

## Introduction:

In their case study, Crabtree and Sapp (2004) shed light on a very important concept that often plays out in cross-cultural communication settings, namely the gap between cognitive and affective/behavioral tendencies. While we can gain knowledge in a classroom setting, this does not necessarily predict our ability to respond effectively and responsively in a cross-cultural setting when our expectations and emotions are put to the test. Oftentimes, head knowledge neither impacts nor aligns with our physiological and emotional responses, which are typically informed by our own deeply engrained cultural tendencies. The case study also naturally leads to a critical discussion of the possibilities of third-culture spaces, **i.e.**, the negotiation of group norms when group members come from from different cultural backgrounds.

## Facilitator Notes:

This activity can be adapted to an asynchronous format with online discussion posts in place of synchronous class discussion.

## Objectives:

As a result of this activity, participants will be able to:

1. Identify and describe the gap between cognitive and affective/behavioral competencies.
2. Apply the cognitive/affective behavioral gap to their own experiences.
3. Analyze an example of third culture space negotiation.

## Time:

1 hour.

## Group Size:

Small or large group.

## Materials:

Crabtree and Sapp (2004) summary and handout (both in [Downloads](#)). Optional: Crabtree and Sapp (2004) article.

## Intercultural Development Continuum Stages:

- Denial
- Polarization
- Minimization
- Acceptance

## AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Goals:

Cultural Self-Awareness

- To articulate insights into own cultural rules and biases (e.g., seeking complexity; aware of how their experiences have shaped these rules, and how to recognize and respond to cultural biases, resulting in a shift in self-description).

## Knowledge of Cultural Worldview Frameworks

- To demonstrate sophisticated understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs & practices.

## Verbal and Nonverbal Communication

- To articulate a complex understanding of cultural differences in verbal and nonverbal communication (e.g., demonstrates understanding of the degree to which people use physical contact while communicating in different cultures or use direct/indirect and explicit/implicit meanings).
- To skillfully negotiate a shared understanding based on these differences.

## Other Skills:

Teamwork; Emotional Resilience.

## Activity Instructions:

1. Decide how you would like to instruct students to prepare prior to this activity. Possibilities are as follows:
  - No preparation required.
  - Students can read the summary provided in [Downloads](#) prior to the activity.
  - Students can read the Crabtree and Sapp (2004) article entitled *Your Culture, My Classroom, Whose Pedagogy? Negotiating Effective Teaching and Learning in Brazil* prior to the activity.
  - A combination of the above bullet points.
2. Once you've instructed students on how to prepare, begin class by discussing the gap introduced in the summary and handout. Based on your preparation instructions, you can have students read the article and summary in class or jump right into discussion.
3. Engage in a discussion with students posing the following questions based on Crabtree and Sapp (2004):
  - To what other contexts might the gap apply?
  - Why does the gap exist?
  - What examples from your own life illustrate the gap? What head knowledge did you have and what was your affective/psychological response when put to the test? Were you surprised by your response?
  - How will knowing about the gap help you for upcoming cultural transitions or unfamiliar contexts/relationships you might enter? Does knowing about the gap



change the way you prepare or conceptualize preparation for these contexts? Does knowing about the gap change the way you approach personal reflection after being immersed in a new experience?

4. Introduce students to the idea of “third-culture building” (Casmir, 1993):

Fred Casmir (1993) developed a paradigm called “Third-Culture building” which may provide a lens through which to view the Crabtree and Sapp (2004) case study. Casmir proposes that when two cultures come together, power dynamics may lead to one culture dominating and the other adapting. Another possibility he suggests, however, is a dynamic in which power is shared more equally and a third culture forms that doesn’t favor one culture over the other, rather, an in-between third culture is co-created.

5. Engage in a discussion with students posing the following questions:

- In what ways did Crabtree and her students build a “third culture”?
- What examples from your life does the concept of third-culture building bring to mind?
- In what other contexts might third-culture building be particularly fruitful?
- What are some advantages of third-culture building? What are some challenges of third-culture building?

**Related Tools:**

- [Adapt or Be Yourself](#)
- [Communication Pacing in "Among Us"](#)
- [Pacing](#)
- [Third Culture Space](#)