and the Master Direction a student were to get an attendance waiver, he/she will have to participate, within a group, in a Workshop, complete an individual assignment set by the Professor and take an individual exam comprehensive of the entire subject. The final grade of the course will be 100% the average grade of those for activities.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND RESOURCES

Basic Bibliography

Meyer, E. 2014. The Culture Map. PublicAffairs, Perseus Books Group (1st Edition).

Thomas, D. C. & Inkson, K. 2017. Cultural Intelligence, 3rd Edition. Berrett-Koheler Publishers.

Harvard Business Review. (2016). *HBR's 10 must reads on managing across cultures*. Harvard Business Review Press.



COMILLAS

UNIVERSIDAD PONTIFICIA

ICAI

ICADE

CIHS

Syllabus
2026 - 2027

Complementary Bibliography

Browaey, M-J. & Price, R., 2011. Understanding Cross Cultural Management. Pearson Prentice Hall FT (2nd Edition).

STEERS, R.M.; OSLAND J.S. 2020. Management across Cultures: Challenges, Strategies, and Skills. Cambridge University Press (4th edition)

Professors will provide students with other bibliographic references, both scientific and informative.

It is recommended to regularly read the press on the key topics of the subject.