

## **INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS INSTITUTE (BMGT 488G)**

BMGT 488G is a new course in international business management. It is being offered during the fall semester in a punctuated format, consisting of five full-day sessions and two shorter sessions. The course is open to juniors and seniors from throughout the University of Maryland at College Park.

### **Overview**

At \$20 trillion annually, the revenues generated by multinational companies' overseas activities represent a significant and growing portion of global economic activity. BMGT 488G examines the opportunities and challenges of doing international business in an increasingly globalized world, introducing students to core International Business subjects including cultural, political, and economic differences among countries; the global monetary system; international trade; foreign direct investment; and global strategy. Students will gain insight into how can leverage their area of study into a meaningful career in international business, and meet the demands of employers who increasingly expect managers and executives to possess knowledge of these topics.

### **Course format**

The course includes both classroom-based and experiential learning activities. Approximately half of each of the five full-day sessions day will consist of lecture and discussion in a classroom format with Prof. Zelner. The remainder of each such sessions will be spent visiting companies, international agencies, and embassies located in the Greater Capital Region. Representatives of these organizations will provide expert insight into course topics.<sup>1</sup>

### **Expectations and assignments**

#### *Grade components*

1. Participation: 20%
2. Midterm exam: 20%
3. Final exam: 35%
4. Team project: 25%

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<sup>1</sup> The visits are currently being scheduled. Organizations that the class has visited in the past include foreign embassies (e.g., Brazil, India and Poland); the World Bank; The European Union Delegation to the United States; and both U.S.- and foreign-based multinational firms in such industries as commercial banking, energy, aerospace, and retail.

### *Participation*

Participation in class discussions is critical. Adequate preparation by reading all assigned materials is necessary for effective participation. Sound participation typically consists of focused comments or questions that enrich the learning experience of the class. Frequent contributions that add little to the learning of the class or demonstrate a lack of familiarity with class materials will be viewed unfavorably. Obviously, you cannot contribute to class discussions if you fail to attend the class sessions.

It is also possible to earn participation points by making discussion board posts on ELMS/Canvas, and by posting articles of interest accompanied by commentary. The same criteria used to assess discussion-based contributions apply here as well..

### *Exams*

A midterm exam will be given on October 14. A final exam will be given at the official scheduled time.

### *Team project*

Many business activities are performed in teams. You will be assigned to a team tasked with performing a strategic analysis for a Capital Region firm entering a specific country. The analysis will consider the political, economic, legal, and cultural environment of the country; outline the challenges and opportunities of conducting business in the country; and provide relevant guidelines and recommendations for entering the market. The analysis should run approximately 15 pages in length, excluding exhibits. Each team will present its analysis in the final class session.

Teams are expected to do a significant amount of work on their projects, including holding meetings with local company representatives, between the midterm exam on October 7 and the subsequent class meeting on October 28.

Additional information about the team project will be provided during the first class meeting.

### **Textbook**

Textbook: *Global Business Today* (9<sup>th</sup> Edition), by Charles W.L. Hill and G. Tomas M. Hult.

## **Discussion board**

You are expected to contribute to the Canvas discussion board for the class. You may do so by posting links to relevant news media items with commentary, and also by commenting on posts made by others.

## **About the instructor**

Bennet A. Zelner (Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley, 2001) is Associate Professor of Business and Public Policy at the Robert H. Smith School of Business. He has taught undergraduate and MBA classes in strategic management, international business, macroeconomics, microeconomics, and business-government relations, as well as short-term study-abroad classes focusing on Southeast Asia and Chile. In his research, he studies three main questions at the intersection of Strategic Management and Public Policy: (1) what leads governments to adopt (and sometimes reverse) policy changes that affect the business environment; (2) how do firms manage the opportunities and risks stemming from such changes; and (3) how should firms assess and manage their relations with external stakeholders in the broader sociopolitical environment? Much of his research has focused on infrastructure industries recently subject to market-oriented reform—such as privatization, deregulation, and liberalization—and the challenges that such environments pose for private investors. Current projects focus on the comparative effects of national renewable energy policies on “green” innovation patterns in Western Europe, as well as the role played by business groups—clusters of legally independent firms joined by multiplex economic and social ties—in different types of capitalist economies. Professor Zelner's research has been published in such journals as *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *Strategic Management Journal*, *Academy of Management Review*, *American Sociological Review*, and *Harvard Business Review*. Prior to joining the Smith School faculty in 2011, Professor Zelner taught at Duke University's Fuqua School of Business and Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business.

## Schedule

*September 2*

*Introduction* (2 hrs – time TBD)

Course overview

Globalization

Hill, ch. 1

*September 16*

*Country differences* (9:00am – 12:00pm)

Political, economic, and legal systems

Hill, ch. 2

Economic development

Hill, ch. 3

Culture

Hill, ch. 4

*Site visits* (1:00pm – 5:00pm)

TBD

*September 23*

*International trade and investment* (9:00am – 12:00pm)

International trade theory

Hill, ch. 6

Government policy and international trade

Hill, ch. 7

Foreign direct investment

Hill, ch. 8

*Site visits* (1:00pm – 5:00pm)

TBD

*October 7*

*Midterm exam* (2 hrs – time TBD)

*October 28*

*Global strategy* (9:00am – 12:00pm)

International business strategy  
Hill, ch. 12

Entering foreign markets  
Hill, ch. 13

Exporting, importing, and countertrade  
Hill, ch. 14

*Site visits* (1:00pm – 5:00pm)

TBD

*November 18*

*Global monetary system* (9:00am – 12:00pm)

Foreign exchange market  
Hill, ch. 10

International monetary system  
Hill, ch. 11

*Site visits* (1:00pm – 5:00pm)

TBD

*December 9*

*Site visits* (9:00am – 12:00pm)

*Farewell lunch* (12:00pm – 1:30pm)

*Course wrap-up / project presentations* (1:30pm – 5:00pm)