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## International business management

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### Course aims and intended learning outcomes

The course aims to give a broad and critical understanding of the international business environment within which firms operate, and to understand the major issues international managers face during the firms' internationalization process.

The central objective of this course is to understand the management of international firms. During this course we will examine why and how firms decide to develop operations in foreign countries, where they go and how firms become successful once they set their operations cross-national boundaries. We will also examine how individuals manage business activities effectively in such international firms.

The course addresses the following main questions: (1) Why do firms expand abroad? (2) Where do firms go? (3) How do firms expand abroad? (4) Why are some companies successful in internationalising their business activities while others are not? (5) How do managers cope with the constraints and opportunities of managing the main firm functions they face when managing cross-border operations?

The course will address the above questions by differentiating managing a large multinational corporation (MNC) from managing a small and medium-sized (SME) domestic firm.

By attending this course, students will develop theoretical and critical skills understanding the fundamental managerial issues involved in doing business within an international context. Students will also develop practical skills in assessing real-world company situations.

At the end of this course students will be able to:

- Discuss the phenomenon of globalization and its major drivers by critically evaluating the ethical dilemmas relating to global business;
- Compare and critique the major theories of international business;
- Analyze the opportunities and risks to international companies in various country/markets;
- Justify the course of action for an international company seeking international market entry, location choice and other key strategic decisions;
- Appraise the key aspects of international marketing;
- Discuss the major internationalization pathways of SMEs;
- Discuss the alternative ways of organizing and managing a MNC.

### Course content

1. *Globalization and the major drivers. Regional Economic Integration process. Government intervention.*
2. *The major theories of IB and firm's level theories.*
3. *The macro environment: Political, Legal, Economic and Social aspects.*
4. *The meso environment: Reasons, barriers, stimuli and support.*
5. *The micro environment: International opportunity assessment.*
6. *Country evaluation and selection.*
7. *Entry modes and International Marketing*
8. *The impact of the internationalization strategy on the firms' functions.*
9. *Organizational design and competences of international firms.*
10. *Global Production and Supply Chain Management.*



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## Reading list

### Textbook

C.W. HILL (create version of), *International Business. Competing in the Global Marketplace*, McGraw-Hill Irwin, 9th edition.

In addition to the textbook, a number of readings will be posted to Blackboard as an additional support for those students who regularly attend the classes.

Exams will cover the contents of the course pack (textbook and additional readings) material.

## Teaching method

The teaching method employed is designed to illustrate the content of the text books; and to provide students with complementary readings, information and examples.

Lectures and seminars are the major teaching methods used. Company case studies will also be discussed and analysed in the light of the theoretical aspects taught in class.

The course may involve presentations by managers and/or business owners for the purpose of better illustrating some of the issues described in the course programme and the country focus.

## Assessment method and criteria

The course is assessed as follows

- Group report (35% of the final grade)
- Group presentation (15% of the final grade)
- Individual assessment (50% of the final grade)

The *group report* should be around 6,000 words including the executive summary, but excluding tables, references and appendices. The details of the assignment will be given during the course. The groups will be formed by the students during the course. Students are required to submit their groups at the beginning of the third week of the course. Groups (max 4/5 people) have to be heterogeneous in terms of gender, nationalities, status (i.e. erasmus vs local student), skills (e.g. working experience, skills, etc).

In addition to the joint report, each student is required to submit one *individual diary* (paper and/or electronic copy) on the same day of the group report. The individual diary represents a peer assessment of the contribution given by each individual student to the group work. We reserve the right to give students who do not participate in the project a zero grade. We reserve the right to remove disruptive students from a team and to substitute an individual project for them.

The *group presentation*. Teams present projects to the Examining Board and fellow students. Each team is allowed 15 minutes for a PowerPoint presentation, followed by 5 minutes for questions. Criteria used in assessing presentations are

### Presenters

1. Confidence, clarity, audibility, pace, eye contact
2. Observance of time limit
3. Clarity of audio visuals
4. Overall team participation

### Presentation quality

1. Content- clarity of brief
2. Content – quality of analysis
3. Content – quality of recommendations relative to brief



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#### Questions

1. Expertise in answers
2. Confidence level
3. Conciseness of answers

The *individual assessment* (exam) will take a written form (1.5hrs) and it will be based on a combination of multiple choice questions, open-ended questions, a brief exercise, and/or a small case study. The dates available will follow.

**Note:** The *individual assessment* (exam) will take a written form **only** during the Fall term. Afterwards the individual assessment may be an oral examination.

For non-attending students the course is assessed as follows

- Individual report (50% of the final grade)
- Individual assessment (50% of the final grade)

The individual report is the same assignment (report) as for attending students.

The report should be around 5,000 words including the executive summary, but excluding tables, references and appendices. The details of the assignment will be made available on Blackboard.

The submission of the report is the same as for attending students. For other exams sections from January onwards, the submission is two weeks before the exam.

The individual assessment has the same nature and takes the same form and dates as for attending students reported above.