UCLouvain	**bmhci1000** *2025*	Organisational Communication in a Multicultural Context

The version you're consulting is not final. This course description may change. The final version will be published on 1st June.

5.00 credits	30.0 h	Q2

Teacher(s)	Jacobs Thomas ;
Language :	English
Place of the course	Bruxelles Saint-Louis
Prerequisites	*The prerequisite(s) for this Teaching Unit (Unité d'enseignement – UE) for the programmes/courses that offer this Teaching Unit are specified at the end of this sheet.*
Learning outcomes	**At the end of this learning unit, the student is able to :** • Familiarize students with the most important concepts and approaches used to theorize the relation between culture and organizational communication • Provide students with a non-exhaustive overview of examples that demonstrate how concrete communicative practices, genres, and activities pursued by various types of organizations are transformed in a multicultural context • Teach students how to analyse the cultural, political, and social effects of organizational communication in a multicultural context • Train students to be aware of and to reflect critically and autonomously on the impact that culture and communication have on one-another, both in an organizational context and beyond • Practice concrete communication skills and competencies that are adapted to multicultural settings
Evaluation methods	The evaluation of the students depends partially on the completion of a series of tasks and assignments throughout the year (which may include a presentation, several shorter notes and papers, the preparation of exercises that take place in class, and participation in these exercises), partially on an oral closed-book exam in which the students are interrogated about their work throughout the year as well as their theoretical and empirical knowledge of the material studied throughout the course. During the second session, the evaluation is conducted exclusively through an oral closed-book exam. Grades cannot be carried over from the first exam session. All assignments produced during this class are a personal production. Students are expected to scrupulously respect the rules and the good practices when it comes to citation, referencing, and avoiding (self-)plagiarism. Students are expected to know and understand as to what these rules and practices comprise. Any failure to apply them may lead to an academic and/or disciplinary sanction for plagiarism and/or irregularity, in accordance with the general regulations for studies and examinations. "Reusing" a personal or group assignment carried out within the framework of any other teaching unit requires a great deal of caution. Exceptionally, such an approach may be considered, provided that the student requests explicit permission from the professor or the assistant; justifies this "reuse" in the assignment, which, as a whole, must obviously constitute an original contribution to the first work; and scrupulously applies the rules of citation and referencing to any use of this assignment. Failure to comply with these rules may be considered self-plagiarism and as such constitutes an irregularity. The use of generative AI is accepted as long as it is occasional and limited. The use of AI must be explicitly indicated and referenced. Any part of the work relying, in any way, on generative AI must be clearly identified (for example, by a footnote), specifying which generative AI tool was used, for what purpose, in what way, and to what extent. Failure to do so may constitute an irregularity.

Teaching methods	The course starts out with a series of ex cathedra lectures, in which the students are familiarized with the conceptual and theoretical foundations upon which the study of organisational communication in a multicultural context is based. These lectures are complemented with the self-study of several academic texts. It then turns towards the exploration of concrete forms of organisational communication in a multicultural context. In this part of the course, ex cathedra lectures are complemented with case studies prepared and presented by the students themselves as well as practical exercises which can include a mock negotiation, a simulation exercise, and/or field work. The class can also include opportunities to encounter practitioners, either through interviews or guest lectures, as well as a field trip. The goal is to: • familiarize students with the most important concepts and approaches used to theorize the relation between culture and organizational communication • provide students with concrete examples illustrating how various communicative practices, genres, and activities pursued by various types of organizations are transformed and negotiated in a multicultural context • teach students how to analyse and understand the cultural, political, and social effects of organizational communication in a multicultural context • train students to be aware of and to reflect critically and autonomously on the impact that culture and communication have on one-another in an organizational context • develop communication skills that are adapted to multicultural settings
Content	Today, more and more organizational and institutional communication takes place in a multicultural context. Gone are the days when Henry Ford developed and branded the Ford-T for a uniquely American audience; when the Belgian government was first and foremost concerned with domestic and national questions; when environmental NGOs primarily focused on local biodiversity and forestation; when corporate lobbies pressured their national banks for a suitable monetary and economic policy;... Corporations, political parties, civil society organizations – there are almost no large societal actors left that do not pursue their objectives in an international and multicultural setting. It is crucial to be aware of this, as this multicultural context strongly conditions the communicative challenges that these corporate, political, governmental, and non-governmental actors face. Communicative genres such as political bargaining and institutional exchange are transformed radically in a multicultural setting, which also gives rise to completely novel modes of communication, such as intercultural dialogue. And what is more, the changes in these communicative practices in turn intersects with larger societal developments – including the rise and decline of neoliberalism, democratic backsliding, technological advancement, and globalization. This way, an even more complex pattern emerges, which completely overhauls how companies brand themselves, how political parties strategize, how NGOs organize,... This course provides an overview of how organizational communication operates in a multicultural environment and of how multicultural contexts condition communicative practices. This includes an introduction to the field of organisational communication, to the cultural approach to organizational communication, and to the methods and concepts most commonly used in this field. The course ensuingly uses this theoretical basis to explore concrete forms of communication as practiced by various types of organisations, in order to study how these communicative practices are affected by and play out in a multicultural context. The combination of a solid theoretical basis and ample empirical exploration of concrete cases will allow students to develop a strong scientific acumen and critical thinking skills that they can use to analyse, interpret, and reflect on organisational communication in multicultural contexts. At the same time, hands-on exercises focused on skill-development and autonomous reflection prepare students to engage with the practical real-life challenges that organisational communication in multicultural contexts in an informed and independent manner. Concrete communicative practices analysed in this class can include, but are not limited to, international corporate branding, internal communication in transnational corporations, various forms of transnational political advocacy (e.g. environmental campaigns), multilateral political negotiation, ... The range of topics that can be tackled is near infinite, and thanks to the use of innovative pedagogical interventions such as flipping-the-classroom, the students themselves have ample opportunity to steer the course towards the ones that interest them most.

Bibliography	This bibliography is indicative, and does not necessarily match the course contents. Rather, it is designed to give the students an idea of the kind of themes and topics covered in the class.
	Abélès, M. (2004). Identity and borders: An anthropological approach to EU institutions.
	Alvesson, M. (2004). Organizational culture and discourse. *The Sage handbook of organizational discourse*, 317-335.
	Bantz, C. R., & Pepper, G. L. (1993). *Understanding organizations: Interpreting organizational communication cultures.* University of South Carolina Press.
	Bellier, I. (1997). Une approche anthropologique de la culture des institutions.
	Blankson, H. K. (2011). *A three cultures model approach to understanding organizational communication: A case study of multicultural organizations.* Ohio University.
	Cheney, G., Christensen, L. T., Zorn Jr, T. E., & Ganesh, S. (2010). *Organizational communication in an age of globalization: Issues, reflections, practices.* Waveland Press.
	Erciyes, E. (2019). A new theoretical framework for multicultural workforce motivation in the context of international organizations. *Sage Open*, *9*(3).
	Gibson, C. B., & Zellmer-Bruhn, M. E. (2002). Minding your metaphors: Applying the concept of teamwork metaphors to the management of teams in multicultural contexts. *Organizational Dynamics*, *31*(2), 101-116.
	Gunnarsson, B. L. (2000). Discourse, organizations and national cultures. *Discourse studies*, *2*(1), 5-33.
	Koskinen, K. (2014). *Translating institutions: An ethnographic study of EU translation.* Routledge.
	Krzy#anowski, M. (2011). Political communication, institutional cultures and linearities of organisational practice: a discourse-ethnographic approach to institutional change in the European Union. *Critical Discourse Studies*, *8*(4), 281-296.
	Marttila, T. (Ed.). (2018). *Discourse, culture and organization: Inquiries into relational structures of power.* Springer.
	Roederer-Rynning, C., & Greenwood, J. (2015). The culture of trilogues. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *22*(8), 1148-1165.
	Rozkwitalska, M. (2018). Thriving in mono-and multicultural organizational contexts. *International Journal of Contemporary Management*, *17*(1), 233-247.
Faculty or entity in charge	TIMB

Programmes containing this learning unit (UE)

Program title	Acronym	Credits	Prerequisite	Learning outcomes
Bachelor in Information and Communication	COMB1BA	5	BPOLS1110	🔍
Bachelor in Information and Communication (French-English)	COAB1BA	5	BPOLS1114	🔍
Bachelor in Information and Communication (French-Dutch-English)	COTB1BA	5	BPOLS1110	🔍
Bachelor in Translation and Interpreting [Filière en communication interculturelle]	TIMB1BA	5		🔍