

# INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS AND INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT

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SYLLABUS

VU Amsterdam Summer School

July 2024



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Any general questions for the Summer School support team? Contact [amsterdamsummerschool@vu.nl](mailto:amsterdamsummerschool@vu.nl).

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## Course Details

Title	Introduction to Business and International Management
Coordinator(s)	Dr. Oli Mihalache
Other lecturers	Dr. Sebastian Baldermann
Study credits	3 ECTS
Form(s) of tuition	On campus
Approximate contact hours	45
Approximate self-study hours	39

## Teaching staff (in order of appearance)

### Course description

Business is all around us. A basic understanding of business concepts is useful for people pursuing any type of career. Learning the foundations about the most important aspects of business such as how are businesses organized, how to work in teams, how to market a product, how to lead, or how to judge the financial situation of a business provides you with a toolbox to better understand the world in which you will work.

The course exposes to students to the most important business knowledge. It aims to provide an overview of all business areas so that students can better understand how to function in organizations. Regardless of a student's background or career ambitions, an understanding of business concepts can help you get the job you want and provide you with a toolbox to help you advance faster.

This interactive course teaches students the basics business, through simulations, games, movies, and in-class team assignments. The course will address the following topics:

- Understanding the global business environment
- How to structure a business
- Business management across borders
- How to motivate, lead, and work in a (multicultural) team.
- The ins and outs of human resources in a global context
- The main principles of marketing (branding, pricing, promotion)
- Finances and accounting

## Learning objectives

After completing the course, you will be able to:

- Discuss the differences and relationships between different areas of a business.
- Solve practical business problems (e.g., how to organise a business, lead (multicultural) employees, market a product at home and abroad, and assess the financial health of a company).
- Present solutions to problems for various audiences through both text and speech.

## Assignments and Assessment

Assessment:

- Team Assignment (40%)
- Team Presentation (20%)
- Individual Exam (40%)

Attendance: If you miss more than two out of the eight lectures scheduled, you cannot receive a final grade in the course. All students must be present and present for the final presentations in order to get a presentation grade. Please note, being late more than 15 minutes, will be considered a missed lecture.

### **Team Assignment – “Global Company Consulting Project” (40%)**

In teams, you will act as consultants to a company of your choice (the professor needs to approve your choice) to develop a plan to help them improve their business. You need to research the company through secondary (e.g., internet, databases, newspaper articles) and/or primary (e.g., interviews) sources. When selecting a company, it is important to ensure that you can get enough information to do a strong analysis. The maximum size of the assignment is 5,000 words.

The assignment asks students to provide an overview of the company and its current operations. Then, you need to analyze three countries to which it should expand – choose some countries that are different from each other to make the analysis interesting. After analyzing the three countries, you need to make a recommendation to the company regarding the attractiveness of these countries.

The assignment should include the following parts:

#### **Part 1.** Executive summary

- This is a one-page summary of your recommendation

## Part 2. Company analysis

- History, activity, industry, size, etc.
- Analyze the current situation of the company:
  - Environmental Analysis
  - Internal Analysis
  - Organizational Structure
  - HR analysis
  - CSR approach
  - Stakeholders
  - Financial situation
- What strengths and weaknesses does the company have and what challenges and opportunities is it facing? (conduct a SWOT analysis)

## Part 3. Recommendations

- Considering the SWOT analysis you performed earlier, what recommendations would you make to the company to increase its performance?
- Suggest a country for foreign expansion. For this, you need to compare three countries of your choice (need to be potentially viable candidates and you need to provide a reasoning for choosing these countries) and select the best alternative. Use the tools you learned in class – CPA, PEST, and CAGE.
- Provide a financial plan for your above proposals – what will it cost and how much money will it bring?
- Develop a marketing plan (i.e., Marketing Mix) for the organization to use in the new foreign market.

**Important:** The assignment is due on Monday 17 July before 9:00am Amsterdam time.

### Team Presentation (20%)

Each group has 10 minutes to “sell” their solution to the client company. Be convincing by showing why your solution is appropriate (by also connecting it to the company’s current situation). You will also have 10 minutes for Q&A.

All team members must present.

## Provisional reading list

The course readings include a textbook, journal articles from both academic and more managerial publications as well as case studies. The textbook needs to be purchased, articles

can be downloaded via the VU library, and some cases need to be purchased while others are free. Please make sure to purchase the case well in advance of the tutorial.

Textbook:

Courtland L. Bovee; John V. Thill . *Business in Action, Global Edition 9th Edition*. Pearson.

Print ISBN: 9781292330969, 1292330961

eText ISBN: 9781292330945

***Make sure to secure access to the textbook prior to the beginning of the course!!!***

Articles:

- Kuemmerle, W. (2001). Go global - or no? *Harvard Business Review*, 79(6): 37-49. (<https://hbr.org/2001/06/go-global-or-no> )
- Ghemawat, P. (2001). Distance still matters. The hard reality of global expansion. *Harvard Business Review* 79 (8) pp. 137-147.

## Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Meeting details
Monday (10:00-13:00)	<b>Lecture 1: The Basics of Business</b> Instructor: Dr. Sebastian Baldermann	→ Read: Textbook chapters: 1. Developing a Business Mindset 5. Forms of Ownership 4. Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility
Tuesday (10:00-13:00)	<b>Lecture 2: International Business</b> Instructor: Dr. Oli Mihalache	→ Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kuemmerle, W. (2001). Go global - or no? <i>Harvard Business Review</i>, 79(6): 37-49. (<a href="https://hbr.org/2001/06/go-global-or-no">https://hbr.org/2001/06/go-global-or-no</a> )</li> <li>• Ghemawat, P. (2001). Distance still matters. The hard reality of global expansion. <i>Harvard Business Review</i> 79 (8) pp. 137-147.</li> </ul>
Tuesday (14:00-17:00)	Tutorial/Team Work	Work on Final Assignment
Wednesday (9:30-12:30)	<b>Lecture 3: Leadership and Organizational Structure</b> Instructor: Dr. Alexander Gorgijevski	→ Read: Textbook chapters: 7. Management Roles, Functions, and Skills 8. Organization and Teamwork

<b>Thursday (10:00-13:00)</b>	<b>Lecture 4: Human Resource Management</b> Instructor: Dr. Oli Mihalache	→ Read: Textbook chapters: 10. Employee Motivation 11. Human Resources Management
<b>Thursday (14:00-17:00)</b>	Tutorial/Team Work	Work on Team Assignment
<b>Friday (10:00-13:00)</b>	<b>Lecture 5: Marketing</b> Instructor: Dr. Alexander Gorgijevski	→ Read: Textbook chapters: 12. The Art and Science of Marketing 13. Product Management and Pricing Strategies 14. Customer Communication and Product Distribution
<b>Friday (14:00-17:00)</b>	Tutorial/Team Work	Work on Team Assignment
<b>Monday (10:00-13:00)</b>	<b>Lecture 6: Finance</b> Instructor: Dr. Oli Mihalache	→ Read: Textbook chapters: 15. Financial Information and Accounting Concepts 16. Financial Management and Financial Markets
<b>Monday (14:00-17:00)</b>	Tutorial/Team Work	Work on Team Assignment
<b>Tuesday (10:00 – 13:00)</b>	<b>Lecture 7: Entrepreneurship Lab &amp; Assignment Clinic</b> Instructor: Dr. Oli Mihalache	→ Read: Textbook chapters: 6. Entrepreneurship and Small-Business Ownership
<b>Tuesday (14:00-17:00)</b>	Team Work	Work on Team Assignment
<b>Wednesday (9:30-12:30)</b>	Team Work	Work on Team Assignment
<b>Thursday (10:00-15:00)</b>	<b>EXAM &amp; TEAM PRESENTATIONS</b>	

