Offered by: Center for Teaching and Learning, Competence & Career Center

ECTS: 3

Lecturer: Nadine Scholz, Yasmin Hedjri

Offered: summer and winter

Registration: directly to Nadine.Scholz@hs-rm.de

**Dates:**

Starting days: 14.3.25: 13.30-15.00 o’clock **or** 10.4.25: 17.00-18.30 o’clock

Communication days: 15.4.25 and 26.4.25: 13-16 o’clock

Weekly meetings: 25.4.25-26.6.25: 13.30-14.30 o’clock

Reflection day: 14.8.25: 10-14 o’clock

**Course description:**

Are you preparing for your semester abroad (as an Incoming student at HSRM or an Outgoing student from HSRM)? Do you want to learn how to effectively showcase the personal skills you've developed during your study abroad in job interviews? Are you curious about the connection between intercultural competence, mindfulness, and resilience? This course provides a platform for you to enhance your global and professional skills. By reflecting on your personal intercultural experiences alongside fellow international students, we will bring theory into practice. We will explore concepts related to culture, intercultural communication, conflict resolution, and resilience strategies. Additionally, we will examine your unique (multicultural) values and how they shape your identity.

Throughout your stay abroad, you will create an interactive portfolio that showcases your personal development. Given that collaborating with individuals from diverse backgrounds—whether remotely or in-person—will likely be a part of your future career, this course aims to enhance your future skill set in many ways.

**For the completion of the course, you can earn 3 ECTS- Credits. Please put them on your Learning Agreement. Questions by faculty can be directed to me directly.**

**Learning objectives (competences):**

After this class, students are able to

1. identify and explain fundamental intercultural theories and their significance for personal and professional contexts
2. conduct and reflect on cross-cultural comparisons such as e.g. mindfulness, university life, or stereotypes
3. develop creative solutions for challenges in intercultural exchange
4. articulate, identify and showcase their development of professional skills in the electronic portfolio
5. practice presenting and stating their opinion on various topics in a foreign language (English)
6. develop communication and empathy skills by acting as buddies for each other

**Detailed class description:**

**Starting days:**

Introduction to the portfolio process and kick-off with first tasks that concern your new surroundings.

**Communication days:**

In this interactive seminar, we will discuss how to act and communicate in an intercultural

sensitive way. You get the chance to reflect on your own values and cultural identity.

This course is together with other international students during their semester abroad. Let’s compare our experience – are they similar, different, what is new?

**Global competence in practice days:**

You will have the possibility to exchange your abroad experience during the semester with other students in the same situation. Together we will reflect on cross-cultural issues – they are even more fun since everybody is in a different country! During the seminar, we will analyze how your international experience contributes to the development of necessary future skills for the job market.

**Reflection day:**

You will reflect your whole study abroad experience and showcase your portfolio.

**Peer feedback:**

There are two sessions open where you will receive and give peer feedback to your peer on your portfolio development.

**Timetable:**

| **Day** | **Date** | **Topic** | **ePortfolio task** | **Buddy** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Starting days |
| **1 A** | 14.03.2513:30-15:00 | Kick-Off 1: Personal growth in a global context |  |  |
| **1 B** | 10.04.2517:00-18:30 | Kick-Off 2: Personal growth in a global context |  |  |
| Communication days |
| **2** | 15.04.2513:00-16:00 | Intercultural theories 1 |  |  |
| **3** | 26.04.2513:00-16:00 | Intercultural communication 2 |  |  |
| Global competence in practice days |
| **4** | 25.04.2513:30-14:30 | Cultural models |  |  |
| **5** | 02.05.2513:30-14:30 | Cultural exploration experience |  |  |
| **6** | 09.05.2513:30-14:30 | Culture & identity |  |  |
| **7** | 16.05.2513:30-14:30 | Cultural stereotypes |  |  |
| **8** | 23.05.2513:30-14:30 | Intercultural competence: mindfulness & resilience |  |  |
| **9** | 30.05.2513:30-14:30 | Global portfolio: peer feedback session |  |  |
| **10** | 06.06.2513:30-14:30 | Cross-cultural comparison: University life |  |  |
| **11** | 13.06.2513:30-14:30 | Future skills: global skills & employability |  |  |
| **12** | 20.06.2513:30-14:30 | Cultural exploration experience revisited |  |  |
| **13** | 27.06.2513:30-14:30 | Global portfolio: peer feedback session |  |  |
| Reflection day |
| **14** | 14.08.2510:00-14:00 | Reflection meeting: portfolio showcase & concluding reflection |  |  |

**Virtual buddy program:**

Within the class, we will work with a virtual buddy program. This means: one (or two) students of this class will function as intercultural buddies for each other. I will match buddies according to not being in the same country, but ideally in the same time zone. Buddies should support each other while facing similar (or different) challenges while abroad and provide a partner to speak to. Please reserve one hour each week for your virtual buddy. Meetings are, however, not necessary if both partners do not need to meet. You will arrange the meeting time and meeting place on your own. The language of communication is up to you.

**Portfolio assessment:**

The final assessment is the completion of a “Study abroad portfolio”. Most contents of the portfolio are worked on in class and have then to be combined to one pdf document. You will receive a word template for the portfolio, but if you wish to use a different system, feel free to do so – as long as you hand in a pdf file.

**The following parts are requested for your portfolio:**

* Motivational letter
* Pictures of beginning/end & stereotypes
* Language requirement test
* Reflections (4 questions, max. 400 words)
* Cultural model
* Cultural exploration curve
* Future skill set: employability skills
* Future skill set: resilience skills
* Buddy feedback & buddy reflection
* Optional: pictures, further artefacts you would like to include that influenced you during your stay abroad

**Please note: the detailed portfolio parts are developed throughout the class and will be presented in the first session and uploaded on Stud.IP!**

**How to register:**

Please write an email to nadine.scholz until **April 9th, 2024**. This seminar is only

for 14 participants, make sure to register as soon as you decide to take this course. Please register as early as possible if you already abroad since this needs to go in your learning agreement and it makes sense to come to the first kick-off session (in March) – some tasks for the portfolio make more sense at the beginning than in the middle :).

**What you need to do to earn 3 ECTS credits:**

Mandatory participation of at least 80%:

* All parts of the intercultural communication days
* Reflection Day
* Exchange Meetings (7 of 10)
* Kick off meeting (1 of the 2)
* Buddy meeting/Peer feedback

Completion of

* Portfolio (which you will fill in along the way during your stay with tasks from the class)

Missed classes:

Contact me beforehand if you already see that some dates do not fit. I will try to find solutions.

**Student voices from last round:**

*“What I liked about the Prepare & Reflect course is that it gets you excited for the semester*

*abroad in a playful way. Set in a safe environment, it also makes you aware of the emotional*

*rollercoaster that one might experience and helps you reflect on the whole experience. I also*

*really enjoyed getting together with other students on a regular basis and hearing about their*

*thoughts.”*

*“I really like the idea of sharing your circumstances and surroundings with other people,*

*especially when they're on the other side of the planet. Also, it's nice to have someone to talk*

*to. Sometimes, it just needs someone to listen.”*