



OLAC009 BUSINESS STUDIES

ACADEMIC FOUNDATIONS

OLive-Access 2020

Seminar Leader: Clem Davies

Email: c.davies@berlin.bard.edu

Course dates: 23rd of March – 10th of May 2020 (Module B)

Course Schedule: Monday 2pm to 3.30pm and Wednesday 10.45am to 12.15pm

Office Hours: Monday 1pm to 2pm

Credits: 4 ECTS, 2 U.S. credits

Course Description

The course is designed to introduce you to the fundamental concepts, authors and theoretical insights of business studies. The goal of this introductory course is to build your knowledge of the subject of business studies, including the function of a business and the broader role of business in society, political economy, management strategies, human resources strategies. It aims to develop a subject appropriate vocabulary and ability to explain a viewpoint on a topical subject and discuss the positives and negatives thereof. Moreover, it aims to help you understand what studying business at MA level entails and what a career in business studies could look like.

Learning Outcomes

Key learning outcomes include:

- Developing English vocabulary specific to Business Studies
- An introductory knowledge of fundamental concepts and issues in Business Studies
- Ability to summarize and discuss a range of academic texts related to the field
- Becoming familiar with career or further education paths opened by studying the subject
- Ability to argue a position on a topical issue of business studies both verbally and in writing
- Developing study skills as independent and active learners

Delivery

This course has been modified in accordance with BCB's directives about online teaching in light of Coronavirus. We will focus on reading and writing, and students will be assessed accordingly. The class will be delivered entirely online. Video calls will be the main format used. The instructor will contact you prior to the beginning of semester to establish the best medium. All written assignments should be submitted in digital format. Presentations will be delivered via video call.

Requirements and Grade Breakdown

The course will be assessed through a combination of assignments which are designed to achieve the overall goals and learning outcomes of the course. All written assignments are expected to be delivered punctually in electronic format. As the course is delivered online, presentations will be done via video call but all efforts as if for an in-person presentation are expected.

Assignment	Length	Weight	Deadline
Preparation and participation in class	Throughout the course	10%	All semester
Weekly written reflection & discussion	200 words. 5 minute summary plus discussion	30%	Weeks 2 to 7
Presentation: Case Study	5 - 10 minutes	10%	Monday 30 March
Written assignment: Business culture	300 words	20%	Draft: Friday 3 April Final: Tuesday 14 April
Paper and presentation: Data in the EU	Paper: 600 words Presentation: 10 minutes	30%	First draft (written assignment only): Wednesday 22 April Final submission (presentation and paper): Wednesday May 6

Participation in class: 10%

You are expected to attend all the classes, prepare the required reading for each class, and actively participate in class discussions. Occasionally, you will be given a specific task to prepare for the following class. You will be assessed on the quality and quantity of your contributions. The highest grades for participation will be awarded to those who make valuable contributions to class discussions and demonstrate an understanding of and engagement with the readings. Attending without contributing to class discussions will only earn you a minimum pass.

Weekly written reflection & discussion: 30%

At the beginning of each week (Mondays), you should submit a summary of 200 words reflecting on the content from the previous week. You will present this in class, followed by a discussion. This is an opportunity to reflect on the content and reinforce your understanding as well as to put new vocabulary to practice.

Presentation: Case study 10%

You will choose a real business and outline its key features, the challenges (currently or if it wishes to expand) and the opportunities it faces in the next decades. The presentation will be rated on the understanding of the market, shown thorough research and analysis, the overall coherence and structure, and incorporation of the topics covered in class.

Written assignment 1: Business Culture 20%

Following the class on Political Economy, you will write a 500-word paper comparing the business environment of your home country with that of the host country (Germany). You may also compare two other countries pending discussion with the instructor. The paper should incorporate the content from previous classes and will be graded on clarity, structure, and quality of information.

Paper and Presentation: Data in the EU 30%

Students will propose a topic related to the business aspects of data in the EU to the lecturer and will write a 1500-word paper on the topic. The paper should have a clear research question, relevant supporting evidence, a structured and coherent argument, acknowledgements of limitations, a critical discussion section, and a conclusion.

Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the staunchest regard for academic integrity and expects good academic practice from students in their studies. You are expected to follow the university's code of academic integrity at all times throughout the course. Any work you submit must be your own original work. Make sure that you properly reference all the sources you use (e.g. books, journals, newspaper articles, websites, etc.). Cases of academic misconduct (e.g. cheating, plagiarism) in which you fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section III Academic Misconduct.

Policy on Late Submission of Papers

As per Student Handbook guidelines, assignments that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Assignments that are more than 24 hours late may be rejected for grading, particularly if the explanation offered for the delay is not satisfactory. If a late assignment is accepted for grading, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline and cannot receive a grade higher than C. Thereafter, you will receive a failing grade for the assignment.

Letter Grade calculation

The total grade out of 100% is calculated according to the weighting described above. Letter grades are assigned as shown in the table below. Corresponding grade points are also shown. See the Bard student handbook for equivalencies to the German system. D is the minimum passing grade for any test or coursework. If a student receives a Failing F, an Incomplete I or a D grade in one or more courses, their record will be reviewed.

Letter Grade	Total %	Grade Point
A	93-100%	4.00
A-	90-92%	3.70
B+	87-89%	3.30
B	83-86%	3.00
B-	80-82%	2.70
C+	77-79%	2.30
C	73-76%	2.00
C-	70-72%	1.70
D	60-69%	1.00
F	Failure	0.00

Schedule

Session	Date	Theme	Notes:
1	Mon 23 March	Organizational issues. Course structure and evaluation.	
2	Wed 25 March	The nature of business & factors of production	
3	Mon 30 March	The Business Environment / Political Economy	Presentation Case Study
4	Wed 1 April	Globalisation	Draft Written Assignment: Business Culture due (3 April)
<i>6 – 13 April – Independent Study Week</i>			
5	Wed 15 April	Data and Business	Final Written Assignment: Business Culture due (14 April)
6	Mon 20 April	Business ethics and social responsibility	
7	Wed 22 April	Management: Approaches & Skills	Draft Final Paper due
8	Mon 27 April	Management: Organising Firms	
9	Wed 29 April	Human Resources: Organising People	
10	Mon 4 May	Your career in business	
11	Wed 6 May	Student presentation. Revision and review.	Final paper and presentation due

Detailed class schedule

Session 1 - Organizational issues

Including the syllabus, course structure and evaluation. Get to know each other and outline the issues covered in the course.

Session 2 - The nature of business & factors of production

Key questions: What is a business? What role does it play in society? Who are stakeholders? What's the difference between a business, not-for-profit and a social business? What are the factors of production? What is the role of entrepreneurship?

Required Reading: Surridge, M. and Gillespie, A. 2014. *Business: Cambridge International AS and A Level*. Hodder Education: London. Chapter 1. (Hereafter referred to as "Surridge and Gillespie").

Other Reading: Patton, Anna. 2020. *Frauen power: Are Germany's social enterprises bucking a trend of male-dominated business*. Pioneers Post. 20 February. Available at: <https://www.pioneerspost.com/news-views/20200220/frauen-power-are-germany-s-social-enterprises-bucking-trend-of-male-dominated>

Session 3 - The Business Environment / Political Economy

Key questions: What makes some countries and locations more attractive than others to do business in? What are the external influences on a business? How can one country's economy be different to

another's? What impact can governments have on business? What impact can business have on governments?

Required Reading:

Surridge and Gillespie Chapter 20

Other Reading:

Surridge and Gillespie Chapter 2 and 21

Session 4 – Globalisation

Key questions: What is globalization? What are the positive impacts of globalization? The negative?

Required Reading:

Surridge and Gillespie Chapters 19 and 26

Other reading:

Pawlicki P. 2016. "Re-focusing and re-shifting – the constant restructuring of global production networks in the electronics industry" in Drahokoupil, J, Andrijasevic, R. and Sacchetto, D. (Eds.) *Flexible workforces and low profit margins: electronics assembly between Europe and China*. Brussels: European Trade Union Institute.

6 – 13 April – Independent Study Week

During this week you will be expected to be working on the two upcoming assignments.

Session 5 - Data and Business

Key questions: What role can data play in business? What ethical issues does this present?

Required Reading:

George, G., Haas, M., and Pentland, A.. 2014. Big Data and Management: From the Editors. *Academy of Management Journal*. 57(2), 321-326.

Other Reading:

Schroeder, R. 2016. Big data business models: Challenges and opportunities, *Cogent Social Sciences*, 2(1).

The Banana Data Podcast. [BDN #2: Biased Data & the Perfect Answer, Multi-Armed Bandits, and the GPUs Behind Your Neural Networks.](#)

Session 6 - Business ethics and social responsibility

Key questions: What's the difference between legal and ethical behavior? What is corporate social responsibility (CSR)? Is it different to philanthropy? Do businesses have a social obligation? What motivates socially responsible behavior?

Required Reading:

Al Hashemi, A. 2012. Philanthropy versus social responsibility. Gulf News.com. 14 March. Available at: <https://gulfnews.com/business/analysis/philanthropy-versus-social-responsibility-1.993852>

Other Reading:

Goodwin Brown, E. 2020. Learning from social enterprises creating an inclusive circular economy.

GreenBiz.com. 13 March. Available at:

<https://www.greenbiz.com/article/learning-social-enterprises-creating-inclusive-circular-economy>

Session 7 - Management: Approaches & Skills

Key questions: What does (or should) management do? What strategies can management use? What are common management and leadership styles, and where are they most effective? What skills do good managers have?

Required Reading:

Surridge and Gillespie Chapters 6

Session 8 - Management: Organising Firms

Key questions: How is a firm organized? What are the benefits, challenges and limitations of different organizational structures? What is a Teal firm and how realistic is it?

Required Reading:

Surridge and Gillespie Chapter 23

Other Reading:

Laloux, F. 2015. *The Future of Management is Teal*. <https://www.strategy-business.com/article/00344>

Session 9 - Human Resources: Organising People

Key questions: What is the role of human resource management in planning, recruiting, and managing a workforce? How do you staff and recruit an organization? What's the point of training and development? What role does diversity play in an organization? What are the key features of the German labour market?

Required Reading:

Surridge and Gillespie Chapter 8

Other Reading:

Surridge and Gillespie Chapter 22

Session 10 - Your career in business

How do I prepare for studying and working in Germany? What's the difference between a "working student" and an "intern"? What goals do you want to set for your academic future? What is a growth mindset?

Required Reading:

Dweck, C. 2016. What Having a "Growth Mindset" Actually Means. *Harvard Business Review*, 13 January.

Hochnadel, A. and Finamore, D. 2015. Fixed and Growth Mindset in Education and How Grit Helps Students Persist in the Face of Adversity. *Journal of International Education Research*, 11(1), 47-50.

Session 11 - Student presentation. Revision and review.

You will present your final paper, followed by a discussion. Any open questions from the previous weeks will be addressed.

Attendance

You are expected to attend ALL classes. In cases of absence caused by illness, students must inform their instructor and the Program Director in advance of the scheduled class via email. You are expected to be proactive and make up for any work missed in arrangement with their instructor.

Spring 2020: Module B courses at OLIVE-Access start on Monday, March 23 and run until Friday, May 8 with spring break planned from Monday, April 6 – Monday, April 13.

Scheduled class times will be available online under the relevant course heading:

https://calendar.google.com/calendar/embed?src=berlin.bard.edu_9fjr6s9vhveromqck8fm243df0%40group.calendar.google.com&ctz=Europe%2FBerlin

Library and Book Purchase Policies

Effort has been taken to source materials freely available online. The Google Classroom will host these resources.