

BUSINESS STUDIES

Seminar Leader: Clementine Davies

Email: c.davies@berlin.bard.edu

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 17:30-18:30

Class times: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 15:45-17:15

Location: SR 12 Kuckhoffstr. 24

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 US Credits

Expected Workload: 240 hours

Course Description

The course is designed to build on the fundamental concepts, theories and vocabulary relevant to business studies and to allow you, as a student, to apply sound economic reasoning to analyze current issues. Moreover, the course aims to prepare you for making a competitive application to a master's program of your choosing at CEU, specifically by supporting you to identify and articulate your study and career goals in your statement of purpose.

Learning Objectives

The overarching objective of the course is to prepare students for entry to Masters programs, meaning to develop skills and capacities to ensure that you meet formal entry requirements. Specifically, by completing this course, you should be able to:

- Utilise subject-specific knowledge to help you make an educated decision about Masters' courses
- Write and speak on a variety of business topics
- Describe and explain current business-related events
- Apply test-taking skills to prepare you for standardised exams and tests (e.g. GRE, CEU maths test)
- Demonstrate appropriate writing skills to be able to convincingly present your interest in and fit for the Masters program of your choosing
- Demonstrate appropriate speaking and presentation skills to be able to convincingly present your interest in and fit for the Masters program of your choosing
- Interpret and implement feedback

Requirements

The course will be assessed through a combination of assignments which are designed to assess your understanding and application of the topics discussed in class, as well as prepare you for application to, and study in, a master's course.

You are required to complete the assigned weekly reading, to actively participate in class (i.e. to demonstrate knowledge of the reading in seminar discussion and to shape relevant lines of inquiry together with fellow seminar participants), to give brief presentations based on your reading, and to complete four short assignments (one multiple choice and short answer exam, one oral presentation, two response papers) and two assignments. Students will receive 30% of their grade for the class for

participation, 20% for the short assignments (5% each), 20% for a mid-term paper (5% for the outline and 15% for the paper), and 30% for a term paper.

All written assignments are expected to be delivered punctually in electronic format via Google Classroom.

Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the staunchest regard for academic integrity and expects good academic practice from students in their studies. In instances in which you fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

Attendance

Attendance at ALL classes is expected. More than two absences (that is absences from two sessions of 90 minutes) in a semester will significantly affect the participation grade for the course.

Please consult the Student Handbook for regulations governing periods of illness or leaves of absence.

Grade Breakdown

The percentage grade allotted to each assessment is listed in the table below.

| Assignment | Length | Weight | Deadline |
|--|-----------------|--------|-------------|
| Seminar Preparation and Participation | Weeks 1 – 7 | 15% | - |
| Seminar Preparation and Participation | Weeks 8 - 14 | 15% | - |
| A. Business Case Study | 300 - 500 words | 5% | Session 3.1 |
| B. Multiple choice and short answer exam | 45 minutes | 5% | Session 4.1 |
| C. Oral presentation | 8-10 minutes | 5% | Session 5.2 |
| D. Business Case Study | 300 – 500 words | 5% | Week 7 |
| E. Midterm Paper - Outline | 2 - 3 pages | 5% | |
| Midterm Paper – Draft | - | - | Week 9 |
| F. Midterm Paper - Final | 1,000 words | 15% | Week 10 |
| Final Paper - Draft | - | - | - |
| G. Final Paper | 2,000 words | 30% | Week 15 |

Assignments

Seminar Preparation and Participation: You are expected to attend lectures, complete the assigned readings, and to actively participate in class discussions.

A. Business Case Study I: You will be required to research a non-traditional business and present a short paper on how it differs from a traditional business model, and the associated risks and opportunities this presents. The assignment will be assessed on the structure of the paper, the thoroughness of the research, and connections to the content of the course and class discussions.

B. Multiple choice and short answer exam: Based on the topics of the preceding lectures, you will sit a 45 minutes multiple choice test.

C. Oral presentation: You will be required to present a response to an economic or business-related policy resulting from a current event (e.g. Coronavirus pandemic) and the subsequent impacts. You should present the policy, the issue it aims to tackle, and, if applicable, the outcomes. The assignment will be assessed on presentation skills, structure and coherence, thoroughness of research and depth of analysis.

D. Business Case Study II: You will again be required to research a (different) non-traditional business and present a short paper on how it differs from a traditional business model. The presentation should incorporate feedback from the previous case study presentation. The assignment will be assessed on the structure of the paper, the thoroughness of the research, and connections to the content of the course and class discussions and the interpretation and incorporation of feedback.

E. Midterm Paper Outline: Based on parameters set by the instructor, examples given, the course content, and following your own curiosity, you will be required to craft a research question and present an outline for the term paper.

F. Midterm Paper: Developing your outline, you will write a research paper. You will be required to submit a draft to the instructor for feedback prior to the submission date. You will be assessed on connections to course content, organisation and structure of the argument, coherence and language usage, thoroughness of research, use and quality of references, and how well the paper answers the research question.

G. Final Paper: Building on your midterm paper and on the feedback given by your instructor, you will extend your research paper. You will be required to submit a draft to the instructor for feedback prior to the submission date. As with the midterm paper, you will be assessed on connections to course content, organisation and structure of the argument, coherence and language usage, thoroughness of research, use and quality of references, and how well it answers the research question. You will also be assessed on your interpretation and incorporation of feedback.

Assignments and Learning objectives.

The following matrix outlines how the course and assignments aim to achieve the learning objectives.

| LEARNING OBJECTIVES | | ASSIGNMENTS | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Particip-ation | A | B | C | D | E | F | G |
| 1 | Gain business-specific knowledge to help you make an educated decision about Masters' courses | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | Write and speak on a variety of business topics | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | Describe and explain current business-related events | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | Apply test-taking skills to prepare you for standardised exams and tests (e.g. GRE, CEU maths test) | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | Demonstrate appropriate writing skills to be able to convincingly present your interest in and fit for the Masters program of your choosing | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | Demonstrate appropriate speaking and presentation skills to be able to convincingly present your interest in and fit for the Masters program of your choosing | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | Interpret and implement feedback | | | | | | | | |

Policy on Late Submission of Papers

Essays that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where an instructor

agrees to accept a late essay, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline and cannot receive a grade of higher than C. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment.

Schedule

Teaching starts: Monday, 31 August
Autumn Break: 19 - 23 October (1 week)
Completion Week: 14 - 18 December
Semester ends: Friday, 18 December

DETAILED SCHEDULE

The following schedule is to be used as a guide only. Readings and themes are subject to change. Ensure you check the google classroom for more information.

Session 1.1: Intro & Course Admin

An introduction to the syllabus, course structure and evaluation methods. We'll get to know each other, outline the topics covered in the course, and discuss the entry requirements for the master's programs.

Session 1.2: What do businesses do?

Guiding Questions: What do businesses do? What type of businesses are there?

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").

Session 2.1: Big questions about the economy

Guiding Questions: How do we define capitalism, the dominant economic system? How does it affect the way we live? Has it affected inequality?

Required Reading: Bowles et al 2017. The Economy: Economics for a changing world. Chapter 1.6. Capitalism defined, 1.7 Capitalism as an economic system, 1.10 Varieties of capitalism (Hereafter referred to as "CORE")

Session 2.2: Measuring economic success

Guiding Questions: How do we measure economic success?

Required Reading: CORE Chapter 1.2 Measuring Income and Living Standards and Callen, T., 2008. What is gross domestic product? Finance & Development, 45(4), (pages 48-49) .

Other Reading: Extract from Robert F Kennedy Speech March 18, 1968 on Material Poverty. [Link](#)

Session 3.1 and 3.2: Markets and when they fail

Guiding Questions: *What happens when markets fail? What role do governments play in the economy?*

Required Reading: Surridge and Gillespie. 2014. Chapter 20 (pages 227 - 249)

Or

Core Chapter 22 Economics, Politics and Public Policy, parts 22.1 The Government as an Economic Actor and 22.2 Government acting as a monopolist.

Session 4.1: Revision and in-class multiple choice test

Session 4.2: Government intervention

Guiding Questions: How do governments stabilise the economy?

Required Reading: Surridge and Gillespie, 2014 Chapter 20: Government Policy and the Business Cycle (pages 231 - 239)

Session 5.1: Political economy

Guiding Questions: What makes some countries more attractive to do business in?

Required Reading: Surridge and Gillespie, 2014. Chapter 21L: Other external influences on business activity (Pages 252 - 271)

Session 5.2: Student Presentations and Discussion

Session 6.1 and 6.2: International Trade

Guiding Questions: Why do we trade?

Required Reading: Reinert, K.A., 2011. Chapter 1 in *An introduction to international economics: new perspectives on the world economy*. Cambridge University Press. (Pages 1 - 15)

Other Reading: IMF, 2001. Global Trade Liberalization and the Developing Countries

Session 7.1: Globalisation and Trade

Guiding Questions: What is globalisation and what impact has it had on the world?

Required Reading: Vanham, P., 2019, A brief history of globalization in World Economic Forum. (Pages 1 - 10) and Tooze, A., 2020, The death of globalisation has been announced many times. But this is a perfect storm in The Guardian. June 2.

Session 7.2: Multinational Corporations

Guiding Questions: What is unique about multinational corporations? What conditions enable them to thrive?

Required Reading: Surridge and Gillespie, 2014. Chapter 19: Business Structure and Size (Pages 216 - 226) and Chanda, 2003. The New Leviathans (Pages 1 - 3)

WEEK 8: AUTUMN BREAK

Session 9.1: Managing a global workforce

Guiding Questions: What are the labour management challenges in international businesses?

Required Reading: Cushen, J. and Thompson, P., 2016. Financialization and value: why labour and the labour process still matter. *Work, employment and society*, 30(2), (Pages 352 - 365).

Session 9.2: Summary and revision of first half

Sessions 10.1 and 10.2: Introducing the Digital Economy

Guiding Questions: What is the digital economy? How is it different from the 'real' economy?

Required Reading: Carlsson, B. (2004). The Digital Economy: what is new and what is not?. *Structural change and economic dynamics*, 15(3), 245-264 and Schwab, K. 2015. The Fourth Industrial Revolution: what it means, how to respond. World Economic Forum.

Other Reading: The Economist Intelligence Unit: Digital Economy. [The State of the Global Digital Economy](#)

Session 11.1: Internet Infrastructure

Guiding Questions: How has the internet changed the economy?

Required Reading: Peitz, M. and Waldfogel, J. eds., 2012. **“Introduction”** in Peitz, M. and Waldfogel, J. eds., 2012. The Oxford handbook of the digital economy. Oxford University Press (4 pages).

Other reading: Greenstein, S. 2012. “Internet infrastructure” in Peitz, M. and Waldfogel, J. eds., 2012. The Oxford handbook of the digital economy. Oxford University Press. (

Session 11.2: Digitalisation and the future of work

Guiding Questions: How does (and how will) the digital economy impact work and employment?

Required Reading: Scholz, T., 2017. "Digital labor in the shadows: Amazon Mechanical Turk" in Uberworked and underpaid: How workers are disrupting the digital economy. John Wiley & Sons. (Pages 25 - 32)

Session 12.1: Case Studies: Tech Companies and Employment

Guiding Questions: How have companies like Taskrabbit, Uber and Mechanical Turk changed employment practices?

Required Reading: TBC - to be determined by student interest.

Session 12.2: Digital economies and monopolies

Guiding Questions: Why do digital economies lead to monopolies?

Required Reading: Hindman, M., 2018. "Chapter 1: Rethinking the Attention Economy" in The Internet trap: How the digital economy builds monopolies and undermines democracy. Princeton University Press. (Pg 1 - 15)

Session 13.1: Case Study: Digital Industry and Monopolies

Guiding Questions: Which companies have monopolistic characteristics and how do they reach this stage?

Required Reading: TBC

Session 13.2: Platform Competition

Guiding Questions: Are platforms the future of internet companies?

Required Reading: Hagiu, A. 2012. “Software Platforms” in Peitz, M. and Waldfogel, J. eds., 2012. The Oxford handbook of the digital economy. Oxford University Press.

Other Reading: Evans, D.S., Hagi, A. and Schmalensee, R., 2008. Invisible engines: how software platforms drive innovation and transform industries (p. 408). The MIT Press.

Session 14.1: Modern Management - Agile Manifesto (Guest Lecture - Peter Talbot)

Guiding Questions: How are management styles changing?

Required Reading: Drummond, C. 2020. Is the Agile Manifesto still a thing? Atlassian Agile Coach. Available at <https://www.atlassian.com/agile/manifesto>

Session 14.2: Surveillance Capitalism

Guiding Questions: How is data used and what value does it have?

Required Reading: Zuboff, S., 2019. Part i: The Definition, and Chapter 1: Introduction in The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power. Profile Books. (Pages 8 - 31)

Session 15.1: Case Studies: Data as a resource

Guiding Questions: How do companies make money from data?

Required Reading: Eddy, M. 2012. "How companies turn your data into money" in PCMag UK. Available at: <https://uk.pcmag.com/features/117876/how-companies-turn-your-data-into-money> (Up until "Dropping out of the data economy") and Cuthbertson, A. 2020. "[Instagram illegally harvested biometric data of millions of users, lawsuit claims](#)" in The Independent. 12 August.

Session 15.2: Digital Skills

Guiding Questions: What skills are necessary to thrive in the digital economy?

Required Reading: Kispeter, E., 2018. What digital skills do adults need to succeed in the workplace now and in the next 10 years. (Executive Summary, pages 4 - 7.)

McKinsey Report. 2017. The Future of Work (4 pages)

Roy, A. 2019. [What are the new foundational skills of the digital economy?](#) TechWireAsia.

Essay Deadlines

All written assignments, including outlines, should be submitted online via Google Classroom. Presentations accompanying oral presentations should be uploaded to google classroom after the presentation. Grades and feedback will be posted either by email or Google Classroom.

Grades Submission

All grades are submitted digitally to the Registrar's Office in a template provided in advance. Grades are submitted midterm and at the end of term.

Library and Book Purchase Policies

Readings will be available online in the Google Classroom. There is no obligation to purchase books for this course.