

COURSE SYLLABUS

International Business

Course code: MGT325

Semester and year: Spring 2026

Day and time: Thursdays 11:15 to 14:00

Instructor: Dipl. Wi. – Ing. Heinrich Homola

Instructor contact: heinrich.homola@aauni.edu

Consultation hours: By appointment or after class

Credits US/ECTS	3/6	Level	Bachelor
Length	15 weeks	Pre-requisite	ECO105, MGT245, MKT248
Contact hours	42 hours	Grading	Letter grade

1. Course Description

The course is thought of as an overview of International Business, intended as the study of cross-border economic transactions carried out by companies. This course is thought to present the nature and role of i) cross-border / regional (i.e. countries within a region) business, ii) the Multi-National Enterprise (MNE), iii) international business aspects from an entrepreneurial / start-up perspective. Theories and especially practices related to International Business operations will be discussed, including attention to key success factors of international operations. In particular, consistently with a trend dominating the recent literature, a particular emphasis will be put on the examination of the geo-political, legal and socio-cultural environment surrounding International Business activities. Real life case studies will be widely used throughout the whole course.

2. Student Learning Outcomes

- Students becoming familiar with the activities of Multi-National Enterprises
- Students learning the advantages and disadvantages of the various foreign market entry-modes
- Students understanding the challenges of a foreign market
- Students becoming familiar with the Ownership, Location and Internalization Advantages of a foreign market
- Students understanding the challenges of the geo-political environment where MNEs operate
- Students understanding the challenges of the legal environment where MNEs operate
- Students understanding the challenges of the social environment where MNEs operate
- Demonstrate the ability to research and gather current and relevant information related to international business issues.
- Develop and orally present a compelling international expansion plan for an existing product or service.
- Demonstrate holistic (conceptual - strategic) thinking and setting direction
- Show analytical problem solving and independent judgement
- Be able to ask good business questions

3. Reading Material

There is no required reading material for this course as the course will not follow chapters from textbooks.

However, students will have to use intensively external sources to complete work assignments, test assignments, and also in-class in order to support discussions, their argumentation and their viewpoints.

Sources have to fulfill standards of academic credibility. Use & citations have to follow AAU's guidelines for writing, including rules about plagiarism specifically.

The following list of possible sources may help but is not meant to be complete:

<https://hbr.org/> (Harvard Business Review)
<https://www.investopedia.com/>
<https://www.bloomberg.com>
<https://www.mckinsey.com>
<https://www.bcg.com/> (Boston Consulting Group)
<https://www.strategy-business.com/>

As for academic journals, those related to the area of International Business are, for example, the ***Journal Of International Business Studies*** and the ***International Business Review***.

In order to obtain further information, especially about statistical data, students may consider having a look at the following websites:

<http://www.imf.org/external/>
<http://www.oecd.org/>
<http://www.unctad.org/>

The websites above contain reports as well as updated statistical data about FDI and International Business in general. Students are welcome to use other websites of their choice in case they find them more convenient or reader - friendly.

For students with a strong interest in International Business

Students interested in gaining in-depth and advanced knowledge of International Business may consider having a look at

DANIELS, J.D.; RADEBAUGH, LEE H.; SULLIVAN, D. **International Business: Environments and Operations**, Prentice-Hall, Inc.

DERESKY, K., **International Management: Managing Across Borders and Cultures**, Pearson Education/Prentice Hall, 7th edition.

RUGMAN, A.; COLLISON, D. **International Business**, Pearson Education/Prentice Hall, 5th edition.

DUNNING, J.H. ; LUNDAN, S.M. 2008, **Multinational Enterprises and the Global Economy**, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, UK, Northampton, USA.

These books represent a real treatise of International Business and provide a fully referenced insight into all topics related to the subject. Students may attempt at reading some chapters (or sections) related to areas of particular interest. In particular, these books provide information about those most important debates where there are different views about particular issues.

4. Teaching methodology

The course is delivered through participative lectures and class discussions. Students are expected to study primary and secondary texts if announced in class, and to be exposed to up-dated materials. The course will consist partly of lectures which are based on readings, case studies and other reading materials. _Class participation* is expected of all students. This means reading assignments in advance and doing all required preparation for class.* The main teaching/learning emphasis of this course is of a "hands-on" workshop approach. Depending on the designated topics for each class session, students will be presenting, discussing and critiquing in class sessions each other's work with the goal of improving day-to-day, "real life" management communication.

5. Course Schedule

Note: Assignments are due the following class unless specified differently

Date	Class Agenda
Class 1 February 5	<p>Topic: Introduction</p> <p>Description: Course overview, teaching methodology, grading structure Multi-National-Companies: Definitions, types, origin & history, characteristics, advantages & risks. Eliciting single brand vs. multiple brand, incl. examples. Discussing the nature of Multi-National Companies using examples from luxury goods categories & retail categories, also comparing local vs. multinational market approaches.</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: Essay specified in class</p>
Class 2 February 12	<p>Topic: Corporate culture, heritage & future, global vs. local</p> <p>Description: Introduction to Culture Sensitivity, translating into development of different corporate cultures / business cultures as challenges for international organizations. The future balance of global vs. local business in light of market cultures. How this affects the development of online vs. B&M retail, and manufacturing ethics. Example of the clothing industry used for <u>interactive group work in class</u>, eliciting key patterns.</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines:</p>
Class 3 February 19	<p>Topic: Balance of global vs. local business (cont.)</p> <p>Description: Why the balance of global vs. local business is key for analyzing international expansion; Analysis of Successes & Failures of Selected Examples: <u>Group work</u> on Starbucks, Red Bull, IKEA, Mc Donald's, Uber, Airbnb; to be presented in following class</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: Group work Presentations for next class</p>
Class 4	<p>Topic: Group work presentations</p>

February 26	Description: Students will present their group work. Assignments/deadlines:
Class 5 March 5	Topic: The geo-political environment (1) Description: Geopolitical development is a complex and multifaceted narrative that spans millennia, with the rise and fall of empires, shifting borders, and global power struggles. Throughout history, geopolitical developments have been shaped by factors such as military conflicts, diplomatic negotiations, economic interests, and the pursuit of strategic advantage, all of which continue to influence global politics and international relations. Specific examples how geo-political developments affect international business. Assignments/deadlines:
Class 6 March 12	Topic: The geo-political environment (2) Description: With this closer look at current geo-political risks, students will better understand in which environment MNEs operate today. Our today's global economy implies that thinking business actually means thinking international business more often than ever before. Hence, understanding geo-political implications and potential risks is essential for corporate management, independently from which branch the company operates. Assignments/deadlines:
Class 7 March 19	Topic: Midterm Exam Description: Midterm Exam which covers the first half of the course Assignments/deadlines:
Class 8 March 26	Topic: Market readiness for international expansion (1) Description: In - class group work on examining the international expansion of the car industry of various countries Assignments/deadlines: Group work on specific examples
April 2	Mid-term Break
Class 9 April 9	Topic: Group work presentations Description: Students will present their group work. Assignments/deadlines:
Class 10 April 16	Topic: Challenges for regional expansion in start-up's (1) Description: Recent trends of globalization turning into regionalization and even glocalization, and about offshoring - nearshoring - friendshoring. Learning about the interrelationships in supply chains, sourcing strategies, organizational structures supporting regionalization strategies. Developing a perspective on why regionalization vs. globalization is becoming an essential discussion point in regional business. Assignments/deadlines: Group work: Researching multiple examples of regional expansion of delivery services and assessing whether successful & why. - GRADED
Class 11 April 23	Topic: Group work presentations – GRADED Description: Assignments/deadlines: none for this class
Class 12 April 30	Topic: Legal Considerations in International Business Description: Challenges & enforcement in a global context, international law vs. foreign law, arbitration vs. litigation. Providing insight into key regulatory frameworks (e.g., FCPA, GDPR) that impact global business operations. Importance of ethical considerations in global business. Assignments/deadlines: In class group work: Choose study case

	between Netflix, YouTube, Uber, discussing future outlook with using variables learned in this class
Class 13 May 7	Topic: 1. Legal considerations (cont.) 2. Review for Final exam: Description: Research on how a given company was coping with legal challenges in different geographies. 7 companies given: Walt Disney, Red Bull, Amazon, Netflix, Youtube, Uber, Airbnb, 1 company per group. Focus is NOT on the outcome of legal disputes, but on whether the company was paying enough attention to cultural AND legal considerations discussed in previous classes, and what kind of changes the company had to pursue based on their dealing with these issues. Assignments/deadlines: None
Class 14 May 14	Topic: Final Exam

6. Course Requirements and Assessment (with estimated workloads)

Assignment	Workload (average)	Weight in Final Grade	Evaluated Course Specific Learning Outcomes	Evaluated Institutional Learning Outcomes*
Attendance and Class Participation	42	20 %	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All students are expected to participate in class To achieve all participation points, student must take an active role Expect instructor to keep track of contributions to class discussion Missing class, naturally, affects participation and therefore the grade! Assessment of a student's performance outside of their assignments Engagement in class discussions Student behavior in group settings 	1,2,3
Assignment I (homework, individual)	22	15 %	TBD	1,2,3
Assignment II (homework, group work)	22	15 %	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of the Key Success Factors of regional expansion Eliciting the various used expansion strategies from the example companies Knowledge and ability to apply learned information and critical thinking. 	1,2,3

Midterm Exam	22	20 %	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students becoming familiar with the activities of Multi-National Enterprises • Students learning the advantages and disadvantages of the various foreign market entry-modes • Students understanding the challenges of foreign markets • Knowledge and ability to apply learned information and critical thinking. 	1,2,3
Final exam	42	30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students becoming familiar with the activities of Multi-National Enterprises • Students learning the advantages and disadvantages of the various foreign market entry-modes • Students understanding the challenges of a foreign market • Students becoming familiar with the Ownership, Location and Internalization advantages of a foreign market • Students understanding the challenges of the legal environment where MNEs operate • Students understanding the challenges of the social environment where MNEs operate • Knowledge and ability to apply learned information and critical thinking. 	1,2,3
TOTAL	150	100%		

*1 = Critical Thinking; 2 = Effective Communication; 3= Effective and Responsible Action

7. Detailed description of the assignments

Participation: All students are expected to participate in class discussions. Class participation means “voluntarily **speaking** and taking part in the conversation/lecture for the purpose of sharing experiences/opinions & enriching the class experience.” Expect your professor to keep track of how often you contribute to class discussion. If you don’t speak, you get a zero. Students should note that while attendance at every class is not required, class time serves as the primary opportunity to participate. Experience has shown that regular attendance will significantly help your performance in the course.

Assessment breakdown Participation

Assessed area	Percentage
Active engagement in discussion: Positive, constructive contribution to discussions and presentations, and the application of relevant course concepts (based on the course readings)	100%

Assignment I – individual homework

The assignment will cover a specific topic based on contemporary reading / research material. Students should then formulate opinions supported by evidence and draw conclusions from their reading / research.

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Capacity to identify challenges for Multi-National Companies	33.3%
Capacity to discuss theoretical concepts	33.3%
Capacity to solve practical exercises	33.3%
Total	100%

Assignment II – homework, group work

Students will work in teams on a given topic from class. They will then present their results in a formal presentation in class. All team members will get the same grade.

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Capacity to identify challenges for Multi-National Companies	33.3%
Capacity to discuss theoretical concepts	33.3%
Capacity to solve practical exercises	33.3%
Total	100%

Midterm Exam

The exam will cover all of the material covered in the readings and classes so far.

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Capacity to identify challenges for Multi-National Companies	33.3%
Capacity to discuss theoretical concepts	33.3%
Capacity to solve practical exercises	33.3%
Total	100%

Final Exam

A final, comprehensive exam will be given to students on the last day of class.

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Capacity to identify challenges for Multi-National Companies	33.3%
Capacity to discuss theoretical concepts	33.3%
Capacity to solve practical exercises	33.3%
Total	100%

2. 8. General Requirements and School Policies

General requirements

All coursework is governed by AAU's academic rules. Students are expected to be familiar with the academic rules in the Academic Codex and Student Handbook and to maintain the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity in their work. Please see the AAU intranet for a [summary of key policies](#) regarding coursework.

Course specific requirements

There are no special requirements or deviations from AAU policies for this course.