At the end of the course, students should be able to:

**Overarching Course Goal:**

Students were given more thorough descriptions of the following two assignments.

- **Cultural News Analysis Paper Part I:** On the first day of class, students received the assignment in which they were to:

  - Read the article, “How Pakistan Failed Itself” by Aryn Baker
  - Write a 3- to 4-page analysis of the article

  The assignment indicated that the purpose was to give students the opportunity to make sense of world events and to see how they interpret them before learning about intercultural concepts, and that the paper would not be graded individually, but as part of the final paper.

- **Cultural News Analysis Paper Part II:** At the end of the course, the students received the assignment in which they were to:

  - Reread the article ‘How Pakistan Failed Itself’ by Aryn Baker
  - Think about how they understood the article at the beginning of the course and now
  - Consider how course concepts help them make sense of the story
  - Select only a few concepts on which to focus
  - Write a 5- to 7-page analysis of the article

Students were to be evaluated on application of concepts, use of examples to support conclusions, demonstration of critical thinking, demonstration of learning, and writing.

**PROJECT OVERVIEW**

**The Purpose**

As the quote above illustrates, it is challenging for an individual to see and understand the influence of culture without leaving the culture into which one has been socialized.

A challenge is to get students to identify and think critically about culture and intercultural communication processes without leaving the country. The course has been redesigned to address this challenge.

This assessment project was designed to measure how well the new course format meets course goals and objectives.

**THE ASSESSMENT**

**THE ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW**

To assess how well the redesigned course is meeting course objectives, a pre-test/post-test assessment was conducted.

- **Pre-test:** Students were given a newspaper article on the first day of class. After reading the article, students wrote a paper in which they were to critically analyze and make sense of the article.
- **Post-test:** At the end of the semester, students re-read the article and wrote a paper in which they critically analyzed the article. This was a graded assignment.
- **Analysis:** Using the objectives of the course, each set of papers was evaluated and scored. The scores were compared to determine how students’ knowledge and thinking about intercultural concepts have developed over the semester.

The information was used to determine areas of the course that need improvement and to assess how well the course is meeting the objectives.

**Assessment Objectives:** Based on the student learning objectives for the course, this assessment was intended to:

- measure changes in the student’s ability to process complex intercultural stories.
- determine how well students use course concepts to make sense of the world around them.
- help students recognize their own learning in the course.

**RESULTS**

I learned several key things through the assessment.

- **Concepts.** Some concepts were more widely used than others. It may be because students better understood those concepts or that they were more obviously connected to the reading than others.

- **Growth.** Many students processed the article differently at the end of the semester and showed a greater depth of understanding.

- **Lack of Relativism.** Students used the rubric focused on the following six elements. Each element had four or five levels (see handout).
- **Identification of course content**
- **Depth of application for each concept**
- **Extent of taking a relativistic perspective**
- **Extent of to which the student approached the second paper with a fresh perspective**
- **How well students describe their learning**
- **Demonstration of critical thinking**

Each paper (a & b) was coded individually; some codes applied to only the second paper. The code sheets remained paired to compare scores.

**THE ANALYSIS**

The initial and final papers were paired. All names and identifying information were removed and each set was given a number designation (e.g., 1a & b).

**THE RUBRIC:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed Learning</th>
<th>Relativistic perspective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identification of course content</td>
<td>1. Depth of application for each concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Extent of taking a relativistic perspective</td>
<td>3. Extent of to which the student approached the second paper with a fresh perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How well students describe their learning</td>
<td>5. Demonstration of critical thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Each paper (a &amp; b) was coded individually; some codes applied to only the second paper. The code sheets remained paired to compare scores.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**COURSE OVERVIEW**

**COM 4345: INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION**

**Overarching Course Goal:** To get students to identify, make sense of, and critically interpret ‘intercultural’ events in the world around them.

**Learning Objectives** (selected):

- Identify how culture shapes perceptions and ways of communicating.
- Discuss the roles of context and power in shaping intercultural communication.
- Identify differences in cultural values, norms, and practices among cultural groups.
- Make connections between intercultural theory, research, and everyday experiences.

**Means of Achieving Goal & Objectives:**

- **Readings:** Instead of a textbook, students read selected news articles, case studies, and trade books that illustrate topics covered in lecture. Through this means, students engage the types of ‘real-world’ texts I want them to be able to process at the conclusion of the course.
- **Discussion:** Through discussion of the readings, students learn how to apply lecture-learned concepts to real-world readings.
- **Exams:** The two exams focus on application of course material.
- **Paper:** Students write a paper analyzing how their contents influenced development their worldviews.

**The reason man does not experience his true cultural self is that until he experiences another self as valid he has little basis for validating his own self.**

- *Edward T. Hall*