



UNIVERSITÀ
CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore



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

**International Business:
A Social and Cultural Approach**

Course Description

This course presents a systematic overview of international business and marketing. 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.

Learning 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 all professional visits and eight independent cultural visits (ICVs).

Teaching methods used in this course include lectures, discussions, field activities, and professional visits. Learning in this course requires the student's constructive participation and active involvement in both class discussions and small group discussions. Small group discussions in particular are a key mechanism for facilitating learning from other team members. Thus, it is essential to attend all group activities inside and outside classes. The professional visits will expose the participants to different aspects of the class and will highlight the practical relevance of the concepts learned. The visits will be accompanied by individual or group assignments. Cultural visits enhance the students' understanding of the history and culture of each country.

Participation in "Europe Today: An International IQ Seminar"

All students also attend **Europe Today: An International IQ Seminar**, a daily session with occasional distinguished guest lectures. In this seminar, students learn about the culture of each country, 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 some exam questions based on the seminar. Knowledge from and participation in the International IQ Seminar is factored into the grade for this course.

Assignments & Grading

Students will be evaluated with a midterm and a final exam. The basis for these exams will be material covered in class, as well as the readings. Relevant material from the International IQ seminar may be included.

Students will also complete a group project and make a presentation that applies their knowledge to a practical use case. This is a group project of 2-3 students. The group will deliver a 15 minute presentation highlighting the main points of the project in which all group members participate. After the presentation, each student will handwrite, in class, a report summarizing the project and its findings

Active and engaged participation in class is necessary to succeed in this course. This requires solid attendance as well as active participation in class discussions. Students are expected to come to class prepared, having read the assigned readings, and ready to discuss in a respectful, collegial manner with their peers.

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.

Components of Final Grade

Midterm Exam	35%
Final Exam	35%
Group Project	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

Required Textbook

International Business: Competing in the Global Marketplace, 14th ed.

by Charles Hill

Kindle edition

McGraw Hill, 2022

Additional Readings

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

Course Outline

Class	Topic
Module 1	Globalization and international business (Ch. 1) <i>Reading assignment: Airbnb and the sharing economy</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 (Ch2)
Module 8	International Business Strategy (Ch. 13) <i>Reading assignment: McDonald’s case study</i>
Module 9	The Organization of International Business (Ch. 14)
Module 10	Entering Developed & Emerging Markets (Ch. 15) <i>Reading assignment: IKEA’s global strategy</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: Walt Disney Marketing Strategies</i>
Module 15	Exporting and Importing (Ch. 16)
Module 16	The Social, Cultural, and Economic Environment in the Netherlands

Attendance Policy

Attendance is a critical component of this course. Students are expected to attend all scheduled class sessions throughout the program. Excused absences are granted only under specific circumstances: documented illness, physical injury requiring medical attention, or other situations that Forum-Nexus staff determine to be valid and appropriate reasons for missing class. Any unexcused absence will lead to a reduction to the overall grade.

Academic Integrity

Franklin University Switzerland, and Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore place 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.

AI Policy

The use of generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Dall-e, Grammarly, etc.) is permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Brainstorming and refining your creative ideas for specific writing assignments;
- Finding information on relevant topics related to the course;
- Checking spelling on your writing assignments and presentations.

The use of generative AI tools is not permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Generating a draft of your writing assignments and final presentation.
- Writing entire sentences, paragraphs or responses to complete class assignments.

In sum, any content that you hand in must not be generated by AI software, but it has to represent your intellectual contribution. Unauthorized use of artificial intelligence tools to write your paper or disguise plagiarized work is considered unauthorized assistance in this course and will result in a failing grade on the assignment.