Culture? Academic? Dutch?

• Culture: the set of (often silently complied with) ideas, beliefs, norms and standards that guide our day to day behaviour and our social interactions

• Cultures vary between institutional and organisational settings (politics/sports/arts/economy/education a.o.), so universities have their own cultural features

• Cultures vary between countries, so the Netherlands has its own cultural features

• => a few things on Dutch academic culture
Dutch universities

- Dutch universities generally are good, student-friendly, highly professional in education.

- Yet they ask for active students, behaving as young professionals.
Dutch Academic Culture

- Lectures and lecturers
- Interaction with teachers
- Examinations
- Evaluations: have your say… take part
- Reading/studying
- Writing
- Plagiarism is a serious issue!
Lectures and lecturers

• Dutch lecturers like to have an interactive audience, engaged in the issues addressed
• Teachers like it when you actively participate, with questions and remarks
• Lectures do not simply cover/reflect the exam stuff: most lectures essentially *structure* that stuff, to enable you to study more easily
• While most lecturers urge less for discipline than you might be used to in your own country; most won’t appreciate you being busy on Facebook or Instagram
• Most lecturers do appreciate a good sense of humor
Interaction with lecturers

- Dutch universities are hierarchic, yet interactions mostly tend to be non-hierarchic
- Lecturers are rather easily accessible
- You may approach them in a rather informal way, yet with respect for formalities (dress, language: don’t start e-mails with ‘Hi’)

- Please comply with appointments and deadlines!
- Be enthusiastic, constructive, yet don’t hesitate to be critical
Examinations (1/2)

- First and foremost: *read* the course manual/student manual to ensure about the exam requirements! These texts are constitutive, yet the requirements differ between courses!

- Exams test your theoretical knowledge: concepts, theories, lines of argumentation, schemes of understanding
- Papers may primarily ask for your skills in applying that knowledge

- Exams will be challenging, but based upon the course material
- Some teachers might organize a ‘question time’ and/or are quite open on (the sort of) exam questions: ask!
Examinations (2/2)

• There will be a so-called ‘inzage’ (sometimes labeled ‘perusal’): go there to learn from it!
• You will have a second chance.

• You will be graded on a 0-10 scale.
  - 5.5 – 6.0 is sufficient (the Dutch ‘6-culture’)
  - 7 is good
  - 8 is very good
  - 9 is brilliant – and rarely provided
  - 10 is extraordinary
• Brilliant students might get frustrated over not receiving a 9, let alone a 10
Evaluations: have your say

• Each course has a written evaluation, a form to be filled out, either during the exam or via Internet/Blackboard.

• It provides you the opportunity to evaluate your course, its content, level and organization, and your teacher: take part! Come up with constructive criticism.

• All evaluations are submitted to the Programme Committee of the education programme; the Programme Committee has a 50/50 lecturers/students representation.

• Course evaluations are taken seriously in Dutch academic culture/our faculty organization.
Reading/studying

• Most, if not all literature is in English: improve your proficiency!

• A lot of reading work to be done!: 4 contact hours/week mostly entails another 8 hours of reading (and writing, see next)

• The readings are relevant: they are there for a purpose, lecturers have thought this through

• A common mistake: do not think you can make it by merely studying power point slides!! Exams ask for argumentations that lecturers and texts address, but slides don’t.
Many courses invite you for group and individual assignments/projects/papers. Papers are meant to display your ability in scientifically sound thinking/working/writing!

Pay attention to your research question, to the scientific and societal relevance of your work, to the structure and language of the paper etc.

Help each other with language editing! Lecturers are not accountable for the quality of your English, yet they will take it into account when assessing the paper’s overall quality.
Plagiarism is a serious issue!

- Internet in general e.g. Wikipedia and others, and specific download services, either legal or illegal, have changed our culture with regard to authors’ rights, referring to initial sources, etc.

- These changes might affect your generation more than mine, yet anyway:

  - In academic culture, plagiarism is a serious issue: it is not tolerated!!
What is plagiarism?

Suggesting that an idea, a finding, a figure, a conclusion, an argumentation is yours - while in fact it is not -, by copying or ‘stealing’ it, e.g. by neglecting or ignoring (intentionally or not!) to mention the original source/book/author etc.

Take care with pictures that might be protected under author’s rights/copyrights.
How to quote/cite/refer properly?

• “I define populism as an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, ‘the pure people’ versus ‘the corrupt elite’, and which argues that politics should be an expression of the volonté générale (general will) of the people” (Mudde, p. 543).

The unacceptable way

To paraphrase:

• Populism is an ideology that believes that society should be divided into two homogenous groups, the pure people against the corrupt elite.
• (no reference)
The proper way to paraphrase

• In this paper I will define populism as follows. Borrowing from Mudde I argue that populism is an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, ‘the pure people’ versus ‘the corrupt elite’ (Mudde, 2004, p. 543). As you can see from this definition.....
The positive arguments to quote and cite

1. You must demonstrate the origins of your sources
   standard: science is an accumulative process, in which you
   should build on others (‘standing on the shoulders of giants’) and
   make your findings open for criticism by others

2. It makes your paper stronger
   standard: you (have to) position yourself in the scientific
   community

3. Someone else may be interested in your (quoted) ideas
   standard: science is a world-wide open access interaction
The negative arguments/sanctions

See also: [http://www.ru.nl/nsm/stip/faculty-study-information/study-information/fraud-plagiarism/](http://www.ru.nl/nsm/stip/faculty-study-information/study-information/fraud-plagiarism/)

If plagiarism (fraud) is ascertained in your work, the sanctions described in the Teaching and Examination Regulations (OER) apply:

- The Examining Board (...) can prevent a student who has committed fraud from taking the interim examinations and final examinations in the faculty for a maximum of one year. In cases of serious fraud, the university administration, based on a proposal of the Examining Board, can definitively terminate the enrolment of the student concerned in the degree programme.

- If the Examining Board of the relevant programme has determined that a student has committed fraud, then the final examination and/or Master examination of that student that must still be passed do not qualify for a degree classification (honours).

Source: “Acknowledgement of sources: principles, rules and examples”, Nijmegen School of Management
Most important of all ....

- enjoy your learning process,
- enjoy Nijmegen,
- enjoy your stay at Radboud.