



Academic Year 2023-2024

Syllabus

Global Business Strategy and Responsibility: Historical Perspectives

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Course Description

This course is designed to develop a comprehensive understanding of the major issues and problems associated with the historical analysis of the formulation and implementation of responsible global business strategies. This will be achieved by reference to the way particular firms and entrepreneurs in different time periods, industries, and countries have developed and implemented their global business strategies. Emphasis will be given to discussions around the responsibility of businesses in strategy formulation and decision taking when operating in different foreign contexts and in globalization and deglobalization periods. Key theories and frameworks in international business will be used to help contextualise historical phenomena and draw generalisations.

Learning outcomes:

By the end of this module, students should be able to have developed the following academic and graduate skills:

- demonstrate a critical understanding of the evolution of global business
- acknowledge that the current business environment is the sum of past experiences, and that there are lessons to be learned from the past from both responsible and irresponsible global business
- understand that certain economic phenomena often believed to be new are in fact not new
- identify the drivers of the different globalisation and deglobalisation waves, and the entrepreneurial challenges and opportunities posed by these
- understand the strategic approaches to international expansion and management and the significance of responsible decision taking
- take responsible decisions in the context of general management and in global, volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous environments
- use this knowledge in preparation and discussion of case studies and decision taking in real life situations
- present and discuss ideas in public and work in groups
- couple backward-looking analysis with forward-looking decision making; and learn to mix qualitative and quantitative types of work (using numbers to inform qualitative judgement) in essay writing and in presentations

Teaching Method:

Teaching will be organised in the following way:

- Weekly lectures – lectures will introduce the main issues, with relevance to the topic discussed. There will be a list of ‘key readings’ (core readings on the topic discussed in the week) associated with the lecture, and a list of ‘other readings’, for those students who wish to go deeper in terms of their understanding of a particular topic.
- Weekly seminars – Every week there will be different activities which will involve research and analysis of particular MNEs and their evolution and strategies with regards to a particular topic. In

some weeks this analysis will focus on written case studies, in others on firms selected and researched by students. Student active preparation for and participation in seminars is crucial. Details on the seminar activities will be given in class.

Schedule of Topics:

Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is ‘Global Business Strategy and Responsibility: Historical Perspectives’ about? • How has MNEs shaped and been shaped by globalization and deglobalisation waves • The evolution of global business • Task: Group research activity
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreign market entry strategies • Concepts, frameworks, and theories in international business • Case study - Globalizing consumer durables: Singer sewing machine before 1914
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibility of global business • Productive/ Unproductive entrepreneurship • Task: Research activity
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High risk environments in international business • Non-market strategies in high-risk environments • Case study: Octopus and the Generals: The United Fruit Company in Guatemala
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multinational strategies and the evolution of global value chains • Creating emerging markets • Task: Research activity
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizing international business • Organizational innovation in global business • Case Study: Aristotle Onassis and the Greek Shipping industry
Week 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Great Divergence and the Great Convergence • Global Business Strategy and responsibility: Historical Perspectives – A Recap • Task

Weekly Reading/Viewing Materials:

Relevant bibliography is provided for each week and each topic. The readings include:

- Theories, frameworks and concepts – articles and book chapters will be recommended to help you familiarize yourself with the main topics discussed in the classes
- Case studies – simulations of real-life situations which highlight the weekly theme and involve discussion retrospectively about global business strategies developed by entrepreneurs and the decisions they took
- Press articles about the challenges faced historically by multinational enterprises and their relevance for today’s global challenges

Requirements and Grading:

Requirements- The course requirements include in-class attendance and participation, in-class presentation, and a final take-home writing assignment.

- In-class attendance and participation: Each week every student will be given the opportunity to do individual or group research, discuss it with the rest of the group and in the class
- In-class presentation: All students will have the opportunity to present their work in class, sometimes relating to a piece of research they carried out, or to a written case study. Presentations will usually last 5-7 minutes, and slides or visual material are encouraged
- Take home writing assignment - The class also requires a final take home assignment

Grading - The breakdown for grading is as follows:

Final assessment – 100%

- **Students attending classes:** Spring term, take home exam, made available two weeks in advance, 2000 words (excluding bibliography and Appendices).
- **Student not attending classes:** will be required to complete a final assessment consisting of an oral examination pertaining to the book *The Routledge Companion to the Makers of Global Business* by Lopes, Teresa da Silva et al (2019).

Not attending students will discuss with the teacher the program of the exam.

Professor Contact Info:

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NOTE: If you are an **Erasmus or a non Global Governance student** who would like to attend one or more courses in the Global Governance programme, please be aware that, **before enrolling in the course**, you should have read the code of conduct and the procedural rules characterizing our programme. We assume that, if you enrol in the course, **you have read and accepted all Global Governance values and rules**. Notice that attendance is required from the very first lesson and you need to attend at least 80% of the course to be considered an attending student.

Description of the methods and criteria for testing learning

The examination assesses the student's overall preparation, ability to integrate the knowledge of the different parts of the program, consequentiality of reasoning, analytical ability and clarity of presentation, in accordance with the Dublin descriptors (1. knowledge and understanding; 2. applying knowledge and understanding; 3. making judgements; 4. learning skills; 5. communication skills).

The examination will be graded according to the following criteria:

Unsuitable: important deficiencies and/or inaccuracies in the knowledge and understanding of the topics; the topics are exposed in an incoherent manner and with inappropriate language.

18-20: barely sufficient knowledge and understanding of most of the topics, with some missing items; sufficient capacity for analysis; the topics are sometimes exposed in an inconsistent manner and with inappropriate/technical language;

21-23: basic knowledge and understanding of most of the topics; ability to analyze and synthesize correctly with sufficiently coherent logical argumentation, with possibly some inaccuracy in the technical language.

24-26: good knowledge and understanding of most of the topics; good analytical and synthetic skills with rigorously expressed arguments, though with possibly a few inaccuracies in the technical language.

27-29: complete knowledge and understanding of the topics; good capacity for analysis and synthesis. Arguments presented in a rigorous manner and with appropriate/technical language, with only minor inaccuracies.

30-30L: very good level of knowledge and thorough understanding of topics. Excellent analytical and synthetic skills and independent judgement. Arguments expressed in an original manner and in appropriate technical language.
