POLITICAL INFLUENCE AND BUSINESS INTERESTS
The Confluence of Government Relations and Business
POGO 750-014
George Mason University
Schar School of Policy and Government
Fall 2018

GENERAL INFORMATION

Listing: POGO 750-014
Time/Location: Thursdays, 7:20:10:00 pm, ARLFH 479
Instructor: Lee R. Godown
Vice President, Global Policy – Markets, General Motors Company
Phone: 202.480.7008
Email: lrgodown@gmail.com
Office Hours: By appointment, usually early evenings

COURSE OBJECTIVE

The objective of this course is to explore the nexus of global politics and the business world. We will examine the ways political influence (lobbying, third party engagement, etc.) can impact decisions that are made by governments. We will also examine the converse – how legislatures, parliaments, executive agencies) can and do make doing business easier and more difficult at times. Conventional wisdom is that governments generally pose a threat to business; but is that really the case, or can politicians and business leaders be partners? Special emphasis will be placed on actual case studies from around the world the instructor has been part of. We will also study examples of governmental and business interactions currently unfolding, with a focus on international trade.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Successful completion of this course provides the students with the following:

1. An understanding of the ways multi-national corporations deal with the variety of types of governments around the world;
2. Exposure to guest speakers from the world of international business at the “C-suite” level, as well as global political leaders, and the ability for students to network with them;
3. The development of a skill set to base future career success upon in the area of international business;
4. An understanding of ethical behavior in influencing global governments (e.g. what may be appropriate in one part of the world, may not be in another);
5. An opportunity for an on-site visit to the Fortune 7 corporation, and a day’s exposure to functional business leaders, as well as the chairman and CEO.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND READINGS:

Class members are responsible for obtaining and reading all of the assigned course materials. The class will also use breakout study groups to work on several, individual real-world examples of situations companies sometimes find themselves in, and be required to devise a strategy to overcome the business challenge. Some of the assigned reading will go beyond those texts below, and will be provided in a course packet before the term begins.

- **Bochum Perspektive 2022**. General Motors internal document, provided prior to course.

REQUIREMENTS AND ASSESSMENT:

Both individual and group break-out session work are important skills to be developed, and students will be evaluated on each throughout the course. You will be encouraged to demonstrate your knowledge of the theories and practices studied during the course, and you will be encouraged to strengthen your oral presentation, writing and research skills. Active participation in class discussions is greatly encouraged by all students, and a contemporaneous record of same will be kept (one credit per class if active participation is noted/maximum 10 credits possible during the course). Two multiple choice exams (closed book) will be administered. Grades will be assigned and apportioned as per below:

- Participation in Discussion During Class 20%
- Formal Oral Responses (x3, 5% each) 15%
- Break-Out Session Papers (x2, 10% each) 20%
- Written Exams (x2, 10% each) 20%
- Final Written Paper 20%
- Participation in Corporate On-Site Visit 5%
SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AT A GLANCE (Dates pertinent to reading assignments, break-out sessions, written exams, written papers, and the corporate on-site visits).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLASS</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>READING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>August 30th</td>
<td>PSA Groupe Sale &amp; Bochum Perspektive</td>
<td>Press coverage/analysis distributed on 8/27 by email</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>September 6th</td>
<td>The Globalization of International Business</td>
<td><em>International Business, Chapter 1, pages 5-47</em></td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>September 13th</td>
<td>Culture and International Business</td>
<td><em>International Business, Chapter 2, pages 54-81</em></td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>September 20th</td>
<td>Written Exam #1</td>
<td>Multiple choice exam based upon Opel/Vauxhall and <em>International Business</em> readings</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>September 27th</td>
<td>Managing Motors in China</td>
<td><em>American Wheels, Chinese Roads, pages 1-218</em></td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>October 4th</td>
<td>Discussion of Breakout Operations</td>
<td><em>International Business, Chapter 17, pages 680-718</em></td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>October 11th</td>
<td>Discussion of Breakout Sessions/Team-Based Papers</td>
<td>Class handout and discussion of group projects/deliverables</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>October 18th</td>
<td>Written Exam #2</td>
<td>Multiple choice exam based upon <em>International Business</em> and <em>American Wheels... readings</em></td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>October 25th</td>
<td>Guest Lecturer - USTR Special Advisor Tim Reif</td>
<td>Review of Tim Reif's bio, and USTR mission statement</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>November 1st</td>
<td>Doing Business in Different Countries</td>
<td>*Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands, pages vii-xiii. Students assigned individual countries</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>November 8th</td>
<td>Student Reports on &quot;Doing Business in My Country&quot;</td>
<td><em>Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands, individually-assigned country chapters</em></td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>November 15th</td>
<td>On-Site Visit to GM Washington Office</td>
<td>Meet with GM C-Suite Executives/optional visit to Detroit, MI GM Headquarters date TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>November 29th</td>
<td>Review of Final Exam Topics</td>
<td>Class handout and discussion of areas to be covered</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>December 6th</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>Multiple choice exam covering all course topics</td>
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GENERAL GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

Papers

Writing research and policy papers is a fundamental part of graduate study. The quality of a paper is determined by a number of factors, including presentation of facts, development of argumentation, clarity of analysis, acknowledgment of sources, and accuracy of format and style. A good guideline for elements and format of a research paper and bibliography, including online sources, is *A Pocket Style Manual*, Seventh Edition (2015), by Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers.

Grading

All written and oral assignments will be judged using the GMU system for grading graduate courses as laid out in the university catalog. Grades earned for each assignment will be added numerically, and the weighted average will be used to determine the final grade, which allows for the grades of A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, as well as C, F, and IN. Assignments that are submitted late
will lead to a grade reduction, up to being marked as missed entirely. Unacceptably frequent periods of absence (missing more than three classes) will result in grade reduction as well. Extra credit can be earned periodically throughout the class.

**Electronic Communication and Blackboard**

The GMU email accounts are the primary and authoritative means of electronic communication; announcements regarding classes will be sent to those accounts only. Students are free to use other accounts, but are solely responsible for any failed communication, missed deadline, etc. Blackboard will also be used to post announcements, presentations, and other items, so be sure to check regularly.

**Use of Cell Phones, Computers, and Other Electronic Devices in Class**

Students are expected to focus entirely on seminar discussion during class. They are expected to refrain from carrying on other professional or personal activities while the class is meeting. This means on both phones and computers. Devices should be turned to vibrate, and only used in case of emergency (personal or professional). Computers are permitted only for use pertaining to the course and may be prohibited at the discretion of the instructor.

**Special Needs**

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services at http://ods.gmu.edu/. All academic accommodations must be arranged through ODS before classes start.

**Academic Integrity**

Faculty at the Schar School have zero tolerance for academic dishonesty, and will strictly enforce Mason’s honor code.