Internal Outcomes:
* Consists of flexibility, adaptability, and empathy. This means understanding and responding to others in an appropriate (cultural sensitivity), expected, and accepted mannerism.

External Outcomes:
* This is visually evidenced through the positive communication behavior of an individual when interacting with those from different cultures.
The City University of New York, is one of the most culturally diverse institutions in the nation. When international students come here, they encounter a new environment different from their home countries. This can have an adverse effect on some students’ and interfere their learning process.

It is important that students develop essential elements needed to thrive in this new environment. These elements are normally referred to as Intercultural Competence. Developing Intercultural competence is no longer optional, but rather a required necessity that enhance students’ success in a competitive global environment. Be mindful that competence is not a state, but rather a refining and adapting process that is constantly evolving.

This brochure is designed to enrich students’ intercultural interactions to help them develop views and perspectives vital to daily survival. However, before we proceed, it’s important that we start by defining culture.

**What is Culture:**
Culture is the summation of beliefs, customs, behaviors, artifacts, language, and attitudes of a particular group of people. There are several things that we should all know about culture.

- It is the total way of life of a certain group of people.
- It is learned and transmitted from one generation to another.
- It is cumulative and ever changing.
- It shapes your view other cultures as well as your own world view.
- It affects everything you do; the way you think, act, speak, walk, and what you think about, why you act the way you do, and what you say.

**When two cultures collide:**
- When two cultures come into contact, a comparison takes place, both are changed in some way. This is usually referred to as “Cross-Culture”.
- Some people are affected negatively, while others are affected positively.
- The difference between one’s expectations and what is actually experienced creates what is psychologically referred to as “Culture Shock”.

**Symptoms of Culture Shock:**
- Feeling uneasiness and/or uncomfortable in the new environment
- Lacking that sense of belonging
- Rejecting the new culture; viewing people as being strange
- Having problems adjusting to the new culture and environment
- Exhibiting emotional and logical reactions of the differences encountered in the foreign culture.

**Minimize Culture Shock:**
- Be respectful, flexible, open-minded, and sensitive to others around you.
- Be tolerant of ambiguity and try to familiarize yourself with the new surroundings.
- Behave in a manner you would consider appropriate and/or proper for a foreigner in your country.
- Judge others and things from their cultural environment and world view, not from yours.
- Use humor to deal with difficult situations.
- Acquire and maintain a positive behavior towards yourself and others.

**Steps to be taken:**
Students should acquire effective and appropriate behavior and communicating skills when interacting with people from different cultures. In other words students should become intercultural competent.

**Intercultural Competence:**
- In order to become intercultural competent, one must be willing to learn and understand all the key elements.

**Elements of Intercultural Competence:**
- **Attitudes:**
  - Key attitudes are respect, openness, curiosity and discovery.
  - Curiosity and openness indicates one’s willingness to learn more and go beyond one’s comfort zones.
  - Openness enhances one’s opportunities to develop world-wide perspectives on various issues.

- **Knowledge and Awareness:**
  - Acquire deep culture specific knowledge through observation, listening, evaluating, analyzing, interpreting, and relating to people from other cultures.
  - Accept the views of people from different cultures.
  - Develop a deep understanding of world views from other people’s perspectives.
  - Acknowledge the demographic paradigm shifts in intercultural education.

- **Skills:**
  - Once you have processed the knowledge and awareness, then you will be able to develop the skills needed to interact with people from different cultures.
  - These skills include but not limited to cross-cultural communication, adjustment, teamwork, critical thinking, and leadership development.

After developing the essential attitude, knowledge/awareness, and skills, one moves on the next stage. In most cases, individuals gain positive internal and external outcomes.