Audio-visual Introduction to American Culture

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1. Pre-class Assessment
   1.1 How to evaluate the students?
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1. Pre-class Assessment

1.1 How to evaluate the students?

Solution 1 English Proficiency Test

All undergraduate non-English majors are required to take an English language proficiency test. The high-level students with excellent performance in this test will take ESL classes for the freshman year to help them pass the College English Test, Band 4 (CET4), and then choose 2 from 9 elective courses for the second academic year. *Audio-visual Introduction of American Culture* is one of nine elective courses.

Undergraduate Freshmen

![Diagram showing students and CET4 level]

- Level 1 Students
- Level 2 Students
- Level 3 Students
The students who enrolled in the class will be asked to answer two comprehensive questions to see whether they have sufficient background knowledge or academic skills to start this new course and whether they are well-prepared to learn American Culture.

The comprehensive questions are as followed.
1. Do you want to know something about American culture? Why or why not?
2. What do you know about the United States of America?

1.2 How to evaluate the module?

Five colleagues who have expertise in the study of American culture will gather together to have a meeting 4 weeks before the new semester to provide the important evaluative information. They will review the syllabus and course-related materials and discuss course goals and class objectives with the instructors.
2. Structural Framework

2.1 Target students enrolled in the course

There are 4 classes who are taking the course this semester. At least 55 students in each class, so more than 220 students in total are studying American culture. They are all sophomores in different academic majors.

Class 21 & Class 27 will meet on Tuesday morning every week for 2-hour class session respectively and on Thursday morning every other week for another 2-hour class session; Class 04 & Class 13 will meet on Wednesday morning every week and on Friday morning every other week, also 2-hour class session each time.

Spring Semester of 2017

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2.2 Course overview & introduction

As a student at the upper-intermediate English proficiency level at Inner Mongolia University, have you thought about studying in USA? Studying in USA will be new and special experience for you. Of course with new experiences come new challenges. One of the most common challenges you will face is to deal with “culture shock”, because American customs and values are definitely different from those of China. You will probably want to familiarize yourself with American culture before your departure in order to make the transition as easy and smooth as possible. Enrolled in the elective course of Audio-visual Introduction to American Culture (3 credits), you will not only get a chance to know American culture, but also better understand your own cultural values and biases, and develop a more sophisticated and neutral way of looking at USA.

3. Content Framework (Syllabus)

Audio-visual Introduction to American Culture

Spring 2017

Instructor: Lecturer Chen Wei, Foreign Languages College

Office Hours: Thu 3-4:30 p.m. & Fri 3-4:30 p.m. in Main Building 245, and other times by appointment at 13009521588

Email the instructor at nmgchenwei@imu.edu

I. Course Description

This course is a broad-ranging introduction to American culture to non-English majors in an ESL / EFL language class. Students will study various aspects of American cultural life such as geography, history, politics, education, religion and social life etc. The course will help non-English majors experience different aspects of American culture and also gain a better appreciation of its richness and variety.
II. Course Aims and Outcomes

Aims

1. To improve students’ reading skills, such as skimming, scanning, predicting, and understanding main ideas and details;
2. To learn to use the method of analysis in order to conduct an investigation of American culture.
3. To build up students’ comprehension of the geography, history and politics of America as a country, and the values, lifestyles, and beliefs of the American people;
4. To increase students’ awareness and to develop their curiosity towards the American culture and their own, helping them to make comparisons between two cultures.
5. To help students think critically, analytically, and creatively, and be the questioning readers.

III. Course Requirements:

1. Class attendance and participation policy:

   a. Attendance at lectures is mandatory. Each student is allowed one unexcused absence during the whole semester. Two points will be deducted from your participation grade if you are absent from class without asking for a leave.

   b. If you have to miss class due to sickness, an emergency, or any other excused reason, please fill in an absence reporting form with specific date and reason for your absence and email it to me beforehand.
c. No texting, no laptop during the lecture. If you are caught texting, you will be counted as absent for that class.
2. Course readings:


**Additional readings:**


IV. Grading Requirements & Assignments

**Active participation in class discussions 10%**
Students’ active participation in class discussion is an essential part of their grade. And the best way to feel confident to participate in discussion is to read and think about the assigned reading.

**Quizzes 20%**
Students will take two quizzes both in the 7th week and the 14th week. Each quiz will be 50 minutes and take up 10% of the total score.

**Short paper 20%**
Students can choose one of the topics related to various aspects of American culture such as history, politics, social life and so on. They can find something from their area of study to demonstrate their understanding of American culture. There is a 300-word minimum and a 450-word maximum. Please submit the paper through email by Friday, June 16th.

**Final Exam 50%**
There will be a final written test during exam week (week 18) at the end of this semester. The test will include multiple choices, true or false, filling the blanks and answering questions. Time limit is 120 minutes. The test will from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on Monday, June 19th.
# V. Course Schedule

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<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Topic(s)</th>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Assessments</th>
<th>Activities to Promote Engagement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Brief Introduction</td>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Feb 21&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; - Feb 23&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Country profile; 5 National symbols; Top 10 cities</td>
<td>Skim the textbook from P3 to P8 and decide ten statements are true or false; Watch the video about Washington D.C. &amp; fill in the blanks;</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Feb 28&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Mar 7&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; - Mar 9&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Location; Physiographic features; Spectacular landscape</td>
<td>Watch the video about the Yellowstone National Park and answer 3 questions; Match the explanations about geographic features in Column B with the words in Column A; Do further research and write a 150-word summary about the importance of the Mississippi River.</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Mar 14&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Mar 21&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; - Mar 23&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Colonial era; American revolution; Industrial revolution &amp; Civil war</td>
<td>Watch the video about the Plymouth colony and fill in the blanks; Do research and discover why the first colony in the American Atlantic coast was named Jamestown;</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Mar 28&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Apr 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; - Apr 6&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Three branches of government; The party system The elections</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; quiz Watch the video about American presidential election and fill in the blanks; 10 students make a group and do a research on the differences between American and Chinese political systems.</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Apr 11&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>People</td>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Apr 18&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; - Apr 20&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Ethnic and racial diversity in the USA</td>
<td>Watch the video about Interracial Marriages in America and answer the questions; 5 minute group presentation</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Apr 25&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Dates</td>
<td>Activities</td>
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<td>Education</td>
<td>Week11, Week12, May 9th</td>
<td>5 minute Group presentation on your understanding about studying abroad; 100-word short essay on why so many students choose to study in USA.</td>
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<td>Week13, May 16th, May 18th</td>
<td>American education system; Admission to a university; Examinations.</td>
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<td>Religion</td>
<td>Week14, May 23rd</td>
<td>2nd quiz; Watch the video about the spread of Evangelical Protestantism and fill in the blanks; Match the explanation about religion in Column B with the words listed in Column A; Talking about the pictures in groups.</td>
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<td>Week15, May 30th, Jun 1st</td>
<td>The American religious heritage; Major religions.</td>
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<td>Social Life</td>
<td>Week16, Jun 6th</td>
<td>Compare the similarities and differences between the typical American families and the Chinese ones; 150-word Essay writing on topic what do you know about Chinese food made in America? Watch the video about American diet and answer the questions.</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Final Test</td>
<td>Week18, Jun 19th</td>
<td>During this 2-hour examination, you must do your own work.</td>
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There will be a day off on April 4th because of Qingming Festival and Week 11 will be the spring break in China.
4. Delivery & Instructional Design

4.1 Module presentation

The module will be delivered both in English and Chinese. It is a traditional lecture, but a part of the lecture will be available online, including welcome message from the instructor and the explanation of syllabus. The teaching materials will be presented by PowerPoint, multi-media, topic-related video clips and pictures.

4.2 Engagement activities

The students will work both individually and with groups. In order to promote students’ engagement, various class activities have been designed. All the details can be found in the syllabus.

5. Course Evaluation

Since the question how the students will be evaluated has been answered clearly in my syllabus, so in this part, I will mainly focus on the module evaluation.

This cross-cultural module will be evaluated through a feedback questionnaire at the end of the semester. The questionnaire is available at the website www.jwxt.imu.edu.cn. In order to get valuable and reliable feedback on the effectiveness of the module, the questionnaire is designed in Chinese.

1) 老师给我的整体印象是教学热诚，敬业勤勉。
   a. 1 分  b. 2 分  c. 3 分  d. 4 分  e. 5 分
2) 老师授课条理分明，概念清楚。
   a. 1 分  b. 2 分  c. 3 分  d. 4 分  e. 5 分
3) 老师授课能抓住重点，讲清难点。
   a. 1 分  b. 2 分  c. 3 分  d. 4 分  e. 5 分
4) 老师授课理论联系实际，能有效的利用一些实例来讲解。
   a. 1 分  b. 2 分  c. 3 分  d. 4 分  e. 5 分
5) 老师对授课内容及相关领域十分熟悉，知识渊博。
   a. 1 分  b. 2 分  c. 3 分  d. 4 分  e. 5 分
6) 老师授课中能介绍该学科的学科背景、发展趋势及前沿成果。
   a. 1 分  b. 2 分  c. 3 分  d. 4 分  e. 5 分
7) 老师授课时能够阐明各种不同理论和方法的含义。
   a. 1 分  b. 2 分  c. 3 分  d. 4 分  e. 5 分
8) 老师讲课时能在智力上激发学生，富有启发性与激励性。
   a. 1 分  b. 2 分  c. 3 分  d. 4 分  e. 5 分
9) 老师组织并鼓励学生提出问题，参与讨论，并对所提问题给予有意义的解答。
5.1 Students evaluate instructors-related factors

In this end-of-semester course evaluation students are required to report on the questions, such as whether the teacher are fully prepared for class sessions; whether the teacher is familiar with the latest currency of the course; and whether the teacher can communicate clearly, stimulate interest, and demonstrate enthusiasm and respect for students etc.
5.2 Students evaluate module-specific factors

Through analyzing students’ answers on the questions designed to evaluate module-specific factors, for example “Did the required textbook help or supplement your understanding of the American culture?” the instructor can also learn more about whether the teaching plan, class activities, teaching materials including additional readings will work for the students or not from this end-of-semester course evaluation.

Thank You!