



Global Business and Industry: France at the Crossroads

COURSE DETAILS

Course Designator and Number: MONT 3802

Number of Credits: 3 credits

Language of Instruction: English

Contact Hours: 45 hours

Instructor: Professor Grazia Ghellini, PhD

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will examine similarities and differences among US, French and global business environments and cultures. It will particularly focus on workplace cultures in France and Europe and study the impact of cultural differences on business communication and intercultural management. Topics will include the establishment of the European Union (EU); as well as institutional, political, legal, and socio-cultural factors at work in the contemporary business landscape.

Students will examine specific business models, strategies and issues of French and international companies operating locally and elsewhere in France and/or abroad. The course will also explore the challenges of international companies and working as part of a Global Virtual Team in the post-Covid 19 pandemic context.

Course Objectives

On completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify key issues facing French businesses and global companies operating in France today, including how they are influenced by EU economic integration, institutions, policies and regulations

- Understand how diversity influences intercultural management and business communication processes, such as first encounters, communications, meetings, negotiations, feedback, approach to conflict
- Develop an awareness of their own cultural preferences in terms of communication and conflict resolution in an intercultural context.
- Appreciate the regional and global context in which French and EU businesses operate
- Develop an understanding of the French and European business environments and major issues involved in their development
- Apply critical thinking in analyzing empirical and corporate specific information
- Recognize the impact of social, economic and cultural factors upon businesses
- Engage in group projects in a structured and efficient manner
- Work as part of a virtual global team to solve a real global business case and participate in a remote group presentation effectively.

Methodology

The course will be conducted through a combination of: classroom lectures and discussions; case studies with media analysis; group case study projects; field visits to local businesses; face-to-face and virtual meetings with professionals working in France and abroad; business case studies and simulations; and collaborative on-line learning.

The classroom lectures and discussions (approximately 30 hours of face to face sessions) will focus on establishing a common theoretical framework to use in analyzing various aspects of the French, European and global business environments. Particular focus will be placed on French business practices and how they have been influenced by the EU integration process, institutions, and development of a single European market and the global economy.

Field visits to local companies and trade organizations, along with the informational interview meetings with working professionals (approximately 15 hours), will enable students to gather insights into those businesses and collect material for their group case study project. See the sample list of industry visits and informational interviews below.

Course Prerequisites

None.

Readings/Materials

- Daniels John D., Daniel P. Sullivan, Radebaugh, Lee H., 2018. "Economic Integration" and "Strategies for International Business", in *International Business and Operations*. 16th ed. Global ed. Pearson, Harlow, England [etc], pp. 234-239, 346-356, 365-375.
- Nadeau, Jean-Benoît, Barlow, Julie. *Sixty Million Frenchmen Can't Be Wrong*, 2003. Routledge, London.
- Students will be given individual readings from publications such as *The Economist*, *The Harvard Business Review*, *The New York Times*, and handouts with case studies

and book excerpts from works on intercultural management/communication and international business with which to prepare for class.

Possible Field Visits & Informational Interviews (to be confirmed each semester)

- Helmgale: <http://helmgale.com/home/about-us/>
- ITK: <https://www.itk.fr>
- Nadine Erasmy will talk about her experience in the international Luxury business in both Luxembourg and France in various positions in Catering, Management and Sales.
- STMicroelectronics, Grenoble (Skype call with Jean-Michel Moutin, Research and Development Manager). <https://www.st.com>
- Arnaud de Graaf, Dutch Lawyer and Lecturer expert in companies' taxation.
- Luigi Cherubino, will share his experience working as a Sales and Marketing Manager at DELL, Montpellier.
- Dr Ouloufemi Obaiomi, Associate Professor of Law at the University of Montpellier and Nimes, (in-class visit) will provide case studies and insights into legal policies and regulations affecting global companies operating in the EU and other legal aspects studied in the course.
- Patrick Pinettes, General Director of GeophyConsult, will deal with the creation of his company in France, in Chambéry and Montpellier, and its development abroad.
- Pierre Gires, Director of Helmegale, French Maritime transportation company based in Montpellier.
- Eric Briole, Founder of EFFICIENT INNOVATION, who has helped over 100 local businesses to take off in the region (in-class visit), will share his experience concerning setting up and managing his company in Montpellier.

Grading

Grading Rubric

Letter grade	Score or percentage	Description
A	93–100	Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
A-	90–92	Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
B+	87–89	
B	83–86	
B-	80–82	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
C+	77–79	
C	73–76	
C-	70–72	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
D+	67–69	
D	60–66	
F	0–59	Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.

Summary of How Grades Are Weighted

Assignments	Percentage of grade
Attendance & Class Participation	10%
Homework	20%
Global Case Study Challenge Case Assignments (Team-building activity, quiz and presentation of case-study solution)	30%
Group Case Study Final Paper	20%
Group Case Study Visual Presentation	20%
Overall grade	100%

Assessment Details

Participation

Attendance and active participation in class is very important to your success in this course. Students should be present at all classes and come prepared to discuss the readings as outlined in the syllabus.

Homework

Throughout the term, students will be assigned 3-4 take-home assignments including case studies, presentation and reading assignments with reflections.

Global Case Study Challenge

Students are required to participate in the four synchronous and various asynchronous on-line *Global Case Study Challenge* meetings, work on their case studies with their global virtual team-mates, and participate in the *Global Case Study Challenge Global Virtual Conference* to present the solution to their case studies.

Please note: Each synchronous session is offered twice to allow the largest number of global participants across different time zones to participate. Students can join the session which best fits their schedule. If students cannot attend either of the synchronous sessions because they have other classes, a recording of the session will be made available.

Group Case Project

Students are required to develop, write, analyze, and present a group case study on a topic of their choice. The case study must be derived from:

- Content covered in the course
- Subjects addressed during one or more of virtual or face-to-face meetings with professionals working in France and abroad conducted during the course;
- Topics discussed during the company visits;
- A presentation of a specific company's products or services, business model, the issues it faces in its specific context and suggest strategies to overcome them;
- Or, students can address the challenges faced by professionals and businesses in France or abroad based on their own research and empirical observations and suggest possible solutions.

Each group will have to prepare a PowerPoint Presentation illustrating their case study in class in week 13. They will also have to write a final paper outlining and analyzing the case study (1,500 words max.) and proposing possible solutions.

COURSE CONTENT

Units 1-2

Introduction to the Course

Culture (dimensions & orientations) and their impact on Global Business

- Introduction to and overview of the general organization of the course.
- Working in a globalised world: Global Virtual Teams
- Diversophy Game: Global Teamwork
- Culture, cultural differences, and their impact on business and Global Virtual Teams
 - The impact of culture on communication in the international workplace.
 - Erin Meyer's podcast on challenges and examples of working internationally, global virtual teams and risk management
https://hwcdn.libsyn.com/p/a/4/0/a4012c212c2b8857/RIMS_022.mp3?c_id=33998447&cs
 - Erin Meyer's model for Effective Global Teamwork - Discussion of Reading Assignment (compulsory reading):
<https://erinmeyer.com/mapping-out-cultural-differences-on-teams/>
- Working /doing business in France/Europe compared with the United States and other countries.
 - French business etiquette
 - Comparison/contrast EU and US culture and etiquette.
- The impact of cultural differences on international businesses
 - Cultural differences and similarities in Europe. Comparison with the US.
- Cross-cultural management cases and business etiquette.
 - Intercultural communication and management case studies: focus on Europe, France and the United States. Cultural incidents: case studies on cultural dimensions and orientations involving businessmen from different EU countries and the US.

Unit 3

Intercultural Dilemmas in Covid Times

- How to solve the dilemmas caused by the Covid-19 pandemics for organisations, using Trompenaar's culture approach.

Units 4-5

French & EU Business, Financial & Political Environments

- The French /EU business and political environment
 - Regional differences in economic development in France.
 - France and the French business and political environment.
- France/EU country business environment
 - France/EU Country Business Environment Group Projects.
 - Foreign Investment report simulation exercise.
- Europe, the EU, The European business environment
 - Introduction/ overview business in the EU in the global context.
 - Business opportunities and challenges in a single European Market.
 - Europe and the Eurozone.
 - Key figures: percentage of population, global GDP, and how this compares with the US.
 - The establishment and development of the EU – overview.
 - The Eurozone. The Eurozone crisis. Economic issues.
 - Case studies: Global companies and the Eurozone.
- Key EU institutional players and decision-making processes.
- EU Financial environments.

Units 6-7

French & EU Business Legal Environments

- EU Business Legal environments
 - Legal European framework; Competition Policy; Comparison with the US.
 - Informational Interview: Dr. Olufemi Obayomi, Associate Professor of Law at the University of Montpellier and Nimes (in-class visit) will provide insights into legal policies and regulations affecting companies operating in Europe.
 - Case studies related to legal issues faced by global companies in Europe in relation to Tax, Competition, and Copyright protection policies.
 - Specific European Union policies impacting global businesses.
 - Case studies related to the impact of EU institutions and policies on companies in the EU (The Schrems-Facebook and Google cases, the Diesel gate scandal and The Big Mac case).
 - Comparison between the US and EU privacy, environmental protection policies.

- Informational interview with Dr Arnaud de Graaf, Dutch Lawyer and Lecturer, expert in taxation.
- Study and comparative analysis of EU/French business legal environments
 - EU/French Lobbying. French business legal environments (company registration procedures; administrative procedures; national insurance contributions and taxes); EU HR Legal Environments laws regulating the relationship between employees and employers (i.e. contracts and the prevention of inequalities and discrimination). Possible legal procedures in case of difficulties. The European Court of Justice; the European Human Rights Court; The European Human Rights Convention.
- Virtual guest speaker
 - Call with Jean-Michel Moutin (TBC), STMicroelectronics, Grenoble, will speak about his experience as Research and Development Manager of his Italo-French multinational company and his company's RD strategy to expand in developing countries. <https://www.st.com>

Unit 8

Religion in the company: French "Laïcité"/Secularism

- The Sikh Applicant Dilemma Parts One & Two
 - Creative Presentations of Justification of Team's Decisions (marked).
 - Case study: the Baby-Loup nursery case.

Unit 9

Global Companies' internationalisation strategies: Global or glocal?

- L'Oreal case
- Informational Interview (TBC): Pierre Gires, Managing Director of Helmegale, French Maritime transportation company based in Montpellier will speak about the challenges his company was faced with during the coronavirus pandemic and how the company fared through them.

Unit 10

Setting up and managing a French Company in France successfully

- Informational Interviews
 - Patrick Pinettes, General Director of GeophyConsult, Montpellier.
 - Eric Briole (TBC), creator and (ex) director of a successful local company which helped many local start-ups get off the ground.

Unit 11-13

Global Case study Challenge, Global Virtual Conference Presentations, Global Case Project Presentations & International Joint Business Venture Simulation

- "In Vino Veritas": A difficult international joint business venture simulation (marked)
 - Simulation of a decisive online business meeting between an American winemaker, a renowned French chef and wine producer, and the owner of an Italian winemaker about a possible joint venture.
- Debrief of Global Case Study Challenge and Review of GCSC case studies and solutions
- Global Case Study Challenge Online Session: De-Brief with International Managers
- Field Visit or Virtual guest speaker
- Case Projects Presentations
- Final Paper Due

POLICIES

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to be on time and attend all classes while abroad. Many instructors assess both attendance and participation when assigning a final course grade. Attendance alone does not guarantee a positive participation grade; the student should be prepared for class and engage in class discussion. See the on-site syllabus for specific class requirements.

University of Minnesota Policies & Procedures

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

Scholastic Dishonesty

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" or "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

Student Conduct

The University of Minnesota has specific policies concerning student conduct. This information can be found on the Learning Abroad Center website.