

International Summer University^{WU} 2022

WU (Vienna University of Economics and Business)

Course outline

Course title	<i>Responsible International Management in the Digital Age</i>
Instructor	<i>Dr. Michal Lemanski</i> <i>Email: michal.lemanski@wu.ac.at</i>
Language of instruction	English
Course level	Undergraduate
Contact hours	35 teaching hours (45 min. each)

Aim of the course

This intensive undergraduate course provides an in-depth understanding of several contemporary challenges managers face in multinational enterprises (MNEs) operating in the increasingly digitised global economy. Students learn about the nature of international management and specific themes related to globalisation, the impact of technology and digitisation on international business, coordination and control of foreign operations, headquarters-subsidary relations, innovation and entrepreneurship, leadership, as well as talent, diversity, and cross-cultural management. Each topic is considered together with related ethical dilemmas and the impact of managerial decisions on the social and environmental performance of the firm. Students are trained to understand both respective managerial perspectives and conceptual, theoretical approaches. Utilizing a teaching method that systematically combines lectures, analytical exercises, class discussions, group workshops, and simulations, students learn about key concepts of international management and their applications to ethical dilemmas and sustainability challenges in the contemporary economy. A considerable proportion of activities require analysis of data and are of experiential nature. Therefore, students are put into the manager's seat, letting them experience being a decision-maker solving problems of multinational companies. Overall, the course is managerial, incorporates multiple perspectives, and is contemporary. It is managerial in that it looks at topics of international management through the lens of managers of multinational enterprises (MNEs). It incorporates multiple perspectives as it considers a variety of different management topics. The course is contemporary in that it incorporates and touches upon up-to-date challenges and managerial responses.

Learning objectives

Knowledge and understanding

By the end of the course students will have learned about theoretical and conceptual foundations of various themes in international management with a special focus on challenges faced by managers working in the digital economy including:

- the nature and context of management of international operations in the digital economy,

- management of people of various cultures working in the virtual environment,
- coordination and control of internationally dispersed organizational units within a multinational enterprise (MNE),
- innovation and knowledge transfer across various institutional environments,
- responsible leadership and business ethics in the digital space in an international perspective,
- responsible use of technology for support of managerial decisions in international environment,
- strategic responses to present-day challenges of international management as well as key analytical tools and frameworks helping managers develop such strategies for the digital age.

Intellectual skills

Students participating in this course develop the ability to:

- think critically and be creative;
- manage the creative process in self and in others;
- organize thoughts, analyse, synthesise and critically appraise.

This includes the ability to identify assumptions, evaluate statements in terms of evidence, detect false logic or reasoning, identify implicit values, define terms adequately and generalize appropriately. Participants also learn how to use information and knowledge collected online and offline effectively: scanning and organizing data, synthesising and analysing in order to abstract meaning from information and to share knowledge.

Professional practical skills

In this course students develop the ability to conduct research into international business and management issues, individually and as part of a team, through research design, data collection, analysis, synthesis, and reporting.

Transferable (key) skills

Students also develop:

- effective two-way communication in personal and online context: listening, effective oral and written communication of complex ideas and arguments using a range of media, including the preparation of presentations.
- high personal effectiveness: critical self-awareness, self-reflection and self-management;
- time management and sensitivity to timezone differences and perceptions of time in various cultures;
- sensitivity to diversity in people and different situations,
- - ability to continue to learn through reflection on practice and experience.

Prerequisites and/or admission requirements

Application requirements for the Undergraduate Program are current enrollment in an undergraduate study program in the fields of business administration. By the time of participation in the ISU^{WU} program, students must have completed a **minimum of one year of undergraduate education** with a specific focus on business administration and related areas.

Applicants interested in participating in the International Summer University^{WU} need an excellent command of the English language. The English language requirements can be found at [ISU^{WU} Language Requirements](#).

Application requirements for WU students can be found on our [application website](#).

Teaching methods

The course applies an interactive and participant-led approach, and takes advantage of a variety of teaching methods such as: lectures, case study discussions and workshops, small-group presentations, and group role-plays. A considerable proportion of this course is dedicated to experiential learning, using approaches which put students into the manager's seat, and help them experience challenges of international management in the digital age.

Pre-course assignment

1. Reading assignment

The assigned readings: case studies, scholarly articles, and business reports, form the basis for discussions, presentations, and other activities planned for this course. They also constitute the obligatory preparation material. It is imperative that all course participants have carefully read all material marked as "compulsory reading" on Learn@WU. You can find the "compulsory reading" in the file storage of the Learn@WU page dedicated to this course.

2. Writing assignment

Critically discuss dangers to gender equality posed by transformation to online work during the current pandemic, and advise what managers of companies operating in your country can do to improve the situation.

First, read information on Sustainable Development Goal No. 5 on the official Website of United Nations (<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment>), and conduct online research to find related reports about gender equality and online work in your country. Make sure that in your paper you put under scrutiny current problems which occur during the COVID-19 pandemic, and identify potential for a better involvement of managers in business firms to ameliorate the situation of gender (in)equality. Your report should present your own conclusions and observations, but make sure these are grounded in facts, and based on relevant sources from United Nations and your government, reading of academic journals and books, as well as daily press, news releases, and Websites of companies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

This written assignment accounts for 25% of the final mark for this course.

Expected length is 2,500 words (+/-10%). The list of references (bibliography) as well as graphics, tables and charts do not count towards this word count.

Submission deadline: July 1st, 2022, 4:00 p.m. CEST (Vienna time).

Submission is only accepted as an upload on [Learn@WU](#). Late submissions will be accepted with a penalty of 5 points deducted for each day the submission is late.

Permitted submission format is only Portable Document Format (.pdf). Submissions made in other file formats will not be opened and result in a "no submission" status.

Submitting a file which is corrupted or saved with disabled text search function (important for plagiarism checks) will result in "no submission" status and zero points awarded for this assignment. Permitted referencing styles: APA or Harvard style.

Important: when citing works in languages other than English and/or alphabets other than Latin, e.g. government report about situation in Ethiopia published in Amharic, provide the original citation and a translation of the source to English.

Note on plagiarism: All submissions will be checked for plagiarism. This essay is an individual piece of work, and strong penalties are in place for plagiarism in line with policies of WU Vienna.

Course contents

Day 1	<p>Welcome and Introduction. International management in times of digitalisation and global uncertainty.</p> <p>We begin this course by discussing the key dynamics and drivers of contemporary international management. We put under scrutiny such phenomena as globalisation, de-globalisation and anti-globalisation sentiments, economic nationalism, digitalisation, cyber-attacks, Tech Cold War, and availability of advanced decision-support technology and Big Data, and naturally the current pandemic. In short, we try to understand challenges of managing in the continuously changing global business environment, and we do so with an ethical reflection and consideration of sustainability-related challenges accompanying managerial decisions. On the basis of this introduction, we discuss all topics covered in this course.</p>
Day 2	<p>Leadership in the digital age</p> <p>One of the challenges of international management is that multinational enterprises (MNEs) and their leaders are increasingly supposed to take on responsibility for the impact of their managerial decisions on people and the natural environment</p>

	<p>globally. In this session, we explore what responsible global leadership is in the digitalised economy, how it is regulated and influenced by the law, religion, social norms, and availability of technological solutions, and how managers can translate society's expectations into business solutions.</p>
Day 3	<p>Coordination and control within multinational enterprises</p> <p>One of the inherent features of managing internationally dispersed operations in the digitalised economy is the complexity of communication and management of human as well as non-human actors. In this session we discuss the resulting challenges for effective management of relationships between headquarters and subsidiaries within multinational enterprises (MNEs). In this vein, we also consider the people-related aspects, since coordination and control not only are important success factors at the form level, but also a constant management challenge when working in teams in the virtual space.</p>
Day 4	<p>Innovation and corporate entrepreneurship within multinational enterprises</p> <p>Innovation is the key success factor in the digital age. New technologies and organisational innovations are key to success when competing internationally. And an increasingly competitive global environment innovations created in foreign subsidiaries play a significant role in determining the success of the whole multinational enterprise. Yet, entrepreneurial activities of distant subsidiaries are often blocked or ignored by the corporate centre. We take a closer look at both benefits and challenges associated with innovation and initiatives within MNEs.</p>
Day 5	<p>Data-driven talent management in international context</p> <p>Business analytics has become a strategic necessity. But how can managers translate data analysis into actions related to attraction, development and allocation of talent? Especially when facing institutional differences across nations and cultures. During this session we address legal questions and ethical dilemmas related to an effective and responsible use of new technologies for talent management in the international context.</p>
Day 6	<p>Managing people and teams across cultures and religions</p> <p>Multinational enterprises (MNEs) increasingly need a workforce which is familiar with newest technologies and at the same time culturally sensitive and capable of dealing with challenges imposed by an international business environment. However, identifying and managing such a workforce may turn out tricky and challenging in itself. In this session, we consider why a diverse and multicultural workforce may be beneficial and a valuable resource for MNEs, and what it takes to leverage this demographic successfully in the digital economy.</p>
Day 7	<p>Future challenges facing multinational enterprises. Revision. Exam.</p> <p>In the last session, we will put under scrutiny the current and future challenges to managing multinational enterprises (MNEs) during the transformation to the remote and hybrid workplace models, and related challenges to be faced by business leaders around the world.</p> <p>Next, we will synthesize material from all sessions and reflect on learning experience. We will connect theoretical and conceptual knowledge as well as practice-oriented applications, and required professional skills.</p> <p>The course will end with a written examination. Students will solve a practical problem and formulate their solution in an essay format.</p>

Comments

Each session begins at 9:00 a.m. and punctuality is required.
Individual coaching or group consultations can be organized on an individual basis.

To request information related to the academic content of this course, please contact the lecturer at michal.lemanski@wu.ac.at.

To obtain information related to organizational arrangements and logistics, please refer to the ISU^{WU} organizers: International Office at WU-Vienna (isuwu@wu.ac.at).

Criteria for successful completion of the course

Attendance in all sessions is mandatory. The minimum pass-rate for the whole course is an aggregated score of 60% for all marked components listed below.

Assessment

There are four components of the final grade awarded for completing this course:

1. *Pre-course written assignment: 25%*
2. *Active participation in class: 30%*
3. *Group project: 20%*
4. *Final written exam: 25%*

Individual components of the final grade: 80%

Group component of the final grade: 20%

Grading scheme:

- o 100-90% excellent
- o 89-80% good
- o 79-70% satisfactory
- o 69-60% sufficient
- o 59-0% fail

Course literature

There are dedicated readings for each session. All will be made available electronically through an online learning platform of WU Vienna (Learn@WU) 4 weeks before the course starts. Students must familiarise themselves with case studies and readings marked as compulsory before the class. This is important to enable active participation and effective work on group assignments.

Further readings suggested by the lecturer(s)

In addition, students who aim to earn highest marks should read papers on relevant topics covered in class and published in leading international journals listed below:

Harvard Business Review,
Journal of Business Ethics,
MIT Technology Review,
Sloan Management Review,
Stanford Social Innovation Review,
Transnational Corporations.

Please note the following information on the total minimum workload of the respective course:

Course level	ECTS-credits	Pre-course workload	In-class activity	Outside of class workload during the program
Undergraduate	4	approx. 20 hours	27 hours (= 35 teaching units)	approx. 33 hours