

BISP Seminar: Cross-Cultural Learning

Instructor: Edwin Lin; edklin@gmail.com

Office Hours: 434 Barrows Hall

Tuesday 8-9:30am, 11am-2pm, 3:30-4:50pm; Thursday 8-10am

Sign-up for Office Hours at: <http://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/icwie>

Sociology 198 Fall 2015

Group 17 and 18

“As an international student from China, I was confident of becoming a good student at Cal before I came here. However, after school started, I realized that there were so many strategies both for studying and socializing in the U.S. that I needed to learn, and the concept of ‘being a good student’ altered according to this new cultural context.” – Former BISP student

Course Objective: This class has been designed to enhance the academic and personal experiences of international students in the Berkeley International Study Program (BISP) in Letters & Sciences who are attending Cal through UC Berkeley Extension’s International Concurrent Enrollment program. The goal of the course is to help BISP students thrive in and out of the classroom and get the most out of their time at Berkeley.

The class focuses on three areas, each of which is explored through a combination of lectures, small-group activities, and workshops:

1. Cross-cultural understanding
2. Skills for American colleges
3. UC Berkeley resources and history

Course Facilitator: The course facilitator is Edwin Lin (Ph.D. Sociology). The sponsoring professor is Michael Burowoy, Department of Sociology. If you have any questions about the class, please contact edklin@gmail.com or visit Edwin’s office hours.

Advising Appointments: To make an appointment with Edwin, please sign up at <http://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/icwie>. Please be prompt. If you cannot come to your appointment, please be sure to cancel online. All students must meet with one of the BISP advisors by Friday, September 4.

Absences: Classroom participation is the most important element of this class, so attendance is required. If you are absent more than two times, you will receive a “no pass” grade. It is important that you contact Edwin (edklin@gmail.com) if you miss a class, ideally ahead of time if you know in advance that you will be absent.

Grading: This class is offered as a 1-unit course and is graded on a Pass/No Pass basis.

Weekly Routines: At the start of each class, two students will share “selfies” taken somewhere interesting and briefly explain to the class where they were and why they chose to share that particular moment (email your selfie to edklin@gmail.com by the Sunday night before class on Tuesday).

Workshops: There will be three workshops held throughout the semester. These workshops, while recommended, are optional to you. You must, however, attend at least ONE workshop during the semester, but you can pick and choose which one. Of course, you are free to attend them all as they seem useful to you.

Class Syllabus and Readings:

Note: Readings are posted under “Files” on bcourses. All homework must be completed before class meets on the day on which it is listed. Writing assignments should be printed out and brought into class. The homework assignments are designed to take less than 1–2 hours per week.

FALL 2015 Class Outline

1. Tuesday, September 1 — Introductions, Q&As, Participating in Discussions, Approaching Professors/GSIs, and UC Berkeley Resources;!

Overview of the course, introductions, fears and expectations, Q&As, communicating with professors, GSIs, and staff and participating in classroom discussions

Explore: <http://resource.berkeley.edu/> (look up topics of personal interest, or just click on a few letters of the alphabet and see what comes up).

2. Tuesday, September 8 — Meeting new people: Conversational English practices

Simple ways to strike up conversation, listening techniques, sharing about yourself, ways to meet people on campus!

3. Tuesday, September 15 — WORKSHOP: Graduate School in the West

Inside scoop on graduate schools in Western countries. letters of recommendation, test scores, GPA, application process, etc.

4. Tuesday, September 22 — Academic and Cultural Differences; East vs. West Cultural Differences; Stereotypes

Discussion on academic and cultural differences

Read: Inside a Chinese Test Prep Factory

In Class: <http://bsix12.com/east-meets-west/>

5. Tuesday, September 29 — WORKSHOP: Writing Papers and Citing Sources

How to craft a thesis statement, strong paragraph structure, and how/when to cite sources

6. Tuesday, October 6 — Exploring Berkeley and California

Exploring Berkeley and short lecture on history and California.

7. Tuesday, October 13 — NO CLASS, BUT MID-TERM OFFICE HOURS CHECK-IN

8. Tuesday, October 20 — US Government and Democracy

Discussion and short lecture on government (East vs. US).

9. Tuesday, October 27 — Documentary and Discussion

Watching a documentary and discussing it briefly.

10. Tuesday, November 3 — Stratification in America / East Asia; Future Plans and Job Searching (in America)

Discussion about poverty and inequality in America; also discussion about future plans and job search

Read: US News STEM Graduates Can't Find Jobs

Read: How to Get a Job, Opinion article by Thomas Friedman

11. Tuesday, November 10 — WORKSHOP: TBD

12. Tuesday, November 17 — Current Events and Issues Around the World

Cross-discussion: sharing what you learned about your topic

Prepare: Come ready to report on your topic and give a short presentation on it!

13. Tuesday, November 24 — Culture, Holidays, and Celebrations

Sharing about our cultural traditions and how we celebrate!

14. Tuesday, December 1 — Final Exams / Reflecting on your Experience / Class Evaluation

December 7-11 RRR (Reading, Recitation, and Review) Week

December 14-18 Finals (No final for this class)