

## Guest Lecture

The Center for Austrian Studies cordially invites you to a guest lecture by

**Dr. Evi Agostini**

&

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University of Innsbruck (Austria)

## **Taboos, Values and Attitudes: Implications for Intercultural Education in Higher Education in Europe**

Due to growing intercultural diversity in Europe, the confrontation with conflicting cultural-based values and attitudes has increased. Therefore, building up as well as keeping positive relationships has become more and more challenging. Nevertheless, conflicting intercultural relationships are often tabooed, especially in higher educational systems. Therefore, the purpose of the study is to explore the phenomenon of intercultural relationships as well as its challenges and success factors in formal educational contexts. The starting point of the project were results of a qualitative study, carried out at the University of Innsbruck. The main result was that taboo breaches or taboo transgressions, often arising out of the violation of tacit cultural agreements, can be understood as expressions of productive cultural crises. Taboo breaches necessarily help to step outside of our cultural boundaries and mark cultural shaped peculiarities. Moreover, they help to identify own cultural orientations and attitudes, reflect self-evident value judgments and support the rethinking of cultural norms. Only in the confrontation with new regulations, in the crossing of so far unknown agreements on cultural and symbolic values, specific attitudes are brought to light and learning experiences can occur. Against this background, taboo breaches or taboo transgressions can help to achieve clarity on our beliefs, values and attitudes in order to improve and strengthen intercultural relationships. Therefore, raising awareness on culturally-based values and attitudes should be acknowledged as an important field of academic education in Europe. The project should provide new insights and ideas on intercultural and social education to be integrated in European academic education.

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Room 2415 | Faculty of Social Sciences  
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