



UNIVERSITÀ  
CATTOLICA  
del Sacro Cuore



**Franklin University Switzerland  
Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore  
Forum-Nexus Program  
Undergraduate Division  
Course Syllabus**

**International Business: An Economic Approach**

**Introduction**

The nature of business in the 21<sup>st</sup> century requires professionals around the world to take their business function to a new level. Having to compete in a globalized business environment characterized by an increase in transparency, proliferation of brands, fragmentation of media, and a changing of stakeholder expectations around the world, business owners are facing considerable challenges – especially with the economic changes that are happening worldwide. At the same time, technological innovations, the reduction of trade and investment barriers around the world, and the unequalled access to global markets provide companies today with unprecedented opportunities to market their products internationally.

**Course Description**

This course presents a systematic overview of international business with an economic approach. As the world becomes more integrated, a solid understanding of international business concepts and their associated implications has become essential for corporate decision-making. This course provides a thorough exploration of the key dimensions of the international business environment, including political, social, economic, legal, and cultural issues. Through practical case studies, team projects, and visits to leading European organizations, students will be exposed to the actual implementation of the topics covered in class. Students will be able to acquire a current, hands-on perspective on international business, with a particular geographic emphasis on the European Union.

**Course Objectives**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Develop a solid understanding of the foundations of international business and the cultural context for managing in diverse international environments
2. Identify the key economic, political, and social factors that influence the rapidly changing product and service markets around the world
3. Examine the strategies and structures that firms adopt in order to compete effectively in the international business arena
4. Discuss the different international marketing strategies to enter new markets and compete globally
5. Describe the planning, personnel, and corporate organizational structure necessary to implement a successful global strategy
6. Examine the policies and practices of multinational corporations regarding ethics, social responsibility, and the environment
7. Become familiarized with the business environment of European countries.

**Course Requirements**

The course requires active student participation. Students are expected to read the required materials before every class. Punctual attendance is required. There will be a midterm, a final exam, a project, and a final presentation. Each student is required to participate in professional visits and cultural visits, as well as in the International IQ Seminar.

### **Teaching Procedures and Methodology**

Teaching methods used in this course include lectures, discussions, case-studies, assignments, and professional and cultural visits. Learning in this course requires the student's constructive participation and active involvement in both class discussions and small group discussions. The professional visits will expose the participants to different aspects of the class and will highlight the practical relevance of the concepts learned. Cultural visits enhance the students' understanding of the history and culture of the country.

### **Attendance Policy**

Students are permitted to miss class only once, due to illness, injury, or another appropriate reason. Missing more than once may result in a letter grade deduction for every additional absence.

### **Participation in "Europe Today: An International IQ Seminar"**

All students also attend **Europe Today: An International IQ Seminar**, a daily session in which students learn about the business environment of each country visited, gain an understanding of essential European geography and current events, discuss their experiences and cross-cultural interactions, get language tips, and identify ways to have an even more immersive study abroad experience. The material covered in the seminar complements the syllabus for this course, and there will be exam questions based on the seminar. Participation in the International IQ Seminar is factored into the grade for this course.

### **Required Textbook**

**International Business: Competing in the Global Marketplace**, 14<sup>th</sup> ed.  
by Charles Hill  
Kindle edition  
McGraw Hill, 2022

### **Additional Reading**

Additional articles covering current international business will be distributed by the instructor throughout the course.

### **Project & Presentation**

Imagine you're the owner of a business that's doing well in your hometown. It's time to expand and you choose Europe. Create a presentation addressing the below topics:

1. Pick a real business from your hometown and explain why this business is worthy of the expansion.
2. Which European country will you penetrate? Why? How? Make sure to mention your entry mode (exporting, franchising, etc.)
3. Which strategy will you use? Global standardization, localization, etc. Why?
4. How will you manage your supply chain and what will it look like?
5. What economic, political, social, legal considerations do you need to take into account? PESTLE analysis.

The project should be about 10-15 pages long, double-spaced, size 12 font, and include a list of references used.

This is an individual project that each student will submit and deliver a presentation highlighting the main points of the project. Each presentation will last about 15 minutes.

## Components of Final Grade

Midterm exam	20%
Final exam	30%
Project	20%
Presentation	20%
Class participation	10%

## Grading Scale

93-100 %	A
90-92.9 %	A-
87-89.9 %	B+
83-86.9 %	B
80-82.9 %	B-
77-79.9 %	C+
73-76.9 %	C
70-72.9%	C-
67-69.9 %	D+
63-66.9 %	D
60-62.9 %	D-
Below 60 %	F

## Course Outline

<b>Class</b>	<b>Topic</b>
Module 1	Globalization and international business (Ch. 1) <i>Reading assignment: <a href="#">Airbnb and the sharing economy</a></i>
Module 2	The Social, Cultural, and Economic Environment in Spain and Italy
Module 3	Dimensions of Cultural Differences (Ch. 4)
Module 4	Foreign exchange markets (Ch. 10)
Module 5	Corporate Social Responsibility & Business Ethics (Ch. 5)
Module 6	Cultural Differences in Europe: The Italians, The French, and the Dutch <i>Reading assignment: "Adjusting to the French Culture"</i>
Module 7	The Current Political & Legal Environment in Europe
Module 8	International Business Strategy (Ch. 13) <i>Reading assignment: <a href="#">McDonald's case study</a></i>
Module 9	The Organization of International Business (Ch. 14)
Module 10	Entering Developed & Emerging Markets (Ch. 15) <i>Reading assignment: <a href="#">IKEA's global strategy</a></i>
Module 11	Global Marketing & Business Analytics (Ch. 18)
Module 12	The Social, Cultural, and Economic Environment in Switzerland
Module 13	The Social, Cultural, and Economic Environment in France

Module 14	International marketing strategy (Ch. 18) <i>Reading assignment:</i> <a href="#">Walt Disney Marketing Strategies</a>
Module 15	Exporting and Importing (Ch. 16)
Module 16	The Social, Cultural, and Economic Environment in the Netherlands

### **Academic Integrity**

The Forum-Nexus program places a high value on the integrity, good conduct, and academic honesty of all students. Students are expected to maintain high standards of academic integrity at all times. Any instance of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will result in a grade of F for the course.