

SCHOOL OF MARKETING AND INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

IBUS 311 **INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS RESEARCH PROJECT** **Trimester One 2008**

COURSE OUTLINE

Contact Details

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Class Times and Room Numbers

Consultation times will be agreed on after initial planning for each project.

Course Objectives

This paper involves the application and assessment of an approved topic relevant to international business through supervised practical experience in an agency, firm or organisation involved in the development, planning and management of international business programmes, policy formation and/or enterprise.

The primary purpose of the paper is to allow students to work for credit on a supervised IBUS project while working with or for a company or agency involved in some aspect of international business. Typically this would be in the form of a research project for the company, or employment with the company where the students gain international experience. Research projects can be quite varied in scope and may include topics such as the following:

- Developing a market entry strategy into a new market for an existing export product.
- Assessing the business outlook for New Zealand trade into a specified market.
- Preparing a case study of an international company, focussing on a selected aspect of their international operations.
- Auditing the “International Business Readiness” of a small/medium sized business.
- Evaluating the impact of “greenhouse emission” accords (or other policies) on New Zealand trade policies.
- Examining the impact of currency fluctuations on export pricing strategies.
- Identifying the key factors that shape FDI policies in selected regions.
- Analysing domestic and international competitors for a selected firm or industry.
- Design of a business plan for an international spin-off, start-up or expanding firm or planning and evaluation of such project.

It is expected that the IBUS 311 project will normally be carried out within a partnering agency for whom the student is working. There is provision however for students to work on a supervised project within a company or agency without specifically being employed. The key consideration in these

circumstances is identifying a manager who is willing to take direct responsibility for working with the student on a project with mutually agreed objectives and outcomes. This includes being reasonably available to the student through the project period (8-10 hours over three months), and assuring reasonable access to people and information likely to be required in adequately completing the project. Alternatively IBUS 311 can be conducted using an international cooperation with one of our overseas partner institutions, where students work in cross-national virtual teams on a common project (i.e. related to international entrepreneurship, international new venture, etc.).

The School for its part works closely with the student in formulating an agreed topic and project outcomes, and supervising the work to ensure that academic requirements are met. While the School is happy to work with students in identifying possible project sites students are responsible for finding organisations to work with.

PLEASE NOTE that acceptance into IBUS 311 is subject to approval by the course coordinator. Approval is based on the quality of the student's proposal, the availability of a project supervisor, or on limited placements in pre-designed projects with partner institutions.

The learning objectives of IBUS311 are to:

- Develop the students' analytical and interpretive skills in the context of international business strategy, strategy formulation and/or management functions within an organisation engaged in some aspect of international business activity.
- Give students practical experience in some aspect of international business that will build on academic knowledge and skills, and more specifically help students to integrate their existing knowledge.
- Refine skills in research, analysis, written presentation of research reports and communication.

Expected Workload and Group Work

Students' workload will vary depending on each project. Normally students can expect to work an average of 10 hours per week on meetings, readings, research and planning. Meeting for developing the group outputs might need to be outside of regular working hours (Mo-Fr. 8:30-5:30pm) and might include virtual meetings with team partners overseas (considering time differences).

Readings

No set readings are assigned. Students can discuss reading recommendations with the course coordinator and project supervisor based upon the specifics of their projects.

Assessment Requirements

1. For individual projects: Research Project 100% (due on the 1st June, 2008).
2. For group projects: Research Project Overall 10% (due on the 1st June, 2008),
Research Project Individual Contribution 30%
Reflective Essay 60% (due on the 8th June, 2008).

The research questions, contents, length and depth as well as other aspect of the research project will be negotiated with the course coordinator and agreed on in writing before 25th February 2008.

Research projects will be assessed using the Carnegie Foundation's 'Six Standards for Assessing Scholarly Work' (cf. Glassnick, Huber & Maeroff, 1997: equal weight on clear goals, adequate preparation, appropriate methods, significant results, effective presentation and reflective critique).

Reflective papers will be assessed using the Bloom et al. (1956) Taxonomy of Cognitive Domains (level of knowledge, understanding, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation).

Prerequisites

IBUS 312, Advanced International Management, a further 24 300-level points, QUAN 102 (or an approved substitute) and/or by agreement with the course coordinator.

Additional Requirements

University policy requires all research projects involving human subjects to be approved by the Human Ethics Committee. Approval for IBUS 311 projects, *that meet certain conditions*, has already been granted. Students should ensure that their research project meets these conditions, or they will need to apply for HEC approval independently. A copy of these conditions is available at www.vuw.ac.nz/ibproject under Info for students, the expectations.

In addition students are required to submit and gain approval from the supervisor for their proposed research topic. A proposal form is available at www.vuw.ac.nz/ibproject under Info for students, submit proposal, and should be submitted to the Course Coordinator.

Penalties

All deliverables must be submitted before the end of the trimester. Specific dates will be agreed on with the supervisors (indicative due dates see above).

Mandatory Course Requirements

Research project (for individual projects) and additionally a reflective essay (for group projects) must be submitted and each individual piece of work needs to obtain a minimum of 50% of the marks available.

Communication of Additional Information

Additional information can be found under www.vuw.ac.nz/ibproject. Means of communication will be agreed on with each student/group on an individual basis at the beginning of the course.

Referencing

All of your references must follow the referencing format of the *Journal of International Business Studies*. See: <http://www.jibs.net/>. Please consult JIBS' 'Instruction for Authors' and articles within the Journal for examples on correct referencing.

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

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.