

BUSINESS IN ACTION

LOCAL COMPANIES IN A GLOBAL WORLD

Business

Course contact hours: 45

Recommended credits: 6 ECTS – 3 US credits

OBJECTIVES

To build a career in the international corporate world or as an entrepreneur it is helpful to follow a program that offers you the experience of analyzing and understanding how European businesses operate.

The goal of this module is to gain an insight into the different strategies and operational activities of Catalan and Spanish institutions and companies working within the European framework. Students will maintain direct contact with the business and economic world in Barcelona where, with the full personal support and collaboration of the Instructor, they will gain hands-on experience of observing, researching, interacting with and analyzing a range of local companies. Direct personal interviews with Business Managers, are designed to supply students with first-hand, unique testimonials related to managerial experiences, competitive advantages and daily operations. The real life experience of this course helps students to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Each visit is prepared in advance following specific guidelines.

REQUIREMENTS

Fluent English

Interest in business implementations in the real world in Europe and in Catalonia in particular

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Understand the European and Spanish Business Environment
- Identify key issues facing business in Europe regarding markets, regulations, and cross- cultural challenges
- Analyze differences in strategies and business models for adaptation to changes
- Understand sector developments in Europe and compare with home sectors
- Gain knowledge of different business implementations in the Barcelona Area
- Discover the main characteristics of the local economy and business developments
- Develop relationship skills via interviews and meetings with local managers
- Analyze key practical business issues for development in the Barcelona and European environment

CONTENTS

Week	Content	Activities*
1	Introduction to the course and presentations. Introduction to the first visit.	First case study readings and in-class discussions. Organisation into groups.
2	Visit	Company to be confirmed.
3	Revisions of the previous visit and business cases. Sector focus.	Group presentations and discussions. Case study readings and in-class discussions. Video and analysis.
4	Preparation of next visit and business cases. Introduction to the second visit. Sector focus.	Case study readings and in-class discussions. Video and analysis.
5	Visit	Company to be confirmed.
6	Revisions of the previous visit and business cases. Sector focus.	Group presentations and discussions. Case study readings and in-class discussions. Video and analysis.
7	Preparation of next visit and business cases. Introduction to the third visit. Sector focus.	Case study readings and in-class discussions. Video and analysis.
8	Visit	Company to be confirmed.
9	Revisions of the previous visit and business cases. Preparation of next visit and business cases. Introduction to the fourth visit.	Group presentations and discussions. Case study readings and in-class discussions. Video and analysis.
10	Visit	Company to be confirmed.
11	Revisions of the previous visit and business cases. Preparation of next visit and business cases. Introduction to the fifth visit.	Group presentations and discussions. Case study readings and in-class discussions. Video and analysis.
12	Final Exam Review of exam	

*Subject to change

Theoretical input:

1. Introduction to the concept of Enterprise in the Catalonia area
2. Entrepreneurship culture, initiatives and roles
3. Predominant Business activities: market and competition situation
4. Sectorial analysis
 1. The Public sector
 - b. Local or regional government institutions, managing services or activities related to the business and economic world within the Barcelona and Catalonia area
 - c. Utilities and services companies whose activity has an impact on business and companies
 2. The Private sector
 - a. Fast-moving consumer goods
 - b. Industrial sector
 - c. Retail
 - d. Food sector

Pre- and post-visit tasks:

- In-class work before the visit

Topics to be addressed include researching background information on the company, understanding the company's target market, identifying the stakeholders and preparing questions or observations to be assessed during the visit.

- In-class work after the visit

After each visit the student researches, writes and presents a report related to the most significant factors of each company. In addition students will be asked to prepare a presentation on the company including objectives, culture, success, failures, future, Swot analysis, etc.

TEACHING METHODOLOGY

The methodology is based on active student participation: reading cases, preparing visits with reference material and documents, preparing questions to be answered after visits, writing and delivering presentations and working in teams, being some examples.

A positive attitude and impeccable behavior is mandatory on the student's part. Any student who misses one visit without official justification will fail the course. During visits, students must be proactive when asking questions, and remember to be polite when talking with executives, directors or managers of the selected companies. Punctuality is also mandatory especially for the field trip days. Waiting time for the group will be maximum 5 minutes after the assigned time to leave.

The Professor's role is to prepare the groundwork for the company visits: organizing the field trip, assuring good company contacts, preparing a list of topics to be covered in each visit, organizing and directing the group during the visit, guiding students when preparing their company presentations, etc.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Case study assignments: 30%
Participation: 30%
Final case or exam: 40%

Participation (30%): Participation in class and involvement in class debates during presentations is essential.

Case-study assignments (30%): Quality and originality, as well as commitment will be considered.

Reminder: Attendance at all company visits and the completion of related reports is mandatory. Failure to attend one visit / complete one report constitutes an overall Fail grade.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Required reading:

Business Case studies delivered in class.

BARÓ I TOMÀS, E. (2009). The New industry : the core sector of the Catalan economy. Departament d'Innovació, Universitats i Empresa, Observatori de Prospectiva Industrial OECD, DL 2009 ([Barcelona] : Addenda) Promoting entrepreneurship, employment and business competitiveness : the experience of Barcelona / Leed Programme

URBANO, D. (2006). New business creation in Catalonia: support measures and attitudes towards entrepreneurship. Generalitat de Catalunya, Departament de Treball i Indústria, Centre for Business Innovation and Development

Recommended reading:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qtozV_lqMUK Video UK and Bcn

<http://www.economist.com/topics/catalonia>

<http://www.catalonia.com/en/index.jsp>

<http://catalonia.com/innovate-in-catalonia/innovation-services/enterprise-europe-network.jsp>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=2&v=dIS2A9bMehw&feature=emb_logo