

## “International Dinner”: A simulation about cross-cultural norms



The purpose of this simulation is to reflect on and discuss about the different cultural norms that people around the world follow to interact and present themselves as polite individuals. The readings and videos consider how cross-cultural differences may represent a challenge when people are required to interact in international settings. Although the materials discuss different sorts of behaviors and provide information about diverse cultural norms, the topic of eating and drinking in public, especially in formal or business-like situations, is especially stressed.

The simulation is centered on the planning of a dinner for a group of international visitors. The participants will play the part of the representatives of diverse student associations. In that role, the students will engage in a competition to plan a dinner for over a hundred international guests. The winners will be given the honor to host the dinner, which will be counted as a very important service activity for their corresponding associations.

## 1. READING

### Do you kiss, bow or shake hands? How to address global audiences with care.

By Terri Morrison

Since intercultural communication issues vary greatly around the world, here are several tips to help you avoid some of the most egregious errors from the outset of your visit.

#### 1. Read their lips. A kiss is not just a kiss.

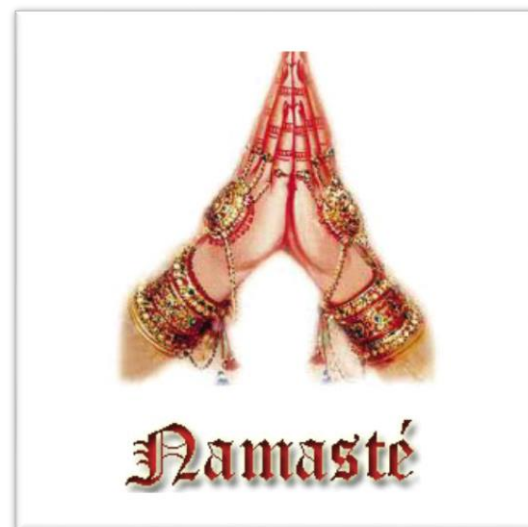
Because *Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands* is part of the title in a series of my books, I am sometimes the recipient of a kiss from the person who introduces me. They use the book title almost like an icebreaker; it gives them a perfect entrée for a warm greeting. *Les bises, un beso* or *un bacio* often occurs in France, Spain, Italy and much of Latin America as well. But in order regions of the world, I am exceedingly careful about touching my hosts. Even an air kiss can cross over from being merely awkward to alarming.



Avoid making the same mistake Richard Gere made at an AIDS benefit in Mumbai several years ago. He dramatically “dipped” and kissed an Indian starlet named Shilpa Shetty on her cheek. It was a typical theatrical gesture that would have played well in Hollywood, but some Hindus were highly insulted. Protests erupted, arrest warrants were issued, and both were hung in effigy.

Many cultures disapprove of public displays of affection between genders for religious or traditional reasons. These include:

**India, Pakistan, Thailand, Myanmar (formerly Burma) and other primarily Hindu or Buddhist countries**



In these cultures, executives may shake hands or greet each other with a *namaste* or a *wai*. Both gestures involve placing one’s hands in a praying position, and raising them to the proper height in front of the face or head.

**Theocracies like Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Israel**

In a theocracy, God tells you what to do. Both observant Muslims and Orthodox Jews are prohibited from touching the opposite sex in public.

**China, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore and other parts of Asia**

Although multiple Chinese presidents have received hugs from exuberant Westerners, your best bet is to offer a brief bow of the head and a

reasonable (not heart-stopping) handshake. In the United States, a firm grip has long been an indicator of strength of character, but in much of Asia, a gentle, extended grip is normal and doesn't reflect negotiating strength. Follow your host's lead.

### **Germany, Austria, Finland, Switzerland and the Netherlands**

These countries consider business a serious endeavor and view humor or physical affection as a frivolous waste of time at work. This may explain why at a G8 summit in 2006, the Chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkel, reflexively shrugged off former President George W. Bush when he attempted to give her shoulders a little massage.

### **2. Stand up straight, chest out, head up, hands at your sides.**

Many nationalities are known for their excellent posture (e.g., Germans, French, Japanese), but a straight back is not the only criteria for a good greeting.

When Bill Gates went to South Korea in 2013, it wasn't just his posture and open jacket that made headlines all over the country. Gates has a habit of leaving his left hand in his pocket when he shakes hands. That may fly in Seattle, but unfortunately, it looked disrespectful when he shook hands with South Korean President Park Geun-hye. The headlines blared: "An open jacket with hand in pocket? Way too casual!" And Secretary General Chung Jin-suk of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea stated, "It was very regretful."



### **3. Use formal titles and last names, and know the correct usage of *tu*, *du*, *san* and *sensei*.**

Names represent much more than a moniker in many countries. They are a link to an individual's personal history: parents, grandparents or even the town where he or she was born. Therefore mispronouncing a name is more significant in certain countries, particularly when the name is actually a patronymic—a name that incorporates your father's name.

Your host's behavior with his own countrymen, in his own country, may be vastly different from his behavior with you. For example, if you were extremely close friends with the President of Russia, Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, you might address him as Vladimir Vladimirovich. Among themselves, Russians often address each other by their first names and patronymic. Thus, Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin's first name is Vladimir (which has been translated as "great, glorious ruler"), and his middle name (a patronymic) means "son of Vladimir."

This tradition is more widespread than you might think. Many languages—from Arabic to Swedish to Spanish—integrate parents' names into their progenies'. If you cannot pronounce a name correctly, you not only insult the person in front of you but his or her ancestors as well.

Of course, you should be careful about more than just pronunciation. Formal situations present their own challenges. Let's say that your first presentation is in Germany. Your host, the *Geschäftsführer* (CEO or executive director), Dr. Ernst Kohler, formally introduces you to a roomful of eminent guests. In response, you graciously state: "Thank you very much, Ernst, for that kind introduction. It is an honor and a pleasure to address this illustrious group!"

That may be an appreciative line in Miami, but it's too informal in Munich. Using the director's first name in front of such distinguished company is unacceptable. Correct protocol mandates that you state the doctor's title(s) and

last name in public, at least until he invites you to switch to his first name, which in some cases may take years. Once you are a trusted, long-term friend, he may move from the more formal form of *you*-which is *Sie* in German-to the informal, almost affectionate term *du*.

Many languages have informal and formal forms of address: French uses *tu* and *vous*, Spanish uses *tu* and *usted* and other cultures use honorifics-like the Japanese terms *-san*, *-sama* and *-sensei*.

You should be aware that your host's behavior with his own countrymen, in his own country, may be vastly different from his behavior with you. For example:

Mr. Michiaki Nakano, a partner at the law firm of South Toranomon in Tokyo, is extremely familiar with Western customs, and is conscientious about making his international associates feel comfortable. So even though his Japanese colleagues address him in a very formal manner, generally with the honorific Nakano-sensei, he always invites English-speaking attorneys to call him Mickey. This ensures that his Western associates will not lose face by mispronouncing his name or macerating his title.



Many other cultures with formal naming conventions (e.g., Germans and Nigerians) also conform to Western sensibilities when they work in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom or the United States.

However, when you are in Rome (or in Tokyo, Seoul or Shanghai), try to behave as the Romans do, particularly when in front of an audience. The last thing you want to see is a video of yourself on YouTube, being too chummy in China-a target for Internet trolls in perpetuity!

There are many more naming conventions: In China surnames come first; in Saudi Arabia *binti* means “daughter of” and *bin* means “son of”; and in Spain a compound family name will probably list the father's surname first, then the mother's. One good source for further information is *Merriam-Webster's Guide to International Business Communications* by Toby Atkinson.

#### 4. Avoid sensitive topics and images.

Once you get past the initial greetings and forms of address, there are other behaviors, topics and images you should circumvent. Here are three topics to avoid in your presentation.

##### Politics and Political Graphics

Your slides should be vetted by a local representative of the country you visit to ensure against the use of insulting topics or images. Some things may seem innocuous to you, like a map for instance, but if disputed territory is portrayed (e.g., the Spratly Islands, claimed by Brunei, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam), a lively question-and-answer session may follow. Remember that many websites are banned in China and the Middle East for politically incorrect content.

##### Sensitive Symbols and Content

Different religious groups have varying degrees of sensitivities. For example, some symbols require special care.

- **The flag of Saudi Arabia:** The name of Allah appears on the flag, so it must be handled with extreme care. It cannot be associated with any promotional items, and it must never be flown at half-mast.

- **Images of Buddha:** Travelers with tattoos of Buddha have been turned away at the airport of Sri Lanka.
  - **Images of animals:** Not all animals are universally beloved. Although they are incredibly popular in advertisements, dogs are not always just mascots. You may still find them on the menu in Asia. And in much of the Middle East, dogs are considered unclean and would never be used in an ad or on business collateral. When TNT debuted in Indonesia—a primarily Islamic country—Ted Turner, founder of the cable TV network, was careful not to include the Porky Pig character in the initial Warner Bros. cartoon lineup, because the consumption of pork is forbidden by the Koran.
  - **Images of the human figure:** Images of humans are generally prohibited in Saudi Arabia, which abides by the Wahhabi branch of Sunni Islam. This took a rather interesting turn recently when northern Saudi Arabia experienced an uncommonly heavy snowfall, and a prominent Saudi cleric used his website to warn believers against building snowmen.
  - **Images of alcohol:** Alcohol is also prohibited to observant Muslims, so avoid incorporating images of glassware associated with alcoholic beverages.
- 5. Keep body language in check.**
- Finally, nonverbal communication can have an enormous impact on a presentation. Sometimes high-energy, animated gestures can be the antithesis of what clients expect. Subtle nonverbal communications are the standard in much of Asia, and minimal gestures transmit tremendous amounts of information.
- Therefore, if you take the podium and start gesticulating wildly—punching out your points with your fingers in the air, or whacking your right hand into your left palm—your crowd may pay more attention to your body language than to your words.
- Clearly, people around the world are not alike. Different cultures have different customs, priorities and ways of thinking and negotiating. Inquiring about the protocol and business practices in each country will help you avoid delivering an embarrassing faux pas along with your brilliant presentation.

Notes: **Terri Morrison** is co-author of nine books, including *Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands: The Bestselling Guide to Doing Business in More Than 60 Countries*. She is working on her next book, which will be published by the American Bar Association. Visit her website at **[TerriMorrison.com](http://TerriMorrison.com)**.

**Potential reading questions for “Do you kiss, bow or shake hands?”**

1. In your home country, how do people greet each other? Does this article mention how your fellow countrymen greet each other? Are they the real case in your country? What would you like to know more about how people greet each other in different countries?
2. In your country, how do people address each other? How do they address those who they are not familiar with? How do they address those who are higher in social status than themselves? How do they address those who are older than themselves?
3. What topics are not good ones for acquaintances to talk about in your home country? What images should be cautious when used in public in your home country? Regarding this, what examples have been mentioned in the article?
4. Are there any specific types of body language that are not polite in your home country? What types of body language are impolite in America? What examples have been given about other countries?
5. What information from this article will you use to help the planning process for the international dinner? Give specific examples from the article.

## 2. CULTURAL NORMS AND TABLE MANNERS: READING AND LISTENING

The following statements describe how different practices are either considered rude or required table manners. Some of the statements are true and some false. Choose the option that you think may be appropriate in each case.

	<b>T</b>	<b>F</b>
1. Arriving early is considered rude in Tanzania.		
2. In Japan you should always pass food to other people at your table using your chopsticks.		
3. In Korea the first person to begin eating should be the lady of the house.		
4. Remember to always cut your noodles when you eat them if you are in China.		
5. Pointing your chopsticks at people is considered rude in Korea.		
6. In Jamaica, some people believe that if children eat chicken before they can speak, they will never talk.		
7. People in Chile feel comfortable using their hands to eat certain foods.		
8. Asking for extra cheese in Italy is considered insulting to the cook.		
9. Putting the empty bottles of Vodka on the table is considered as bad luck in Russia.		
10. In the UK, you should always spoon the soup away from you.		
11. Rushing though a meal is considered rude in France.		
12. In the Arab countries, you should eat your food with your left hand.		
13. In Germany, you should not eat bread with your fingers.		
14. In South Korea, when you drink something you should turn your head and look away from the others.		
15. Adding salt to your food in Egypt means good luck.		

The following video talks about dining etiquette and dining taboos in different cultures:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9XT4SbajwFw> Watch the video and verify your answers.

### 3. TABLE UTENSILS AND CULTURAL NORMS: READING

Read the content in the online forum about cutlery differences among different cultures

<http://forum.wordreference.com/threads/different-eating-habits-among-cultures.967268/>

Practice skimming and scanning.

Answer the following questions:

1. What are the main types of eating utensils that have been talked about in this thread of conversation?
2. What are one or two controversial opinions regarding one single fact in this thread of conversation that you've recognized?
3. What side of opinion do you agree with, according to your personal life experience? What are some of the ways that you can find out about the real situation?
4. Select at least two cultural regions mentioned in this thread of conversation and compare and contrast them with regard to a few aspects. You can use graphic organizers to make the comparison and contrast.



#### 4. INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ETIQUETTE: LISTENING AND SPEAKING



You will watch a brief video that features Michael Czinkota, a professor of the School of Business at Georgetown University, talking about international business etiquette. Listen to his talk and take notes on the key points of his presentation.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yV\\_XMCFPOjQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yV_XMCFPOjQ)

Discuss the following questions with your colleagues and your instructor. In your answers, provide examples from your own culture/country.

1. According to Michael Czinkota, being aware of cultural imperatives is essential for business etiquette. What did he mean by this? Do you agree? Why?
2. Different cultures have different expectations regarding time management. What does Czinkota mean when he says that time is seen as incidental in certain cultures? How important is time in your own culture?
3. Czinkota says that in certain cultures people pay special attention to how they address others depending on their social status. Is this true for the people in your country? If so, explain how this is done in the context of a business dinner when people of different ranks and ages share a meal. Do you have to use especial words or forms of address to show respect? Are seating arrangements considered as a way to show respect? If formality is not so relevant in your country, explain how you feel when people treat you in a very formal way.
4. Czinkota tells a story about a group of American businessmen who took off their jackets during a business dinner in Germany. The German host was appalled at this action. Why was this so? Would this behavior be considered rude in your country? Can you think of any other behaviors that would be inappropriate in your culture in a similar setting?
5. Is being touched by others during a formal social event considered inappropriate in your culture? If yes, what reactions would people get if someone touches them? If not, what types of physical contact are considered appropriate?
6. Why is it important to know the cultural norms of your potential business partners?
7. What resources are recommended by the speaker to know more about what to do and not to do in international business settings?

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### **Additional Resources**

Students can also discuss or summarize the following video that talks about Chinese cultural norms. This material can be used as homework if needed:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMwjscSCcf0>

### International Dinner

The School of Hotel and Restaurant Administration and the School of International Studies at International University (IU) are teaming up to welcome a group of university representatives and distinguished scholars from different parts of the world (see Table 1). As part of the events that will be held to honor the visitors, the university wants to offer a dinner organized and hosted by students. Several student associations have volunteered to host the dinner as part of their service activities. The two schools in charge have organized a contest to decide which organizations can best take the challenge in a way that would be mindful of the guests' cross-cultural differences and guarantee that the occasion will be a pleasant and memorable experience for all the attendees.

Table 1. Guest delegations and OSU authorities invited to the dinner

Country	University	No. Males	No. Females
United Arab Emirates	Abu Dabi Institute of Technology	10	
China	Xining Agricultural University	10	8
Japan	Nagoya New Women's University	15	7
Ethiopia	Debre Science and Technology University	10	8
Mexico	Autonomous University of Valladolid	12	10
India	New Delhi Arts and Sciences University	5	5
IU guests	IU President, the Provost, Deans and other authorities.	10	10
TOTAL = 120			

For the contest, the participants will be working in teams of four members. Each team will be composed of representatives from different student associations. Two of them will be members of an international student association and the other two will be members of different associations of local students. To win the contest, each team will have to present a full plan to host the dinner considering all the details listed on Table 2.

Table 2. Details to consider for the organization

- Dietary restrictions for religious, cultural, or health reasons
- Best time to host the dinner considering the guests' cultural norms (beginning time and duration of the event)<sup>1</sup>
- Dining etiquette
- Seating arrangements
- Hosts and waiting staff behavior
- Entertainment
- Decoration
- Dress code for attendants and hosts

The organization of the event should achieve two main objectives. First of all, the dinner should respectfully address the guests' cultural norms. Second, the dinner should showcase at least one aspect of the Mexican culture that could be interesting for the visitors. The winning team will be the one that

<sup>1</sup> Contestants should take into account that the dinner will be hosted on the second week of June, which happens to coincide with the beginning of Ramadan this year.

proposes a plan that successfully achieves these two objectives in a balanced manner. In their presentation, each participating team should explain how the details of their plan will meet the objectives of the event.

In order to supervise the contest and decide on a winner, one professor from the School of Hotel and Restaurant Administration, and one professor from the School of International Studies have been appointed as advisors and judges. During the contest, the advisors will supervise the teams and make sure that they consider all relevant details in their planning. The advisors will also be in charge of selecting the evaluation criteria for the contest and letting the participants know how their work will be evaluated. During the presentation of the teams, the professors will act as judges to choose a winner. They will also have to explain the reasons they had to select one team over the others.

## Roles

### The International Students

*Abub Al-Ahdal* (President of the Muslim Student Association) –male role

You are a junior in the Industrial Engineering major. You feel that your association should be included as part of the organization committee to ensure that the needs of the Muslim visitors are appropriately met. For instance, you are concerned about the fact that the dinner will be hosted during the first week of Ramadan. You know well that in order to respect the guests' fasting time, this dinner should be held at a rather late hour. Other details, such as not serving alcohol to the Muslim guests, making sure that they are seated according to rank, or offering dishes without pork, are also important to be considered. Additionally, you are not necessarily advocating in favor of a typical Arab menu. However, to show that the hosts are really interested in pleasing their guests, you want to make sure that certain types of food are included as an option. Specifically, you want to include foods that may help the Muslim guests break their fast, accompany their main dishes, and close the meal on a happy note. Finally, you are also concerned about the dress code since formality is important for Arabs and you want to emphasize on this aspect of the organization just as much as on the timing of the dinner and the dietary restrictions.

*Xin Zhang* (President of the Chinese Student Association) –female role

You are a Chinese student from the school of Hotel and Restaurant Administration. You are from the southern part of China. This is your senior year at IU. You are pretty familiar with the food and culture of the southern part of China. However, you need to know a little more about the food and culture of the northern part of China, since the Chinese delegation group is from that region. In the organization meeting, you will inform the whole group of the usual dining time and utensil preferences for a formal meeting in China.

*Jingling Chen* (Vice-president of the Chinese Student Association) –female role

You are a junior international student from the northern part of China. You are an International Studies major. Since the Chinese university whose delegation is visiting is located in the northern part of China, you will inform the whole class what will probably be their customary ways of organizing formal dinners. You are aware that the banquets in Mexico are different from those in China. Banquets in China usually consist of as many as twenty courses, but those in Mexico only comprise a few courses. You know that it is impossible to make this event totally meet the expectation of the Chinese delegation, but you still want

to emphasize that the courses should have a variety of choices. That is, the meal should have more than three or four courses.

*Junyoung Kim* (President of the Korean Student Association) –male role

You are an international student from South Korea studying in the Hospitality Management department. This is your junior year of study in this university. You have had an internship back in South Korea during the summer when you were a sophomore, and another internship experience in a local small hotel this past winter break. You have traveled to a few big cities in Japan before. You are pretty familiar with the food and culture in East Asia, including such countries as China, Japan and South Korea. You are aware that the Muslim delegation will emphasize that the meal should start after the sun sets that day, which will probably be around 8:00 p.m. or even 8:30 p.m. By that time, the Korean delegation might be very hungry. You plan to suggest that if the meal starts around or after 8:00 p.m., the event organizers should consider sending some baskets of fruits or some snacks to the hotel rooms where the other groups stay.

*Stephen Okafor* (President of the African Student Association) –male role

You are a senior majoring in Food Services from Nigeria. As a Nigerian, you know that people in some parts of Africa and Latin America love spicy food. However, other delegation representatives might not like spicy food that much. Therefore, you will propose that there should be spicy and non-spicy options of dishes. You are also concerned with the ingredients of the meal since the representatives in the delegation groups are from different religions and follow different practice in dietary choices. For example, what types of meat should be included, what kinds of beverages should be provided, etc. You will raise among the whole organizing group the awareness of taking care of those who might have allergy to certain types of food.

*Dhanya Chaudhri* (President of the Indian Student Association) –female role

You are a sophomore student, still undecided about your major. Although you have lived in Mexico for over a year, you still find many aspects of the Mexican culture confusing, to say the least. You have taken the leadership of the Indian association as way to feel less lonely and adapt to your new life. For the same reasons, you believe that participating in the organization of the dinner may be good for you at a personal level, and also for your association. So, you are determined to win this contest. Additionally, you have heard that among the guests, there will be a group from India. You are concerned about the Indian delegation's dietary restrictions and want to propose the inclusion of a vegetarian menu to accommodate to their needs. On the other hand, you believe that the success of a dinner depends not only on the food, but also on the possibility of engaging in pleasant conversations. You believe that your team may have a chance to win the contest if seating arrangements are planned in a way that they contribute to promote fluid conversations and avoid awkward situations. For example, you know that in certain countries, men and women are not used to share the same table. Finally, those officers and scholars from IU who will also attend the dinner should be considered in the seating arrangements with special care.

### **The National Students**

*Jessika Hernández* (President of the Alpha-Chi-Omega Association) –female role

You are a Hospitality major and this is your senior year at OSU. You were born in Guadalajara, which you consider a very cosmopolitan city where different ethnic groups and foreign residents live and interact. Last year, you travelled to Japan in a study-abroad program and learned a great deal about the

Japanese life-style and culture. You believe these experiences have enabled you to lead your association to play an important role in the organization of this important dinner. You also think that the Japanese delegation would be among those who might be the most difficult to please because of their high standards regarding hygiene, order, and beauty. However, you know they will hardly complain if something is amiss during the dinner to avoid embarrassing their hosts. So, you want to take special care to avoid mistakes. Additionally, as a hospitality major you believe that paying attention to small details will be essential to let the guests know that their hosts have done their best to make them feel welcome. For instance, the committee could consider offering wet towels to the Japanese guests to clean their hands before the meal, providing chopstick stands, or making sure that the music, if any, is not too loud to interfere with conversations during the meal. You are positive that, if your win a place as part of the hosting committee, your association will gain visibility. Therefore, you are decided to do your best in this contest.

*Pedro Martínez* (President of the Phi-Delta-Chi Association) –male role

You are a sophomore in the Food Processing program and proud to be a true Jarocho from Veracruz. As the leader of your association this year, you want to expose the membership to new service experiences that may strengthen their commitment with the local community. With this purpose in mind, you want to win the contest and help the committee showcase the culture of Veracruz. You are convinced that the dinner will be a great opportunity to do that and want to accomplish this goal to its fullest. You do not have much experience dealing with people from other countries and cultures; however, you are never afraid of a challenge. Besides, you are convinced that it will not be possible to organize a dinner party that could satisfy everybody's cultural norms in every detail. However, you believe that the committee may be more successful if they try to find the common aspects among the very diverse cultures of the guests and try to organize the event considering these commonalities. You know that some of the members of your team are especially concerned about the first goal of the contest (addressing the guests' cultural norms), but you want to persuade them to also include a "jarocho" theme to meet the second goal of the contest.

*Andrea García* (President of the South American Student Association -SASA) –female role

You are an exchange student from Costa Rica in the International Studies program and the president of the South American Student Association this year. You are very excited about the contest because you consider it as an opportunity to apply what you have learned in your program about cross-cultural differences and international relations. At the same time, you believe that if your team wins the contest, the inclusion of your organization in the committee will contribute to make the occasion a great success. Since your association is a group where people of diverse nationalities and cultures are used to interact with each other, you think that the SASA will be key to find a common ground to make things work. Besides, Latin American people are well-known for their hospitality. To win the contest, you want to plan a dinner party that could keep a balance between fun and formality. You think that, even though the occasion demands a very formal organization and setup, it does not mean that the dinner should be boring. Also, with respect to the second goal of the contest (including one aspect of the Mexican culture), you believe that presenting Mexico as a complex multicultural society will be the best way to approach this challenge.

*Giovanni Esposito* (Lambda Alpha Epsilon Association) –male role

You are senior music major from Baja California. As a member of a family of Italian descent and the fiancé of a Vietnamese woman you know that hosting people of different backgrounds considering their diverse cultural norms may be a real challenge. However, as the leader of an association composed by

young musicians, you think that your student organization could contribute to meet this challenge by using the universal language of music. Also, your connections with other art students could be useful to fulfill the purpose of displaying an aspect of the Mexican culture with an artistic twist. You are convinced that this approach could make the event pleasant and interesting at the same time. On the other hand, considering the purpose of addressing the guests' cultural norms, you want to make sure that your team pays special attention to the role of the waiting staff and the size of the portions. By your own experience you know that different cultures have different expectations regarding the quantity of the food they are served and how the food should be handled when it is being served. You believe that you can find creative ways to reconcile different expectations. You are certain that an emphasis on food portions and serving etiquette along with the use of music may give your team the edge needed to win the contest.

*Antonia Santiago* (President of the Association of Mexican Indigenous Students) –female role.

You are a senior student of indigenous descent and a Graphic Design major. You have a special interest in participating as part of the dinner organization committee because you want to emphasize on the importance of showcasing the Native Mexican culture during the event. You know that the history of the indigenous peoples of Mexico is not a happy one; however, you believe that, for the purpose of the dinner, the committee may use many of the brighter aspects of the local indigenous culture. For instance, as a graphic designer, you believe that the rich aesthetic tradition of your people, with their bold use of colors and textures, may provide great ideas for the decoration of the venue where the dinner will take place. Moreover, your ethnic group could be benefitted if IU invites them to participate with their crafts, dances, and food.

### **The Judges**

*Dr. Simon McNeal*

You are a professor in the School of Hotel and Restaurant Administration. You hold a PhD in Hospitality and Food Service Management by the University of Ohio. You are especially determined to make this dinner a great success. To do that, you want to select a balanced and responsible group of students that can truly meet the challenge of organizing such an important dinner. You are aware of the great diversity of food cultures among the guests, but as an experienced manager and an expert on international cuisine, you know that it would not be feasible to prepare separate menus for every delegation. So, you will especially pay attention to how the teams will attempt to solve this problem in their presentations. You are also concerned about the organization of the hosting and waiting staff. In your experience, you have seen that this staff is central to achieve the satisfaction of the guests. You will work hand in hand with your colleague from the School of International Studies to create a rating sheet that considers all the details listed in Table 2 and an appropriate scale to rate each criterion. Also, you will let the participants know the criteria that will be used to rate their performance. You will formally present the rating scale to be used during the meeting that will take place before the final presentation. During the competition, you and your colleague will rate the participants and take notes on the performance. Once you and your colleague have decided on a winner, the two of you will present the results to the contestants and explain the reasons for your decision.

*Dr. María Saldaña*

You are a professor in the School of International Studies and an expert in international trade. During your career, you have accumulated experience in 54 countries representing all major geographic areas, and you are also fluent in Arabic and English. Therefore, you are familiar with the challenges implied in the preparation of the dinner. Achieving balance in presenting the Mexican culture and honoring the

cultural diversity of the guests are two different goals, but you believe that one should not take precedence over the other. So, you will pay special attention to how the participating teams will address these two goals in creative ways. You want this dinner to be an opportunity to show the visitors that IU instills in its students an interest in promoting a greater understanding and involvement in international affairs. So, you will be looking for a team that truly shares this interest. You will work hand in hand with your colleague from the School of Hotel and Restaurant Administration to create a rating sheet that considers all the details listed in Table 2 and an appropriate scale to rate each criterion. Also, you will let the participants know the criteria that will be used to rate their performance. You will formally present the rating scale to be used during the meeting that will take place before the final presentation. During the competition, you and your colleague will rate the participants and take notes on the performance. Once you and your colleague have decided on a winner, the two of you will present the results to the contestants and explain the reasons for your decision.

### **Debriefing**

1. After participating in the International Dinner simulation, do you think that the role descriptions you were given helped you plan the dinner in a realistic manner? If not why not? If yes, explain how.
2. How well did the presentation of the cultural norms during the simulation reflect what you know or have experienced about those cultures included?
3. How did you feel about your role? What did you learn from playing it?
4. What did you learn about cross-cultural differences that could be useful in future international encounters?
5. When travelling abroad, to what extent do you think people should consider your cultural norms and act accordingly when interacting with you? To what extent should you adapt to your hosts' cultural norms?



**Food Taboos T & F Answerkey**

	<b>T</b>	<b>F</b>
1. Arriving early is considered rude in Tanzania.	T	
2. In Japan you should always pass food to other people at your table using your chopsticks.		F
3. In Korea the first person to begin eating should be the lady of the house.		F
4. Remember to always cut your noodles when you eat them if you are in China.		F
5. Pointing your chopsticks at people is considered rude in Korea.		F
6. In Jamaica, some people believe that if children eat chicken before they can speak, they will never talk.	T	
7. People in Chile feel comfortable using their hands to eat certain foods.		F
8. Asking for extra cheese in Italy is considered insulting to the cook.	T	
9. Putting the empty bottles of Vodka on the table is considered as bad luck in Russia.	T	
10. In the UK, you should always spoon the soup away from you.	T	
11. Rushing through a meal is considered rude in France.	T	
12. In the Arab countries, you should eat your food with your left hand.		F
13. In Germany, you should not eat bread with your fingers.		F
14. In South Korea, when you drink something you should turn your head and look away from the others.	T	
15. Adding salt to your food in Egypt means good luck.		F