# International business management

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***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to give a broad and critical understanding of the globalization phenomenon and the international business environment within which firms operate. The course provides students the critical skills and practical tools to better understand the major international management issues facing the firms’ internationalization process.

The course addresses the following main questions: (1) Why do firms expand abroad? (2) Where do firms go? (3) How do firms expand abroad? (4) Why are some companies successful in internationalising their business activities while others are not? (5) How do managers cope with the constraints and opportunities of managing the main firm functions they face when managing cross-border operations?

The course will address the above questions by differentiating managing a small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) from managing a large multinational corporation (MNC).

*Learning outcomes*

By attending this course, students will develop critical skills in assessing the impact of the business environment on real‑world company situations. Students will develop both a theoretical and practical understanding of the fundamental managerial issues involved in doing business within an international environment. At the end of this course students will be able to:

1. Discuss the phenomenon of globalization and its major drivers by critically evaluating the ethical dilemmas relating to global business
2. Compare and critique the major theories of international trade and business
3. Analyze the model to recognize opportunities and risks to international companies in various country/markets
4. Justify the course of action for an international company seeking location choice, international market entry and other key strategic decisions
5. Appraise the key aspects of international marketing
6. Discuss the major internationalization pathways of a SME
7. Discuss the alternative ways of organizing and managing a MNC

***READING LIST[[1]](#footnote-1)***

E-book version of Hill, Hult, International Business. Competing in the

Business, McGraw-Hill, 11th edition.

In addition to the e-book, lectures slides and a number of additional readings will be posted on Blackboard in order to support those students who regularly attend classes. Exams will cover the contents of the course pack (ebook, lectures slides and additional readings) material.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The teaching method employed is designed (1) to illustrate the content of the ebook; and (2) to provide students with complementary readings, cases and examples.

Lectures and seminars are the major teaching methods used. Company case studies will also be discussed and analysed in the light of the theoretical aspects taught in class.

The course may involve presentations by managers and/or business owners for the purpose of better illustrating some of the issues described in the course programme and the country focus.

The teaching philosophy employed in this course drawn inspiration from the old saying *“Tell me and I will forget, show me and I will remember, involve me and I will understand”* (Confucius).

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The student’s learning journey during this course is assessed as follows:

Individual participation in class and peer-review assessment during group work (10% of the final grade)

During this course students will work in group on a real case project (40% of the final grade). Groups (4/5 students) will be formed during class by students themselves. Groups have to be heterogeneous in terms of gender, nationalities, status (i.e. erasmus vs local student), skills (e.g. working experience, skills, etc).

Students have to produce a ***group report*** that should be around ***6,000 words*** including the executive summary, but excluding tables, references and appendices. The details of the assignment will be given during the course.

In addition to the group report, each student is required to submit one ***individual diary*** (paper and/or electronic copy) on the same day of the group report. The individual diary made of list of meetings detailing how the work was organized and distributed amongst members (one per student). On the course page you’ll find a template for your individual diary where to give an individual assessment of the contribution given by each individual student to the group work. Each student has to upload his/her individual diary in Blackboard under “Valutazioni” on the same day of the report. The individual diary represents a peer assessment of the contribution given by each individual student to the group work. Students who, without reasonable cause (e.g. continuous or recurrent ill-health, as evidenced by medical certificates), do not fully participate in the group work, or prevent others from doing so, will be penalized and may fail the course.

We reserve the right to give students who do not participate in the project a zero grade. We reserve the right to remove disruptive students from a team and to substitute an individual project for them.

The ***individual assessment*** (written exam – 50%) will take a wtritten form (1hr) and it will be based on a combination of multiple choice questions, open-ended questions, a brief exercise, and/or a small case study. The dates available will follow.

***NON-ATTENDING STUDENTS***

Fornon-attending studentsthe course is assessed as follows:

– Individual report (50% of the final grade)

– Individual assessment (50% of the final grade)

The individual report is an internationalization project based on evaluation of three countries for a small company selected by the student. The report should be around ***5,000 words*** including the executive summary, but excluding tables, references and appendices. The details of the assignment will be made available on Blackboard.

The submission of the report is the same as for attending students. For other exams sections from January onwards, the ***submission is two weeks before the exam***.

The individual assessment has the same nature and takes the same form and dates as for attending students reported above.

***EVALUATION METHOD***

The student's preparation is evaluated according to the following criteria: in-depth knowledge and understanding of the frameworks and models analyzed during the course; originality, appropriateness and depth of the solutions offered in response to practical business cases; awareness of the business and environmental characteristics that influence the issues in question; rigor in framing problems, focusing, and arguing original and actionable solutions in the organizational context; appropriateness and correctness in the choice and implementation of qualitative and quantitative models aimed at effectively support decision-making; autonomy and rigor in interpreting and selecting the relevant information for problem solving, as well as in identifying (and addressing) possible information gaps; critical approach to the subject, arguing the advantages/disadvantages of the tools and techniques analyzed throughout the course from a conceptual and practical perspective; clarity, completeness, consistency and linguistic mastery in communication; the quality, originality, and accuracy of the Field Study's final report.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

*In case the current Covid-19 health emergency does not allow frontal teaching, remote teaching will be carried out following procedures that will be promptly notified to students.*

1. I testi indicati nella bibliografia sono acquistabili presso le librerie di Ateneo; è possibile acquistarli anche presso altri rivenditori. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)