

GlobalMBA Thesis Syllabus

Instructors: Professor Lothar Cerny, Professor Alojzy Nowak, Professor Harald Sander, Professor Jeff Steagall, Prof. Oliver Schnusenberg

Office:

Telephone:

FAX:

email:

homepage:

Class Hours:

Office Hours:

I. TEXTBOOKS, ETC.

None.

II. PURPOSE OF COURSE

The thesis, including its submission and defense, is a required component of the GlobalMBA program. The purpose of the thesis is to allow students to learn how to conduct a deep, thoughtful, creative investigation of developments in and strategies of major global industries that is properly-grounded in academic methodology. Moreover, due to the intercultural nature of the GlobalMBA, all theses must be conducted by multi-country teams. Learning to work in such a diverse team over an extended period of time is an essential skill for international business. Individual theses are not allowed. The teams are expected to perform as professional consultancy team. As such they will build upon work of previous GlobalMBA cohorts and make their research available to future GlobalMBA cohorts. It is strongly encouraged that the teams link with the investigated industry, including consultancy activities. The terms of such consultancy in conjunction with the thesis, however, must be approved by the GlobalMBA directors.

III. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of the thesis and its defense, the student will be able to:

- Demonstrate the ability to conduct a large-scale academic research project with real-world application
- Demonstrate the ability to function effectively over time in an internationally-diverse team
- Demonstrate the ability to defend research orally

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students will form international teams and select thesis themes during the first term of the GlobalMBA. Professor Sander will facilitate that work, and may also get faculty from any of the GlobalMBA schools involved at any time. The thesis proposal is due by May 1 (during the semester in Warsaw). Each team must submit the following to Prof. Sander (gh.sander@t-online.de) and Dagmar Schall (dagmar.schall@fh-koeln.de) at CUAS via email:

- Table showing team member names and thesis topic
- One-page abstract summarizing the scope of the thesis.

Professor Sander will then assign each thesis group a supervisor (first examiner) from among the GlobalMBA directors. Each supervisor will select another faculty member to serve as a second examiner of the thesis.

From this point, thesis communication will occur primarily through the GlobalMBA Blackboard site. By June 1, the supervisors will provide feedback on the proposals to the teams. Teams will then conduct research and write their theses advised by the advisors. However, they are encouraged to draw upon the expertise of all GlobalMBA faculty, as appropriate.

The thesis should be about 30 – 40 pages per team member and follow the style sheet provided by CUAS.

The completed thesis must be submitted October 1 to Ms. Anne Sheridan at UNF, as follows:

- Four (4) hard copies (glue binding) delivered.

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- Ms. Sheridan will get archival copies to FHK and WU
- Ms. Sheridan will distribute one hard copy to the supervisor and second examiner
- One (1) electronic copy sent as an attachment in Word format. This version will be used to check for web-based plagiarism (see related section below)
- Ms. Sheridan will distribute copies to all program directors and staff
- One (1) electronic copy sent as an attachment in PDF format
- Ms. Sheridan will distribute copies to all program directors and staff
- The PDF of the thesis will be made available via the GlobalMBA Blackboard and the alumni-Webpage to all past, present and future cohorts of the GlobalMBA.

One full day (date to be determined, depending on class schedules) will then be devoted to the mandatory thesis defense, which will be open to all faculty from all institutions, some of whom may participate via teleconferencing or other media. Students will briefly present their work (15 minutes). Next will follow a question-and-answer session, during which anyone in attendance may ask questions of the team. Questions may relate to the thesis, or to general knowledge that should have been obtained in the GlobalMBA program. With the permission of the students, videotapes of the defenses will be made, so that those unable to participate during the session may see the results. Teams that have an outstanding may be requested to allow the video to become part of the GlobalMBA website, so that future cohorts may see the expected standard.

V. GRADING

The thesis grade will consist of the written thesis (2/3) and the defense (1/3). In keeping with the spirit of the group thesis, the written portion of the thesis will result in the same grade for all team members. However, variations in performances during the defense may result in variations in grades for that portion of the course. Missing thesis deadlines will result in severe grading penalties.

VI. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Working together is a wonderful way to learn, and your instructor encourages it. You may (and should!) work with others in this class on any activity except examinations. All examinations, whether in-class or take-home, must be individual efforts.

Plagiarism is taking someone else's work and passing it off as your own. Plagiarism includes taking phrases, sentences, or paragraphs from someone else's writing and using them in your own writing without providing true attribution of their source. Avoiding plagiarism, of course, does not mean neglecting to conduct solid research. It is appropriate to read what various scholars and experts have learned about an issue before you form your own conclusions about it. However, you must ensure that you understand the literature. At a minimum, students should rephrase the literature's content, rather than quoting it verbatim. This practice also helps to ensure student understanding of the issue, as you cannot write intelligently unless you do know your subject. Another way to avoid plagiarism is to ensure that you utilize a large number of sources, so that your knowledge goes beyond that of any particular book or article.

The internet now provides students with the opportunity to purchase term papers or otherwise copy someone else's work. Turning any work that is not your own is a violation of academic integrity.

With regard to these and all other issues of academic integrity, students are also expected to adhere to the code of conduct as outlined in the UNF catalog. Anyone caught violating the academic integrity code will be disciplined fully.

VII. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a disability, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which requires a classroom accommodation or auxiliary aid(s), please inform me of your needs during the first week of class so that I may take appropriate action. You should also notify the Office of Disabled Services Programs at 620-2769 concerning any needs you may have.

VIII. THESIS DEFENSE ETIQUETTE

Students are expected to remain polite during classroom discussions and business visits. Even during heated debates, you must treat your classmates with respect. Violation of this policy will result in a reduction of your class participation grade. For example, you should not make derogatory remarks about your classmates' ideas. Instead, explain why you think they are wrong, backing up your viewpoint with sound economic analysis and refrain from personal attacks. Another example is being quiet while someone else (including your instructor!) has the floor.

You may *not* use cellular telephones or pagers in class. If you bring them to class, they *must* be turned off. If there is an emergency situation that requires you to have an active telephone or pager in class, you *must* notify your instructor *in advance* before that your equipment will be turned on. In such cases, pagers (and cell phones, if possible) should be set to vibrate, not to sound an alarm. Violation of this policy will result in your being asked to leave the 3

classroom for the remainder of the period. Repeated violations will be reported to the appropriate authorities and will result in disciplinary action.