

**THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA**  
**FACULTY OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT**

**OGB 401: MANAGING ACROSS DIVERSE CULTURES.**  
**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Introduction:**

Managing across diverse cultures is a new course which is being introduced for the first time at the undergraduate level, in the study programmes of the Open University of Tanzania. The course is being introduced in view of the increasingly multicultural environments to which today's managers are exposed. The challenges which multicultural environments pose may have and in fact, do have negative impacts upon business' performance. The course is thus intended to equip managers with the right skills or be able to adapt the traditional managerial skills in the changing work places, so as to be able to deal with the multicultural teams and be able to get the best out of their personnel

**Course Description:**

Diversity is a key feature of modern work place, which manifests itself in different dimensions, ranging from age variations, gender, cultures, generations, professions, nationalities, ethnic groups, minorities/majorities etc. They may also involve variation in religious groupings, life styles e.g. working with gays, lesbians, homo-sexual, people with criminal records and many others. In essence, diversity involves every aspect of social, economic and cultural patterns of behaviors which have a bearing in the work place and the way they need to be harmonized so that, in spite of those variations, people can work together and move as a team in the course of attaining organizational goals. It follows from the above that managing people in Diverse Cultures, involves managerial practices, philosophies, strategies and approaches which will enable managers and organizational Leaders to be able to understand their staff's diverse attitudes, values, beliefs and characteristics and incorporating the value of diversity in the work place. It also follows that in understanding such diverse characteristics, managers can create the right work place environment that can make people of all diverse backgrounds work together and contribute towards the smooth attainment of organization mission, while also employees realizing their fullest potential in such a diverse environment, through fostering free flow and exchange of information, as well as continuously learning in a bid to achieve better the organizational goals.

**Course Objectives:**

1. To define diversity from different perspectives while relating it to the traditional functions, roles and management skills
2. To explain the dimensions of diversity and develop the appropriate attitudes which value diversity
3. To discuss the changing workplace and the management activities required for a culturally diverse work force
4. To understand the differences between the management of business operations in domestic setting and in a multicultural setting

5. To understand the difficulties and challenges marginalized employees face at work places
6. To explain and devise various forms of affirmative actions which might lead into breaking the hypothetical “glass ceilings”
7. To describe how to change the corporate culture, structure, and policies and how to use diversity awareness training to meet the needs of the diverse employees
8. To explain the importance of addressing sexual harassment and all other forms of harassments at the work place
9. Discuss the importance of multi cultural teams, understanding how to build effective teams and how to manage them successfully
10. To enable and nurture the learning culture organizations and appreciate the synergy that develops out of work force diversity.

### **Course Outline:**

#### **Theme 1: -The Nature of Diversity: Definitions:**

This topic introduces the concept of diversity, its various features, the cross –cultural differences in values, attitudes and behavior and their implications to the work place. It also introduces strategies managers use in order to manage work force diversity and their role in creating an environment that welcomes and values diverse employees.

- Diversity, management, managing diversity
- Cross- cultural differences
- Valuing Diversity and viewing diversity positively

#### **Theme 2: Dimensions of Diversity**

This topic identifies the various dimensions of diversity that feature in most organizations, including, but not limited to age, gender, profession, academic levels, nationality, race, religious, geographical location and many others. The topic will also consider the various implications these differences have to the work organization generally and in particular how they affect the performance as a whole. It will also highlight the approaches managers use to harmonize the variations and to recognize that the differences people bring to the organization are valuable.

- Secondary Dimensions of Diversity within an organization’s work force
- Primary Dimensions of Diversity within the work force
- Their Implications to Management
- Harmonizing Differences
- Attitudes towards Diversity

#### **Theme 3: Managing Diverse Workforce**

This topic revisits the traditional functions of management of planning, organizing, leading and controlling and the corresponding roles and skills pertaining to each level of management, with a view to aligning those functions, roles and skills in changed work place of diverse work force. It also considers the way managers have to operate so that results can be achieved through creating viable visions and action plans to achieve goals with and through diverse work force.

- Revisiting the functions, roles and skills pertaining to management of organizations

- Aligning the functions, roles and skills to diversity in work places
- Managing to get results – creating viable mission, vision and actions

#### **Theme 4: Understanding Others**

This theme dwells on personality characteristics, that is, the way individual look, act, think, feelings about others, which are a product of interaction and socialization with other members in the organization and the way such characteristics influence both the other individuals, groups in the organization and in turn influence the organization. The topic further considers the value conflicts that arise at the work place at interpersonal, intrapersonal and individual levels and the way they impact on the work performance and manager's capacity to manage such conflicts for effective performance of organizational goals. Finally the topic looks into how managers harmonize the individual differences on the organization, in the areas of attitudes, personality, perceptions and feelings as these will in the final analysis, shape the way they do in the organization and how they do it.

- Personality Characteristics
- Individual differences, values and group dynamics
- Understanding and Managing individual behavior, emotions and values
- Managing Value Conflicts – interpersonal, intrapersonal and individual – organization value conflicts

#### **Theme 5: Building and Managing Teams**

This theme addresses the management of Human Resources from the point of recruitment and selection into the organization and their placement in the structure in terms of roles and job descriptions. It also addresses managing human resources as working teams, with common goals and shared focus. It looks into the features of effective teams, and the strategies for building and sustaining such teams. Finally it addresses the importance of managing with and through diverse teams to achieve organizational goals.

- Recruitment and selection strategies
- Roles and Job descriptions and organization structure
- Managing human resources as work teams, with common goals and shared focus
- Building effective work teams, sizes, member roles, Characteristics of effective teams and Team processes
- Team building strategies, Model of Work Team effectiveness
- Working with and through teams to achieve organizational goals

#### **Theme 6: Retaining your Team**

This theme is a continuation of theme six and specifically it addresses the manager's role in retaining the teams once established in the organization. This role on the side of the manager involves maintaining high morale and motivation of the team members and continuously show them that their worth in the organization is well recognized and equally rewarded. The manager can do this by creating an environment that further energizes organization members, makes their work more challenging and continuously make the team maintain a clear focus of what is expected from them as individuals and as work teams. It also involves showing clearly to the team members that the organization has defined each team member's future path in terms of career development, as well as personal growth needs.

- Role of leadership in inspiring and retaining an effective and well motivated team
- Team Energy Management
- Managing Team Conflicts, Dealing with difficult people
- Career path and Development
- Benefits and Costs of Teams

### **Theme 7: Managing Change**

The theme in Change management introduces to the students the philosophy of change and its relevance in managing organizations of all forms, but much so, in diverse work force, highlighting the necessity of change in work organizations and their contribution towards improving the organizational health. The topic will identify the various forces which drive for change, as well as the approaches towards planned change. It will also cover the types of planned changes and the way to introduce them

- Change philosophy and the new work place
- Forces and need for Change
- Model of planned Organizational Change
- Creating innovativeness and creativity in work organizations
- Types of planned change- culture/people change, product change, structure change and technology change.

### **Theme 8: Managing Motivation on diverse work force**

This topic addresses the concept, theories and models of employee motivation from different perspectives i.e. from the traditional approaches and the current approaches to motivation that describe the employee needs and processes associated with motivation. The topic further discusses how job design and changing structures can affect employee satisfaction and improve productivity. Finally it addresses the issues of empowerment, facilitation, coaching and other methods, which increase employee motivation especially in diverse work force.

- The concept and foundations of Motivation
- Perspectives on Motivation – content, process and reinforcement perspectives on motivation
- Job Design for Motivation
- Motivating the diverse work place – i.e. through empowerment, facilitation, coaching and giving meaning to work

### **Theme 9: Communication across Culturally diverse work force**

This topic addresses the issue of communication and its importance for organizational managers of all organizations, but much so in the current diverse work places. It discusses the various use of communication that managers use communication, the channels that are commonly used and the need for supplementing each channel used. It also addresses the issue of communication barriers as they occur in normal organization setting and specifically so with diverse organization setting. It thus considers the various forms of communication in diverse work places through open communication, dialogue, feed back and learning.

- Communication and the manager's Job

- Communicating among people of diverse cultural backgrounds
- Organizational Communication
- Managing organizational communication – i.e. through identifying and removing communication barriers
- Communication in diverse work places – i.e. through open communication, dialogue, feedback and learning

### **Theme 10: Leadership in diverse workforce**

This topic explores the one of the most important aspect of management, that is, Leadership. Leadership will be defined, explore the differences of leadership and management and discuss the respective sources of their power. The topic will further discuss the various theories of leadership effectiveness as well as discuss charismatic and transformational leadership approaches. Finally it shall address the new leadership approaches in the diverse work force in today's work place.

- The Nature of Management: Leadership versus Management – sources of power
- Leadership traits autocratic versus democratic leadership styles
- Contingency approach to leadership
- Change Leadership –i.e. Charismatic versus Visionary leadership, Transformational Leadership and Leading the diverse work place

### **Theme 11: Diversity and the Learning Organization**

The topic addresses the notion of learning organization within the context of diversity in work places. The topic explores the evolution of learning organization philosophy, the main tenets of learning organization as a unique problem solving tool. It further addresses the aspect of managing technology driven organizations and the roles and types of information Systems.

- The concept of Learning organization
- Main characteristics of Learning organization
  - Team based Structure
  - Employee empowerment
  - Open information
- Managing the Technology driven work place
  - Operations Information System
  - Management Information Systems (MIS)
  - Open Book Management
  - Knowledge Management

### **Theme 12: Human Resources Management and Diversity:**

This topic addresses the issues pertaining to Human Resources Management (HRM), and the challenges that work force diversity brings to the organization and the role of Human Resource Manager. The topic further explores the various view points, experiences and needs that diversity brings into the organization and the need for HR Managers to understand and recognize those diversity values so that innovative, training programmes, mentoring and cross- cultural teams are developed at the work place.

Course Evaluation:

The course will be assessed through **two** Assignments each carrying 7.5 marks (15%); **two** Timed Tests each carrying the weight of 12.5% (25%) and Annual Examination 50%.

**References:**

Daft, L.R (2004), **Management**. Vanderbilt University. Thomson South – Western. UK

Armstrong, M. (2000), **How to be an even Better Manager**. Kogan Page Ltd, London

Stewart, D.M (1992), **Handbook of Management Skills**. Billing and Sons Ltd. Worcester

Kreitner, R. (1999) **Organizational Behaviour**. International Student Edition

Campbell, D.J. (1999), **Organizations and the Business Environment**. Butterworth Heinemann. Oxford

Dave Needham, Rob Dransfield, Rod Harris and Martin Coles (1995), **Business for Higher Awards**. Heinemann Educational Publishers. Oxford

Peter Winfield; Ray Bishop and Keith Porter (2000), **Core Management for HR Students and Practitioners**. Butterworth Heinemann. Oxford

Tim, H. (2005), **Management: Concepts and Practices**. FT Prentice Hall. London

Parker, Barbara (2005), **Introduction to Globalization and Business**. Sage Publications. London

Leslie W. Rue and Llyod Byars (2002), **Management: Skills and Applications**. Mc Graw Hill Education. London

Mullins, J.L (2005), **Management and Organisational Behaviour**. FT Prentice Hall. London

Naylor, J. (2004), **Management**. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Pearson Education Limited. London

Plunkett, W. Richard; Raymond F. Attner and Gemmy S. Allen (2002), **Management: Meeting and Exceeding Customer Expectations**. South Western. UK

Mark Teale, Vincenzo Dispenza, John Flynn and David Currie (2003), **Management Decision Making**. FT Prentice Hall.

Hellriegel, S. (1996), **Management**. South Western College Publishing. Cincinnati. Ohio

Debra Johnson and Collin Turner (2003), **International Business**.

**Note:** The reading list which has been provided is far from being exhaustive, so students are encouraged to read extensively and make reference to other books which do not appear under the reading list but may provide substantial information related to managing diversity.

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