



Entrepreneurship & Business: From Street Stalls to Global Enterprises

Course Details

Course Designator & Number: THAI 4xxx

Number of Credits: 4

Language of Instruction: English

Contact Hours: 60

Instructor: On-Site Faculty

Course Description

One of the defining characteristics of life in Thailand and Southeast Asia is the proliferation of entrepreneurial enterprises from small street food carts to larger businesses. This course will examine entrepreneurship and business in Thailand, with a special emphasis on small businesses and their integration into the wider economy.

The course will first look at an overview of entrepreneurship in Thailand and Southeast Asia, including different types of small businesses as well as the variety of sectors within which these businesses operate. A large part of the class will be experiential case studies of types of business in several different sectors, examining the scale (micro enterprise to large businesses), as well as the focus (production, services, etc.), and how they are shaped by cultural needs and expectations.

The course will then turn to a series of case studies and experiential learning in sectors that are important in the Thai context. This will include looking at street food and markets, ecotourism, agrotourism, medical tourism and the hospitality industry more broadly, as well as the dynamic and growing coffee, cacao, and medicinal cannabis industries.

In each of these case studies we will be learning about the legal framework for how businesses operate, marketing and business development, as well as details specific to the business including value chains, profitability, and business operations.

Course Objectives

- Understand the landscape of entrepreneurship and business in Thailand and Southeast Asia
- Learn about specific sectors (ecotourism, street food, coffee, cacao, medicinal cannabis, etc.) and the legal and logistical challenges they face
- Understand the constraints and opportunities for entrepreneurial activity in Thailand and Southeast Asia
- Learn about cultural constraints and needs unique to entrepreneurship in Thailand
- Understand the markets within which each of these activities take place (domestic, local, international) and how entrepreneurs work to overcome constraints and take advantage of opportunities

Methodology

The course will integrate course lectures and readings with group discussions and seminars. Experiential field studies will be an important component of the course, both formal and informal. Guest lecturers will be a part of the course to share their experiences and perspective with students. Keeping up with readings, materials presented in class, and assignments is critical for success during this course.

Required Reading / Materials

- McMillan, John, and Christopher Woodruff. "The Central Role of Entrepreneurs in Transition Economies." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 16, no. 3 (2002): 153-70.
- Vietor, Richard H. K., and Emily J. Thompson. "Singapore Inc." Harvard Business School Case. Harvard Business School Publishing. Case: 9-703-040, February 27, 2003.
- Morduch, J. "The Microfinance Promise." *Journal of Economic Literature* 37, no. 4 (1999): 1569-1614.
- Bråten, & Rudie, I. (2013). *Embedded entrepreneurship market, culture, and micro-business in insular Southeast Asia*. Brill: Leiden, the Netherlands.
- Malizia, Emil, and Edward Feser. *Understanding Local Economic Development*. New Brunswick, NJ: Center for Urban Policy Research, 1999, pp. 1-48. ISBN: 9780882851631.
- Henderson, J. Vernon, Zmarak Shalizi, and Anthony Venables. "Geography and Development." *Journal of Economic Geography* 1, no. 1 (2001): 81-105.
- Markusen, Ann. "National Contexts and the Emergence of Second-Tier Cities." In *Second-Tier Cities: Rapid Growth Beyond the Metropolis*. Edited by Ann R. Markusen,

Yong-Sook Lee, and Sean DiGiovanna. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999, pp. 65-94. ISBN: 9780816633746.

- Qian, Nancy. "Missing Women and the Price of Tea in China: The Effect of Relative Female Income on Sex Imbalance." Mimeograph, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2005.
- Udry, C. "Gender, Agricultural Production, and the Theory of the Household." *Journal of Political Economy* 101, no. 5 (1996): 1010-1045.
- Minniti, M. (2010). Female entrepreneurship and economic activity. *European Journal of Development Research*, 22(3), 294-312.
- Shah, H., & Saurabh, P. (2015). Women entrepreneurs in developing nations: Growth and replication strategies and their impact on poverty alleviation. *Technology Innovation Management Review*, 5(8), 34-43.
- Loayza, Norman. "The Economics of the Informal Sector: A Simple Model and Some Empirical Evidence from Latin America." Policy Research Working Paper Series 1727, The World Bank, 1997. Strengthening Human Rights and Peace Research and Education in ASEAN/Southeast Asia (SHAPE-SEA)
- Carlisle, Erica, Chris Lin, Libby Putman, and Emily Spurl. "Mercy Corps and KeBal Healthy Food Carts: Sustaining and Scaling Up." MIT Sloan School of Management Case. MIT Sloan Teaching Innovation Resources. Case: 10-106, September 26, 2010.
- Banerjee, A. V., and E. Duflo. "The Economic Lives of the Poor." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 21, no. 1 (2007): 141-167.
- Hartmann, Betsy, and James K. Boyce. "The Trials of a Poor Peasant Family." Chapter 12 in *A Quiet Violence: View from a Bangladesh Village*. Oakland, CA: Food First, 1985. ISBN: 9780935028164.
- Wijeratne, Thushari Lakmini, "Assessing and reducing the environmental impact of tea cultivation" from Sharma, V. S. and Gunasekare, M. T. K. (ed.), *Global tea science: Current status and future needs*, Burleigh Dodds Science Publishing, Cambridge, UK, 2018
- Lee, Hau, et al. "Starbucks Corporation: Building A Sustainable Supply Chain." Stanford Graduate School of Business Case. Stanford, CA: Stanford Graduate School of Business. Case: GS-54, May 1, 2007.
- Simms, Jessica, "Introduction" to "Environmental Conditions" (p.1-22) from *I Know Coffee: Harvesting, Blending, Roasting, Brewing, Gridding & Tasting Coffee*, Skinny Bottle, 2017
- Pendergrast, Mark, "The Speciality Revolution" in *Uncommon Grounds: The History of Coffee and How it Transformed the World*, Basic Books, 2010
- Coe, Sophie and Coe, Michael, "Introduction" and "The Tree of The Food of The Gods" in *The True History of Chocolate*, Third Edition, Thames and Hudson, 2019
- Edoh Adabe, K. Ngo-Samnick, E. *Cocoa Production and Processing*, 2014 / "Harvest and Post-Harvest Operations" / "Use of Byproducts"

- Walters, Dale, *Chocolate Crisis: Climate Change and Other Threats to the Future of Cacao*, University of Florida Press, 2021. (Chapter 13-15)
- Nantthasorn Zinboonyahgoon, et al. "Medicinal cannabis in Thailand: 1-year experience after legalization," *PAIN* 162 (2021) S105–S109
- Russo, Ethan B., "History of Cannabis and Its Preparations in Saga, Science, and Sobriquet." *Chemistry & Biodiversity*, vol. 4, 2007, (pp. 1614–2648.)

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 fully meet the course requirements.
D+	67–69	
D	60–66	

Letter Grade	Score or Percentage	Description
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.

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Summary of How Grades Are Weighted

Assignments	Percentage of Grade
Participation in class	15%
Seminar and general observation notes	5%
Field study notes	20%
Essays	20%
Independent Field Study Proposal	10%
Independent Field Study Progress Update	10%
Final Presentation	20%
Overall grade	100%

Assessment Details

Participation

In class Participation: This means being an active participant in classes, contributing meaningfully to the discussions, questions, and ongoing learning.

Field Studies: Participating in field studies outside of the classroom, both through asking good questions in the field, engaging in activities, and being an active and engaged learner during field studies.

Seminar & General Observation Notes

An important component of learning to observe and analyze the issues during this course is taking notes in class as well as keeping an on-going record of observations about Thailand. This means writing daily in your field notebook, even if only for brief or significant observations

Field Study Notes

A more structured way of taking notes and learning during a field study. Field Study Notes need to be structured as follows for each Field Study:

- “Field Study Notes” and the title / study and the date on the TOP of the page.
- “Where” — describe the location of the field study. If multiple locations note that as well.
- “When” — both the date as well as the time of day/duration.
- “Description” — describe the activities and learning during the field study. This should be detailed and clear about what the activities were.
- “Analysis” — write out what you learned during the Field Study. How did the field study help you understand Thailand’s culture and history, or other topics?
- “Questions” — write three (3) questions that you would like to learn more about based on this Field Study.

Essays

For this course essays are longer reflections and analysis. There are two (2) essays during the course, due on Monday of the third week and the last day of the course. Choose a topic that you studied during those weeks that you’re interested in and take some time to reflect on what you’ve learned. Essays should be 2 pages long when typed in a doc format using Font: Times New Roman, Size: 12 point, Spacing: Double and covering the following points (10 points total):

- How this issue or topic links to the overall topic of the course. (1)
- Why you are interested in this specific issue or topic. (1)
- An analysis of a specific issue observed or learned about during the two weeks — describe this and why it is important. (5)
- Reference to interviews or observations during the course. (2)
- Other questions that this issue raises for you to explore further. (1)

Independent Field Research Project

Each student will choose an issue related to the course to study independently. This should be a combination of research, observations, and analysis of a topic that the student is interested in. The emphasis is primarily on field observations broadly defined, drawing on both class related field studies as well as independent observations in Thailand on your own time.

Proposal: The IFRP proposal will be a 1 page long when typed in a doc format using Font: Times New Roman, Size: 12 point, Spacing: Double explaining what you are interested in studying, personal rationale, how data will be gathered, the feasibility of studying this during the course, and any potential challenges you may anticipate running into.

Progress Update: This part of the IFRP is a short update during the course delivered both oral and a doc format (1 page long when typed in a doc format using Font: Times New Roman, Size: 12 point, Spacing: Double) on what the student has discovered about their topic so far, what further questions this raises, any challenges they have faced and how they have overcome them, as well as further information they will be looking for during the second half of the field study.

Final Presentation

On the last day of the course each student will give a five minute presentation on their research. Focus on clarity, field observations, interviews/discussions with community members, and analytical depth. 5-10 slides in PDF format.

Course Content

Unit 1

Introduction and overview

Readings:

- McMillan, John, and Christopher Woodruff. "The Central Role of Entrepreneurs in Transition Economies." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 16, no. 3 (2002): 153-70.
- Vietor, Richard H. K., and Emily J. Thompson. "Singapore Inc." Harvard Business School Case. Harvard Business School Publishing. Case: 9-703-040, February 27, 2003.

Unit 2

Business in Thailand: Formal, informal, and micro enterprise

Readings:

- Morduch, J. "The Microfinance Promise." *Journal of Economic Literature* 37, no. 4 (1999): 1569-1614.
- Bråten, & Rudie, I. (2013). *Embedded entrepreneurship market, culture, and micro-business in insular Southeast Asia*. Brill: Leiden, the Netherlands.

Unit 3

Regional cities and businesses

Readings

- Malizia, Emil, and Edward Feser. *Understanding Local Economic Development*. New Brunswick, NJ: Center for Urban Policy Research, 1999, pp. 1-48. ISBN: 9780882851631.
- Henderson, J. Vernon, Zmarak Shalizi, and Anthony Venables. "Geography and Development." *Journal of Economic Geography* 1, no. 1 (2001): 81-105.
- Markusen, Ann. "National Contexts and the Emergence of Second-Tier Cities." In *Second-Tier Cities: Rapid Growth Beyond the Metropolis*. Edited by Ann R. Markusen,

Yong-Sook Lee, and Sean DiGiovanna. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999, pp. 65-94. ISBN: 9780816633746.

Unit 4

Gender and Business

Readings

- Qian, Nancy. "Missing Women and the Price of Tea in China: The Effect of Relative Female Income on Sex Imbalance." Mimeograph, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2005.
- Udry, C. "Gender, Agricultural Production, and the Theory of the Household." *Journal of Political Economy* 101, no. 5 (1996): 1010-1045.
- Minniti, M. (2010). Female entrepreneurship and economic activity. *European Journal of Development Research*, 22(3), 294-312.
- Shah, H., & Saurabh, P. (2015). Women entrepreneurs in developing nations: Growth and replication strategies and their impact on poverty alleviation. *Technology Innovation Management Review*, 5(8), 34-43.

Unit 5

Case study of Tha Pae Road businesses

Commodity tracing of products in Kad Luang and Kad Muang Mai Markets

Unit 6

Microenterprise & Informal Economy

Readings

- Loayza, Norman. "The Economics of the Informal Sector: A Simple Model and Some Empirical Evidence from Latin America." Policy Research Working Paper Series 1727, The World Bank, 1997. Strengthening Human Rights and Peace Research and Education in ASEAN/Southeast Asia (SHAPE-SEA)

Unit 7

Street food, walking streets, and transitory entrepreneurial space

Evening case study of street food at Chang Puak Market

Readings

- Carlisle, Erica, Chris Lin, Libby Putman, and Emily Spurl. "Mercy Corps and KeBal Healthy Food Carts: Sustaining and Scaling Up." MIT Sloan School of Management Case. MIT Sloan Teaching Innovation Resources. Case: 10-106, September 26, 2010.

Unit 8

Poverty and Marginalized Economic Activity

Readings:

- Banerjee, A. V., and E. Duflo. "The Economic Lives of the Poor." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 21, no. 1 (2007): 141-167.
- Hartmann, Betsy, and James K. Boyce. "The Trials of a Poor Peasant Family." Chapter 12 in *A Quiet Violence: View from a Bangladesh Village*. Oakland, CA: Food First, 1985. ISBN: 9780935028164.

Unit 9

Case study of the Night Bazaar

Meetings with small scale business owners in Chiang Mai, meeting with the Chiang Mai Chamber of Commerce

Unit 10

Tourism and the hospitality sector

Introduction and Field Study to the Shangrila Hotel

Unit 11

Community based tourism, ecotourism, agrotourism

Readings:

- Wijeratne, Thushari Lakmini, "Assessing and reducing the environmental impact of tea cultivation" from Sharma, V. S. and Gunasekare, M. T. K. (ed.), Global tea science: Current status and future needs, Burleigh Dodds Science Publishing, Cambridge, UK, 2018

Unit 12

Introduction to cash crops and commodity agriculture: Coffee, Cacao, and Cannabis

Readings

- Lee, Hau, et al. "Starbucks Corporation: Building A Sustainable Supply Chain." Stanford Graduate School of Business Case. Stanford, CA: Stanford Graduate School of Business. Case: GS-54, May 1, 2007.

Unit 13

Coffee production and consumption

- Travel to 91 Coffee farm: Bean to cup study of coffee farm, roasting, and brewing speciality coffee

Readings:

- Simms, Jessica, "Introduction" to "Environmental Conditions" (p.1-22) from I Know Coffee: Harvesting, Blending, Roasting, Brewing, Gridding & Tasting Coffee, Skinny Bottle, 2017
- Pendergrast, Mark, "The Speciality Revolution" in Uncommon Grounds: The History of Coffee and How it Transformed the World, Basic Books, 2010

Unit 14

Cacao, artisan chocolate, and international networks

Field Study: Cacao farm and artisan chocolate

- We will visit a cacao farm and learn about cacao production, and then do a case study of Siamaya Chocolate, producing fair trade artisan chocolate

Readings

- Coe, Sophie and Coe, Michael, "Introduction" and "The Tree of The Food of The Gods" in *The True History of Chocolate*, Third Edition, Thames and Hudson, 2019
- Edoh Adabe, K. Ngo-Samnick, E. *Cocoa Production and Processing*, 2014 / "Harvest and Post-Harvest Operations" / "Use of Byproducts"
- Walters, Dale, *Chocolate Crisis: Climate Change and Other Threats to the Future of Cacao*, University of Florida Press, 2021. (Chapter 13-15)

Unit 15

Medicinal cannabis and emerging markets: Seminar and Field Study

Field Study to Cannabis production / Business Ethnography

- The morning will be spent at a commercial medicinal cannabis production facility. In the afternoon, students will do ethnographies and business case studies of cafes, cannabis dispensaries, and other small businesses in the Nimanhamen area.

Readings

- Nantthasorn Zinboonyahgoon, et al. "Medicinal cannabis in Thailand: 1-year experience after legalization," *PAIN* 162 (2021) S105–S109
- Russo, Ethan B., "History of Cannabis and Its Preparations in Saga, Science, and Sobriquet." *Chemistry & Biodiversity*, vol. 4, 2007, (pp. 1614–2648.)

Unit 16

Final Wrap Up

- Final Presentations
- Essay #2 Due
- Field Study Notes 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](#).