



# Cultural Adjustment

## International Programs

**IP-Global Services**  
**Bryan Hall 108**



Office of  
**International  
Programs**

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

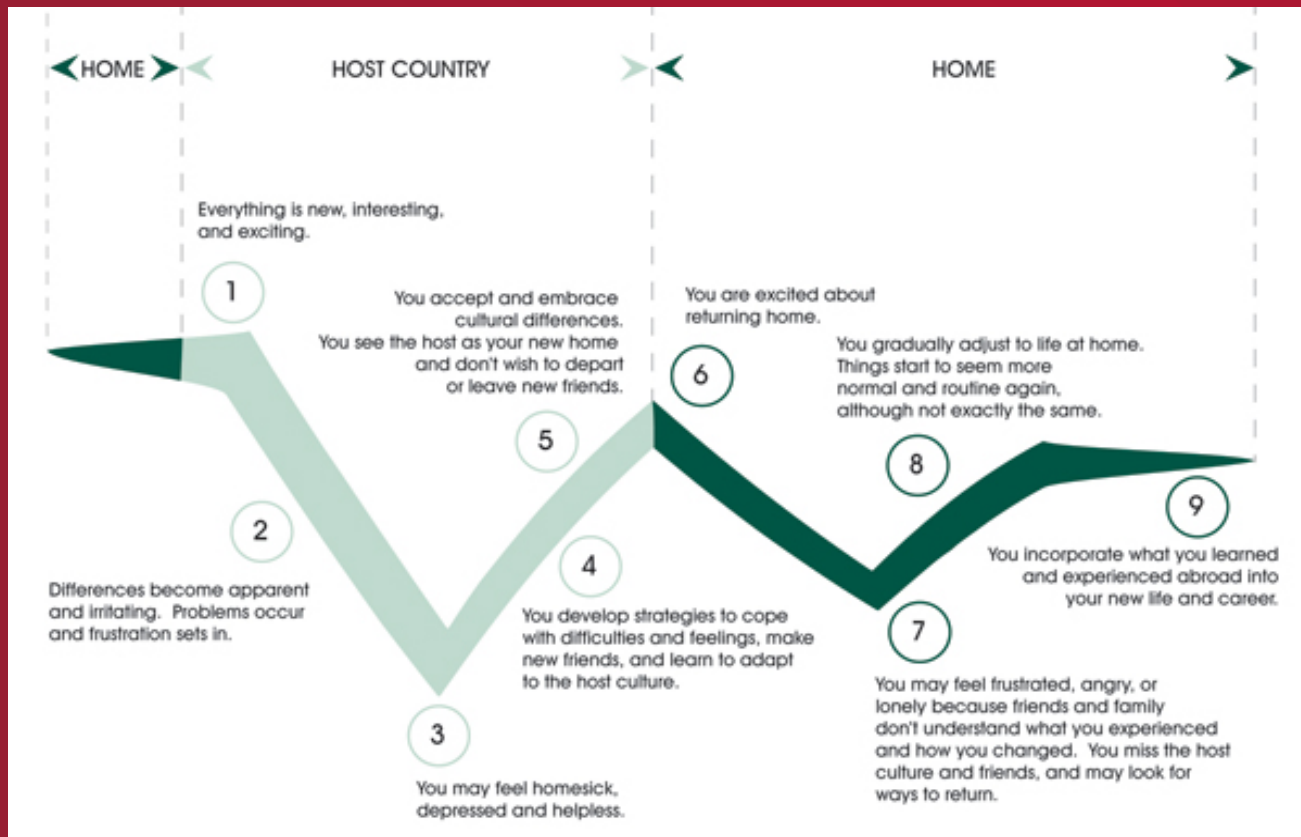
# In your own words:

- What is culture?
- What is culture shock?
- What kind of feelings can be caused by culture shock?



# Culture Shock

Each person's experience is unique! Two people may cope very differently when adjusting to a new environment. Generally, culture shock is defined by the ups and downs an individual experiences when immersed in a new culture.



# The Cultural Iceberg



## Easy to see

- > customs
- > mores
- > courtesies

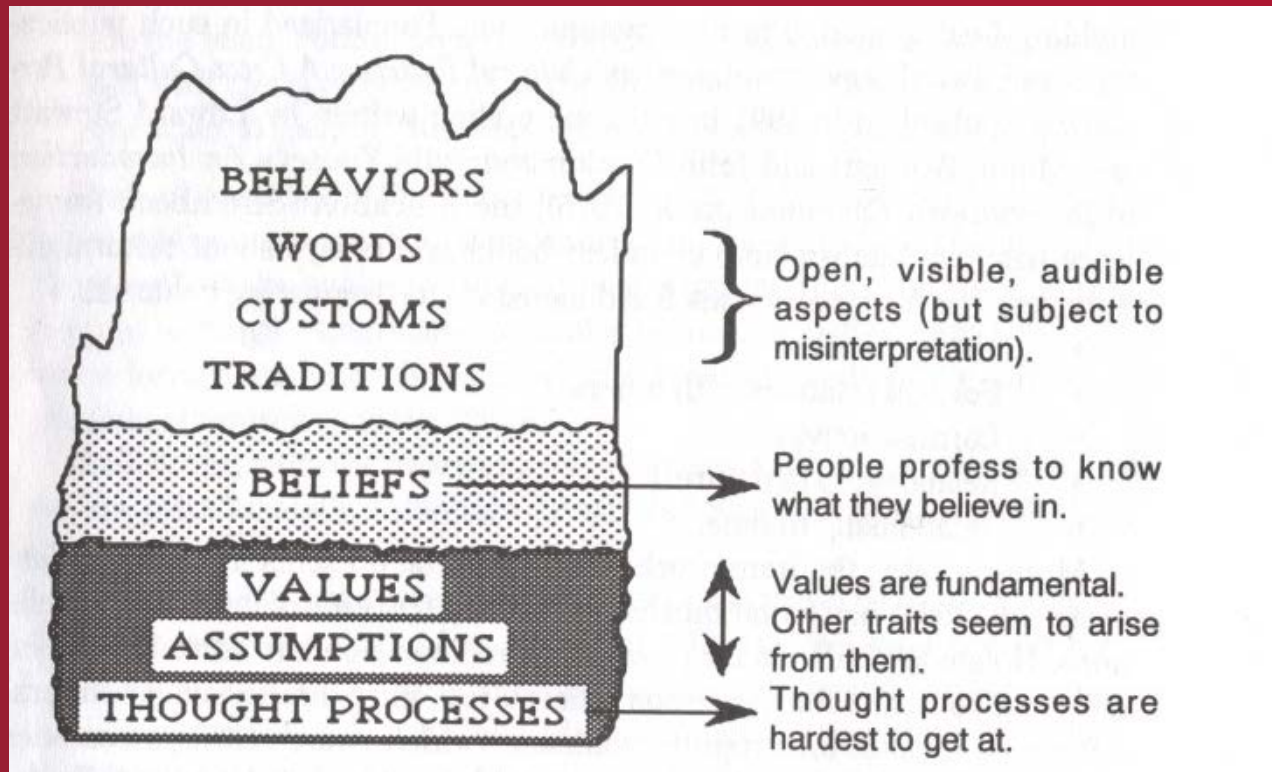
## Difficult to see

- > values
- > priorities
- > assumptions

# Culture Shock

## Visible vs. Invisible

Visible elements of culture are: language, words, customs, traditions. Invisible cultural elements are: beliefs, values, and assumptions.







# Who gets culture shock?

You will experience culture shock!

Why?

You will be exposed to an unfamiliar environment as you transition from your home country to WSU. This exposure will result in culture shock due to the change. Variables that might trigger shock are:

1. Food
2. Language
3. Weather
4. Geography
5. Social Structure
6. Academic system\*\*
7. Relationships\*\*



# How to survive culture shock

What strategies do you think can help you adjust?



# How to survive culture shock

You will experience transition and it is important to have some strategies to cope. Remember transitions may affect each person differently but find things that help you adjust. Extreme culture shock can disrupt your daily life and affect your academics.

Strategies for coping with culture shock:

- Talk to a friend, someone in Global Services, or in Counseling and Testing Services
- Exercise
- Get plenty of sleep
- Eat a balanced diet
- Stay connected with your home
- Have a sense of humor
- Be patient - what you are going through is normal!
- Get involved on campus
- Go the International Center
- Improve your language skills



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# General U.S. Traits

- U.S. citizens are more direct in communication with others
- Certain topics are considered private
  - Religion, politics, money, age
- Take initiative
  - Independence is expected
  - You will be expected to know the rules
    - WSU, Pullman, Washington, United States
- Time is important – be on time for appointments and meetings
- Ideal of equality
  - Rules apply to everyone equally
  - Ideal of gender and sexual orientation equality

# Academic System

U.S. academic system has many unique opportunities like: extra curricular activities, personal wellbeing and development, and learning opportunities outside of the classroom.

U.S. academic expectations:

- Initiative – (action, effort, energy, resource) is an *expectation*
- Relationship with professor
- Other expectations



# Relationships

- Making new relationships in the United States and keeping your relationships from home
- Personal space (distance between two people) is valued
- Male and females will be peers and can be friends
- Romantic relationships are generally individual choice
  - Consensual action is required (acceptance, agreement, authorization)
  - Violence is not acceptable in a relationship
- Individualism is valued and encouraged



# Campus Resources

- Global Services, Bryan Hall 108
- International Center, CUB L46
  - International Students Council
- Counseling and Testing Services, 280 Lighty Student Services
- Health and Wellness Services, Washington Building
- Center for Civic Engagement, CUB L48
- University Recreation
- Dean of Students, French Administration 134



# International Center (IP- Intl Center)

The International Center offers all students intercultural communication opportunities, leadership roles and a variety of global programs for the campus and community.

- Exciting programming for international and domestic students
- Flat screen TV with comfortable lounge area
- Computers and free printing (up to 10 pages a day)
- Free tea and coffee, as well as a kitchenette for warming up meals
- Study and meeting space – open for anyone and available for group meeting reservations

Compton Union Building (CUB), L46

Email: [ip.intlcenter@wsu.edu](mailto:ip.intlcenter@wsu.edu)

Phone: 509-335-4223

Website: <https://ip.wsu.edu/on-campus/the-student-center>

Pam Duran  
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# Final Thoughts

“ We all would like to find a magic pill for crossing cultures, the “right” answer, a simple list of do’s and don’ts....But crossing cultures is a dynamic, complex process, where context is everything” (Culture Matters, p.1).

Global Services is located in Bryan Hall Room 108

**GO COUGS!**

