

12-2015


# Introduction: Foreign Films and Higher Education

Heba A.N. El Attar Ph.D.

Cleveland State University, [h.elattar@csuohio.edu](mailto:h.elattar@csuohio.edu)

## How does access to this work benefit you? Let us know!

Follow this and additional works at: <https://engagedscholarship.csuohio.edu/cecr>

 Part of the [Bilingual, Multilingual, and Multicultural Education Commons](#), [Critical and Cultural Studies Commons](#), [Cultural History Commons](#), [Dispute Resolution and Arbitration Commons](#), [Gender, Race, Sexuality, and Ethnicity in Communication Commons](#), [International and Intercultural Communication Commons](#), [Peace and Conflict Studies Commons](#), and the [Social and Cultural Anthropology Commons](#)

## Recommended Citation

El Attar, Heba A.N. Ph.D. (2015) "Introduction: Foreign Films and Higher Education," *Cultural Encounters, Conflicts, and Resolutions*: Vol. 2 : Iss. 1 , Article 3.

Available at: <https://engagedscholarship.csuohio.edu/cecr/vol2/iss1/3>

This Introduction is brought to you for free and open access by the World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures Journal at EngagedScholarship@CSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Cultural Encounters, Conflicts, and Resolutions by an authorized editor of EngagedScholarship@CSU. For more information, please contact [library.es@csuohio.edu](mailto:library.es@csuohio.edu).

---

## Introduction: Foreign Films and Higher Education

# Introduction: Foreign Films and Higher Education

**Heba El Attar**

*Cleveland State University*

## 1. Introduction:

Border crossing, inwards as much as outwards, lies at the heart of this special issue *Teaching/Learning Interculturality and Diversity through Foreign Film*. It is a project that originated primarily to assess U.S. college learners' acquisition of intercultural competence and notions of diversity through exposure to foreign films in courses dealing with world cultures offered by departments of languages, literatures, and cultures. However, the project group soon found itself reflecting upon the identity, mission, position, and input of the educators/scholars teaching world cultures in these departments within the broader context of U.S. higher education, whose chief teaching/learning goal today is engendering intercultural communicative competence in U.S. learners—hence, a solid training in diversity. The process of teaching/learning intercultural competence itself requires a progressive pedagogy, particularly one based in multiliteracies.

Central to the latter is multimodal/multimedial communication (addressing the linguistic, aural, visual, and spatial). Multimodal text formats, especially those related to the reel, digital, etc., can increase the chances of successful communication regarding a wide range of topics. This successful communication often results in learners' higher exposure to the complex notions of diversity, at the local and global levels. Diversity here designates the fact of acknowledging the existence, on an equal basis, of other cultures that, may not only be foreign to one's own culture, but rather sharply oppose it in values and practices and still equally valid in its own right. Developing learners' awareness about diversity in their own society raises their overall consciousness and practice of democracy and social justice. Also, developing their acquaintanceship with diversity across cultures enhances their competence and performance in today's global society and market. Now, not only are films among the most efficient instructional tools to expose learners to diversity, but also they are central to the multimodality required for such exposure.

Although using film as an instructional tool is a common practice across the disciplines, this volume examines the unique role played particularly by scholars/instructors in departments traditionally viewed as merely tied to teaching foreign languages, in fulfilling that teaching/learning goal of intercultural competence that leads the U.S.

higher education agenda today. Since the 60s, departments of languages, literatures, and cultures have been moving beyond the narrow scope of setting linguistic competence as the ultimate goal/outcome of their teaching/learning. From the 70s onwards, they began implementing the communicative competence approach, before finally embracing the intercultural communicative competence scope (ICC) (Pegrum, 2008; Yanga & Fleming, 2013, p. 297). Consequently, course offerings in these academic units became increasingly geared toward courses that provide inter/cross-cultural training for learners with the aim of preparing them for an ever-changing global market ruled by a technology that shifted, for the most part, from print to non-print formats. As a result, educators in the aforementioned departments, like their peers in most other academic units, found themselves increasingly relying on audiovisual and digital materials in their teaching. Meanwhile, films continued to prove having a greater potential than printed words in the teaching/learning process because they confer an audiovisual mimicry of whichever culture they depict; hence, they increase learners' engagement in the learning process. All this resulted in learners' shift away from conventional courses that rely on written texts in favor of the ones that emphasize visual and aural texts. This shift occurred across the disciplines: Politics and international affairs (Seret, 2011), social issues (Russell, 2009), history (Marcus, Metzger, Paxton, & Stoddard, 2010), business management (Champoux, 2001; Picketty, 2013), and medical training (Alexander, Lenahan, & Pavlov, 2006; Rovener, 2015), etc.

Nonetheless, given Hollywood hegemony on the U.S. market, hence the limited acquaintanceship with non-U.S. made foreign films, many U.S. instructors who use film as instructional tools in teaching business and management, social issues, etc., end up relying on U.S. film productions. This holds true, for example, in the case of Smith, Shrestha, and Evans (2010), who mainly used U.S. films such as *Crash* to teach a graduate course required for the School of Business at Florida A&M University. Their teaching/learning objective was for the films to increase their students' inter/cross-cultural knowledge. The authors concluded, however, that despite learners' demonstrated ability to quickly identify cultural differences and problems depicted in the screened films, they remained unable to deal with cultural disparities. It could be inferred that the shortcomings of the aforementioned teaching/research experience derive from two major adversities: Non-usage of foreign films and failure to competently provide a meaningful cultural contextualization.

Foreign films in particular are instrumental for teaching/learning intercultural competence. This is especially true because travelling abroad may not be feasible for many learners, so foreign films provide learners

with authentic exposure to foreign cultures, allowing learners to view the “other” depicting himself in his own context. This direct encounter with the Other’s national voice may induce different reactions on the learners’ receiving end: Indifference, objection, rejection, acceptance, sympathy, etc. (Yanga & Fleming, p. 299). The reaction resulting from that encounter with the “other” through the reel may be positive or negative. Either way, it often generates channels for dialogues and negotiations. And, it is by negotiating possible solutions to existing conflicts that the paths for intercultural awareness are paved. Certainly, the opposite is also true. Exposing learners to cultural conflicts through the reel without facilitating discussion of possible solutions does not generate inter/cross-cultural awareness. Rather, it may deepen cultural and civilizational clashes.

Thus, exposing learners to the “Other” through authentic cultural products such as foreign films requires instructors with decent preparation in international affairs, world history, folklore, foreign languages, etc. Instructors’ rounded knowledge is necessary even if the film chosen for instruction is featuring local/national diversity, such as is the case with *Crash* that was used in the aforementioned Business course. Instructors who themselves are lacking in such intercultural competence will most likely end up covering only the assimilated sectors of any given group in the U.S. Such training, however, may still not be common among U.S. instructors of Business, Engineering, etc. (Bordoloi & Winebrake, 2015; In this respect, the direct input (in the form of course offering) or the indirect input (in the form of curricular design) by departments specializing in languages, literatures, and cultures are decisive because their instructors, by virtue of their specializations, have received inter/cross-cultural training in world history and politics, cultural practices, and literature, and subsequently are among the best prepared to undertake, participate, or oversee ICC related curricular tasks and designs.

## **2. Research Scope, Method & Data Analysis:**

As discussed in the previous section, engendering intercultural communicative competence (ICC) requires instructors to be interculturally competent themselves. More importantly, however, it requires a rigorous application of ICC criteria and purposes while structuring the course learning objectives, outcomes, and activities. Using foreign films *per se* does not guarantee learners’ acquisition of a higher degree of intercultural communicative competence. This special issue emphasizes such a requirement by highlighting an insightful teaching experience that has perfectly incorporated all the necessary teaching tools except for

addressing ICC criteria and standards. The result was a significant shortfall in learners' acquisition of intercultural competence and real notions of diversity. This deficiency could be compared with the result of the other teaching experiences described in the articles that follow, which rigorously implemented ICC learning goals and outcomes.

Research participants were comprised of a total of seven groups, either undergraduate or graduate students of French, Spanish, and Arabic. Except for classes in introductory language level sections, participants were exposed to foreign films through culture courses covering different geopolitical regions such as Latin America, the Arab Middle East, and Europe. For the most part, research participants' proficiency in the language of the target culture ranged between intermediate mid and advanced high. Thus, in most cases, films were shown without English subtitles, which increased the authenticity of students' exposure to the target culture. In contrast, when films were shown with English subtitles, as was the case in the Arab film course, results often showcased learners' proclivity to identify conflicts and superficial affinities in the target culture screened.

To assure adequate exposure to the foreign cultural product, research participants often watched the films in their entirety rather than just viewing a few excerpts or brief clips. Based on such exposure, the scholars/instructors were able to ask them to volunteer to take a semi-structured standard assessment questionnaire developed particularly for the purpose of this study (Appendix I).<sup>1</sup> The aim of having a semi-structured assessment was to allow room for each researcher to personalize the assessment in the way that best fits each individual course. In their analysis of the findings, however, all scholars, except one, who conducted this research took into account intercultural competence criteria (Appendix III), namely:

1. Cognitive: Learners' awareness of their own cultural identity and motivation to learn about the target culture.
2. Behavioral: Learners' ability to identify similarities between the target culture and their own and their ability to identify potential conflicts with the cultural features portrayed in each of those foreign films.
3. Applicative: Learners' ability to negotiate solutions for cultural conflicts.

---

<sup>1</sup> Appendices I & III were developed by El Attar. They were assessed according to ICC criteria by Lee Wilberschied in appendices II and III.

Although all the essays focus on using the national cinema of different geopolitical areas (i.e., France, Lebanon, Colombia, etc.), and from different lenses (i.e., gender studies, history, etc.) to teach world cultures, they represent two substantially different teaching experiences: non-English European Cinema (namely, the French one), and Third Cinema (Colombian, Egyptian, etc.). The difference between the two teaching experiences stems from U.S. learners' ingrained perceptions about the culture(s) screened in each of these cases. Certainly, the two cinemas in question here are linguistically different from the English (and Anglo-Saxon) one to which most U.S. learners are accustomed. Nonetheless, because French cinema is a West European one, it was likely to appear the most familiar, in terms of aesthetics and cultural values, to U.S. learners. This similarity was central to the pedagogical approach adopted when teaching French film. In contrast, the case of Third Cinema is not confined to its association with U.S. learners' familiarity (or lack thereof) with the aesthetics of/values behind the films screened.

Rather, as argued by Shaheen (2009), it aligns with the fact of their being inescapably surrounded by a pop culture that pejoratively portrays Arabs and Arab-Americans, as well as Hispanics and Latinos, along with Native and African Americans. Undoubtedly, students' learning mindset regarding the products (i.e., art, literature, film, etc.) of any given culture should factor in instructors' choice of the course material (in this case, films) and the pedagogy. As a result, in many cases, the instructors' task may not be limited to planning the teaching/learning setting, but rather to guiding learners, first and foremost, through a phase of unlearning some of the prejudices institutionalized in their native culture. In the absence of this unlearning stage, it may be difficult, if not impossible, to proceed to the following stages necessary to attain ICC—namely, the ability to identify conflicts and to adopt appropriate strategies to resolve them.

The teaching experiences discussed in this volume also differ in two aspects: Their degree of inclusion of films on peripheries versus mainstream ones, and, as previously indicated, the level of application of ICC criteria and objectives. For instance, emphasizing marginal narratives appears explicitly in Cardona's essay showcasing a non-fiction portrayal of a sexual minority group in Mexico. It is less apparent, however, in Martínez-Abeijón's essay that zooms in on a social comedy film from Colombia. In his essay, "*El Paseo* by Harold Trompetero: Approaching Popular Film from Colombia in North American Classroom," Martínez-Abeijón discusses his pedagogical approach to the selected film, which primarily takes into account the cultural modes of production and distribution in Colombia. Such a film selection *per se* challenges U.S. learners' notion of the Other because they are more acquainted with a

market that is primarily controlled by a U.S. center. Providing U.S. students with a Third cinema product that has been a hit within/without Colombia—that is, an “alternative film practice” (Naficy, 2001, p. 43), subverts these learners’ simplistic perception of Colombia as a locus of violence. Despite the instructor’s successful selection of film material and his meticulous structuring of course-related activities, he gives valuable insight regarding the limited reach of these activities in helping learners, in that particular offering of the course, to advance their intercultural communicative competence, given the absence of incorporation of ICC learning goals/outcomes in those activities.

Notwithstanding, all the teaching experiences discussed in this special issue point out to a very nuanced selection of film material in each case. For example, in “Can Films Speak Truth? Mathieu Kassovitz’s *Hate* (1995) and Phillipe Faucon’s *Disintegration* (2005),” Jouan-Westlund draws a comparatist reception analysis of two banlieue film propositions teaching American students about social, racial and religious diversity in suburban France, a main challenge in French society for its potential impact on the increase of violence and terrorism. In her essay, Jouan-Westlund discusses her pre- and post-film screening activities structured to guide U.S. learners through three specific paradigms: Marginalization, gender, and aesthetics. Then, she examines the reaches and limitations of her film selection and pedagogy in enabling those learners to identify cultural affinities as well as disparities.

Unlike Jouan-Westlund’s course on French cinema which was taught to intermediate/advanced level French majors, Tayyara’s course on Arab films was cross listed. That is, it was offered to students of Arabic and to Middle Eastern Studies minors. Simultaneously, it was open to students from other disciplines (i.e. STEM fields) under the general education category fulfilling the non-Western civilization requirement. Tayyara’s essay “Understanding Arab Culture through Cinema” may be of particular interest for instructors non-specialized in Arabic or Middle Eastern Studies and who develop courses on world cinema. More often than not, the latter type of courses often fail to incorporate films from the Arab world. The Arab film industry, however, has always had a potential impact on Arabs’ collective consciousness and was a major source for national income in Arab countries such as Egypt in the first half of the twentieth century. Thus, to dismiss Arab films in courses on world cinema, or any course whose curricular design allows it, is a disservice to U.S. learners.

Although teaching Western European cinema may allow instructors to build on U.S. learners’ disposition to identify with that cinema’s aesthetics and themes, using Arab films casts a very different experience, given the negative images ingrained in U.S. folk culture regarding Arabs



(and Arab-Americans). In “Understanding Arab Culture through Cinema,” Abed Tayyara departs from that very fact in teaching U.S. learners about the Arab Middle East (i.e., its plural identities, social complexities, colonialism, dictatorships, revolutions, etc.). Tayyara’s pedagogy seems to initiate the intercultural process by grappling directly with the conflict stage—that is, by encouraging students, in the pre-screening phase, to examine their preconceptions about the Arab world, its peoples, and its cultures. The purpose of such an approach is to counter a twofold generalization: The one resulting from the anti-Arab prejudice institutionalized in U.S. pop culture, and the other induced by the linguistic unity of the Arab world that unveils a heterogeneity in history and sociopolitical facts in the past and present. Tayyara screened a total of eight films from distinct Arab loci to challenge U.S. learners’ homogenizing views regarding the Arab world.

On her part, Cardona-Nuñez discusses her use of Latin American films to raise learners’ intercultural awareness and competence by focusing on documentary films. In her “Teaching about the Muxes in the United States: Cultural Construct, Gender Identity, and Transgression in the Twenty-First Century,” she discusses using non-fiction films to challenge learners’ preconceived notions about minority issues in general, and gender issues in particular, in the Other’s society. Like Tayyara, Cardona departs from learners’ limited familiarity with aspects of the target culture. Not only does her film selection challenge some U.S. learners at the undergraduate and graduate levels about gender identities in general, but it also subverts their preconceptions regarding such identities in a patriarchal society like Mexico. Importantly, the selected documentary transgresses learners’ image about their own culture because the Muxe group is among many Mesoamerican indigenous groups whose gender culture was altered primarily with the advent of Western values since the Spanish conquest.

Now, all the aforementioned essays assess the use of foreign films to teach/learn intercultural competence to intermediate/advanced undergraduate or graduate learners, Delia Galván’s essay, however, illustrates the pertinence of using them at the introductory levels. As she points out in her piece, such relevance stems from the fact that these levels often target students from inside and outside the humanities seeking to fulfill their foreign language requirement. In her “Approaches to Teaching Latin American Culture through Film: Children’s Plight in Poverty and Violence-ridden countries,” Galván assesses the efficiency of using foreign film to increase this population’s awareness about world cultures in general, and its potential in recruiting learners to study world cultures. She observes that, although many of these learners’ reaction to such

exposure is bound by/to the purpose of finishing the language requirement load, others develop long-term interest in learning about the cultures. Although her film selections, one fiction and one documentary, relate to two of the Latin American countries, El Salvador and Bolivia, with tumultuous social and political problems, unrest, and long histories of U.S. direct and/or indirect intervention, learners' reactions tended to be more exploratory than dismissive. However, from her discussion of learners' interaction in the pre- and post-viewing activities, we could infer that, even though they did not reject the target culture screened, in most cases they were unable to trace similarities between it and their own. On another note, Galván underscores the critical pertinence of having instructors with strong international and intercultural expertise, the need to identify similar expertise among the students themselves, and to skillfully rely on it to strengthen the teaching/learning process of intercultural competence in any given course.

### **3. Conclusion:**

This introductory essay underscored the idea that a decentralized acknowledgement of other cultures is unattainable in absence of interculturality because learning about a foreign culture/language does not *per se* guarantee openness to/acceptance of the fact that such culture is valid in its own right. The acquisition of intercultural competence has the potential to secure engagement in dialogues and negotiations between differing cultures, hence the disposition for conflict resolutions, and ultimately, diversity. The latter, especially if it is based on Interculturality, rather than Multiculturalism, can protect democratic values and practices. It is in the field of education in general, and that of higher education in particular, that democracy can be preserved through the promotion of diversity. In absence of these values, preparing competitive learners for today's global market can be nothing but inefficient, because preparing students to become global citizens, and not just competitive global workers, is the ultimate aim. Such an aim will not be attainable by prioritizing the STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering, etc.) over the humanities, as is the case in U.S. higher education today (Slaton & Riley, 2015). Rather, it is achievable by incorporating the cultural dimensions provided through the humanities into STEM curricula, or by engaging experts from the humanities in curricular design and/or teaching initiatives.

Within the humanities, the expertise of and input by teachers/scholars from department of foreign languages, literatures, and cultures are seminal to achieving the aforementioned goals. Not only do

they often have the necessary intercultural preparation, but they are also frequently equipped with border-crossing perspectives as showcased by the authors in this special issue. This border crossing disposition contributes to equipping learners with the adequate intercultural training that enables them to perform competently and competitively in the global market. Lastly, such border crossing falls in line with the goals set in 2007 by the Modern Languages Association<sup>2</sup> which called on departments of foreign languages to revitalize their undergraduate and graduate curricula and governance by setting translingual and transcultural competencies as ultimate learning objectives. The essays in this special issue represent a responsive implementation of that call.

## References

- Alexander, M., Lenahan, P., & Pavlov, A. (2006). *Cinemeducation: A comprehensive guide to using film in medical education*. Oxford, UK: Radcliffe Publishing.
- Bordoloi, L. M. & Winebrake, J. (2015). Bringing the liberal arts to Engineering education. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. DOI: <http://chronicle.com/article/Bringing-the-Liberal-Arts-to/229671?cid=megamenu>
- Champoux, J. E. (2001). *Management: Using film to visualize principles and practices*. Cincinnati, OH: South-Western College Publishing.
- Marcus, A., Metzger, S., Paxton, R., & Stoddard, J. (2010). *Teaching history with film: Strategies for secondary social studies*. NY: Routledge.
- Naficy, H. (2001). *Accented cinema. Exilic and diasporic filmmaking*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Pegrum, M. (2008). Film, culture and identity: Critical intercultural literacies for the language classroom. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 8(2) 136-154.

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.mla.org/flreport>

- Picketty, T. (2013). *Le capital au XXI siècle*. Paris: Seuil.
- Rovener, J. (2015, May 27). A top medical school revamps requirements to lure English majors. *NPR (National Public Radio)*. Available at: DOI: <http://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2015/05/27/407967899/a-top-medical-school-revamps-requirements-to-lure-english-majors>
- Russell, W. B. (2009). *Teaching social issues with film*. U.S.A: Information Age Publishing.
- Seret, R. (2011). *World affairs in foreign films: Getting the global picture*. Jefferson, NC: Macfarland.
- Shaheen, J. G. (2009). *Reel bad Arabs: How Hollywood vilifies a people*. Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press.
- Slaton, A., & Riley, D. (2015). The wrong solution for STEM education. DOI: <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2015/07/08/essay-criticizes-proposed-changes-engineering-accreditation-standards>
- Smith, W. L., Shrestha, N. R., & Evans, C. L. (2010). 360 approach to assessing cross-cultural intelligence: Use of film. *Journal of Instructional Pedagogies*, 3. DOI: <http://www.aabri.com/manuscripts/09424.pdf>.
- Yanga, H. L., & Fleming, M. (2013). How Chinese college students make sense of foreign films and TV series: Implications for the development of intercultural communicative competence in ELT. *The Language Learning Journal*, 41(3), 297–31. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2013.836347>

## Appendix 1

### Film Survey

**Please complete this section PRIOR TO the movie screening.**

**1. Please indicate the title of the foreign film you intend to watch:**

---

**2. How often do you watch foreign films?**

Always

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

**3. You are watching this film for:**

Personal growth

Entertainment

Class requirement

Other

(Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**4. How do you rate your acquaintance with cultural contexts other than the U.S.?**

Strong

Fair

Poor

Null

**5. Please write about your expectations for the film that you are going to watch and especially indicate whether you are or not familiar with the cultural context in which this foreign film develops:**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Please complete this section AFTER the film screening.**

**6. How do you rate the film you just watched?**

(title \_\_\_\_\_)

Very interesting                      Interesting                      Fair                      Boring

**7. In the following, circle an answer wherever it is applicable to the film you watched:**

**a. I find that the film techniques (lightning, camera work, etc.) are very different from the ones I am used to here in the U.S.**

Strongly agree              Agree              Disagree              Strongly disagree              Not sure  
Don't know

**b. I can see more similarities than differences between the social, political and economic background depicted in the film and the one here in the U.S.**

Strongly agree              Agree              Disagree              Strongly disagree

**c. I find the religious views expressed in the film shocking to some extent.**

Strongly agree              Agree              Disagree              Strongly disagree

**d. I can see more differences than similarities between the conditions of women represented in the film and that of women here in the U.S..**

Strongly agree              Agree              Disagree              Strongly disagree

**e. I was specifically shocked by the depiction of non-heterosexual groups in this film.**

Strongly agree              Agree              Disagree              Strongly disagree              N/A

**f. I found the representation of sexuality in the film to be disturbing**

Strongly agree              Agree              Disagree              Strongly disagree              N/A

**g. I found the representation of violence in the film to be disturbing**

Strongly agree              Agree              Disagree              Strongly disagree              N/A

**h. I am surprised by how different the political system depicted on the film is from what I know in the U.S.**

Strongly agree      Agree      Disagree      Strongly disagree

**8. I find the themes/topics in this film comparable to at least one of the films made here in the U.S.**

Strongly agree      Agree      Disagree      Strongly disagree

**9. I would recommend this film to others**

Strongly agree      Agree      Disagree      Strongly disagree

**10. Please write any additional comments that you may have:**

---

---

---

## Appendix II

### Assessment of Appendix I According to ATSL ICC Standards

- Analyze and describe diversity in the host culture.

*Includes questions about film's content on religion, gender, sociopolitical/socioeconomic, sexual, & political aspects of the culture(s) depicted*

*Does not specifically ask for description or analysis, but raises the questions, and lays groundwork for future description and analysis in other activities and assignments.*

*Question 8 implies description and analysis in future discussions and/or assignments.*

- Identify and describe significance of cultural images and symbols in the host culture and one's own.

*This would also be addressed in other future discussions and/or assignments, in reference to question 8.*

- Analyze everyday behaviors in the host culture and compare and contrast to one's own.

*Question 7b through 7g and 8 prepare the way for analysis in class discussion, group work, or outside assignments.*

- Identify culturally determined behavior patterns.

*Question 7b through 7g and 8 prepare the way for analysis in class discussion, group work, or outside assignments.*

- Examine own cultural adjustment process and the necessary personal balance between acculturation and preservation of their own cultures.

*Questions 7b and 8 open the way for discussion in class and act as prompts for self-reflection, either in groups, journals, or essay assignments.*



- Recognize cultural stereotypes—favorable and discriminatory—and describe how they impact their own and others' behavior

*Question 7b through 7g and 8 prepare the way for analysis in class discussion, group work, or outside assignments.*

- Compare and contrast differences and similarities in values and beliefs in their own cultures and the host culture.

*Questions 7b and d and Question 8 specifically prepare the way for discussion, analysis, and writing or presentation activities/assignments. Other parts of Question 7 could also serve as prompts.*

### Appendix III

#### Correspondence of AACU Rubric for Intercultural Knowledge and Competence and Film Questionnaire Items

AACU Criteria	Criteria Description for “Capstone” Level	
Cultural self-awareness	Articulates insights into own cultural rules and biases (e.g. seeking complexity; aware of how her/his experiences have shaped these rules, and how to recognize and respond to cultural biases, resulting in a shift in self-description.)	Questions 4, 5, 8, and 7b, d, and h prepare the learner for self-reflection and discussion as well as articulation of insights.
Knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks	Demonstrates sophisticated understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices.	Questions 7 and 8 help toward building sophisticated understanding.
Empathy	Interprets intercultural experience from the perspectives of own and more than one worldview and demonstrates ability to act in a supportive manner that recognizes the feelings of another cultural group.	Question 8 prepares the way for interpretation during discussion and self-reflection, followed by culminating assignments.
Verbal and non-verbal communication	Articulates a complex understanding of cultural differences in verbal and nonverbal communication (e.g., demonstrates understanding of the degree to which people use physical contact while communicating in different cultures or use direct/indirect and explicit/implicit meanings) and is able to skillfully negotiate a shared understanding based on those differences.	Questions 7 and 8 help toward building a complex understanding and skilled negotiation of shared understanding.
Curiosity	Asks complex questions about other cultures; seeks out and articulates answers to these questions that reflect multiple cultural perspectives	Questions 3, 8, and 10 help to prompt question. Assignments in relation to these questions help to prompt seeking and articulating answers with multiple cultural perspectives.
Openness	Initiates and develops interactions with culturally different others. Suspends judgment in valuing his/her interactions with culturally different others.	Assessment of answers to questions 4, 5, 8, 9, and 10 give the instructor opportunities to build these attitudes and behaviors.

<b>Assessment of Appendix III According to ICC Criteria</b>	
<b>I. and II. Film and teaching strategies:</b>	
1. (Inter)cultural learning goals/ objectives of course How they were they clearly outlined to learners	Could be described in terms of AACU criteria or ATSL Standards. Also, ACTFL's IPA and Moeller & Nugent (2014) <sup>3</sup> ; Roell (2010) and others + 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Framework: Social and Cross-Cultural Skills
2. Film genre How genre serves course learning objectives How genre serves development of intercultural competence	Please see above
	AACU criterion: Knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks AACU: Knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks
3. Prerequisite level of knowledge of TC How students acquired prerequisite knowledge of TC How prerequisite knowledge of TC was provided	Altman, Pusack, and Otto (1990); Roell (2010)
	21 <sup>st</sup> C: Global Awareness
4. Themes covered in films How themes relate to the target culture	AACU criterion: Knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks
5. Theories and supportive readings chosen to help learners achieve the intercultural learning objectives and goals	Altman, Pusack, and Otto (1990); Roell (2010); 21 <sup>st</sup> C: Global Awareness
6. Films screened in entirety or a few clips only	Ning (2009) and Altman, Pusack, and Otto (1990); Roell (2010);
7. Pre- and post-activities to underscore the (inter)cultural features in the selected films?	(Peagrum, 2008) and Altman, Pusack, and Otto, 1990; Ning (2009); (1990); Roell (2010)
<b>III. Assess students' intercultural knowledge:</b>	
Based on student answers to assessment sheet and on course performance in other related work (class discussion, papers, etc.)	ACTFL's IPA
<b>IV. Assess competence:</b>	
1. Level of student motivation to learn about the target culture motivation related to certain aspects/themes, or general	Chao (2013)
2. Cultural aspects with which learners related Number of students able to draw comparisons between TC and their own	AACU criteria: empathy and motivation
	AACU criteria: cultural self-awareness and empathy

<sup>3</sup> Full reference information for studies is found in Wilberschied's article in this issue.

3. Range of comparisons: description to critical re-examination of own culture as much as the TC	AACU criteria: cultural self-awareness; 21 <sup>st</sup> C criterion: global awareness; ACTFL Standard: Culture
4. Cultural aspects triggering student rejection, objection, or indifference Was rejection/indifference common?	Bennett (1993)
5. Possible explanation of rejection/objection/indifference (limited learner knowledge of culture's intricacies, ethnocentrism, lack of motivation, etc. )	Moeller and Nugent (2014); Bennett (1993);
6. Frequency of student willingness to communicate/negotiation and show understanding of cultural disparity/conflict to communicate it and/or negotiate resolution and show understanding? Type of instructor input.	AACU rubric: Verbal and non-verbal communication  Roell (2010)
7. Frequency of relating learners' negotiation of resolution for cultural conflicts to their notion of diversity?	Roell (2010)
<b>Instructor's pedagogy and input to teaching intercultural:</b>	
1. Instructor description: students' intercultural competence at the beginning/ end of the course	AACU rubric
2. Instructor expectations of students at the beginning/end of course	AACU rubric
3. Aspects to be covered and how to improve students' intercultural competence in future offerings of this course	AACU rubric
4. Instructor's assessment— experience of using foreign films in the US classroom	Adair-Hauck, Glisan, & Troyan (2013); Johnson & Nelson (2010)

## Appendix IV

### Intercultural Competence Data Analysis Sheet

The following questions are meant to guide your analysis according major aspects of intercultural competence: learners' knowledge about their own culture and disposition to learn about the target culture and their own; their ability to identify potential similarities and conflicts between that culture and their own; and, finally, their ability to negotiate (re)solutions for such conflicts. The purpose of the questions is to help you generate qualitative data, however, any quantitative data can certainly be insightful.

#### I. Info about research participants:

1. How does the student body in your course look like? )  
Established U.S. citizens, 1<sup>st</sup> generation immigrants, heritage speakers, etc.?
2. How advanced are they in their academic careers? (freshman, sophomore, etc.)
3. What are their majors/minors?
4. How proficient are they in the language of the target culture? (novice, intermediate, etc.)

#### II. Information about course material, theoretical frame, and activities:

1. What are the (inter)cultural learning goals and objectives in your course? Were they clearly outlined to learners? How?
2. What type of film genre did you pick for your course? How does this genre serve your learning objective of intercultural competence?
3. What level of knowledge about the targeted culture was required from learners prior to film screening? How was that knowledge acquired by/or provided to them?
4. What themes were covered in those films and how do they relate to the target culture?

5. What type of theories and supportive readings did you chose to help learners achieve the intercultural learning objectives and goals?
6. Where films screened in their entirety or did you show few clips only? Why?
7. What type of pre and post activities did you structure to underscore the (inter)cultural features in the selected films?

**III. Assessment of students' intercultural knowledge. Please base your analysis on students' answers to the assessment sheet and on their performance in other course related work (class discussion, papers, etc.)**

1. How motivated were students to learn about the target culture? Was such motivation related to certain aspects/themes only or was it general?
2. What are some cultural aspects with which learners were able to relate? Also, how many among them were able to draw comparisons between the target culture and their own?
3. Were such comparisons limited to description or were learners able to critically re-examine their own culture as much as the target one?
4. What are some cultural aspects that triggered their rejection, objection, or indifference? Was such rejection/indifference common among them?
5. How can such rejection/objection/indifference be explained? In other words, was it induced by learners' limited knowledge about the intricacies of the target culture? Was it due to ethnocentrism? Was it due to lack of motivation?
6. In case of cultural disparity/conflict, how frequently were learners willing to communicate it and/or negotiate resolution and show understanding? Also, what type of input were given by the instructor in this case?
7. How often was learners' negotiation of resolution for cultural conflicts related to their notion of diversity?

**IV. The purpose of the following questions is to assess instructor's pedagogy and input to teaching intercultural competence:**

1. How would you describe students' intercultural competence at the beginning and at the end of the course? (Any supportive evidence will be insightful)
2. What were your own expectations from students at the beginning of the course and at its end?
3. Which aspects do you believe should be covered and how to improve students' intercultural competence in future offerings of this course?
4. As an international instructor/scholar with intercultural competence, how would you assess the experience of using foreign films in the us classroom?

**Heba El Attar** is Associate Professor of Spanish at Cleveland State University. She earned her PhD from the University Complutense (Spain). Her research and publication focus on the Christian Palestinian Diaspora in Chile—their contributions to filmmaking, national press, and literature. Her work on Palestinian-Chilean poets and/or novelists (i.e. Mahfud Massís), filmmakers (i.e. Miguel Littín), or press (i.e. *Al-Damir*) appeared in *L.A.C.E.S.*, *Hispania*, and *E.I.A.L.* She translated and published several novels and books from Spanish into Arabic. She directed, produced, and subtitled *Christian Palestine in Chile* (2014), a documentary on Palestinian-Chileans that screened at film festivals in the U.S.A, Europe, and Latin America.