CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN A WEB-COURSE

Scenario: In an international web-course there seem to be some problems with cultural differences. The students from different countries don't seem to have equal input to their collaboration, they don't have a shared understanding about concepts, some of them are not committed to joint activities and students from some countries seem to be more self-directed than the others. How could the teacher or course designer take these cultural differences into consideration when implementing international courses? Consider this issue both from pedagogy and technology point of view.