

ONLINE COURSE DEVELOPMENT for a GLOBAL AUDIENCE



REFLECT ON YOUR OWN CULTURE

Everyone has a culture, and as the faculty member in the course, you have to be acutely aware of yours. If you can identify your own culture, you can be aware of how it is affecting your students' perceptions of your course. Think of culture as a box—if you aren't aware you are inside a box, how can you get out of it to perceive your course from the outside? You don't have to remove your culture from the course, but you need to be aware of the effect it can have on your students.

INTEGRATE A WORLD/GLOBAL VIEW

- **Clarify references** to US landmarks, Western literature, and famous people. If they are directly applicable to the course content, be sure to explain them rather than assume students are familiar.
- **Encourage** students to apply their own worldview to content, when applicable or meaningful.
- **Be careful** of analogies—they are excellent teaching tools, but does everyone share the same concepts? (e.g., comparing something to the length of a football field)
- **Avoid** references to pop culture as they might differ across the cultures and will be outdated quickly.
- **Make sure** concepts are not based on geographical location (e.g., seasons, locations of stars/planets in the sky, etc.).

INCLUDE VISUALS

- **Make use of visuals** as much as possible to further support your message.
- **Be clear** and to-the-point to focus learner's attention.
- **Summarize** and **reinforce** important points (e.g., Infographics).
- **Incorporate** a variety of media to meet your needs (e.g., a video might be a good option to demonstrate a procedure; a graph might be best to show data/trends).

PLAN YOUR COURSE CONTENT

- **Include** the contributions to a field of study from other cultures. (e.g., Chinese contributions to holistic medicine, Arab contributions to mathematics).
- **Be aware** of traditional Judeo-Christian ideas that are pervasive in US society that may not be understood in other places.
- **Recognize** that various political systems may affect the way learners interact with course content. If your course content touches on political systems, be mindful of different political contexts and that political ideas might not be shared (or even understood).
- **Acknowledge** that processes are not universal (e.g., mathematical procedures). Show the process of doing sample problems.

ORGANIZE YOUR LECTURE

- **Introduce** and preview the main points to activate learners' cognitive domain without overload (e.g., agenda).
- **Use** clear standard transitions and sequencing (first, second, however, in contrast, etc.).
- **Restate** key points/ideas to reiterate important concepts.
- **Summarize** your main points at the end of the lecture.
- **Provide** graphic organizers and visual tools for note-taking (e.g., incomplete outlines, Venn diagrams, etc.).
- **Share** written materials that support your lecture (e.g., summaries, abstracts, etc.).
- **Include** questions to focus learners' attention on the key points of the materials.

USE CLEAR WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS

Watch out for these:

- **Idioms:** e.g. "a far cry from," "piece of cake" (easy), "for good" (permanently), "hand in" (submit)
- **Slang:** e.g. "I'm down with that," "OMG," "The two sides were headed for a face-off."
- **Acronyms:** When first using an acronym, use the full name first and in parentheses write the acronym. Global Freshman Academy (GFA)
- **Field-specific vocabulary:** Be sure to clearly explain any applicable vocabulary of the field.
- **Phrasal verbs:** Beware of two-word verbs such as "look up" or "turn in." They are difficult to find in a dictionary and are challenging for 2nd language learners to hear (the second word is usually small and quickly pronounced).
- **Figurative language:** Refrain from hyperbole/similes/metaphors that can be taken literally (e.g., "a workplace having a toxic environment"—there is not really poison in the air).
- **Large numbers:** Use standard form (e.g., say "one thousand seven hundred" rather than "seventeen hundred")
- **Measurements:** Give both metric and British units; avoid non-standard measurements, e.g. "the size of a walnut," "a couple of blocks").

RECORD VIDEO

- **Wear** formal, professional clothing.
- **Gesture** using your full hand with an open palm—no pointing.
- **Be aware** that synchronous sessions could be problematic because of time differences.
- **Consider** sub-captioning of live sessions if needed for comprehensibility.
- **Try** to include images of people that reflect ASU's diversity.

ORGANIZE YOUR LECTURE

- **Give explanations** of academic terms in the context, for example, "Write a *précis*, or *summary*, of what you read."
- **Use** clear and direct language. Too much academic vocabulary might overwhelm learners.
- **Align** questions and discussion board prompts with expected answer(s) (e.g., make a list of what the answer should be). Then make sure that your question clearly asks for that result.
- **Guide students** through the assignment, especially if it is a multi-step process. If possible, give a model answer.
- **Recognize** that educational experiences differ. Some learners will want the instructor to be directive, while others will be more comfortable with open-ended assignments. Just be aware of both styles.
- **Realize** that learners' concept of space and time may differ. Make deadlines and due dates clear. Warn students several times (not just in the syllabus) if due dates are firm and late assignments will not be accepted or marked down.