Instructor Information

A. Name: Dr. Hugh Macdonald and Dr Andrey Jichev
B. Day and Time: Mondays 12:30 – 4:30 pm from 26 February, in April 9.00-13.00pm and final session on April 23 12.30-16.30
C. Location
D. BU Telephone
E. Email
F. Office hours: By appointment

Course Description

The course enables students to understand the importance of strategic management for firms pursuing international business aims, in relation to such exogenous forces as innovation, competition, and differing business cultures and systems of regulation. At first, the international political and economic system is examined for an understanding of the interactions that occur between global forces such as technological diffusion, regional factors such as regulatory regimes and business cultures, and nation-based features such as economic development goals and economic ‘clusters’. This provides learning as to how the strategies of international businesses have tended towards an imprecise ‘globalisation’, whilst becoming distinctive, ‘internalised’, and more complex than businesses operating in a single jurisdiction (‘country’, ‘state’). The analysis of strategic management is approached in terms of three ‘building blocs’. First, strategy as analysis and planning explains how a business may choose to ‘internationalise’ itself, and how ‘late arriving’ competitors may overtake longer-established international businesses. Second, strategy as organizational decision making within a political and cultural context identifies distinctive aspects of the business and regulatory cultures of North America, the EU, Japan and China. Third, strategy as adaptability and flexibility of the enterprise, illustrates how even the largest and most successful international businesses operate in a risk environment containing ‘unknown unknowns’. Yet even when a business strategy achieves a vritable ‘global’ status, it must deal with distinctive and often unpredictable challenges: National and regional business cultures that may respond differently to its actions; different regional and national systems of regulation; and an ‘environmental setting’ that demands anticipating forces of change, and preparing to adapt to ‘unknown unknowns’.
**Methodology**

The Instructors serve as resource persons in the class. Concepts and key issues are introduced through Lectures and developed via Seminar discussions of textbook concepts and case studies. Students are expected to undertake preparatory readings for each class. Students also report on their ongoing Assignment investigations. The Instructors will agree topics proposed by each student for an International Business Term Paper (TP) and by groups for a Group Presentation (GP). Each student will ultimately submit for assessment an TP using case study guidelines set out in this Syllabus. Each Group will make a Presentation, usually during the penultimate class, to explain and critically examine chosen concepts and empirical material from Lectures and texts. There will also be a Take-home Final Examination that will test understanding of textbook and Lecture concepts, empirical material, and case studies.

**Course Objectives & Outcomes**

The course offers scope for developing and applying:

- Analytical skills required by case study analysis;
- Conceptual frameworks as overall guides to explaining the formation of strategies;
- Case studies that broaden the understanding of multinational management issues;

As a result, students will be in an improved position to address the following:

1. What are the dominant characteristics of the international economic and business systems, and how do these differ from ‘domestic’, ‘municipal’, ‘national’ and ‘local’ markets?
2. In what circumstances does a business to decide whether or not to become international or multinational?
3. How do/should international firms respond strategically to differing national cultures, regional regulatory systems, and changing approaches to corporate social responsibility?

**Assessment**

The course will be assessed in five components, each carrying weights given below.

1. A Term Paper (TP): The topic must be agreed in advance by the Instructor. In this exercise, the student will research one of the key issue-areas or concepts developed by the course, and apply this research to an international business (firm, group of firms, sector of the international economy etc). Each student will submit a completed write-up of the investigation along case study lines. The completed TP will be due on the same date as the Final Examination in the course.
2. An In-Class Mid-Term Test. This is a test which will be taken during Class 5 and will test understanding of Classes 1-5 and set-text readings.
3. A Group Presentation (GP) by pre-assigned groups (20 minutes). The topic will be chosen in advance by members of the Group in consultation with the Instructor, and will usually be given during the penultimate Class. Members of a Group will be given the same grade, so it is important for research and presentation tasks to be allocated equitably. One member of the group will liaise with the Instructor and will submit a copy of the materials prepared for the Group Presentation.
4. **Seminar Participation** (not including TP principal findings & conclusions or Group presentations) will be assessed on the contribution each student makes to questions and discussions in Class throughout the course.

5. A Take-home **Final Examination** will test understanding of concepts and empirical materials that have been presented in Course Texts or pre-selected Case studies.

Maximum marks for each of the components of assessment (out of 100%) will be awarded as follows:

- Individual Business Term Paper = 25%
- Mid-Term Test = 20%
- Group Presentation = 20%
- Class/Seminar participation = 10%
- Final examination = 25%

**Grading**

Please refer to the Academic Handbook for detailed grading criteria and policies on plagiarism: [http://www.bu.edu/london/current-semester](http://www.bu.edu/london/current-semester)

*Final Grades are subject to deductions by the Academic Affairs Office due to unauthorised absences.*

**ATTENDANCE POLICIES**

**Classes**

All Boston University London Programme students are expected to attend each and every class session, seminar, and field trip in order to fulfill the required course contact hours and receive course credit. Any student that has been absent from two class sessions (whether authorised or unauthorised) will need to meet with the Directors to discuss their continued participation on the programme.

**Authorised Absence:**

Students who expect to be absent from any class should notify a member of Academic Affairs and complete an Authorized Absence Approval Form 10 working days in advance of the class date (except in the case of absence due to illness for more than one day. In this situation students should submit the Authorised Absence Approval Form with the required doctor’s note as soon as possible). The Authorised Absence Approval Request Form is available from: [http://www.bu.edu/london/current-semester/](http://www.bu.edu/london/current-semester/)

*Please note: Submitting an Authorised Absence Approval Form does not guarantee an authorised absence.*

Students may apply for an authorised absence only under the following circumstances:

- **Illness (first day of sickness):** If a student is too ill to attend class, the student must phone the BU London Student Affairs Office (who will in turn contact the student’s lecturer).
• **Illness (multiple days):** If a student is missing more than one class day due to illness, the student must call into the BU London Student Affairs Office each day the student is ill. Students must also provide the Student Affairs office with a completed Authorised Absence Approval Form and a sick note from a local doctor excusing their absence from class.

• Important placement event that clashes with a class (verified by internship supervisor)

• Special circumstances which have been approved by the Directors (see note below).

**The Directors will only in the most extreme cases allow students to leave the programme early or for a significant break.**

*Unauthorised Absence:*
Any student to miss a class due to an unauthorised absence will receive a **4% grade penalty** to their final grade for the course whose class was missed.
This grade penalty will be applied by the Academic Affairs office to the final grade at the end of the course. As stated above, any student that has missed two classes will need to meet with the Directors to discuss their participation on the programme as excessive absences may result in a ‘Fail’ in the class and therefore expulsion from the programme.

**Religious Holidays**
Boston University’s Office of the University Registrar states:

‘The University, in scheduling classes on religious holidays and observances, intends that students observing those traditions be given ample opportunity to make up work. Faculty members who wish to observe religious holidays will arrange for another faculty member to meet their classes or for cancelled classes to be rescheduled.’

**Special Accommodations**
Each student will need to contact the Office of Disability Services to request accommodations for the semester they are abroad. Students are advised by BU-ODS not to expect the same accommodations as they receive on campus.

BU London can only uphold special accommodations if we have received the appropriate documentation from the BU-ODS. We cannot accept letters from other universities/centres.

All disabilities need to be known to the ODS in Boston if they are to be used as a reason for requiring a change in conditions, i.e. reduced internship hours or special accommodations for the internship schedule.

**Lateness**
Students arriving more than 15 minutes after the posted class start time will be marked as late. Any student with irregular class attendance (more than two late arrivals to class) will be required to meet with the Associate Director for Academic Affairs and if the lateness continues, may have his/her final grade penalised.
Readings

**BU Blackboard:** Electronic versions of selected weekly readings can be obtained from Blackboard: [http://learn.bu.edu](http://learn.bu.edu) Current international business news can be found in such publications as *The Economist* and the *Financial Times* (and their associated web sites). Copies of the main course textbooks, from which readings and case studies will be drawn, are held in the University Library:

**Principal textbooks**


**Supplementary texts**


**Abbreviations:** JG = Johnson (Chapter); JGCS = Johnson (Case Study); BGB = Bartlett, Ghosal & Beamish (Chapter); BGBCS = BGB (Case Study); BGBR = BGB (Reading); HM = Mintzberg; RR = Roberts; RC = Rugman & Collinson (Chapter); RCCS = Rugman & Collinson (Case Study)

**Chronology of Classes**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>LECTURE SEQUENCE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>TEXTBOOK</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>26 February</strong></td>
<td><strong>LECTURE 1:</strong> 12:30-4:30pm (Dr Hugh Macdonald)</td>
<td><strong>SEMINAR 1:</strong> Introduction to the international economic &amp; business environment</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>How far would you agree with the framework presented in Johnson et al Chapter 2?</em></td>
<td>JG 2 (11e)</td>
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<td><strong>5 March</strong></td>
<td><strong>LECTURE 2:</strong> 12:30-4:30pm (Dr Hugh Macdonald)</td>
<td><strong>SEMINAR 2:</strong> Strategy &amp; International Strategy</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Why do firms become international?</em></td>
<td>JG 9 (11e)</td>
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<td><strong>Supplementary Text:</strong> Going global – lessons from late-movers</td>
<td>BGBCS 1-3</td>
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12 March
LECTURE 3: 12:30-4:30pm (Dr Hugh Macdonald) Corporate Sector & industry analysis
SEMINAR 3: “Configuration strategy” JG 5 (11e)

19 March
LECTURE 4: 12:30-4:30pm (Prof. Roy McLarty) International social responsibility
SEMINAR 4: Are firms’ strategies “Shaped by a cultural web”? JG 3 (11e) HM 11 (2e)

26 March
LECTURE 5: 12:30-4:30pm (Dr Hugh Macdonald) Economic Development: Public Goods, Welfare & Firms’ Strategies
SEMINAR 5: Stakeholders & the development of Canary Wharf In-Class Mid-Term Test JG 5 (11e) RR 1-3

9 April
LECTURE 6: 9.00-13:00pm (Dr Andrey Jichev) Mergers, Acquisitions & Strategic alliances: The European Union (EU)
SEMINAR 6: Business culture & institutional regulation in Europe Supplementary Texts: Boeing v Airbus, France Telecom, TCL Multimedia RC 16 BGBCS 3-1

16 April
LECTURE 7: 9.00-13:00pm (Dr Andrey Jichev) Management culture & economic performance in Japan

17 April
LECTURES 8/9: 9:00-13:00pm (Dr Andrey Jichev) Doing business in China: How does China’s way of doing business compare?
SEMINARS 8/9:
23 April
LECTURE 10: 12:30-4:30pm (Dr Andrey Jichev &
SEMINARS Dr Hugh Macdonald)
9/10: The Multinational Enterprise: Is all Business
Student Presentations becoming International?

26 April
FINAL EXAMINATION DUE DATE
The Final Exam in this Course will be a Take-
home Paper, which will be given to students
prior to the due date.

Case Studies

These Notes provide guidance for the most important Coursework Assignments in IR 427 -
the preparation of an Term Paper (TP) over several weeks; the preparation of a Group
Presentation (GP) for in-class presentation; and the pre-preparation of a Case Study for the
Final Exam. The Principal Textbook by Johnson et al provides an additional outline for these
exercises.

What is a Case Study?

A case study is a process or record (often but not necessarily compiled throughout a
considerable stretch of time) in which detailed consideration is given to the development of a
particular matter over time. For present purposes the case study must be compiled quite
swiftly, although the subject matter may cover a considerable period of time.

The ‘matter’ considered is a particular international business, group of businesses or business
sector, which should meet textbook criteria for a Multinational Enterprise (MNE).

The ‘process of detailed consideration’ is about describing and analysing business strategy or
behaviour, or at least in some aspects of it, within the chosen business, group or sector, in
order to ‘test’ that against one or more of the concepts developed via textbooks and teaching
in the course.

The ‘over time’ aspect of the research may relate either to the historical development of the
business, group of firms or sector where its current strategic orientation is the main issue; or
to the future when the main issue is whether or not some current/emerging aspect of its
operations are being analysed for their viability or appropriateness.

It is possible that the TP will examine the business with which an individual student is
undertaking work experience, but this is an option and not a requirement. Other international
businesses that might prove suitable are introduced in case studies and readings in textbooks
etc. In such cases, your study will be required to take forward through further independent
research information and issues found in these sources. In all cases, you should discuss your
preliminary ideas with the Instructor.

What will my TP need to cover?
Your TP will need to do the following things:

1. Identify the international business to be given detailed consideration, including (a) basic information about its main activities and functions (b) the competitive sector(s) of the international economy in which it operates (c) its scale and scope of operations across the international economy (d) its ‘home base’ and headline financial results.

2. Consider whether and to what extent the international business you are studying meets the benchmarks laid out in the two main textbooks for distinguishing the contemporary MNE from other and earlier types of international business.

3. Consider to what extent the ‘three correlates’ of external forces shaping international business strategies (global/technological; regional/cultural; national/country specific) can be identified in the case concerned.

4. Seek to determine which of these external forces most strongly shapes the firm.

5. Consider to what extent the ‘three modes of strategy’ (analysis & planning; organisational decision-making in a political & cultural setting; pragmatic adaptation & flexibility) can be identified in the case concerned.

6. Seek to determine which of these internal modalities most strongly shapes the firm.

7. Summarise the arguments/concepts applied to the international business that has been given detailed consideration, and indicate the extent to which they have proved applicable.

8. Summarise the evidence considered and, as appropriate, the extent to which it fits or fails to fit into conceptual analysis.

9. Indicate conclusions.

**How do I structure my TP?**

Your original work and your freedom to express evidence and judgements as you see fit are important. Hence, the structure of your TP is for you to determine. You may choose to write your TP along the lines of a *Report* (similar to an Essay) which might include data, appendixes etc. You might prefer to compile a *PowerPoint Presentation* which includes visual and/or audio visual material. You will, however, follow the above guidelines; you will show understanding of the concepts developed in texts and class discussions; you will provide appropriate references and sources for evidence you deploy; and your TP will have a short Introduction, several substantive sections in which you deploy evidence & concepts; and you will summarise and conclude on the overall process of research and detailed consideration.

**Is there a guideline length for my TP?**

Yes – Approximately 3,500 words or a PPP equivalent of 25 Slides. This guideline length does *not* include tables, data, references etc whether these are located as appendixes or placed in the body of the text/slides/under-slide notes.

**Group Presentations (GP) and Scenarios for the Final Exam**

These are designed as learning devices *via* Textbook private study and in-Class seminar discussion so as to:
• Enhance your ability to **derive knowledge & information** from examining a practical context.
• Test your abilities to **address problems** in a **logical, analytical, practical and systematic manner.**
• Develop your skills in assessing the significance of **incomplete** information.
• As most case studies are to a greater or lesser extent **open-ended** in at least some of their ‘conclusions’, these held develop your skills in testing **hypotheses**, and tend to generate debate as well as firm ‘findings’.

It follows that the student learning from Case Study work needs to:

• **Adapt** and **apply** pre-existing knowledge and concepts to the issues that the Case Study or Case Reading discusses.
• **Identify problems** rather than propound perfect solutions.
• Employ a **flexible** approach to what can be learnt from the Case Study or Reading.
• Consider **alternative outcomes to given scenarios** and state these where appropriate.
• Look for practical recommendations.

**Preparing for & participating in Class discussion of case studies:**

1. Skim read the case to get an overview of the “story/situation” being analysed;
2. Re-read the case more thoroughly to identify/analyse key facts/issues;
3. Review data and any other ‘exhibits’ within the case study;
4. Decide what the strategic issues are and how these can best be articulated.
5. Read questions attached to the Case Study/Reading and match these to the data/exhibits in the case;

On presenting your Case Study you should expect the following:

1. The Instructor assumes the role of questioner, listener and devil’s advocate;
2. Other members of the Class will offer observations and/or raise questions about what you have state;
3. Challenges may emerge to your stated conclusions/recommendations.
Boston University Study Abroad
London

PRESENTATION GRADE SHEET

Case Study:  Subject: International Business Strategy (Elective B)

Professor’s Name:  Level: UG

Date & Time:  Seminar Session Number:

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<tr>
<td>Presentation Clarity (Communication verbal/written)</td>
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<td>Presentation Logic</td>
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<td>Presentation Visual Aids</td>
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<td>Timing</td>
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<th>CONTENT</th>
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<tr>
<td>Evidence of reading and researching the topic / case (Depth/Breadth)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evidence of Analysis of “issue/problem” (Depth /Breadth)</td>
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<td>Evidence of Logic to arguments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge and application of concepts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evidence of value - added by student around topic (e.g. links with other conceptual areas of study)</td>
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<td>Response to questions</td>
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