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# What Makes Us Global? Macro-trends and Effective Management of Cultural Interconnectedness

PROF. STEFANIA VITULLI

## Overview

**Area:** Media and Communications

**Dates:** July 10 - 21 (2 weeks)

**Campus:** Milan

**Course Number:** CM/MG310

**Term:** Summer 2023

**Credits:** 6 ECTS

## Description

What are the relevant macro-trends to follow? How does one find their point of origin and observe their shifts and transformations in a global and interconnected landscape that seems flat and also unstable to the point of disintegrating at the mere manifestation of any new crisis? The so called third stage of globalization, which started in the 1980s, witnessed the beginning of the “all in one” norm, in which local cultures and customs seemed set to become obsolete, making way for a great period of confusion. What the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed is that effective communications during a crisis have to take into account both the global and the local cultural contexts in which it evolved: missing this goal can affect the reputation of a country/company with a log-lasting damage.

The first part of the course will focus on basic principles of cultural studies, such as theoretical approaches to global, glocal, local and cultural dimensions (Hofstede/Culture maps), taking decisions (Kahneman), data research (Lindstrom), which will be used to assess real problems and case studies by way of a holistic perspective. Furthermore, the class will look at how insights tied to concepts of Influence, Trust, Reputation, Generation, Complexity, Post-Humanism and Censorship mechanisms bring awareness of the present and of the potential impact global transformations can have on ideas of citizenship, consumption and consensus decisions.

The second part of the course will be dedicated to a review of the essential global macro-trends and can include the following:

- Green citizenship: green communication, how to tackle green stakeholders' challenge, Gen Z Activism
- Post-Humanism and Artificial Intelligence
- Company/Stakeholder relationship vs citizenship role model
- Executive Reputation and Ceo Branding
- Global/ Macro Trends in Social Movement: focus BLM-Black Lives Matter

A co-teaching with Professor Jatia Wrighten (see bio below) will be integral part of the focus of the class.

This course is highly interactive. Students are expected to proactively contribute to class discussion and to the building of concepts and course objectives by way of individual and group assignments that will include: strategy implementation plans; politics and market analysis; team building exercises; critical perspective training; effective and impactful presentations of contents to faculty and peers.

## Course contents



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Lesson 1: Why are you here? -Team creation - Intro to the course and to syllabus -**Is it really global? Starting by 2020**, the most different year, gallery of critical tools in analysis criticism and communication to assess and navigate cultural differences in considering events

Lesson 2: 2020 teams' presentations – **Marginalization/Intersectionality** (a global perspective on cultural indexes "POWER DISTANCE"/"COLLECTIVISM/INDIVIDUALISM") Introduce American culture aspect- emphasis on marginalized groups in the U.S. Theoretical Approaches to understanding identity made up of more than one characteristic- but specifically race and gender- *Intersectionality* Who are marginalized groups in the U.S.? Who are these groups in Italy? How does their marginalized status effect their ideas of global or cultural interconnectedness? How does *Intersectionality* look in an Italian context? – **Co-teaching prof Jatia Wrighten** + Brief for "US-Italy approaches" submission: look at specific policies that emphasize similarities/differences.

Lesson 3: My 2020/FUTURE 100 presentation + **Cultural perspective 1 + Black swans/Small Data discussions+Decisions/Kahneman focus** + LINDSTROM presentation/Kahneman tasks/Intro Country Culture

Lesson 4: **Reputation economy**: a global perspective on cultural indexes "UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE"/"LONG TERM ORIENTATION"+ **Brief for assignment "Reputation" submission**

Lesson 5: **Cultural perspective 2** + Maslow, Frankl/**Desirable/Desired dimension + Trust as a key value with Edelman materials (on BlackBoard)** video+report to be studied + task about them)

Lesson 6 **MIDTERM EXAM (Discussion+Essay submission)**

Lesson 7: **CEO Branding**: how CEO could become pioneer for ethical purpose

Lesson 8: Political and cultural connections in communication&relationships – Activism and neoactivism - **Global/ Macro Trends in Social Movement** that had a global effect. FOCUS Black Lives Matter (BLM): How do we understand Black? Does context matter? Why does this movement have global appeal? Role of media/social media and branding: how did retailers capitalize on this movement? Is it genuine if capitalism benefits? Did it/ does it continue to increase interconnectedness? – **Co-teaching prof Jatia Wrighten**

Lesson 9: **Green citizenship, green activism. Generations, communications, pressure approaches to green stakeholders**: a global perspective on cultural UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE index + Team task on Ideal EcoCountry

Lesson 10: **Digital self in Artificial Intelligence. Smart objects and smart ethics**: a global perspective on cultural POWER DISTANCE index. Brief launch for Final Exam individual essay/team task

Lesson 11

**FINAL EXAM PRESENTATION TEAM TASK/DISCUSSION (on individual ESSAY SUBMISSION)**

## Prerequisites

There are no formal prerequisites. However, the course is highly recommended for students with the following background: Economics, Law, International Cooperation, Sociology, Psychology, Foreign Languages, Science in Management, Literature and Arts.



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## Method of instruction

Interactive lessons with role playing in case study analysis, essays writing and presentations, group discussions, online simulations, students' masterclasses. Presentation of case studies/topics by guest speakers. A list of references will be provided during the course.

## Course requirements

### Credits

6 ECTS

### Grading

Class Assignments: 40%

Midterm and Final exams: 50% of final grade (30%+30%)

### Team Assignments

In order to foster cooperative learning and an in-depth study of a particular topic of interest, students will be responsible for participating in group presentations. The final products could be slides, videos, creative tools or communication strategies. Groups will present to the class or to guest speakers and their works will receive a total final grade given from speakers and from the instructor.

Teams will have to present part of the theoretical contents in special "classes" to be held by teams as "professors". So to explore the items more in depth and acquire an ability to enrich and apply a critical perspective to read/studied essays/reports and even to be better prepared for the theoretical midterm.

### Mid-Term Exam

The Midterm Test will consist of open-ended questions to test basic knowledge and comprehension of course material and theoretical topics; to test critical perspective; to apply theoretical topics to concrete examples.

### Final Exam

The final exam will consist in conceiving a strategy for a real case study, to test basic knowledge and comprehension of the whole course, theoretical and case

## Course readings and materials

The lecturer's slides, readings and essays for exams and assignments will be posted on Blackboard.

## Instructor bio

**Stefania Vitulli** is a creative consultant, journalist, dramaturg. She is contract professor of Advertising Management and Business Communication at Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan, where she teaches also Environmental and Social Sustainability Communication and Personal Branding. She is research fellow at LabCom, UCSC, and professor and Senior Tutor at the Master in Corporate Communication, UCSC. She is the author of articles and academic papers on green communication and sustainability and of the book "CEO branding in the reputation economy", 2021.



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**Jatia Wrighten** conducts research on Black women, state legislatures, and leadership, with an emphasis on intersectionality. Her current project examines the differences in leadership attainment that exists between Black women, White women, Black men, and White men in state legislatures and the factors that cause these differences. She created the novel theory, the Heavy Lifters Theory, to explain the primary differences between Black male and Black female legislators as it relates to leadership in state legislatures. She was most recently awarded a research grant from the Center for Effective Lawmaking to continue her work on Black women, leadership, and intersectionality. She continues to research and provide instruction that emphasizes themes of equity, justice, and political effects for the most marginalized groups in the United States as an assistant professor at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) in the Political Science Department. Jatia uses her degree to teach and serve as a mentor to a future generation of scholars. When she is not researching and writing, she enjoys traveling with her family.

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