

**UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS**  
*INTERCULTURAL* **INTERNATIONAL**  
*COMPETENCE* **AFFAIRS**

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KU International Affairs

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“Cultural differences are an asset to our personal and professional lives, and... intercultural competence is vital to leverage that asset. I believe that by adapting to different cultural styles of learning, thinking, leadership, conflict resolution, and communication--we can honor the worldviews of others, enhance our creativity, and maximize our productivity and learning.”

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-Janet Bennett

# THE VALUE OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETEN

Distefano's research compared the performance of homogenous and diverse teams

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Number of Teams

Monocultural Teams

Multicultural Teams

Multicultural Teams

Performance

Leaders ignore and suppress cultural differences

Cultural differences become an obstacle to performance

Leaders acknowledge and support cultural differences

Cultural differences become an asset to performance

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THE FRAMEWORK

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- UNDERSTANDING YOURSELF.  
What is culture, and who am I as a cultural being?

- UNDERSTANDING OTHERS.  
How do the cultural experiences of others influence and shape their behavior?

- MANAGING THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS.  
Avoiding judgment or negative feelings related to intercultural communication challenges.

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### CURIOSITY

Seeing difference as a learning opportunity

### EMPATHY

Understanding and sharing someone else's feelings

### OPENNESS

Suspending criticism and being willing to be wrong

### COGNITIVE

**COMPLEXITY**  
Applying nuanced interpretations to a situation

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A photograph of a modern university building with large glass windows and a stone base, overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The text is centered over the image. There are two large, thick, black diagonal bars: one in the top right corner and one in the bottom left corner.

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*UNDERSTANDING YOURSELF AND OTHERS*  
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UNDERSTANDING  
YOURSELF AND OTHERS:  
KEY CONCEPTS AND  
ACTIVITIES

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- CULTURE AND CULTURE-BASED VALUES.

Concept: Iceberg and Tree models

Activity: Circles of Identity

Concept: GlobeSmart Continuum

Activity: Plotting an "average  
German"

- PERSPECTIVE-TAKING.

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# WHAT IS CULTURE?

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Behaviours and artifacts

Accessible to the senses

Observable

Explicit

Taught

Conscious

The What

The Why

Attitudes, beliefs, expectations,

values, assumptions

Intangible

Not directly observable

Implicit

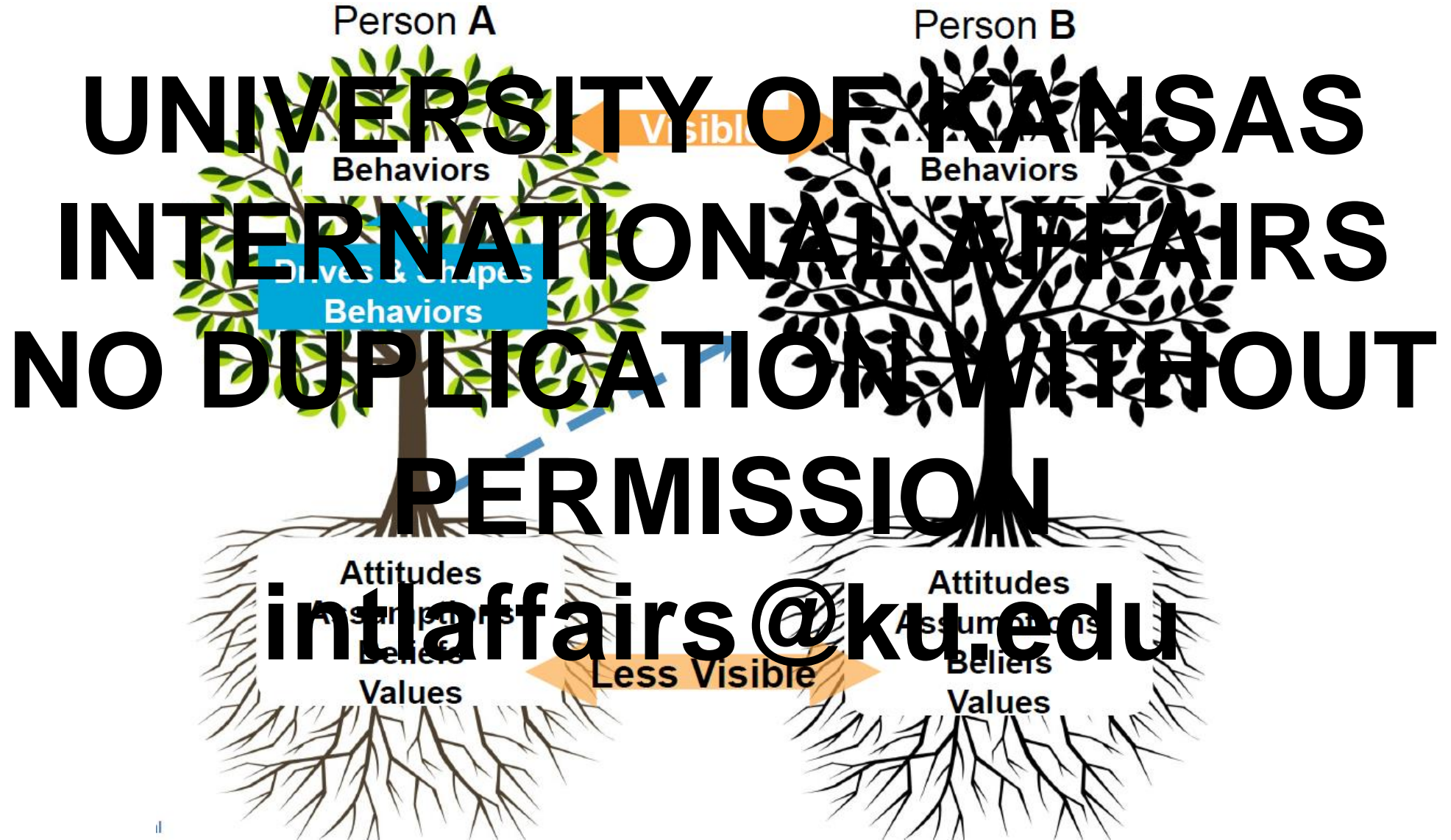
Caught

Subconscious





# WHAT IS CULTURE?



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Independent

Interdependent

- Place great importance on individual identity
- Create identity from personal choices and achievements
- Prefer taking action on one's own

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- Place great importance on group harmony and cooperation
- Drive identity from working in a group
- Have a sense of duty, obligation, and loyalty to ascribed groups



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Egalitarianism

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Status

- Comfortable challenging ideas
- Can change roles easily
- Treat everyone the same
- Share power with everyone



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- Prefer not to challenge leader
- Polite to leaders
- Change behavior to get along with others
- Believe power should be for a few

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Risk

Certainty

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- Prefer quick choices and results
- Place great importance on flexibility and change
- Value speed over control



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- Spends lots of time on research
- Thinks before starting a project
- Value control over speed



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Direct

Indirect

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- Comes to a decision quickly
- Quick to ask questions
- Comfortable asking for help, explaining, or disagreeing
- Give negative feedback directly

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- Spend time explaining before coming to the point
- Do not like asking questions publicly
- Show disagreement in small ways
- Give negative feedback indirectly

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Task

Relationship

- Like to finish goals on schedule
- Prefer to do tasks over keeping relationships
- Focus on what people can do more than whom they may know

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- Spend time on building relationships
- Prefer to keep relationships over finishing goals on time
- Focus on whom people know as much as what they can do

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Independent Interdependent
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Egalitarianism Status
- ◆ ▲ ■ **intlaffairs@ku.edu**  
Risk Certainty
- ◆ ▲ ■ **Task Relationship**  
Direct Indirect



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The background features a graphic of a hand holding a globe, with the year '2014' written in red. To the right, there is a small circular seal of the University of Kansas.

IT'S ALL A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE...

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FIFA WORLD CUP  
BRASIL



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*MANAGING THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS*

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MANAGING THOUGHTS AND  
EMOTIONS: KEY CONCEPTS  
AND ACTIVITIES

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- STEREOTYPES VS GENERALIZATIONS

Discussion: How do stereotypes and generalizations differ? Identity revisited.

Activity: Germany versus China

- MINDFULNESS IN CROSS-CULTURAL SITUATIONS

Activity: D.I.V.E. Photo Exercise



# STEREOTYPES & GENERALIZATIONS

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The diagram features two orange circles. The left circle is labeled 'Stereotype' and the right circle is labeled 'Generalization'. Horizontal arrows point from the 'Stereotype' circle to the 'Generalization' circle and vice versa. Vertical arrows labeled 'New Information' point from the top of each circle to the text 'UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS'. A vertical arrow labeled 'intlaaffairs@ku.edu' points from the bottom of the circles to the text 'intlaaffairs@ku.edu'.

**Dictionary Definition of stereotype:**  
To develop a fixed, unwavering idea about. (new information is not accepted)

**Dictionary Definition of generalization:**  
A principle, statement, or idea having general application. (new information is continuously taken into account)

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## GERMANY VS. CHINA

The images on the following slides were created by Chinese-German artist Yang Liu, who moved from China to Germany at the age of 13. She designed these images as a way of exploring the cultural differences between her two homes. She writes, “With my personal visual diary, I hope to help other people avoid some of the stumbling blocks to communication between cultures, and make it easier for them to arrive at the essence of communication—the exchange between individuals—as far as possible without misunderstandings.”

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All opinions expressed by the images are those of the artist.

Vorstellung vom anderen

中国的地方

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Chef

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# GERMANY VS. CHINA

Umgang mit Problemen

处理问题

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# GERMANY VS. CHINA

Lebensstil

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生活方式

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# GERMANY VS. CHINA

Talking about money

谈钱

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# GERMANY VS. CHINA

Self-portrayal

自我展现

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WHAT DO YOU SEE?



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Using the D.I.V.E. tool can help us shift our frame of reference, foster curiosity, suspend judgment, and hopefully respond more effectively during an intercultural interaction.

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- **DESCRIBE:** observable facts - *What do I see?*
- **INTERPRET:** *What do I think is going on? What are some possible explanations as to what is happening? What are my assumptions about what I am seeing?*
- **VALIDATE:** seek additional information - *Who is a cultural expert that I can ask for help?*
- **EVALUATE:** *What do I feel (positive or negative) about what I think is going on?*

Four of the young people in the group are actually residents of the area and had to flee during the shelling.

This was the first time they returned to the suburbs and they were eager to check on their apartment and their belongings.

The driver was Jadil Farouk, his sister Tanana, is the blond girl sitting in the front, in the winning picture.

She isn't in the group picture. She couldn't make it to the interview because she was getting ready for her engagement party.

Bissan, Jad's other sister, pictured here second from the right, was sitting in the back of the car in the winning picture, taking pictures with her mobile phone.



The friends in the car got to know each other during the summer of 2010.

She recorded a short video of their drive. On it you can hear people commenting on their appearance and the girls screaming back: "We live here!"

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