

# SEC 101 INTRODUCTION TO UNIVERSITY LIFE COURSE INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS BULLETIN

## Collaborations within the scope of the SEC 101 course by the OLTE: Intercultural Awareness Workshops

The primary goal of the Intercultural Awareness Workshops within the OzU Connect Module is to introduce intercultural skills to first-year students at OzU and to maximise communication among all students within OzU. Following participation in the workshop, SEC 101 students complete the activity by preparing a self-reflection report that includes the experiences and knowledge they have gained on the theme of intercultural awareness.



\*SEC 101 Modules and OzU Connect Components



The design and implementation of the SEC 101 Introduction to University Life Course are conducted by the Office of Learning and Teaching Enhancement (OLTE). Aimed at providing first-year students with a solid foundation in social and academic realms and facilitating a smooth transition into university life, the SEC 101 Course requires collaboration with experts within OzU.



The purpose of the OzU Connect module is to encourage SEC 101 students to lay the groundwork for the development of OzU's values and intercultural awareness skills by familiarising them with the resources, departments, faculties, and schools at OzU and to reflect these values both within the OzU community and outside the campus.



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## Workshop Facilitator

### Mert Şanivar

Mert Şanivar joined OzU in February 2022 and is the founding manager of the Office of Intercultural Awareness and Support. He is an ICI (Intercultural Communication Institute, USA) certified intercultural communication trainer along with his work in various roles in the field of international higher education, global mobility and global business.

## Activities Used in the Workshop

### Group discussion

**Group discussion** and reflection in dyads, triads and polyads on intercultural competencies such as *listening, empathy, observing, and flexibility.*



The facilitator provides a general overview of these skills and then asks the groups to discuss what they understand from these terms and how they may have experienced them in their own lives. Groups then reflect back to the rest of the class with their responses.



### Written Q&A



The facilitator asks the students to respond to a single question by allowing them to think and write their answers before reading out their answers to the class.





## Displaying short video clips

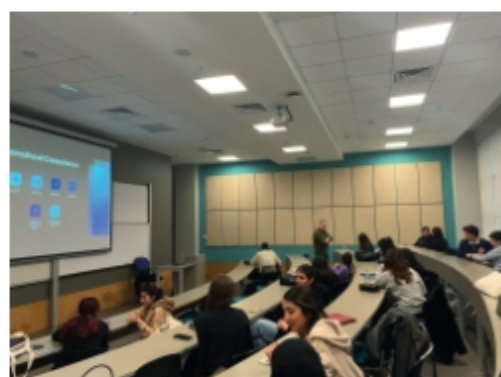


From sitcoms and movies to illustrate aspects of culture and communication within the context of the workshop.



## "New and Old Me" Activity

The facilitator invites the participants to reflect on situations where they transitioned between before and after and what aspects of the previous situation they liked and disliked and how they are adjusting to the new situation. Students usually talk about how becoming a university student has changed their lives at this phase. The objective of this activity is to draw parallels between personal adjustments to any unfamiliar situation in life and the process of acclimatising to a new culture. This includes facing new challenges such as adapting to a different language, customs, or cuisine.



## Material and Evaluation Rubric



Using materials and rubrics enhances the learning process for students while also enabling instructors to teach and assess effectively. Therefore, regularly utilising materials and rubrics in education is crucial for improving student success and teaching quality.

You can access the materials used in the Intercultural Awareness Workshop through the following links.



[Self-Assessment Rubric](#)



[Self-Assessment Task](#)



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# Feedback from Our Students



*“Intercultural communication skills go beyond knowing multiple languages. Effectively utilizing body language, gestures, facial expressions, and other elements are essential conditions for successful intercultural communication and interaction. One of the most important skills is being respectful and tolerant. Accepting cultural differences, showing tolerance, and respecting other cultures are important.”*



*“With the changing moral understanding of the world and generations, and the increasing trend of individualism, the importance of **self-confrontation** for individuals becomes more crucial as it constitutes **the fundamental point of prejudice.**”*



*“Seminars of this nature are incredibly beneficial in raising awareness among individuals. **For instance, in the seminar I attended, there were people from multiple linguistic and ethnic backgrounds, which helped reinforce the understanding that they were no different from me and that we are all equal.** It reminded me once again of the importance of being able to communicate with people of different languages and races, and not treating them differently or viewing them through a different lens just because they belong to a different race from mine.”*



*“Labeling someone based on their race, achievements, etc., as if assigning them a predetermined judgment, is not a correct or ethical behavior. From my perspective, the purpose of the workshop to **create awareness** about this issue has been quite beneficial.”*



*“Being prejudiced may have deprived me of the chance to meet many people until now. It might have even caused them to have negative thoughts about me as well. Therefore, from now on, **I will be more open-minded** about this matter and I won't judge anyone without getting to know them.”*



“At international universities like Özyeğin University, respect for different cultures is an issue we need to focus on. In my opinion, one of the most important components required to achieve **this is the ability to empathize**. This is one of the important conditions for understanding individuals from different cultures and being able to live together in an environment. On the other hand, knowing what other cultures around you attach importance to can provide guidance on which issues to be more careful about. Since I started studying at this school, I have encountered individuals from many new cultures. I think I can say that our school is successful in allowing many cultures to act together in peace.”

## Excerpts from the Self-Reflection Reports

“I gained knowledge about a topic that was **previously unmentioned and had never crossed my mind before.**”

“Thanks to the SEC101 family for enabling us to dedicate time to **such important topics beyond our core courses.**”

“What I liked the most was that **students from other cultures** attended this workshop, and we engaged in **group work** with them.”

“It was an **insightful** event, and the in-class activity allowed me to interact with other international students.”

“Learning about how to be a better student by socializing with international students to **understand international students’ issues about coming from another culture and studying here** has been important.”