

Victoria Management School

MMBA 558 INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

Trimester One 2008

COURSE OUTLINE

Contact Details

COURSE COORDINATOR

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Class Times and Room Numbers

Lecture: Wednesdays 17.40-19.30

This course has no final examination.

Introduction

MMBA 558 International Business focuses on the core question of the international business discipline: 'What determines success and failure of the internationally operating firm?' Upon completion of this course students will have acquired knowledge and comprehension regarding the following topics: (a) Internationalisation and the nature of the multinational corporation (MNE); (b) forces of global integration, local responsiveness and differentiation and worldwide learning; (c) developments towards the creation of strategic capabilities within the firm; (d) the management and organisation of conflicting demands generated by activities to increase global integration and local responsiveness of the firm; (e) the design of cooperative organisational innovations for international success.

Programme and Course-related Learning Objectives

Besides the content related objectives MMBA 558 has a set of objectives which reflect cognitive levels students should aspire to in their pursue of learning. Thus the *cognitive course objectives* are:

(1) **Knowledge and comprehension** of international business concepts and methods. Provision of proof of knowledge and understanding of the most important concepts and methods, especially discussed during the lectures, the student will be able to pass the course.

(2) **Analysis of international business context and application** of frameworks, tools and methods in order to solve problems, demonstrate alternative solutions and construct suggestions concerning international business strategy and implementation. Students who sufficiently demonstrate these abilities (including what was required in 1. above) will attain final grades in the good to very good categories (compare: Grading Guidelines).

(3) **Evaluation and Synthesis.** Students who want to achieve grades in the very good and excellent categories (compare: Grading Guidelines) will provide evidence of their learning (covered above in 1. and 2.) and will repeatedly demonstrate cognitive abilities of evaluation and synthesis. Evaluation means, for instance, the student is able to judge the effectiveness of certain strategies in different environments and recommends alternative strategies. Synthesis involves, as examples, the design of a strategic proposition, the development of a hypothesis, the synthesis of different approaches in order to generate new solutions.

All pieces of assessment will be directed towards identification of these three groups of cognitive capacities. The course is designed to give each student a transparent overview of the individual status according to the classification of learning goals as stated above.

Besides that, this course will provide students opportunity:

- To develop communication skills
 - through work in collaborative work groups
 - through the development and presentation of oral and written reports, using narrative, rhetoric and diagrammatic and other schema as forms of presentation
 - through formal and informal classroom debate
- to develop critical and creative thinking skills
 - through observation of interacting issues important for international business
 - through integration of conceptual theories, ideas and experiences
 - through debate and classroom discussion
- to develop leadership skills
 - through structuring independent study: identifying useful contents, evaluation them and exploiting them in argumentation, discussion and debate
 - through leading class discussions, engaging your colleagues, formulating questions that guide classroom discussions
 - through fulfilling spokesperson duties, reporting on a group's activities or ideas to a class
 - through (voluntary) participation in the **Global Enterprise Experience (1st – 22nd of May)**, you will meet the challenge of planning, organising, managing a global virtual team, an increasingly important organisational form for multinational enterprises, SMEs and project teams.

Overall Course Objectives

The course has several objectives, which include:

- Knowledge and understanding of fundamental concepts of International Business (i.e. the multinational enterprise, internationalisation processes, global-integration and local responsiveness, international alliances, cross-cultural knowledge)
- Application of this understanding to an industry
- Analysis of their implications for a particular firm/business/business concept
- Evaluation of alternative courses of action (i.e. market entry modes)
- Synthesis to develop your own international business theories/international business concept

Course-related Student Learning Objectives

On successful completion of the course, students should be able:

- to serve their respective communities and constituencies with solutions in regard to international issues
- develop alternative concepts/strategies/approaches for internationalisation
- lead a global virtual team in the pursue of developing an international business concept with clear global integration, utilising geographic location advantages

Expected Workload

Workload expectations for this course are 10 hours per week for the 12 teaching weeks and additional 30 hrs during the duration of the course (depending on projects and allocations).

Individual Work

While the Victoria MBA programme has a tradition of study group collaboration, there are important elements in the assessment process that are strictly individual. Collaboration on individual assignments is not allowed beyond general discussion as to how one might interpret the nature of the assignment question. Please do not work together to formulate a response and do not loan out your completed assignments.

Readings

Recommended:

Bartlett, C.A., Ghoshal, S. & Birkinshaw, J. (2004) Transnational Management. Text, Cases, and Readings in Cross-Border Management. McGrawHill, New York.

This textbook includes a number of seminal articles which contributed to the formation of the discipline of international business. Different readings found in this book will be assigned to selected students for their critical evaluation and will be presented during the lecture for further discussion and syntheses. A number of articles which are not found in the book will be provided via Black-board.

Assessment Requirements

Assignment	Title	Weight	Date
1	Presentation (Individual)	20%	Allocation of dates will be negotiated
2	Reflective Wiki	40%	Weekly Entries
3	FINAL REPORT (Individual Project)	40%	Week 12
	TOTAL	100%	
	<i>BONUS: Participation in GEE</i>	<i>5%</i>	<i>Competition Deadlines</i>

1. PRESENTATION

Date: To be allocated in Week 1 Marks: In sum 20%

During MMBA 558 you will be asked to read, make-sense, reflect on allocated articles that shed light on different aspects of International Business. You will prepare a presentation for class which includes:

- (a) A summary of the most critical aspects of the papers you read;
- (b) Present a freely chosen application (i.e. an institution, industry, organisation, etc) for these issues/concepts;
- (c) An analysis of these issues/concepts related to your own professional/personal experience;
- (d) An evaluation of these issues/concepts in regard to your individual project;
- (e) Your personal conclusion/synthesis: Integration of knowledge;
- (f) A framework of questions for class: What are the implications?

2. Reflective WIKI

Due: Before Lecture in Weeks 2-11 Marks: 40 %

Length: Not determined

The reflective Wiki is an exercise that allows you to keep up with current learning of concepts and issues, help you to apply this knowledge and will over time lead to integrating knowledge. The Wiki is an open document, which you will work on continuously over the duration of the course. You will write a brief reflective chapter after each session, summarising for yourself what are the main 'takeaways' of that session for you personally, how they relate to your previous understanding and experience and how you can utilise this understanding for your final report. You will also be able to return to these notes over time and review your thoughts and add new ones. In addition you will be able to read your colleagues thoughts on the concepts and issues, which in turn can stimulate your own thought development. Your individual Wiki should be your personal record of development over this course and it will be assessed in week 12. Marking criteria: Will be in line with the cognitive course objectives and contain especially an evaluation of your development.

3. Final Report

Date: End of Week 12 Marks: 40%

International Business and this course are by nature investigating how international issues are interacting, at various levels of analysis (macro, industry, organisation, individual and process levels) and how an integration of conceptual knowledge can help to create value for diverse communities from international business. For your final report you will:

- (a) Select an industry of your choice (preferably one you have professional experience in or you aspire a career in); analyse how international business, global trends and other issues affect and potentially affect this industry in future; develop a framework that identifies potential factors that are crucial for international success and failure in this industry.
- (b) Either, select a company that has been internationally successful in that industry: Analyse the history of the firm and the factors that in your opinion have been fundamental in this firm's international success; and suggest how this firm should pursue their further international involvement in the light of your analysis of the industry in (a).
- (c) Or, you develop a 'start-up' business concept that would allow a firm to become an 'international new venture' or 'born global company' within a timeframe of 3-5 years. Use your findings from (a) to build a 'case and possible development plan' for this start-up.

Bonus: Global Enterprise Experience

When: 1st-22nd May 2008 Weight: 0% (participation bonus: 5%)

Global Enterprise Experience is a competition that SMIB & VMS organise together with Te Kaihau Ltd. It will run this year the 5th time. Last year over 700 students from more than 33 countries participated.

The Challenge: You will be put in charge (lead) of a team of 6-8 students, who are dispersed all over the world. Your challenge is, within the three week timeframe, to organise a functioning project organisation, manage an effort by this team to generate a business concept which utilises (a) geographic location advantages based on team-members locations and capabilities; and (b) create a globally integrated business concept that has the potential to make the shortlist of the competition (about 10 business concepts out of around 80) for which you receive a bonus 5% in this course. Besides that, the winning team will get a prize of up to NZD 8,000. The benefit of participation is to apply your recent learning in international business, especially deal with issues of local adaptation, global integration, worldwide learning and cross-cultural communication.

Handing in assignments:

Assignments should be submitted via Blackboard.

Mandatory Course Requirements

To meet Mandatory Course Requirements, students are required to:

- a. To carry out all assignments;
- b. Be present at all sessions (except for good reasons); and
- c. To obtain at least 50% in all assessments.

Penalties

In fairness to other students, work submitted after the deadline will be subject to a penalty of 5% of the total marks available per day of lateness. Assignments more than one week late will not be accepted. A “zero” mark will be applied. In the event of unusual, unforeseen circumstances (e.g., serious illness, family bereavement), students should discuss waiver of the penalty with the course controller prior to the deadline date.

Victoria MBA Grading Standards are as follows:

Excellent Category

A- (75 – 79%) to A (80 – 84%) to A+ (85% and above): The learning is demonstrated to a very high level of proficiency, i.e. it is at a standard that makes it exceptional at Master’s level.

Very Good Category

B+ (70 – 74%): The learning is demonstrated at a high standard. Students have reached a level that clearly exceeds “competency”.

Good Category

B (65 – 69%): The learning is clearly demonstrated without being exceptional in any way. Students can be thought of as fully competent.

Satisfactory Category

B- (60 – 64%): The learning is demonstrated without being exceptional in any way. Students can be thought of as competent.

Marginal Category

C (50 – 54%) to C+ (55 – 59%): The learning is demonstrated to a minimally acceptable level. There may be flaws but these are not serious enough to “fail” the student.

Unsatisfactory / Failure Category

E (0 – 39%) to D (40 – 49%): The learning is absent or performed to a very low level, or the performance is seriously flawed.

Referencing

There are many different styles of referencing and the Faculty of Commerce & Administration at VUW has decided to make APA (American Psychological Association) referencing style the common standard across the Faculty. The Commerce and Central Libraries hold the APA Style Guide. You can also access the information from the online VUW library site (<http://www.vuw.ac.nz/library/research/reference/referencingguides.aspx>).

Communication

Information on course-related matters will be announced at class and posted on the **Blackboard** website at <http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz/>. It will be crucial for you to regularly check Blackboard for messages, announcements and materials.

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 on the ground floor (EA005). This counter is the first point of contact for :

- 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.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy/students.aspx

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

- Academic Grievances
- Student and Staff Conduct
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

www.victoria.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html

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 6015. To contact the Pacific Support Coordinator, email pacific-support-coord@vuw.ac.nz or phone (04) 463 5842.