

UGRD_LKCSB_2620_COMM254_ONG SIOW HENG



Singapore Management University

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Code & Title

COMM254 - Overseas Project Experience
(Corporate Culture and Values in Asia)

Effective Start Date

11/01/2027

Offering Unit / Department / School

LKCSB

Course Career

Undergraduate

Course Units

CU:

Grading Basis

GRD - Graded

1

Course Description

The aim of this course is to learn from the thought leadership and practice of various companies and organizations in Vietnam, and for us to recognize the relationship between success and positive corporate culture. The corporate and social impact of good culture in companies and organizations cannot be underestimated. This course's focus on Vietnam's corporate culture is timely as Vietnam is at an interesting point in its corporate development. Vietnam is rapidly growing into a "middle-class" economy, propelled by an expanding young workforce. In 2025-2026, the median age of the labour force is about 33. The country's numerous corporations and organizations are necessarily adapting to new trends in marketing, change management and corporate culture. Many organizations have already successfully adapted well to modern market demands. Do these corporations and organizations rely on one or two individuals, or do the staff function as a team, regardless of rank? Is being competitive

and aggressive prized over nurturance and social support? Is the chain of command lauded, or is less hierarchy appreciated? Features of culture such as diversity and inclusion, individualism/collectivism, power distance, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and issues related to episodes and relationships in intercultural communication will be discussed. This is an SMU-X Overseas course. Students will have the chance to visit Ho Chi Minh City and participate in project work with local organizations. They will also visit Vietnam companies and network with practitioners, apply their knowledge and skills in real-world settings. This hands-on experience provides practical insights into Vietnamese business practices and culture, helps develop cross-cultural competencies, and facilitates building professional networks in the Vietnamese market. The course takes place in both SMU and our partner university in Vietnam. It culminates in a group project which will focus on understanding the corporate culture and values of an organisation based in Vietnam, and developing an integrated communication and business strategy for a programme related to social and organisational impact, tailored to its identified stakeholders.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Appreciate how various organizations and corporations in Vietnam have forged sustainable positive values in their corporate culture
- Read corporate culture using the axioms of Intercultural Communication
- Develop knowledge and skills in understanding and attending to various demographics to forge positive culture
- Forge Cross-cultural collaboration
- Develop multi-disciplinary skills to forge positive values through sound corporate culture
- Integrate other modules with this module and apprecia

SMU Graduate Learning Outcomes

Critical thinking & problem solving, Communication, Intercultural understanding and sensitivity, Understanding of global and Asian perspectives, Multidisciplinary knowledge, Collaboration & leadership

Competencies

Marketing Communications Plan Development, Organisational Relationship Building, Reputation Management, Stakeholder Management

Course Area(s)

AREA - Asia Studies (Intake 2019 to 2023), AREA - Asian Studies (Intake 2018 and earlier), AREA - Business Options, AREA - Business-Oriented Electives, AREA - Communication Management Electives, AREA - Econ Major Rel/Econ Options, AREA - Social Sciences/PLE Major-related, ENRL - SS Enrolment: 4 ISEP; 1 SUSEP, RQCX - COMM120, RQCX - COMM122, TRCK - COMM: Data, Design and Communication Track

Simple Requirements

COMM254/COMM120/COMM122 - Mutually Exclusive

Type

Antirequisite

Enroll in the following Courses:

- COR-COMM1313 - Intercultural Communication
- COMM122 - Intercultural Communication – An Asian Perspective (Inactive)

CLASS SECTION INFORMATION

Instructor(s)

ONG SIOW HENG ONG (shong@smu.edu.sg)

Instruction Mode

In Person

Office Location

LKCSB #4072

Assessment Components (New)

Category*	Weightage*	Assessment/Submission Period*				
Class Participation and Activities	20	Week 15				
Description	Individual Group?*	or	With Component?*	Writing	With Component?*	Oral
Participation and Professionalism	Individual		No		Yes	

Category*	Weightage*	Assessment/Submission Period*				
Projects/Assignments	25	Week 18				
Description	Individual Group?*	or	With Component?*	Writing	With Component?*	Oral
Presentation on Business and Communication Management in Vietnam	Individual		Yes		Yes	

Category*	Weightage*	Assessment/Submission Period*				
Projects/Assignments	15	Week 18				
Description	Individual Group?*	or	With Component?*	Writing	With Component?*	Oral
Video Reflection on Learning	Individual		Yes		Yes	

Category*	Weightage*	Assessment/Submission Period*
Projects/Assignments	40	Week 18
Description	Individual Group?*	or With Component?*
Group Project on Culture and Communication of Client's Organization	Group	Yes
		Writing With Component?*
		Yes
		Oral

Instructional Methods and Expectations

The pedagogical style that is employed in SMU seminars is one of many reasons why the university has gained much positive attention. The cooperation of the instructors and students is critical in the successful delivery of meaningful and productive seminars. Participation in seminars and company visits is therefore vital. To derive maximum benefit from the seminars, you are reminded to be present and on time for all sessions of the course. Students will imbibe and demonstrate good intercultural communication competencies and be respectful to each other. Cultural sensitivity, consideration and thoughtfulness towards our hosts are expected and will be inculcated.

Weekly Lesson Plan

SMU JANUARY SEMESTER WEEK	TOPICS AND ACTIVITIES
In SMU (7 weeks) (January Semester, 2027)	
Week 1	Introduction / Overview of Course Why Study Corporate Culture in Vietnam
Week 2	Culture and Verbal Communication Culture and Nonverbal Communication

SMU JANUARY SEMESTER WEEK	TOPICS AND ACTIVITIES
Week 3-4	Cultural Dimensions in the Workplace <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individualism and Collectivism • Masculinity and Femininity • Power Distance • Relationships and Episodes in Intercultural Communication
Week 5	Introduction to the Sponsor Client; Organization, History, Achievements and Challenges
Week 6	Guest Lecture: “Vietnam, Culture and Management”
Week 7	Reports on Vietnam: Economy, Education, Politics, Religion and Society
Week 8	Pre-Departure: Preparation, Expectations and Adaptation
In Saigon – Collaboration with Van Lang University and Project Sponsor (2-12 May 2027)	
SIN-SGN-SIN 2-12 May 2027	2 May SIN-SGN; Orientation 3 May - Preparation for Meetings with Stakeholders 4-5 May – Meet Project Sponsor and Interviews with Key Stakeholders; Project Work 6 May – Guest Lecture; Company Visits 7-8 May – Guest Lecture; Interviews and Research 9 May – Review Final Presentation 10 May - Project Presentations; Sponsor Feedback to Consolidate Learning 11 May Video Reflection on Learning and Growth 12 May – SGN-SIN Departure

Recommended Textbooks and Readings

To be Confirmed

Other Information

This is a SMU-X overseas course that combines academic with experiential learning through the heavy use of projects provided by overseas organisations. It challenges talented students to use their disciplinary knowledge and skills to tackle real world problems through interdisciplinary approaches and activities. The course will partner with overseas corporate, non-profit and government-sector organisations in project design and content delivery. Through this course, students will be actively mentored by faculty and practitioners from these overseas partner organisations to develop practical and implementable solutions to the projects. Although students are required to put in more effort and time in such SMU-X course, the journey and outcome of this course can be rewarding. With an emphasis to experiential project-based and cross-cultural learning, SMU-X overseas courses encourage students to:

- Be aware of the connections and differences across disciplines and to integrate knowledge to explore an issue or meet a challenge;
- Develop a better understanding of business opportunities and challenges in other markets and economies of interest to the students of the University;
- Familiarize students with the power of informal networks and the importance of leveraging SMU-related networks while working globally;
- Provide global exposure to our students so as to enable them to become culturally sensitive global citizens;
- Adapt to new or unfamiliar environments and exercise leadership;
- Think creatively and critically when solving problems;
- Make sound decisions while managing complex situations and;
- Work collaboratively and productively as a team.

Visit <https://x.smu.edu.sg> or connect with the SMU-X team (smux@smu.edu.sg) for further enquiries and information.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Integrity

All acts of academic dishonesty (including, but not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, facilitation of acts of academic dishonesty by others, unauthorized possession of exam questions, or tampering with the academic work of other students) are serious offences.

All work (whether oral or written) submitted for purposes of assessment must be the student's own work. Penalties for violation of the policy range from zero marks for the component assessment to expulsion, depending on the nature of the offence.

When in doubt, students should consult the instructors of the course. Details on the SMU Code of Academic Integrity may be accessed at <https://smu.sharepoint.com/sites/oasis/SitePages/DOS-WKLSWC/UCSC.aspx>.

Responsible Use of AI

The University recognises the importance of equipping students with the skills to navigate an AI-driven world. While AI tools may support learning, they must be used judiciously and responsibly. Students must not present AI-generated output as their own work.

Each course may set specific guidelines on the use of AI in assessments. Students are required to follow these guidelines carefully and should seek clarification from the instructors if uncertain.

Misuse of AI constitutes a breach of academic integrity and will be subject to the same penalties as other acts of academic dishonesty.

Copyright Notice

Please note that all course materials are meant for personal use only, namely for the purposes of teaching, studying and research. You are strictly not permitted to make copies of or print additional copies or distribute such copies of the course materials or any parts thereof, for commercial gain or exchange.

For the full copyright notice, please visit <https://researchguides.smu.edu.sg/copyright>.

Accessibility

SMU strives to make learning experiences accessible for all. Students who anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers due to disability are encouraged to inform the course instructor as soon as possible. Students may also contact the university's disability services team if they have questions or concerns about academic provisions:

accessibility@smu.edu.sg. Please be aware that the accessible tables in our seminar room should remain available for students who require them.

Digital Readiness for Teaching and Learning (DRTL)

As part of emergency preparedness, instructors may conduct lessons online via the Zoom platform during the term, to prepare students for online learning. During an actual emergency, students will be notified to access the Zoom platform for their online lessons. The class schedule will mirror the current face-to-face class timetable unless otherwise stated.