



## **BS/ET/MG 362 MANAGING SMALL BUSINESS ENTERPRISES WITH A FARM-TO-TABLE FOCUS**

IES Abroad Siena

**DESCRIPTION:** The aim of this interdisciplinary business course is understanding the world of Small Business Enterprises. In light of the growing popularity of farm-to-table business and their prevalence in the Tuscan region surrounding Siena, there will be a specific focus on this topic. Students will learn how companies can achieve the benefits of moving toward a farm-to-table model such as gaining new customers, leading innovations, helping the local economy, improving general welfare of the community by decreasing the amount of fuel used to move around resources, and achieving greater scale and scope.

The aim of this course is to provide students with both a theoretical and practical understanding of managing small firms. It will consider key aspects like facing big challenges when planning delivery, organizing logistics, dealing with scarcity of resources, and addressing marketing and communication issues related to consumers' food decisions and their cultural approach to food.

The course will aim to allow students to learn the key concepts of business and of farm-to-table start-ups. To achieve this, we will discuss some of the most brilliant and successful Italian business cases. The course will introduce state-of-the-art approaches to quality, risk, and compliance in business management.

The course uses interactive methods aimed at transmitting professional skills, abilities and attitudes which foster learning, teamwork, conflict resolution and leadership.

**CREDITS:** 3 credits

**CONTACT HOURS:** 44 hours

**LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION:** English

**PREREQUISITES:** None

### **METHOD OF PRESENTATION:**

- Lectures (including PowerPoint projections)
- Discussions
- Case studies
- Group project work
- Student presentations

### **REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:**

- Active class participation in class discussions (10%)
- Homework assignment, 5-pages paper (20%)
- Group Project 40%
  - Midterm project outline and presentation (15%)
  - Final oral presentation, executive summary and slides (25%)
- Final Exam 30%

### **HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT: (20%)**

Considering the theoretical knowledge based on lectures and the practical hints coming from field studies, students have to write a 5-page paper based on a case study they have previously chosen. They must analyze strengths and weaknesses and suggest how it can make changes to be more successful.

Students must upload their papers.

Paper must be 5 pages long:

- A4 sized paper



- times new roman, size 12
- double space
- margins: 2,5 cm on the top, 2 cm on the left, right and bottom

Insert page numbers and your name on each page.

Footnotes are allowed (times new roman, size 10)  
Reference list at the end is mandatory

#### **GROUP PROJECT:**

The group project will help students (in groups of at least three) apply specific business strategies. Projects also allow students to demonstrate their ability to organize and carry out a major piece of work. Students will be asked to propose a new business and write a business plan using the tools learned in class. Student should include in their final project some aspect studied during the field trips.

#### *Midterm project evaluation*

The project midterm analysis is meant to provide a check on progress, and to ensure the adequate preparation for the final presentation. During Week 8, each group will present in class an outline of the project (a PPT presentation of at least 12 slides - each student has to present a part of it) and the further steps. Students will be able to ask questions on how their work is going and on how to define the further stages.

#### *Oral presentation of the final project*

The course finishes with the presentation of the final project in Week 11. Students must hand in the 30+ slides PPT presentation the day before the first day of presentations. Each group will also have 30/35 minutes to present their work in class (students can prepare a, shorter, more usable version for this in-class presentation) and answer questions from the instructor and other groups. Each member presents a part of the plan.

Student are also asked to write an executive summary of 12 pages that would outline the project in detail:

- A4 sized paper
- times new roman, size 12
- double space
- margins: 2,5 cm on the top, 2 cm on the left, right and bottom

Insert page numbers and your name on each page.

Footnotes are allowed (times new roman, size 10)  
Reference list at the end is mandatory.

Deadline for group executive summary: the day before the first day of final presentation

Among 25% of total value assigned to final presentation:

- Final Presentation will count for 15%
- Executive summary 10%

The final project must include the following components:

1. Business name and mission
2. Marketing plan
  - i. Market analysis
  - ii. Brand description



3. Financial plan
  - i. Initial financing
  - ii. Cash flow
4. Potential belonging to a designation of origin (why or why not?)
5. Operating plan
  - a. Location and facilities
  - b. Supply chain path to market
  - c. Staffing
  - d. Product safety and quality
6. Ethical and social considerations
  - a. Stakeholders' and shareholders' benefits

The project work will be evaluated in terms of the following criteria:

#### BASIC CRITERIA

Methodology  
Completion of the project  
Quality of the work  
Structure of the work (clear, consistent and understandable)  
Understanding of the problems

#### ADDITIONAL CRITERIA

Knowledge of the literature  
Solution of any conceptual problems  
Amount of work

#### EXCEPTIONAL CRITERIA

Evidence of originality

#### FINAL EXAM:

The final exam is a written, closed book, in-class exam which consists of short answer questions. All the topics and materials covered both in class and in field studies will be part of the final exam. Each answer must have a length of approximately 200 words (between 180 and 250). Students are asked to answer few questions they choose among several proposed questions.

#### LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- Understand the fundamental concepts and principles of small business management
- Understand theoretical aspects and its application to modern management practice by learning from business cases
- Define a suitable business model for small enterprises
- Write a business plan, deal with the supply chain and define their optimal path to market
- Identify the key competencies required of effective farm-to-table managers
- Carry out the development and practice of the fundamental management competencies related to local agricultural enterprises
- Demonstrate critical thinking when presented with related managerial issues and problems.

#### ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Successful progress of the program depends on the full cooperation of both students and faculty members: regular attendance and active participation in class are essential parts of the learning process. Attendance at and participation in all class meetings are required. More than TWO unjustified absences (that are not medically excused with a written certificate of the doctor or caused by serious sudden family and/or personal occurrences, as for example death of a family member) will result in a lowering of your grade by two percentage points for every unexcused absence.

**PLAGIARISM:**

According to the Handbook of the Modern Language Association ("MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers 7th edition", 2009):

*"Plagiarism involves two kinds of wrongs. Using another person's ideas, information, or expressions without acknowledging that person's work constitutes intellectual theft. Passing off another person's ideas, information, or expressions as your own to get a better grade or gain some other advantage constitutes fraud. Plagiarism is sometimes a moral and ethical offense rather than a legal one since some instances of plagiarism fall outside the scope of copyright infringement, a legal offense."*

Please note that word-for-word copying is not the only form of plagiarism.

Citing and quoting are two simple ways to avoid plagiarism

**CONTENT:**

Week	Content	Assignments
<b>Week 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explanation of Homework assignment and deadline determination</li> <li>- Introduction: plan, structure and organization of course</li> <li>- What is farm-to-table business? An introduction</li> <li>- Management and organizations: understanding management context, constraints and challenges</li> </ul>	<p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TROBE, Helen La. Farmers' markets: consuming local rural produce. <i>International Journal of Consumer Studies</i>, 2001, 25.3: 181-192.</li> <li>• BROWN, Cheryl; MILLER, Stacy. The impacts of local markets: a review of research on farmers markets and community supported agriculture (CSA). <i>American Journal of Agricultural Economics</i>, 2008, 90.5: 1298-1302.</li> <li>• BUCKETT, Maurice. <i>An Introduction to Farm Organisation &amp; Management</i>. Elsevier, 2012. (Ch 1; pp. 1-8)</li> <li>• RENTING, Henk; MARSDEN, Terry K.; BANKS, Jo. Understanding alternative food networks: exploring the role of short food supply chains in rural development. <i>Environment and planning A</i>, 2003, 35.3: 393-411.</li> </ul>
<b>Week 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local Food in Italy: general overview and case studies</li> <li>- Crafting and executing a business strategy</li> </ul>	<p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VECCHIO, Riccardo, et al. Local food at Italian farmers' markets: three case studies. <i>International Journal of Sociology of Agriculture and Food</i>, 2010, 17.2: 122-139.</li> <li>• BLACKBURN, Robert A.; HART, Mark; WAINWRIGHT, Thomas. Small business performance: business, strategy and owner-manager characteristics. <i>Journal of small business and enterprise development</i>, 2013, 20.1: 8-27.</li> <li>• CASPRINI, Elena, et al. I choose my business model! A cross-national analysis of business</li> </ul>

		<p>model choice in family firms. <i>EuroMed Journal of Business</i>, 2016, 11.2.</p>
<p><b>Week 3</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Small business management overview</li> <li>- Business plan for small enterprises</li> <li>- Building a resilient organization capable of good strategy execution in the food industry</li> <li>- Managing the innovation in farm-to-table business</li> </ul>	<p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scarborough, N.M. and J. R. Cornwall (2014) <i>Entrepreneurship and Effective Small Business Management</i> (11th Edition). Pearson/Prentice-Hall (Ch. 1; pp.29-64. Ch.3 pp. 99-113. Ch.8 pp. 263-300).</li> <li>• VORLEY, Bill; LUNDY, Mark; MACGREGOR, James. Business models that are inclusive of small farmers. <i>Agro-industries for Development, Wallingford, UK: CABI for FAO and UNIDO</i>, 2009, 186-222.</li> </ul> <p>Suggested extra reading for the first three weeks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ZANNI, Lorenzo. Leading firms and wine clusters: understanding the evolution of the Tuscan wine business through an international comparative analysis. <i>FrancoAngeli</i>, 2004. (Ch 3 pp 50-56; Ch 4 pp.61-71; 6 pp. 113-132; Ch 7 pp. 193-211)</li> <li>• Radjou, Navi. <i>Jugaad innovation. Think frugal, be flexible, generate breakthrough growth.</i> Wiley, 2012 (Ch 1-4; pp 1-85)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 4</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Managing small business in Italy: Core concepts, context and analytical tools, marketing strategies (with a focus on Tuscany)</li> <li>- The 3 keys to small business management and development of local areas: People, Planning, Places</li> </ul>	<p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MATTIACCI, Alberto; ZAMPI, Vincenzo. Brunello di Montalcino: how a typical wine could revive a poor country-village. <i>British Food Journal</i>, 2004, 106.10/11: 767-778.</li> <li>• MATTIACCI, Alberto; NOSI, Costanza; ZANNI, Lorenzo. Wine business in Tuscany: evidence on entrepreneurial models and local systems. In: <i>3rd International Wine Business Research Conference, Montpellier</i>. 2006.</li> <li>• Scarborough, N.M. and J. R. Cornwall (2014) <i>Entrepreneurship and Effective Small Business Management</i> (11th Edition). Pearson/Prentice-Hall (Ch. 22; pp.769-808)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 5</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduction to the balanced scorecard and performance measurement systems</li> </ul>	<p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KAPLAN, Robert S. Conceptual foundations of the balanced scorecard. <i>Handbooks of management accounting research</i>, 2008, 3: 1253-1269.</li> <li>• COE, Nicholas; LETZA, Steve. Two decades of the balanced scorecard: A review of developments. <i>The Poznan University of Economics Review</i>, 2014, 14.1: 63.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Week 6</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supply chain management and coordination: focus on food supply chain</li> <li>- Farm-to-table supply chain</li> <li>- Farm-to-table food marketing</li> </ul>	<p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scarborough, N.M. and J. R. Cornwall (2014) <i>Entrepreneurship and Effective Small Business Management</i> (11th Edition). Pearson/Prentice-Hall (Ch. 9; pp. 301-326. Ch.10 pp. 333-370. Ch.19 pp.655-677)</li> <li>• TIPPINS, Michael J.; RASSULI, Kathleen M.; HOLLANDER, Stanley C. An assessment of direct farm-to-table food marketing in the USA. <i>International Journal of Retail &amp; Distribution Management</i>, 2002, 30.7: 343-353.</li> </ul> <p><i>Suggested readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DA SILVA, Carlos A. <i>Agro-industries for development</i>. CABI, 2009 (Ch. 6 pp. 186-218)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 7</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Farm-to-table Business and quality management</li> <li>- Farm-to-table business and compliance management</li> <li>- CSR, sustainability and local development in farm-to-table business</li> <li>- Qualivita Foundation case study: meeting with General Director</li> </ul>	<p><i>Reading:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scarborough, N. and Cornwall, J. <i>Entrepreneurship: Effective Small Business Management</i>. 11th Edition. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Pearson/Prentice-Hall, 2015 (Ch. 21; pp. 711-741)</li> <li>• DA SILVA, Carlos A. <i>Agro-industries for development</i>. CABI, 2009 (Ch. 7 pp. 223- 242)</li> <li>• Scarborough, N.M. and J. R. Cornwall (2014) <i>Entrepreneurship and Effective Small Business Management</i> (11th Edition). Pearson/Prentice-Hall (Ch. 2; pp.65-98)</li> </ul> <p>Deadline: Homework assignment - (20%)</p>
<p><b>Week 8</b></p>	<p>Midterm exams</p>	
<p><b>Week 9</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Small Business Enterprises and retail</li> <li>- Quality Labels and Policies</li> <li>- Sustainability and local development in farm-to-table business (with case studies)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Reading:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TREGEAR, Angela, et al. Regional foods and rural development: the role of product qualification. <i>Journal of Rural studies</i>, 2007, 23.1: 12-22.</li> <li>• RULLI, Maria Cristina; VERONI, Arianna; ROSSO, Renzo. The Water Footprint and Environmental Sustainability of Italian DOP, DOC and DOCG Food Products. In: <i>The Water We Eat</i>. Springer International Publishing, 2015. p. 229-241.</li> <li>• REISCH, Lucia; EBERLE, Ulrike; LOREK, Sylvia. Sustainable food consumption: an overview of contemporary issues and policies. <i>Sustainability: Science, Practice, &amp; Policy</i>, 2013, 9.2.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VERBEKE, Wim. Food quality policies and consumer interests in the EU. In: <i>Consumer attitudes to food quality products</i>. Wageningen Academic Publishers, 2013. p. 13-22.</li> <li>• BUREAU, Jean-Christophe, et al. European food-labeling policy: successes and limitations. <i>Journal of Food Distribution Research</i>, 2003, 34.3: 70-76.</li> <li>• APRILE, Maria Carmela; CAPUTO, Vincenzina; NAYGA JR, Rodolfo M. Consumers' valuation of food quality labels: the case of the European geographic indication and organic farming labels. <i>International Journal of Consumer Studies</i>, 2012, 36.2: 158-165.</li> </ul>
<b>Week 10</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tradition and innovation in small businesses</li> <li>- Wine producers and national/international trade</li> </ul>	<p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VRONTIS, Demetris; BRESCIANI, Stefano; GIACOSA, Elisa. Tradition and innovation in Italian wine family businesses. <i>British Food Journal</i>, 2016, 118.8.</li> <li>• CONTINI, Caterina, et al. Wine consumption and sales strategies: The evolution of Mass Retail Trading in Italy. <i>Wine Economics and Policy</i>, 2015, 4.2: 116-127.</li> <li>• FRANCONI, Barbara; VISSAK, Tiia; MUSSO, Fabio. Small Italian wine producers' internationalization: The role of network relationships in the emergence of late starters. <i>International Business Review</i>, 2016.</li> <li>• FLINT, Daniel J.; GOLICIC, Susan L.; SIGNORI, Paola. <i>Contemporary Wine Marketing and Supply Chain Management: A Global Perspective</i>. Springer, 2015. (Ch.5; pp. 63-82)</li> </ul>
<b>Week 11</b>	Final exams	

Suggested extra readings:

- European Commission. *European Policy for Quality Agricultural Products*. Luxembourg :Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2006.
- KNEAFSEY, Moya, et al. *Short food supply chains and local food systems in the EU. A state of play of their socio-economic characteristics*. JRC Scientific and Policy Reports. Joint Research Centre Institute for Prospective Technological Studies, European Commission, 2013.
- VLACHVEI, Aspasia, et al. *Web Marketing Strategies in Agro Food SMEs: Evidence from Greek and Italian Wine SMEs. E-Innovation for Sustainable Development of Rural Resources During Global Economic Crisis*, 2013, 199.
- Scarborough, N. and Cornwall, J. *Entrepreneurship: Effective Small Business Management*. 11th Edition. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Pearson/Prentice-Hall, 2015 (Ch.22; 745-778)
- Scarborough, N.M. and J. R. Cornwall (2014) *Entrepreneurship and Effective Small Business Management* (11th Edition). Pearson/Prentice-Hall (Ch. 12; pp.409-415.
- CRESCIMANNO, M.; GALATI, A. Competitiveness of Italian wines in the international market. *Bulgarian Journal of Agricultural Science*, 2014, 20.1: 12-22.

- D'AMICO, Mario; DI VITA, Giuseppe; BRACCO, Salvatore. Direct sale of agro-food product: The case of wine in Italy. *Calitatea*, 2014, 15.S1: 247.
- BIÉNABE, Estelle, et al. The internationalization of food retailing: opportunities and threats for small-scale producers. *Regoverning Markets. A place for Small-Scale Producers in Modern Agrifood Chains*, 2007, 3-17.
- Scarborough, N. and Cornwall, J. *Entrepreneurship: Effective Small Business Management*. 11th Edition. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Pearson/Prentice-Hall, 2015 (Ch. 21; pp. 711-741 Ch. 2 )
- Scarborough, N.M. and J. R. Cornwall (2014) *Entrepreneurship and Effective Small Business Management* (11th Edition). Pearson/Prentice-Hall (Ch. 2; pp.65-98
- Salazar,Erasmus. *Understanding Food Safety Management Systems: A Practical Approach to the Application of ISO-22000:2005*. Ed CreateSpace Independent Publishing PlatformPaperback 2013 (*used as reference guide to the standard*)
- DA SILVA, Carlos A. *Agro-industries for development*. CABI, 2009 (Ch. 7 pp. 223- 242)

#### COURSE-RELATED TRIPS:

Students will visit several local producers in San Gimignano area: a traditional cookies and cakes factory, a honey producer. Visiting a winery and an agriturismo famous for Vernaccia wine and saffron production will help students to see first-hand wine clusters in Tuscany and farm-to-table business. During the field study in San Gimignano we will discuss the management of real local businesses.

In spring students will also visit a family-run business producing wine and extra virgin olive oil in the Chianti area. Owners will explain how they run the business and students will have the opportunity to directly ask them specific questions.

#### REQUIRED READINGS:

##### a) Course-packet (texts and selections):

- Scarborough, N. and Cornwall, J. *Entrepreneurship: Effective Small Business Management*. 11th Edition. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Pearson/Prentice-Hall, 2015
- Cadden, David **Small Business Management in the 21st Century**. Southern CT State University
- Salazar,Erasmus. **Understanding Food Safety Management Systems: A Practical Approach to the Application of ISO-22000:2005**. Ed CreateSpace Independent Publishing PlatformPaperback 2013
- BUCKETT, Maurice. *An Introduction to Farm Organisation & Management*. Elsevier, 2012
- DA SILVA, Carlos A. *Agro-industries for development*. CABI, 2009.
- Other readings for weekly topics

#### RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- ZANNI, Lorenzo. Leading firms and wine clusters: understanding the evolution of the Tuscan wine business through an international comparative analysis. FrancoAngeli, 2004.
- HOQUE, Zahirul. 20 years of studies on the balanced scorecard: Trends, accomplishments, gaps and opportunities for future research. *The British accounting review*, 2014, 46.1: 33-59.
- FABBRIZZI, Sara, et al. Coping with the economic crisis in agriculture: an analysis of the Tuscany (Italy) premium quality wine area and strategies for impact mitigation. *New medit: Mediterranean journal of economics, agriculture and environment= Revue méditerranéenne d'économie, agriculture et environnement*, 2015, 14.3: 61-72.
- DIGIACOMO, Gigi, et al. Building a sustainable business: a guide to developing a business plan for farms and rural businesses. *SARE Handbooks*, 2003.
- PERCOCO, Marco. Entrepreneurship, social capital and institutions: Evidence from Italy. *Spatial Economic Analysis*, 2012, 7.3: 339-355.
- Rivella, Ezio. **Brunello, Montalcino and I: The Prince of Wines' True Story**. Ed Baldini Castoldi Dalai, 2008
- Rifkin, Jeremy. **The Zero Marginal Cost Society: The Internet of Things, the Collaborative Commons, and the Eclipse of Capitalism**-Palgrave Macmillan, 2014
- Dickie,John. **The Delizia!: The Epic History of the Italians and Their Food** Ed. Atria Books 2010
- Carbone, A. **The role of designation of origin in the italian food system**, in: S. GATTI, E. GIRAUDHÉRAUD nd S. MILI (eds) *Wine in the Old World: New Risks and Opportunities*, Milano: Franco Angeli, 2003 pp.29–39.
- Rich, Pirog **Checking the food odometer: Comparing food miles for local versus**



- **conventional produce sales to Iowa institutions.** Iowa State University July 2003 [www.leopold.iastate.edu](http://www.leopold.iastate.edu)
- Pollan, Michael. **The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals.** Penguin Books, 2007
- Barber, Dan. **The Third Plate: Field Notes on the Future of Food** – Penguin Books 2015
- Taylor, John. **Trading Places: the local economic impact of street produce and farmer's markets.** New economics foundation, London 2005
- Radjou, Navi. **Jugaad innovation. Think frugal, be flexible, generate breakthrough growth.** Wiley, 2012
- Gilbert, Elizabeth. **Eat, Pray, Love: One Woman's Search for Everything Across Italy, India and Indonesia.** Penguin, 2006
- Dahl, Roald **Charlie and the Chocolate Factory** Ed. Random House 2001
- WCED (1987). Brundtland-Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future. Available at <http://www.un-documents.net/wced-ocf.ht>

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS:**

Supplementary materials are free-standing materials that serve to augment information being learned in class. A variety of resources like articles, books, pictures, voice recordings, or videos to provide external information about a specific class topic may be given by the instructor in order to improve and enrich students' comprehension.