Cultural Norms

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Renee Bishai
What is Culture?
culture
/kʌltʃər/ Show spelled [kuhl-cher] Show IPA noun, verb, -
tured, -tur·ing. **noun**

- The quality in a person or society that arises from a concern for what is regarded as excellent in arts, letters, manners, scholarly pursuits, etc.
- That which is excellent in the arts, manners, etc.
- A particular form or stage of civilization, as that of a certain nation or period: Greek culture.
- The development or improvement of the mind by education or training.
- The behaviors and beliefs characteristic of a particular social, ethnic or age group: the youth culture; the drug culture.
- Anthropology. The sum total of ways of living built up by a group of human beings and transmitted from one generation to another.
- Biology. a. the cultivation of microorganisms, such as bacteria, or of tissues, for scientific study, medicinal use, etc. b. the product or growth resulting from such cultivation.
- The act or practice of cultivating the soil; tillage.
- The raising of plants or animals, especially with a view to their improvement.
- The product or growth resulting from such cultivation.
How would you describe culture?
Culture is like an iceberg
The Iceberg Concept of Culture
Like an iceberg, the majority of culture is below the surface.

Surface Culture
Above sea level
Emotional load: relatively low
food • dress • music •
visual arts • drama • crafts
dance • literature • language
celebrations • games

Deep Culture
Unspoken Rules
Partially below sea level
Emotional load: very high
courtesy • contextual conversational patterns • concept of time
personal space • rules of conduct • facial expressions
nonverbal communication • body language • touching • eye contact
patterns of handling emotions • notions of modesty • concept of beauty
courtship practices • relationships to animals • notions of leadership
tempo of work • concepts of food • ideals of childrearing
tone of voice • attitudes toward elders • concept of cleanliness
notions of adolescence • patterns of group decision-making
definition of insanity • preference for competition or cooperation
tolerance of physical pain • concept of “self” • concept of past and future
definition of obscenity • attitudes toward dependents • problem-solving
roles in relation to age, sex, class, occupation, kinship, and so forth

Unconscious Rules
Completely below sea level
Emotional load: intense
No matter how many books you read...
Friends you talk to…
You cannot prepare for everything.
The Iceberg Concept of Culture

Like an iceberg, the majority of culture is below the surface.

**Surface Culture**
- Above sea level
- Emotional load: relatively low
- food • dress • music • visual arts • drama • crafts • dance • literature • language • celebrations • games

**Deep Culture**
- Unspoken Rules
  - Partially below sea level
  - Emotional load: very high
- Unconscious Rules
  - Completely below sea level
  - Emotional load: intense
  - courtesy • contextual conversational patterns • concept of time • personal space • rules of conduct • facial expressions • nonverbal communication • body language • touching • eye contact • patterns of handling emotions • notions of modesty • concept of beauty • courtship practices • relationships to animals • notions of leadership • tempo of work • concepts of food • ideals of childrearing • theory of disease • social interaction rate • nature of friendships • tone of voice • attitudes toward elders • concept of cleanliness • notions of adolescence • patterns of group decision-making • definition of insanity • preference for competition or cooperation • tolerance of physical pain • concept of "self" • concept of past and future • definition of obscenity • attitudes toward dependents • problem-solving roles in relation to age, sex, class, occupation, kinship, and so forth

Indiana Department of Education • Office of English Language Learning & Migrant Education • [www.doe.in.gov/englishlanguagelearning](http://www.doe.in.gov/englishlanguagelearning)
Cultural norms here

China

– Group harmony
– Loyalty
– Long-term relationships
– Indirect, reading between the lines
  – People may say “maybe” when they mean “no”
  – People are polite, saving face
– Crowds
Cultural norms there

United States

- Independence
- Self-reliance
- “Friends”
- Recognition
- Direct, to-the-point (usually)
  - “We should get lunch sometime.”
- We like lines, don’t jump in line in front of others
Initial impressions of Americans

• Stereotypes of people in the United States:
  – Fat and lazy
  – Arrogant
  – Self-absorbed
  – Everyone has a gun
  – Loud
  – Self-centered
  – Bad at geography

• How did you develop these stereotypes?
Initial impressions of you

- You will be asked questions
- Americans may have stereotypes about you that may cause some silly questions:
  - Do you have computers in your country?
  - Do you have electricity?
  - Do you own a pet panda?
  - Do you wear clothes when you are at home?
  - Do you know karate?
  - Are there fast-food restaurants in your country?
  - Have you ridden an elephant?
Ohio State Values Diversity

- Freedom of speech, a source of pride
- Allows people to sometimes express unpopular opinions
- Very tough presidential election
- A lot of differing rhetoric
- Ohio State is not a place for hate in any form
- Ohio State values diversity and the learning that results from it
- Reporting hate speech or crimes
- Resources available
Making friends and living in America
Megan C. Lawther
Renee Bishai
Cultural clues when making friends with Americans

- Popular Culture References
  - Movies, music, sports and TV shows
- Making “Small Talk”
  - Campus events
  - Hobbies/activities
  - What is going on in the news or in class
  - Share something about your home country
M& M Activity
Cultural clues when making friends with Americans

- Non-verbal greetings
  - Handshakes
  - Wave
  - Nod
  - Man-shake/Hug

- Verbal greetings
  - “Hi, how are you?”
  - “Hey! What’s up?”
  - “What’s going on?”

- Popular culture references
  - Movies
  - Music
  - Sports
Popular phrases and American idioms

- “BFF/Bestie/Bae”
- “LOL”
- “JK”
- “BRB”
- “ROFL”
- “Play it by ear”
- “For here or to go”
- “Legit”
- “Okie Dokie”
- “Drive thru”
- “Hang Out”
- “On Fleek”
From our current students

Things that may surprise you in America

- Tipping
- Sales tax
- Everything is so cold
- Lack of public transportation
- American system of measurement
- Shoes on inside the house
- Overt patriotism
- People talk about “semi-private” issues in public
From our current students

Things that may surprise you in America

• Americans are generally friendly
• Electronics are cheaper
• Diversity of culture
• Politeness
• Informality
• Customer service
• Unlimited refills on drinks in many places
• Open mindedness
No Picture Menu!!
Let’s take a closer look…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chicken</th>
<th>Steak</th>
<th>Carnitas</th>
<th>Barbacoa</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>6.35</td>
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<td>5.95</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bowl</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tacos</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salad</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Calorie Range

160-640*

320-670*

170-780*
BURRITO

BURRITO BOWL

TACOS

SALAD
Burrito
Burrito Bowl
Tacos (3)
Like a Burrito Bowl but with Lettuce on the bottom.
If you like cheese, this is Chipotle’s best kept secret…
WHAT'S INSIDE

CHOOSE RESPONSIBLY RAISED® MEAT OR ORGANIC TOFU

STEAK
CARNITAS
CHICKEN
BARBACOA
SOFRITAS

RICE, BEANS & FAJITA VEGGIES

CILANTRO-LIME BROWN RICE
CILANTRO-LIME WHITE RICE
BLACK BEANS
PINTO BEANS
FAJITA VEGGIES

TOP IT OFF

FRESH TOMATO SALSA (MILD)
TOMATILLO RED CHILI SALSA (MILD)
TOMATILLO GREEN CHILI SALSA (MILD)
ROasted CHILI-CORN SALSA (MEDIUM)

ROMAINE LETTUCE
GUACAMOLE
CHEESE
Pick White or Brown Rice

Pick Black or Pinto Beans

You may need to ask for these
Pick One Protein
This costs extra $
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Media</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>China</strong></td>
<td><strong>U.S.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>WeChat</td>
<td>IM/Facebook messages</td>
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<td>YouTube</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skype</td>
<td>Skype/iMessage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While in America…

- Drinking age is 21 years of age
- We are a Tobacco Free Campus
  - No cigarettes or smokeless tobacco
- You will need extra-long twin bed sheets in the residence halls
- Making friends can be challenging, even for American students
- You need to practice your English
- People you don’t know will say hello or smile
- When people ask “how are you” it’s a form of hello
- Ask questions
Language Excellence and Academic Preparedness (LEAP) is a pre-first semester non-credit program that will prepare first-year international students for The Ohio State University experience.

Why international students should apply to LEAP:

- The program is basically FREE! Students have to pay the $1,000 fee upfront but will be reimbursed with a $1,000 scholarship if they successfully complete the program.
- Students will arrive early to Ohio State and have the opportunity to improve their spoken English skills and their academic preparedness.
- Students will explore campus resources, go on trips and get acclimated to life in Columbus.
- Students will be living on campus, will receive a city bus pass for transportation and will be given a $50 per diem to purchase meals, goods and services on and around campus.
- Upon completion of LEAP, students will be more prepared to start their college journey at Ohio State.

U.OSU.EDU/LEAP
APPLICATION DEADLINE IS JULY 1 AT 12 P.M.

LEAP is a co-supported program by the Office of International Affairs and the English as a Second Language Programs.