Cross-Cultural Variables

In the Culture At Large

Language
Use of space
Perceptions of time
Meaning of nonverbal behaviors
Degree of individualism versus collectivism
Amount of contexting
Importance of hierarchy
Use of silence
Definition of power and leadership
Definition and rigidity of gender roles
Attitudes about technology and the environment
Criteria for success
Use of humor

In Business

Role of written communication (e.g., inform? persuade? document? reinforce?)
Level of informality in interpersonal communication
Criteria for personal success
Oral presentation styles (formal? informal?)
Emphasis on task versus relationship building
Goals of business as a cultural institution

In Education

Purpose of education (discover new knowledge? pass on traditions?)
Relationship of teacher to student (e.g., can the teacher be challenged?)
Behavior of students in the classroom (e.g., can students compete with one another?)
Norms of classroom (e.g., who talks in this classroom, when? for how long? when do they get the floor?)
Instructions for Cross-Cultural Group Discussion

Spend the next 15 minutes discussing your observations about American culture, particularly as it differs from your own. As a group decide upon one common or especially interesting observation, which you will report back to the entire class. (Since the instructor will choose the person who will speak for each group, everyone should be prepared to participate!)

We will use the "data" from the discussion to try to identify those aspects of culture that vary from country to country.