

School of Marketing and International Business

IBUS 309

EXPERIENCING MANAGEMENT ACROSS CULTURES

Trimester 1 2007

COURSE OUTLINE

Contact Details

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Class Times and Room Numbers

Lectures: Mondays 09.30 am to 11.20am, GB LT4
Thursdays 09.30 am to 10.20am, GB LT4

Tutorials: This course has an experiential component in the form of a cross-cultural exercise during the period between 15th March and 5th April, 2007. Students will be required to devote all of their tutorial time to working on the Global Enterprise Experience (GEE) project.

Final Examination: During Trimester 1 examination period (4th-30th June 2007).

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The objective of IBUS 309 is to combine conceptual learning with experiential learning and learning-by-doing with reflective learning. Students will acquire valuable competencies related to work in global virtual teams, an increasingly important work organisation within multinational enterprises (MNEs), internationally active small and medium-sized enterprises and cooperative forms of organising (i.e. strategic alliances, international joint ventures, virtual corporations). This course will contribute to the student's self-confidence (know-what) and professional conduct (know-how) in leading and organising cross-cultural global virtual teams.

The course is divided into three distinct parts, which focus on: (I.) the organisation of global virtual teams, (II.) leading and managing global virtual teams, and (III.) the cross-cultural skills required for working in international organisations, with an emphasis on global virtual teams.

In order to reach a high level of understanding in (I.), useful concepts and various approaches for organising teams will be introduced, followed by the generation of 'business concept innovations' which will be applied in the second part of this course. In the first assignment, **collaborative group work**, students will develop an action plan and transform their conceptual learning into applicable knowledge to be used in (II.). The second part of the course involves an experiential learning exercise where the student will lead an actual global virtual team in an international competition, the Global Enterprise Experience (GEE). This exercise has previously proven to be extremely effective for learning and will provide the student with experiential and experimental (learning-by-doing) outcomes. Part three (III.) will utilise the learning transformations from part two and will introduce various cross-cultural frameworks, some of which will be based on primary data collected during the GEE and will provide a tool for firsthand learning about cultural differences and cross-cultural management approaches. The **individual reflective essay** is designed to bring these three parts of the course and the four approaches to learning (conceptual, experiential, experimental and reflective) about organising global virtual teams within a cross-cultural setting together.

COURSE CONTENT

The course is structured on three different but interrelated parts. Part I (lecture weeks 1-3) introduces students to the main learning goals of the course and establishes conceptual knowledge about 'business concept innovations' and the structures and processes of global virtual teams, a growing phenomenon of work organisations within multinational corporations and other internationally active organisations.

Part II (lecture weeks 3-6) is a practical exercise in which you will lead a globally composed cross-cultural team through the task of creating and developing a business concept (to enter the GEE competition). During this phase of the course students will implement their conceptual understanding and apply your acquired knowledge about organisation, coordination, team leadership, goal formulation and the management of global virtual teams. You will also engage in an experiential learning regarding interactions in a cross-cultural environment.

The final component of the course (weeks 7-12) introduces students to the concept of culture, intercultural communication and negotiating across cultures to achieve desired goals. In this part, you will once again experience cross-cultural differences firsthand and will be able to compare this experience to the GEE and put these experiences into perspective through a synthesis of concepts and experiences.

READINGS

Course textbook:

Thomas, David C. (2002). *Essentials of International Management: A Cross-Cultural Perspective*, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications. ISBN: 0-7619-2181-8.

Selected articles will be available via Blackboard. The students will receive additional materials in the form of handouts in the lectures.

- 1) Distefano, J.J. and Maznevski, M.L. (2000) 'Creating Value with Diverse Teams in Global Management', *Organizational Dynamics*, 29 (1): 45-63.
- 2) Hambrick, D.C., Davison, S.C., Snell, S.A., Snow, C.C. (1998) 'When Groups Consist of Multiple Nationalities: Towards a New Understanding of the Implications', *Organization Studies*, 19 (2): 181-205.
- 3) Hinds, P.J. and Bailey, D.E. (2003) 'Out of Sight, Out of Sync: Understanding Conflict in Distributed Teams', *Organization Science*, 14 (6): 615-632.
- 4) Jarvenpaa, S.L. and Leidner, D.E. (1999) 'Communication and Trust in Global Virtual Teams', *Organization Science*, 10 (6): 791-815.
- 5) Maznevski, M.L. and Chudoba, K.M. (2000) 'Bridging Space over Time: Global Virtual Team Dynamics and Effectiveness', *Organization Science*, 11(5): 473-492.
- 6) Montoya-Weiss, M.M., Massey, A.P., and Song, M. (2001) 'Getting It Together: Temporal Coordination and Conflict Management in Global Virtual Teams', *Academy of Management Journal*, 44 (6): 1251-1262.
- 7) Zakaria, N., Amelinckx, A. and Wilemon, D. (2004) 'Working Together or Apart? Building a Knowledge-Sharing Culture for Global Virtual Teams', *Creativity and Innovation Management*, 13 (1): 15-29.

ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

Task	Weight	Due Date
Coursework:		
Collaborative Group Assignment	20%	13 th March 2007
Individual Reflective Assignment	30%	28 th May 2007
Final Examination	50%	

Collaborative Group Assignment

You will form groups of three students to thoroughly weigh the challenges that you will encounter in the Global Enterprise Experience (GEE). The result of these discussions will form the basis of an action plan that you will submit as a collaborative work group via Blackboard. Your contribution to the process of this assignment is critical to your success in the remainder of this course, as it will inform your role as a team leader in the GEE, a challenge where you will need to lead, organise and manage a team of 8 students from all around the world to function effectively and jointly produce a potentially winning business concept.

The initial discussion within your collaborative work group should include ‘sense making’ about the content of the first very intensive weeks of lectures (which will give you many of the needed conceptual tools) and may include the following:

- (1) Defining your role as the team leader of your virtual global team;
- (2) Defining your approach to this leadership position;
- (3) Reflecting upon the different factors that need to be taken into account (e.g., creating a social infrastructure, building relationships, communication channels, a shared group vision, a shared approach to defining and managing tasks, etc.)
- (4) Researching and discussing different ways of creating a technical infrastructure to facilitate the construction of a social context that will help you to carry out your tasks.
- (5) Defining your own approach as to how you intend to coordinate your global virtual team, especially taking the following into account: (a) information distribution and information asymmetries, (b) communication channels, procedures and policies, and (c) decision-making mechanisms.
- (6) A design of the structure and process that will facilitate the development of ideas, shared criteria and objectives that your team will implement in the final deliverable - your business concept entry to the GEE.
- (7) Reflecting about how your ideas for an innovative business concept will be understood by your team members overseas (who may not have been exposed to the same lectures as you have in this course).
- (8) Reflecting on how to establish a workable process to ensure that all members of the global virtual team have the opportunity to contribute to its outcomes and that the team as a whole share tasks effectively.
- (9) Developing a hedging strategy to minimise the negative influences of the following on successful project delivery: (a) time differences, (b) spatial distance, (c) virtual means of interaction, (d) cultural differences, (e) differences in perceptions of time, (f) differences in technical infrastructures and availability of the Internet in some parts of the world (e.g., some parts of Africa), (g) sources of conflict, and (h) inactive team members; defining the potential scale and scope of these threats to your project and developing feasible strategies and tactics for their minimisation.

The assessment of your collaborative group assignment will be based on the following criteria:

- (1) Communication: How well is the action plan structured? How well is the reader guided through this action plan? How clear are the ideas, and how plausible are they?
- (2) Information literacy: How well does the report reflect an informed mindset? Is the reader convinced that you have researched reliable and useful sources for advancing

your understanding of the issues and for finding solutions to dealing with the challenges?

- (3) Inquiry: Are the problems well understood (knowledge and understanding)? Is the process of dealing with these problems based on a well-selected concept or method (analysis and application)? Based on these, does your group offer convincing solutions that can be used in a realistic setting? Have you evaluated your approach critically and developed eventual alternatives (synthesis and evaluation)?

The collaborative group assignment is due on **13th March 2007**. It contributes 20% to your overall grade in this course. Submission is exclusively **via Blackboard** by midnight. There is no word limit for this assignment. You are required to make a sensible evaluation of a suitable length for such a paper.

The Global Enterprise Experience (GEE)

The GEE is a three week long exercise in which you will lead a team comprised of members from all over the world in formulating a 'real life' business concept, based on a pre-determined topic. The GEE is scheduled for 15th March to 5th April. Participation in this activity is a requirement to passing the course. As team leader, it will be your task to coordinate the team's activities and to develop a written proposal by the due date (**5th April, 2007**). The GEE will serve as one of the foundations for your Individual Reflective Assignment. All of your team members will also be asked to complete a post-GEE questionnaire in which they will evaluate different aspects of your team process. It will be your task to ensure that all of your team members complete the questionnaire and return it within the specified timeframe (details will be provided). This questionnaire will also assist you in evaluating your team's performance, comparing different viewpoints and analysing the reasons for any difficulties or differences experienced within your team.

Individual Reflective Assignment

This individual reflective essay gives you the opportunity to review your personal learning and to provide us with evidence of your learning. Essay topic:

'Managing across borders – the challenges and opportunities of working in global virtual teams'.

Your reflective essay will synthesise what you have learned from the three parts of the course. Your essay should be structured as follows. The first part should be a comparison of the most important concepts from the first part of this course, to your own initial strategy for leading your GEE team (this includes a review of your collaborative group assignment, outlining your approach to the competition).

In the second part of the essay you should compare your ex-ante learning and your personal evaluation of the challenge with your actual experiences during GEE. Reflect on any gaps between planning for organising and leading a global virtual team with what you actually experienced when managing the team. You should conclude this section with conclusions about approaching such challenges in future.

In the third part you should reflect on your learning concerning cross-cultural management. Analyse the concepts from the third part of the course within the context of the GEE (and the additional simulation exercise). Conclude this section with an evaluation of selected cross-cultural concepts against the backdrop of your own experience.

This assignment accounts for 30% of the overall mark for the course and is expected to be around 2000 words. It is **due by the midnight, 28th May 2007** and must be submitted via Blackboard.

Note on referencing: You are expected to consult the literature in preparing both assignments, to apply the concepts and theories from the course, and to reference your sources appropriately. Follow the referencing guidelines of the Journal of International Business Studies (www.jibs.net) when citing your sources. Do not rely solely on the textbook and Internet sources, but make a concerted effort to consult academic journals when writing your papers.

Final Examination

The final examination has a weight of 50% of the final course mark and will be held during the examination period 4th to 30th June 2007. It is of critical importance for this examination to attend the lectures and to keep up with the readings. Your active participation in the GEE will also provide you with the basics for attaining a passing grade on your examination. The best preparation for sitting this exam will be: active participation in the lectures, keeping up with the readings, active participation in your collaborative work group (assignment 1), thoroughness in your reflective essay. Assessment of your examinations will not be limited to memorising information but will seek to establish a level at which you are able to use **knowledge** and **understanding** to **apply** concepts, **analyse** situations, **synthesise** approaches and **evaluate** alternatives.

Penalties

Late submissions are penalised 5%. The due date indicated for each of the assignments is the due date of submission. Assignments must be submitted through Blackboard on the due day (any time until midnight). Any submission more than 48 hours late will not be considered! All submitted work must clearly indicate the course name, title and topic of the assignment, your name and ID number. Extensions **must be applied for in advance** - they will only be considered if a written application is made at least 24 hours prior to the due date, except where the student has a medical certificate, a note from the student counsellor, or some exceptional circumstance exists. Application for an extension must be made to the course coordinator.

Mandatory Course Requirements

In order to obtain a positive overall grade (C, C+, B-, B, B+, A-, A, A+) you must have a **minimum of 50% in the final examination** and you need to have a **minimum of 50% overall** (the weighted sum of all assessments). Participation in the Global Enterprise Experience is required to obtain a pass.

Communication of Additional Information

All additional information, lecture notes, notices, feedback to your assignments etc. will be found on Blackboard.

Faculty of Commerce and Administration Offices

Railway West Wing (RWW) - FCA Student and Academic Services Office

The Faculty's Student and Academic Services Office is located on the ground and first floors of the Railway West Wing. The ground floor counter is the first point of contact for general enquiries and FCA forms. Student Administration Advisers are available to discuss course status and give further advice about FCA qualifications. To check for opening hours call the Student and Academic Services Office on (04) 463 5376.

Easterfield (EA) - FCA/Education/Law Kelburn Office

The Kelburn Campus Office for the Faculties of Commerce and Administration, Education and Law is situated in the Easterfield Building - it includes the ground floor reception desk (EA005) and offices 125a to 131 (Level 1). The office is available for the following:

- Duty tutors for student contact and advice.
- Information concerning administrative and academic matters.
- Forms for FCA Student and Academic Services (e.g. application for academic transcripts, requests for degree audit, COP requests).
- Examinations-related information during the examination period.

To check for opening hours call the Student and Academic Services Office on (04) 463 5376.

General University Policies and Statutes

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar or go to www.vuw.ac.nz/policy.

For information on the following topics, go to the Faculty's website www.vuw.ac.nz/fca under Important Information for Students:

- Academic Grievances
- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
- Student and Staff Conduct
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support
- Notice of Turnitin Use

Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme

Manaaki Pihipihinga is an academic mentoring programme for undergraduate Māori and Pacific students in the Faculties of Commerce and Administration, and Humanities and Social Sciences. Sessions are held at the Kelburn and Pipitea Campuses in the Mentoring Rooms, 14 Kelburn Parade (back courtyard), Room 109D, and Room 210, Level 2, Railway West Wing. There is also a Pacific Support Coordinator who assists Pacific students by linking them to the services and support they need while studying at Victoria. Another feature of the programme is a support network for Postgraduate students with links to Postgraduate workshops and activities around Campus.

For further information, or to register with the programme, email manaaki-pihipihinga-programme@vuw.ac.nz or phone (04) 463 5233 ext. 8977. To contact the Pacific Support Coordinator, email pacific-support-coord@vuw.ac.nz or phone (04) 463 5842.

IBUS 309
Course Schedule 2007

Session	Week Beginning	Topic	Information	Deadlines
1	26 February 2007	Introduction to the Course and Outline of the Challenge (GEE)	Materials on Bb.	
2	5 March 2007	Teams: Objectives, Organisation, Coordination, Management	Materials on Bb.	
3	12 March 2007	Teams: Phases of team-building; Business Concept Innovations	Materials on Bb.	Group Assignment Due! GEE Start: 15th March!
4	19 March 2007	GEE (15/03-05/04)	Consultation Time: Mon 09.30-10.20 Thu 0930-10.20	
5	26 March 2007	GEE (15/03-05/04)	Consultation Time: Mon 09.30-10.20 Thu 0930-10.20	
6	2 April 2007	GEE (15/03-05/04)	Consultation Time: Mon 09.30-10.20 Thu 0930-10.20	GEE Finish: 5th April GEE Deliverables!
7	23 April 2007	GEE debriefing		
8	30 April 2007	Cross-cultural simulation activity: <i>Working in multicultural teams</i>	Attendance mandatory	
9	7 May 2007	The meaning of culture: <i>What it is and where it comes from</i>	Reading: Text Ch. 1, 2 & 3, Article: 2	
10	14 May 2007	Cross-cultural interaction: <i>Communicating and negotiating across cultures</i>	Reading: Text Ch. 4 & 6, Articles: 3 & 4	
11	21 May 2007	Business goals in a cross-cultural context: <i>The challenge of multicultural groups and teams</i>	Reading: Text Ch.5, 7 & 8, Articles: 1, 5, 6, 7	
12	28 May 2007	Review: Managing across borders: <i>What have we learned about cross-cultural management?</i>		Individual Reflective Essay Due!