1. Basic description

Name of the course: Culture and Business in North of Africa and Middle East
Area: International business
Profile: in World
Academic year: 2011-2012
Year: 3rd
Term: 2nd
Degree / Course: Bachelor’s Degree in International Business and Marketing
Code: 40201
Number of credits: 4
Total number of hours committed: 100
Teaching language: English
Professor: José Luis Aznar, Commercial Lawyer and SME Consultant

Timetable: Monday 13:15-15:30
            Friday (seminar) 10:05-11:00

2. Presentation of the course

This course deals with the issues that today’s Export Sales Managers and Area Managers face when negotiating with their counterparts (customers, commercial agents, distributors and partners) in North of Africa and Middle East. These issues are quite related to business culture and communication and how history, former colonialism, vicinity, religion, social and political developments, etc. do actually influence the world of business in the Region.

This course also deals with economic issues (trade agreements, trade flow, business opportunities, import, investment and legal regulations) the knowledge of which is essential to successfully achieve business goals.
3. Competences to be achieved in the course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General competences</th>
<th>Specific competences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental competences</td>
<td>Disciplinary competences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.I.2. Ability to relate concepts and knowledge from different areas.</td>
<td>E.D.3. Understand and recognise the geopolitical, social and cultural dimension of a wide range of economic activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General personal competences</td>
<td>E.D.4. Provide an economic and political perspective of different areas in the world and facilitate a critical comprehension of their current processes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.P.1. Ability to adapt, lead and work in a group that is multicultural, interdisciplinary, competitive, changing and complex in nature.</td>
<td>E.D.5. Identify the economic, cultural, political, legal, democratic and technological environments that may represent opportunities and threats for the development of business at a worldwide level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generic systemic competences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.S.2. Ability to observe.</td>
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<tr>
<td>G.S.7. Promotion of and respect toward multicultural values: respect, equality, solidarity, commitment.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above competences interrelate with the basic competences set out in Royal Decree 1393/2007, namely:
a. competence to **comprehend knowledge**, on the basis of general secondary education
b. competence to **apply knowledge** to day-to-day work in international management or marketing, in particular, ability to develop and defend arguments and to solve problems
c. competence to **gather and interpret** relevant data, enabling the development of critical judgements on the economic and social reality
d. competence to **communicate and transmit information** (ideas, problems, solutions) to a specialised and non-specialised public
e. competence to **develop learning activities** in a relatively autonomous manner.

In order to establish a correspondence between the basic competences and those developed in the degree, these are grouped according to two criteria. Thus, the competences developed in the subject are structured into those that are seen as a development or specification of basic competences and those that define the professional profile of the graduate, with respect to general and specific competences.

**Basic competence:** **understanding of knowledge**

I. General competences G.S.2  
II. Specific competences E.D.3

**Basic competence:** **application of knowledge**

I. General competences G.I.2  
II. Specific competences E.D.5

**Basic competence:** **gather and interpret data**

I. General competences G.I.1

**Basic competence:** **communicate and transmit information**

II. Specific competences E.P.13, E.P.16

**Competences that define the professional profile which are not included under basic competences**

In general, these competences combine the following key elements for professionalising students in the area of international business:

- provide students with the capacity to adapt to dynamic teams and environments

- provide students with the capacity to create their own integral vision of the operation of an international business project
- provide students with the capacity to take complex decisions and carry out negotiation processes

- provide students with the capacity to adapt to dynamic teams and environments

I. General competences G.P.1, G.S.7
II. Specific competences E.D.2, E.D.4, E.P.20

Own competences of the subject

Capacity for adapting to and to empathise with a business environment operating in North Africa and Middle East.

4. Contents

General:
- Understanding Middle Eastern and North African society, geopolitics and culture. Specific elements of economic and business organisation.

Countries:
- Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia (Maghreb)
- Libya, Egypt
- Lebanon, Syria, Jordan
- Israel
- Iraq, Kuwait
- Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Qatar
- Iran

The role of Turkey in the transition process to democracy

Cultural issues
- Communication across cultures: bridging the gaps
- Stereotypical about Arab Countries: Don’t pull Arabs in the same compartment
- The Arabs: A Nation, Different States, historical & political evolution & interests
- The Arab Language: Classical Arab. Variety of standards and dialects. Arab words in the Spanish Vocabulary. Country of Origin effect (Spain)
- The common bond of Islam: Not only a religion but a way of life
- How to negotiate with....
- Respect their religious beliefs
- Avoid doing business in Ramadan
- Risk-free areas of conversation
- Business: pricing and bargaining
- How to behave in an Arab's office

- Women in the Muslim world
- Other players in the Region: Turkey, Israel and Iran

**Economic Issues:**

- The influence of neighbourhood, history and politics on Foreign Trade with North African and Middle East Countries.

- General Trade flow between West and Middle East Countries: importing petroleum products and exporting all type of goods

- Limited trade between North African and Middle East Countries.


**Specific**

**Country per country analysis (indicative list)**

- Country Introduction.
- Country economy and economic sectors
- Foreign trade: Import–export figures and partners
- Doing Business.
- The economic cities and the industrial areas.
- Import Regulations
- Technical Regulations
- Investing Regulations
- Trade and Legal issues: Agency and Distributorship Contracts
- Free Trade Agreements with other countries
- Social and family issues: Ethnic groups, Religions
- Women's role family life, business and politics
- Trade Languages
- Other
### 5. Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment elements</th>
<th>Time period</th>
<th>Type of assessment</th>
<th>Assessment agent</th>
<th>Type of activity</th>
<th>Grouping</th>
<th>Weight (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>Throughout the course</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Conceptual and synthesis</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case discussions</td>
<td>Throughout the course</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Self-eval</td>
<td>Application and synthesis</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and presentations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Co-eval</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Project</td>
<td>Every two weeks</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>A&amp;S</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partial Submittals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Project</td>
<td>Friday 16 March</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>A&amp;S</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Submittals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>(A minimum score of 4 is required)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>C&amp;S</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Taking the final exam and obtaining a minimum score of 4 are necessary conditions in order to pass the course.

### September extraordinary evaluation

- **Case discussions and case presentations** 10%

  If the case studies were done and presented during the term, the grade will be applied in September. In case any or all were not done during the regular term, their submittal will be required at the time of September's exam.

- **Project** 40%

  The project's completion and submittal is a necessary condition to pass the course. If the project was finished and submitted during the term, the grade will be applied in September. In case it was not completed successfully during the regular term, its submittal will be required at the time of September's exam.

- **Final exam** 50%

  Doing the final exam is a necessary condition to pass the course. In case of not attending the exam, the student will receive a “not presented” grade.

  The minimum score in the final exam in order to compute with the other grading elements (case discussions and team’s project) is 4. In case of not attaining this score of 4, the course’s final grade will be the final exam’s score.

### 6. Bibliography and learning resources
Basic bibliography

Books
http://issuu.com/globalmarketing1/docs/librohowtonegotiate
How to negotiate successfully in 50 countries

http://www.traderscity.com/abcg/culture.htm
Arabian Business and Cultural Guide

Understanding the Arab Culture (Working With Other Cultures)

http://www.amazon.com/Iran-Culture-essential-customs-culture/dp/1857334701
Iran - Culture Smart: the essential guide to customs & culture

http://www.amazon.com/Israel-Culture-essential-customs-culture/dp/1857333446/ref=sr_1_3?ie=UTF8&s=books&sr=8-3&qid=1321968373
Israel - Culture Smart: the essential guide to customs & culture

Some Web sites

http://www.geert-hofstede.com/  Geert Hofstede “Cultural Dimensions”

http://www.cyborlink.com/  International Business Etiquette and Manners


http://www.al-bab.com/arab/about.htm  Al-Bab aims to introduce non-Arabs to the Arabs and their culture


Supplementary bibliography

The Economist Intelligence Unit Country

Legal Issues
7. Methodology

Lectures

Students are expected to be prepared and participate actively in class discussions. Therefore, students must read prior to the class session the material related to the content of the session as specified in section 8.

Seminars

Students of a specific seminar group will form subgroups of 4 people that will work on the case study analyses and discussions and will elaborate and present the Country Project. Case discussions will be evaluated both as a group and on an individual basis. The Country Project will be evaluated and graded on group basis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IN CLASSROOM</th>
<th>DIRECTED (OUTSIDE CLASSROOM)</th>
<th>AUTONOMOUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professor:</td>
<td>Professor:</td>
<td>Student:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Professor's exposition</td>
<td>- Reading and assessment of case study reports.</td>
<td>- Reading of material before class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Doubts and questions resolutions</td>
<td>- Reading and assessment of Country Project sections.</td>
<td>- Personal individual study of the subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student:</td>
<td>Professor:</td>
<td>Student:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Case study discussions</td>
<td>- Case study preparation</td>
<td>- Preparation for the final exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Country Project submittal</td>
<td>- Country Project elaboration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Final exam</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. Scheduling activities

1) Allocation of hours between theory and practical lessons:
   2 h of lecture and 1 h of seminar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activities outside the Class room</th>
<th>Activities on the Class room</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Session</td>
<td>Monday 9 January</td>
<td>Lecture: Introduction to the course; Overview: North African &amp; Middle East. Historical, social, economic and political facts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>Friday 13 January</td>
<td>Organizing group formation</td>
<td>Group formation and Country Plan's proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Session</td>
<td>Monday 16 January</td>
<td>Reading Preparation of Country Plan's proposal</td>
<td>Lecture &amp; Case Study discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>Friday 20 January</td>
<td>Work on Country Plan</td>
<td>Asking questions &amp; Solving doubts about Country Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Session</td>
<td>Monday 23 January</td>
<td>Reading Preparation of Country Plan's proposal</td>
<td>Lecture &amp; Case Study discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>Friday 27 January</td>
<td>Work on Country Plan</td>
<td>1st partial submittal of Country Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Session</td>
<td>Monday 30 January</td>
<td>Reading Preparation of Country Plan's proposal</td>
<td>Lecture &amp; Case Study discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>Friday 03 February</td>
<td>Reading Work on Country Plan</td>
<td>Teacher comments on 1st submittal of Country Plan Discussion on Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Session</td>
<td>Monday 06 February</td>
<td>Reading Work on Country Plan</td>
<td>Lecture &amp; Case Study discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>Friday 10 February</td>
<td>Reading Work on Country Plan</td>
<td>Asking questions &amp; Solving doubts about Country Plan Discussion on Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Session</td>
<td>Monday 13 February</td>
<td>Reading Work on Country Plan</td>
<td>Lecture &amp; Case Study discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>Friday 17 February</td>
<td>Reading Work on Country Plan</td>
<td>2nd partial submittal of Country Plan Discussion on Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Session</td>
<td>Monday 20 February</td>
<td>Reading Work on Country Plan</td>
<td>Lecture &amp; Case Study discussion Discussion on Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>Friday 24 February</td>
<td>Reading Work on Country Plan</td>
<td>Teacher comments on 2nd submittal of Country Plan Discussion on Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Session</td>
<td>Monday 27 February</td>
<td>Reading Work on Country Plan</td>
<td>Lecture &amp; Case Study discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>Friday 02 March</td>
<td>Reading Work on Country Plan</td>
<td>Submittal of Country Plan (Final Draft)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Session</td>
<td>Monday 05 March</td>
<td>Reading Work on Country Plan</td>
<td>Lecture &amp; Case Study discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>Session</td>
<td>Comments of Teacher on Country Plan's Final Draft</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday 09 March</td>
<td>Reading Work on Country Plan</td>
<td>Discussion on Reading</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 12 March</td>
<td>Reading Work on Country Plan</td>
<td>Lecture &amp; Case Study discussion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 16 March</td>
<td>Work on Country Plan</td>
<td>Submittal of Country Plan (Final)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Notes**

- Sessions on Mondays are both theoretical and practical.

- "Work on Country Plan" is both an individual activity and a Group activity, as team members organize their respective converging tasks. Basically, Groups of max 3 members. Allocated countries or group of countries according to primarily students’ choice.

- Readings: Newspaper of Magazine Articles about:
  - Social, economical, political issues
  - Successful / unsuccessful Companies experiences

  all of them about events related to North Africa and Middle East.