

# Building Intercultural Competence Culture & Exchange

---

Alexandra Schreiber, MA  
Intercultural Learning Lab // Goettingen University

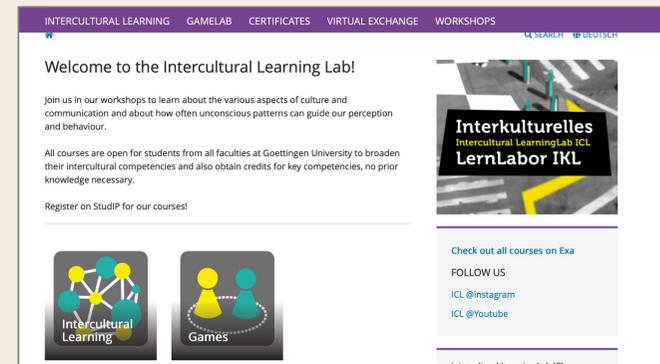
Goettingen International Office  
Welcome event for international students  
March 4th, 2026 // online

# Intercultural Learning Lab

Department for Intercultural German Studies

Intercultural  
Interkulturelles LernLabor IKL  
LearningLab ICL

- Courses to build intercultural competence for students of all faculties.
- Small group interactions and exchange, classroom, online, blended-learning formats.
- YouTube Channel with learning material.
- Focus on games and intercultural learning.
- Website: [www.uni-goettingen.de/interkulturell](http://www.uni-goettingen.de/interkulturell)



# Where in the world...

Please type in the chat

- My name is...
- My pronouns are... (optional)
- I am logging in from...
- Fill in the blank: „I get my best ideas when...“

Source: [www.gamesforhumanity.com](http://www.gamesforhumanity.com)

*Fill in the  
blank*

**I get my best ideas  
when \_\_\_\_.**



@GamesForHumanity  
GamesForHumanity.com

# Housekeeping notes

- Our task is to start and end on time.
- We ask you to participate as fully as possible.
- We may call on participants to give a chance to speak.
- When in your small groups in the breakout rooms, we ask you to turn it on your camera, if possible.
- Stay muted when in the plenary, and raise your hand for questions or comments.
- Feel free to ask questions at any time.

# Intercultural Competence

Aspects for intercultural learning (process model)

- Attitudes: Entry for cultural learning, e. g. openness, curiosity, non-judgmental approach.
- Knowledge acquisition: Cultural knowledge, self-awareness, communication skills (listening, observing, analyzing, interpreting) that can influence a person's motivation for intercultural learning.
- Shift of internal frames of reference
- Achieving desired external outcomes, e.g. appropriate, effective intercultural communication.



Deardorff 2006; Spitzberg & Changnon 2009

# Intercultural Competence

- Intercultural competence is the ability to interact effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations;
- it is supported by specific attitudes and affective features, (inter)cultural knowledge, skills and reflection.



Bertelsmann. Deardorff. Thesis 2

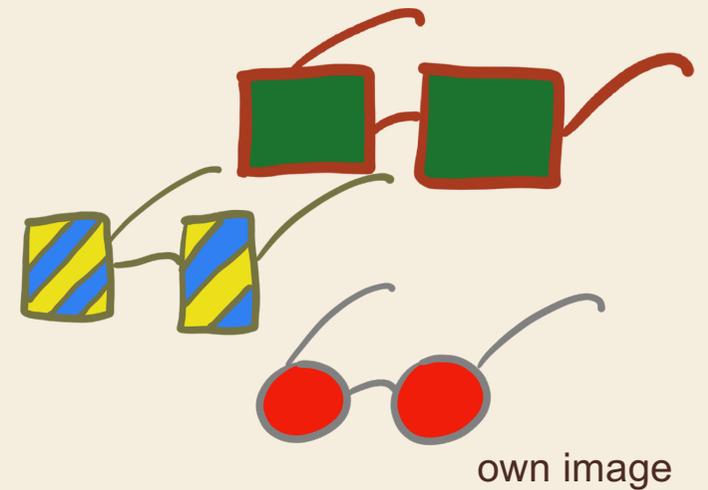
# Culture

- Fuzzy set of basic assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioural conventions that are shared by a group of people, and that influence (but do not determine) each member's behaviour and interpretations of the „meaning“ of other people's behaviour.

Spencer-Oatey, 2009

# Culture and worldview

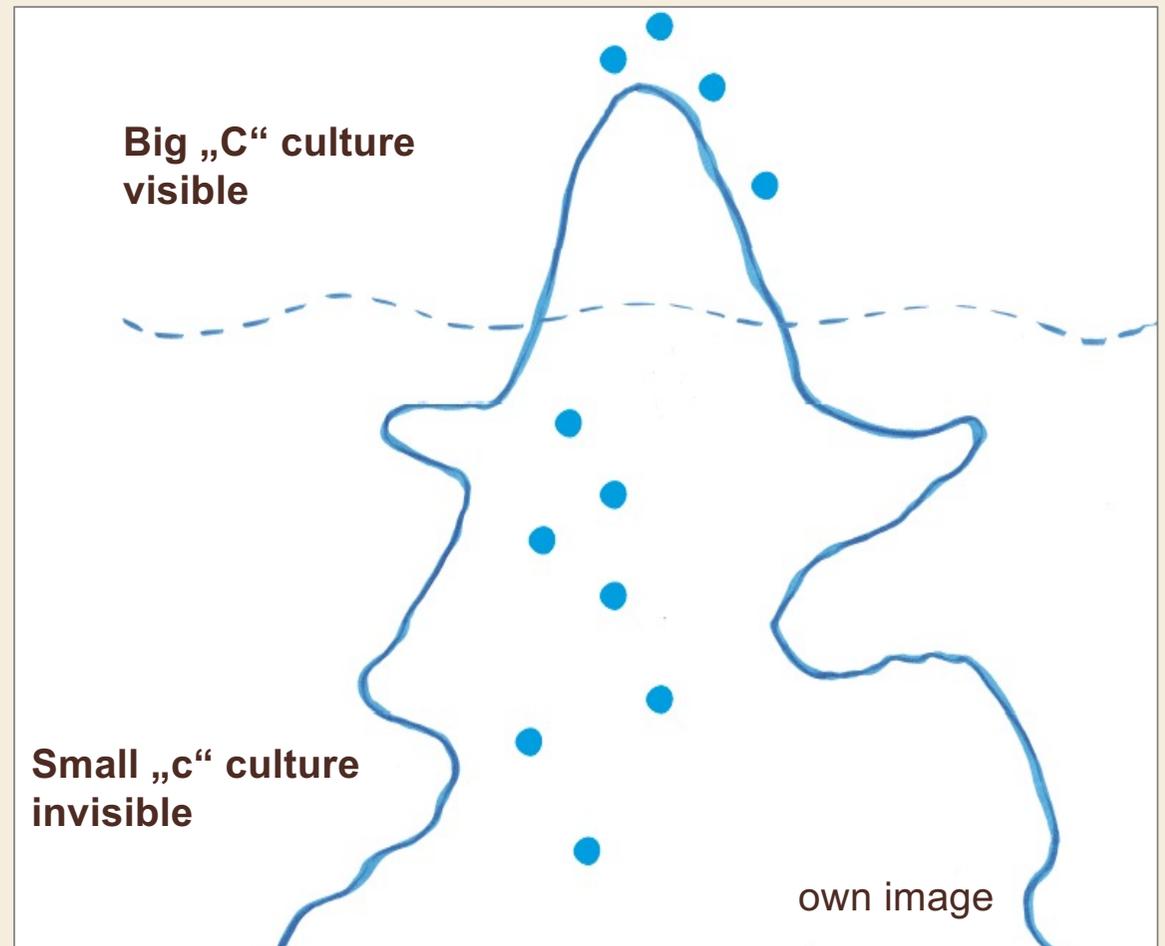
- „Cultural lenses“ influence the way people see the world and themselves.
- Culture and one’s own cultural lens influences the interpretation and meaning that is attached to practices of behaviour.



# — Culture and subcultures

- People can belong to multiple, overlapping subcultures that comprise cohesive patterns of behaviour, e.g. subcultures of academic disciplines, student groups, music culture, etc.
- Invisible aspects of culture, like values and beliefs require time and energy to explore, adapt and to be integrated into existing patterns of cultural behavior.
- The way how people view the world is culturally learned and shaped through patterns of behaviour in everyday life and through institutions.

# Cultural Iceberg



# Culture

- **Visible, Big „C“ culture:** Objective culture, visible culture  
e.g. forms of architecture, dance, opera, literature, culinary arts, fashion, holidays, economic systems, religious systems, educational systems, etc.
- **Invisible, small „c“ culture:** Subjective culture, „hidden“ culture  
e.g. how to behave, verbal/nonverbal symbols, communication styles, conflict management, cultural values what is good or bad, cultural traditions, etc.

# Intercultural Communication and Understanding

- Intercultural communication prioritizes “communicating within human diversity that is inclusive of age, race, genders, religions, socioeconomic backgrounds, physical abilities, ideological beliefs.”

Deardorff, 2022

# Projects - examples



- ENLIGHT European Universities

10 European Universities. Courses for students: Range of formats, e.g. virtual, blended learning programs, and topics.

<https://enlight-eu.org>

- Erasmus+ Project ROCKET

Universities Goettingen, Uppsala/Sweden, Groningen/Netherlands.

Online courses, blended learning: Conflict transformation through educational role-playing games in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion.

<https://rocket-erasmus.eu>



# Courses in March

## 1. Intercultural Competence – Introduction GameBased

**Start: March 16, 2026 (Monday)**

StudIP course number **453213**

When: 3 sessions (Mon/Tue/Thu) // 14:15 – 17:45 hrs

Where: Foyer International, von-Siebold-Str. 2, Goettingen

4 credits for key competencies //

Form of exam: reflective portfolio (due April 30, 2026)

## 2. Intercultural Competence Compact (English language)

**Start: March 23, 2026 (Monday)**

StudIP course number **453214**

When: 3 sessions (Mon/Tue/Thu) // 14:15 – 17:45 hrs

Where: Foyer International, von-Siebold-Str. 2, Goettingen

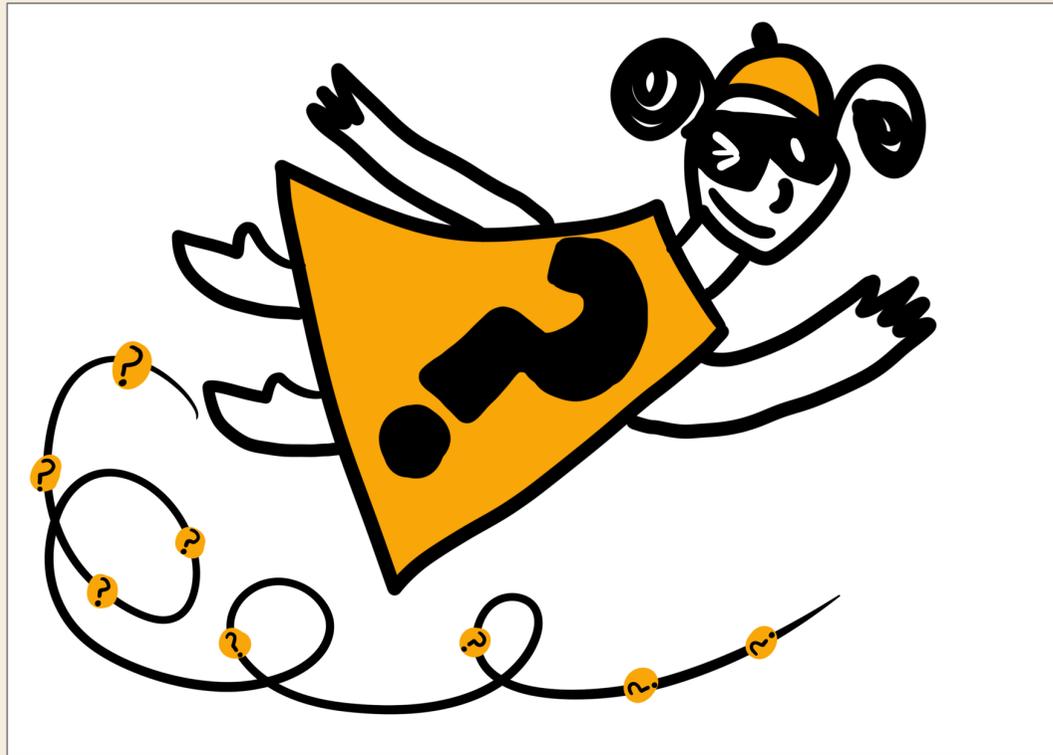
4 credits for key competencies //

Form of exam: reflective portfolio (due April 30, 2026)

**No prior knowledge necessary. Students from all faculties are welcome!**

Alexandra Schreiber | Intercultural Learning Lab | University of Goettingen/Germany

— Questions? Ask us anything!



# References

- Bennet, Janet M. 2011. *Designing Intercultural Training: Skills and Tools for the Educator*. Donau-Universität Krems. March 28-31, 2011.
- Deardorff, Darla K. 2022. "Communicating successfully across differences within COIL Virtual Exchange." In *The Guide to COIL Virtual Exchange*, edited by Jon Rubin and Sarah Guth, 274 - 286. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing LLC.
- ENLIGHT European Universities.
- Intercultural Talks. Shokkin Group. <https://et.shokkin.org/intercultural-talks-everyone-can-help/>
- ROCKET Erasmus+ project. <https://rocket-erasmus.eu>.
- Spencer-Oatey, Helen. 2009. *Intercultural Interaction. A Multidisciplinary Approach to Intercultural Communication*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Spitzberg, Brian H. and Gabrielle Changnon. 2009. „Conceptualizing Intercultural Competence“. In: *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence*. Edited by Darla K. Deardorff. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.



**[www.uni-goettingen.de/interkulturell](http://www.uni-goettingen.de/interkulturell)**



**@interkulturell.unigoe**



**Interkulturelles Lernlabor der Uni Göttingen**

**Mail**

**[alexandra.schreiber@phil.uni-goettingen.de](mailto:alexandra.schreiber@phil.uni-goettingen.de)**



**Thank you!**

Contact

Mail: [alexandra.schreiber@phil.uni-goettingen.de](mailto:alexandra.schreiber@phil.uni-goettingen.de)

Website: [www.uni-goettingen.de/interkulturell](http://www.uni-goettingen.de/interkulturell)