

ISENBERG SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS-AMHERST

MGT 394G BEHAVIOR IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY SPRING 2008

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Introduction

This course starts with the premise that “business,” “economy” and “management” are categories that may not be similarly relevant in all societies. The course approaches this premise as an issue to be explored. Given such a scenario, **what could then be “behavior in the global economy”?**

Most international management courses, at least in the USA, tend to stay within traditional management/business disciplinary boundaries, and within a single orientation to issues, an orientation that often represents mostly US views. In this course, we **cut across disciplinary boundaries** from management into anthropology, political science, sociology, literary theory, among others. We also “visit” several regions of the world and look at issues from their regional perspectives. This makes us **aware of multiple dimensions** defining the issues we explore during the semester. What is “the global economy” from the perspectives of various participants the world over?

In principle, then, this course is about exploring many ways in which the idea of “behavior in the global economy” might be understood. **What would this mean for you as future member of an organization, and as citizen of a global society?** ---Regardless of whether or not you become a 'global/transnational/multinational/international ' manager.

Objectives

1. To develop understanding of “behavior in the global economy”:
 - a. From multiple points of view
 - b. As a complicated process in which all people in the world are implicated
 - c. As general cultural and historical issues of which “business” is only a part

2. To learn to learn in a global economy:
 - a. Learning to be up to date all the time, for globalization means ongoing changes in what and how we know.
 - b. Using technology to help us “see” the world from multiple “places,” in multiple ways, all the time.
 - c. “Reading” differently. Learning to interpret in many different ways at the same time what you “see happening” in the world.

General Course Format

1. During the first month, we develop the critical awareness constituting the 'backbone' of the course. Attention is focused on the development of analytical 'eyes' necessary for the rest of the semester. This would help us “see” how we “see”. As a first step to start “seeing” differently, the focus is placed on our cultural assumptions embedded in our traditional notions about “business,” “economy” and “management”.

2. From there on, the course becomes based on different regions in the world. Attention is focused on a set of topics deemed important now in the business/economic context of each specific region. As the course progresses, however, topics important in one region are often contrasted

with how they are addressed in other regions (e.g., immigration in the US and EU). Doing this helps us realize the existence of differences often glossed over by assuming that it is possible to have “universal translations” in the context of the global economy. In short, these explorations are aimed at increasing our awareness of **complexities that ensue when we take a domestic understanding into the international arena**, and the possibly negative consequences of ignoring these complexities.

3. This is also a **“Web-Enhanced” course**. In several classes, we do exercises drawing from Websites, often outside the United States. Most of these exercises emphasize the multiplicity of ways in which an issue may be represented, depending on who represents it, and for whom it is represented. **Most of these exercises are done as teamwork. The final project is also a Web-based, team-based activity, including designing a website to represent what each team has learned in the course.**

Course Expectations and Evaluation

The course is taught in an **electronic-enhanced classroom, with a computer for each student**. There is no 'official' textbook for this class. Reading materials for the course are either handed out in class each week or are linked to the course Website as electronic readings.

- You are required to **do the readings as assigned** and be prepared to discuss and contribute to the class based on these materials.
- Readings and discussion issues **are applied** to films, cases, and/or exercises in class.
- Attendance is extremely important. The nature of the course **requires you to be present in every class**. Attendance is the **basis for your participation grade** (i.e., if you are not in class you are not participating)
- You are expected to have a **basic knowledge of physical and economic geography** of the contemporary world. The course Website includes **electronic resources** to this effect.

Evaluation Activities and Grading

<u>Evaluation Activities:</u>	<u>Grading Value %</u>
Attendance and participation	10%
Group and individual assignments (associated with class work)	20%
Individual Term Exam 1	10%
Individual Term Exam 2	15%
Individual Term Exam 3	20%
Final Project group presentations in class and website project	25%
TOTAL	100%