

International Business in the Era of Disruptions (MNGT-C2001, 6 ECTS)

SYLLABUS, draft

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Instructor's contact information	Course information
<p>Professor Rebecca Piekkari and Assistant Professor Aleksi Niittymies E-mail: rebecca.piekkari@aalto.fi aleksi.niittymies@aalto.fi Office: BIZ building, Dept of Management Studies, Y205/Piekkari and Y203/Niittymies Office Hours: upon agreement</p> <p>Teaching assistants: Viola Kilpeläinen E-mail: viola.kilpelainen@aalto.fi Xiaoshi Xu E-mail: xiaoshi.xu@aalto.fi</p>	<p>Status of the course: Mandatory course of the Strategy specialization, BSc Studies in Management Academic Year, Period: 2022-2023, Period I & III Location: Primarily in U7 PWC 135a, but on January 27 in Y-405.</p> <p>Please note that only students who attend the course through the ECOL network, or students who are sick and can therefore not come to class, will join this course online.</p> <p>Zoom link to the course: https://aalto.zoom.us/j/64926213661 Language of Instruction: English Course Website: https://mycourses.aalto.fi/course/view.php?id=37087</p>

1. OVERVIEW

Understanding the dynamics, opportunities, and risks of international business is practically a must for everyone in today's business environment. In the last few years, the global business environment has become increasingly volatile and unpredictable. There are significant, potentially disruptive forces affecting businesses today such as climate change, technological advances, entirely new business models, and rapid shifts in the political landscape. In addition, the global pandemic and the war in Ukraine has caught many businesses by surprise, rendering the future hard to predict.

This course provides a theoretically grounded overview of key issues, opportunities and challenges in global business. We will assess the implications of (de-)globalization for firms and their operating environment. We will also analyze firms' needs to adjust their strategies and operations due to disruptive changes. The course covers key concepts and principles of conducting international business, including functional perspectives such as human resources and finance. The role of politics and regulation are also covered from the viewpoint of world trade and regional economic blocs. The premises that various countries provide for companies in terms of competitiveness are analyzed. Ethical issues as well as social and environmental responsibility are addressed.

Thus, the purpose of the course is to i) present the most important forces affecting international business today, ii) introduce various international strategies, and iii) present ways to organize, coordinate and control international activities.

2. PREREQUISITES

No formal prerequisites exist.

3. LEARNING OUTCOMES

The key objectives of the course are to i) introduce the frameworks and tools for analyzing the global business environment, ii) compare various modes of doing business across borders, and iii) present approaches to the planning, implementation and management of business activities globally.

The learning outcomes include:

- enhanced awareness of the differences in global business environment, including political, regulatory and cultural aspects
- improved understanding of the suitability of various ways to conduct business across contexts, including adaptation
- appreciation of ethical and social responsibility issues
- ability to analyze and plan global business activities
- ability to solve problems presented in real-life cases

4. ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

The course assessment will be based on the following components:

Individual assignments (50%):

- Reflection papers (2 x 9 points)
- Final reflection paper (20 points)
- Pre-class assignments (12 points)

Class participation (10%):

- Active contribution to other students' learning in class (10 points)
- Two bonus points are given to those who fill in the course feedback form (2 bonus points)

Case studies done in teams (40%)

- Presentation: slides and Q&A (30 points)
- Executive summary (10 points)

Regular class attendance is expected of all participants, as described under 'Class attendance and active participation' section. You are also expected to be in class on time.

Grade (0 to 5) is based on the points below:

0-49 points	= 0
50-59 points	= 1
60-69 points	= 2
70-79 points	= 3
80-89 points	= 4
90-100 points	= 5

All assignments must be submitted and the final case presentation made in order to get the final grade for the course. General feedback is given during the lectures and/or on MyCourses following the submissions. Specific feedback will be given personally for students or teams upon request.

Note that turning in class assignments is considered an acknowledgement of guidelines on scholastic honesty and academic integrity (see section 9).

5. ASSIGNMENTS

This course consists of individual assignments and a case study made in teams, in addition to class participation. Please find below a detailed description of the assignments.

Individual assignments – reflection papers, final paper & pre-class assignments (50%)

The reflection papers help you to reflect on the knowledge accumulated from the course book, articles, other reading materials, and lectures. The purpose of the reflection papers is to summarize the key knowledge and bring your own perspective to it. In the reflection paper, you should summarize YOUR key lessons of the material covered since the start of the course or the deadline of the previous reflection paper. You may for instance reflect on what you found surprising, particularly interesting, or things that you do not agree with. Excellent papers are those in which you describe your own learning as well as demonstrate critical and analytical thinking. In the final longer reflection paper, you will be given a set of questions which you are expected to answer based on your learnings from the whole course.

Please use academic referencing (text references as well as reference list) in all written assignments. Failure to follow academic writing standards may lead to failing the assignments. Please use APA referencing style: <https://apastyle.apa.org/>

Format: Length of maximum 2 pages (except final paper: 5 pages), font 12, line spacing: 1,5. The first two reflection papers can also be substituted with 4-5 min video reflection.

Deadline: The assignment must be uploaded to the assignment submission box in MyCourses by 17.00 on Monday of the submission week.

Evaluation: Maximum number of points for each reflection paper is 9, except for the final paper that is 20.

Another 12 points are given based on pre-class assignments that are completed in MyCourses.

Case study assignment in teams (40%)

Each team will consist of 4-5 students. The teams will be formed by the teachers during the first week of the course, so please make sure to be present during the first lectures. (In case of absence, please contact the teaching assistant ahead of time and also kindly inform her if you decide not to take the course to give space to a fellow student). The teams will themselves choose a case company and a topic to work on (please see below for more instructions on choosing the case organization and the topic). The topic should be a relevant business or management issue that has a clear problem – or opportunity – in the era of disruptions and a significant international dimension. For instance, the topic could be related to the internationalization of a start-up company, divestment decision, management of the global value chain of which a company is part, or cross-border people management.

There are two deliverables: i) a set of PowerPoint (or equivalent) slides and real-time Q&A (30 points), and ii) an executive summary of the assignment (maximum 1 page, 10 points). The time allocated for each case will be decided and communicated during the course.

Deadline: All material must be uploaded on MyCourses by 12 noon on February 7.

Evaluation: Maximum number of points for the assignment is 40.

Class attendance and active participation (10%)

Active participation in the class is considered integral of learning and therefore, it represents a maximum of 10 points of your final grade. You will get 1 point for active contribution to class discussion per every attended class (max 10 points) which is assessed based on your contribution to other students' learning in class.

To get credit for the course, 70% of the lectures must be attended (7/10). Exceptions are made based on 'force majeure' reasons such as illness. If you need to be absent due to medical reasons, compensatory assignments will be provided.

6. CHOOSING THE CASE ORGANIZATION AND THE TOPIC

Students will work in teams of 4-5 to analyze and propose a solution how the case organization should handle the issue at hand. When choosing the case and topic, it is worth considering the availability of information about the organization and the issue that you are analyzing. Carlsberg cannot be the case company as it is covered in-depth during the lectures. You may collect primary data but the assignment can also be done entirely based on secondary data. The teams are encouraged to meet face-to-face, whenever possible. The topics need to be approved by the teachers and there is a face-to-face meetings with them during the third week of the course. The booking will be available in MyCourses during the second week.

7. READINGS

The teaching case is available on MyCourses. You are expected to download the other readings yourself based on the references provided in the schedule. These readings are available via the Aalto University library services, and you can find them easily by searching with the article name (please note this works on any Aalto computer, but not elsewhere), or via our university library webpages.

Textbook

Global Business Today, 11th or 10th edition, by Charles W. L. Hill and G. Tomas M. Hult, McGraw-Hill, 2020 or 2018, international student edition.

Articles and other readings assigned for a particular lecture session

Florida, R. & Hathaway, I. (2018). How the geography of startups and innovation is changing, *Harvard Business Review*, November 27.

Kobrin, S. J. (2017). Bricks and mortar in a borderless world: Globalization, the backlash, and the multinational enterprise. *Global Strategy Journal*, 7(2), 159-171.

Knight, G.A. & Liesch, P.W. (2016). Internationalization: From incremental to born global. *Journal of World Business*, 51(1), 93-102.

Lee, D., & Glosserman, B. (2022). How companies can navigate today's geopolitical risks. *Harvard Business Review*, November, 28. <https://hbr.org/2022/11/how-companies-can-navigate-todays-geopolitical-risks>

Maitland, E., & Sammartino, A. (2015). Managerial cognition and internationalization. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 46, 733–760.

Meyer, E. (2017). Being the boss in Brussels, Boston, and Beijing. *Harvard Business Review*, 95(4), 70-77.

Niittymies, A. (2020). Heuristic decision-making in firm internationalization: The influence of context-specific experience. *International Business Review*, 29(6), 101752.

Péterfi, B. (2022, November 23). Not all satellite imagery is created equal – why choose SAR? *Iceye Blog*. <https://www.iceye.com/blog/sar-technology-not-all-satellite-imagery-created-equal>

Welch, L., Benito, G. & Petersen, B. (2019). *Foreign Operation Methods: Theory, Analysis, Strategy*. Chapter 2: Theoretical approaches. Available on MyCourses.

Cases

Carlsberg Breweries A/S: Facing Political Risk in Russia. Available on MyCourses.

Moomin in Japan case. Available on MyCourses.

Extra readings

Ciravegna, L., & Michailova, S. (2022). Why the world economy needs, but will not get, more globalization in the post-COVID-19 decade. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 53: 172-186. Read pages 172-180.

Contractor, F. J. (2022). The world economy will need even more globalization in the post-pandemic 2021 decade. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 53: 156-171. Read pages 156-165.

De Villa, M. A. (2022). Assessing geopolitical risk: A multilevel approach for managers of multinationals. In review for AIB insights. Used with the author's permission on this course. Available on MyCourses.

Lazarow, A. (2020). Beyond Silicon Valley: How start-ups succeed in unlikely places. *Harvard Business Review*, March-April. When Startups Succeed in Unlikely Places (hbr.org)

Panwar, R., Pinkse, J., & De Marchi, V. (2022). The Future of Global Supply Chains in a Post-COVID-19 World. *California Management Review*, 00081256211073355.

World Bank. 2020. World Development Report 2020: *Trading for Development in the Age of Global Value Chains*. Washington, DC: World Bank. doi:10.1596/978-1-4648-1457-0. pp. 14-21. Available at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/wdr2020>

World Bank. 2022. World Investment Report 2022: *Tax Reforms and Sustainable Investment*. New York, NY: United Nations Publications. pp. 1-6. Available at https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/wir2022_en.pdf

SCHEDULE

Session	Date	Topic(s)	Lecturer(s)	Readings	Assignment
1	Wed 11.1. 13:15 – 16:00	What is international business? What are disruptions and megatrends and how are they managed? Introduction and course practicalities	Rebecca Piekkari Aleksi Niittymies	Hill & Hult, Ch 1 Niittymies, 2020	Quiz 1 (pre-assignment for session 2) opens
2.	Fri 13.1. 13:15 – 16:00	The global business environment: political, economic and legal dimensions	Rebecca Piekkari Aleksi Niittymies	Hill & Hult, Ch 2 Kobrin, 2017 Case: Carlsberg	Quiz 1 (pre-assignment for session 2) closes at 13.00 Quiz 2 (pre-assignment for session 3) opens
3.	Wed 18.1. 13:15 – 16:00	Geopolitical risks: China in focus	Rebecca Piekkari Aleksi Niittymies Guest: Eric Hundman, China Office	Hill & Hult, Ch 2 Lee & Glosserman, 2022	Reflection paper 1 due 16.1. at 22.00. Quiz 2 (pre-assignment session 3) closes at 13.00
4.	Fri 20.1. 13:15 – 16:00	Disruption as a business opportunity - a start-up perspective Company visit to Iceye Maarintie 6 B Team meetings for the case study in class	Hosts: Silja Lehti, Adam Qawasmeh	Péterfi, 2022 Develop questions for Iceye representatives	Quiz 3 (pre-assignment for session 5) opens
5.	Wed 25.1. 13:15 – 16:00	International Human Resource Management Managerial decision-making Team meetings for the case study in class	Rebecca Piekkari Aleksi Niittymies	Hill & Hult, Ch 17 Maitland & Sammartino, 2015	Quiz 3 (pre-assignment for session 5) closes at 13.00 Quiz 4 (pre-assignment for session 6) opens
6.	Fri 27.1. 13:15 – 16:00	Internationalization process Market entry modes	Rebecca Piekkari Aleksi Niittymies Guest: Catherine Welch, Trinity College Dublin	Welch, Benito, & Petersen, 2019 Hill & Hult, Ch 12	The class is exceptionally held in hall Y-405 Quiz 4 (pre-assignment for session 6) closes at 13.00 Quiz 5 (pre-assignment for session 7) opens

Session	Date	Topic(s)	Lecturer(s)	Readings	Assignment
7.	Wed 1.2. 13:15 – 16:00	Internationalization of small firms	Rebecca Piekkari Aleksi Niittymies Hiroshi Kanno, Waseda Business School Arto Lindblom	Florida & Hathaway, 2018 Knight & Liesch, 2016 Case: Moomin in Japan	Reflection paper 2 due 30.1. at 22.00. Quiz 5 (pre- assignment for session 7) closes at 13.00 Quiz 6 (pre- assignment for session 8) opens
8.	Fri 3.2. 13:15 – 16:00	International marketing International finance at 13-14	Rebecca Piekkari Aleksi Niittymies Timo Korkeamäki	Hill & Hult, Ch 11 & 16 (Ch 10 optional)	Quiz 6 (pre- assignment for session 8) closes at 13.00
9.	Wed 8.2. 13:15 – 16:00	Team presentations	Rebecca Piekkari Aleksi Niittymies Xiaoshi Xu	Team presentations	Power point slides and executive summary due 7.2 at noon.
10.	Fri 10.2. 13:15 – 16:00	Team presentations; Course wrap-up	Rebecca Piekkari Aleksi Niittymies Xiaoshi Xu	Team presentations	
	Mon 20.2				Final reflection paper due 20.2. 17.00.

8. COURSE WORKLOAD

Classroom hours, online	30h
Class preparation	35h
Assignments	95h
Total	160h (6 cr)

9. ETHICAL RULES

Aalto University Code of Academic Integrity and Handling Violations Thereof

<https://into.aalto.fi/display/ensaannot/Aalto+University+Code+of+Academic+Integrity+and+Handling+Violations+Thereof>