



GRADUATE SCHOOL

GM0114 Managing and Organizing the Multinational Corporation, 7.5 higher education credits

Att leda och organisera multinationella företag, 7,5 högskolepoäng

Second Cycle

Confirmation

This course syllabus was confirmed by School of Business, Economics and Law on 2010-07-02 and was last revised on 2016-03-01 to be valid from 2016-03-01, spring semester of 2016.

Field of education: Social Sciences 100%

Department: Graduate School

Position in the educational system

The course Managing and Organizing the Multinational Corporation, is a core course positioned in the second term of the Master of Science in the International Business and Trade programme at the Graduate School, School of Business, Economics and Law, University of Gothenburg.

The course can be part of the following programmes: 1) Program in Environmental Social Science (S1SML), 2) Master of Science in Management (S2MAN), 3) Master of Science in Environmental Management and Economics (S2EMA), 4) Master of Science in Marketing and Consumption (S2MAC), 5) Programme in Logistics management (S1LOM), 6) Master of Science in Accounting (S2ACC), 7) Master of Science in Tourism and Hospitality Management (S2TOM), 8) Master of Science in Economics (S2ECO), 9) Master of Science in Finance (S2FIN), 10) Programme in Business and Economics (S1HEG), 11) Master of Science in International Business and Trade (S2IBT), 12) Master of Science in Logistics and Transport Management (S2LOG) and 13) Master of Science in Innovation and Industrial Management (S2IFM)

Main field of studies

International Business and Trade

Specialization

A1F, Second cycle, has second-cycle course/s as entry requirements

Entry requirements

To be eligible for the course Managing and Organizing the Multinational Corporation the participant must fulfil the entrance qualifications for the Master of Science programme in International Business and Trade.

Learning outcomes

The overall outcome of the course is to increase students' knowledge of international business management and organization and to develop their understanding, both theoretically and practically, of problems and phenomena in MNCs. The course is intended to give students a scientific approach towards literature and research within the area of how to manage and organize international business activities.

After having completed the course, students should be able to:

- 1) define, explain, and compare approaches and theories on the subject of managing and organizing MNCs.

- 2) demonstrate an in-depth understanding of research on managing and organizing MNC in order to critically reflect and systematic analyze issues and problems multinational corporations encounter when managing and organizing their activities across national borders.

- 3) systematically illustrating, defining, categorizing and analyzing a broad range of issues and problems that MNCs have when organizing and managing their activities across national borders. This to enable the students to make well-reasoned decisions in an international setting.

- 4) use different perspectives, theories and methods which can be integrated in practical application in order to be used in daily operations when managing and organizing activities across units in different geographical locations.

The qualitative targets of the course are linked to the learning outcomes of the course.

Qualitative target	Learning outcomes
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Knowledge and understanding	1+2
Skills and abilities	1+2+3+4
Judgement and approach	1+3+4

Both the overall outcome and the three more specific learning outcomes will be obtained through the assigned reading, lectures and case/assignment discussions.

Course content

To manage and organize multinational corporations (MNCs) means the skills to handle a set of problems similar to corporate management in a national or mono-cultural setting, but done so in a vastly more complex context. Multinational corporations (MNCs) operate in diverse national markets and have to find constantly an optimal trade-off of different businesses, countries, functions tasks as well as a whole range of economic and political characteristics that differ between countries. In other words, MNCs differ in their managerial and organizational complexity from national organizations since they operate in many, often dissimilar, environments with multiple, more or less, autonomous subsidiaries linked by shared policies and strategies. In order to achieve competitive advantage is it necessary to implement good international management practices. While previous research mostly focused on the role of the headquarter (HQ) perspective, recent research also acknowledge the subsidiary perspective addressing its organizational role and local challenges. This course deals with a variety of managerial and organizational implications due to this complex nature of MNCs.

The course is divided into four major themes that are relevant in order to understand how to manage and organize an MNC.

The first theme provides a background to research focusing on the MNC with special attention to the driving forces for how to manage and organize an organization across national borders. As noted in the introduction, the role of HQs and subsidiaries has changed over the years and it is important to understand the driving forces for this shift – in order to understand how to best manage and organize an MNC in today's global competitive environment. An introduction to what aspects that are important to understand is offered. These aspects will be further developed and discussed in the

proceeding themes.

The second theme will focus on the relationship between headquarters and their subsidiaries and how the management of subsidiaries has changed over time. The course also deals with the question of how to ensure that the geographically dispersed and often autonomous subsidiaries act in ways to support a common corporate agenda. What mechanisms of coordination and control are possible to use? What mandates do the management of the subsidiaries have compared to the headquarter management? What determines the development of these mandates? The commonly experienced dilemma between local adaptation and global integration implies the need for MNCs to resolve the tension between integrating their activities in the pursuit of economies of scale and scope with the need to respond to the local market context.

The third theme relates to how knowledge is shared, and why knowledge is important to understand, within an MNC. Focus will be on issues related to knowledge stocks and how knowledge flows within the MNC in order to be efficient, innovative, and competitive. The focus of this theme is how knowledge is created and shared across different units in the MNC, and how an MNC manages to balance the trade-off between exploration and exploitation across national borders.

The fourth theme links to the earlier themes by addressing overarching issues related to international management of contemporary MNCs: International Human Resource Management, the corporate and national culture balance, and sustainable management from a CSR perspective. What implications does the intra-corporate relationship have on human resource practices for local employees and expatriates? What influence does culture have in such relationship? What ethical issues are discussed within the field of International Business and Trade? Discussing these aspects of managing and organizing an MNC will provide a more holistic view on the contemporary international management.

Form of teaching

The teaching is based on a variety of pedagogical approaches, this in the form of a combination of lectures and literature seminars. Guest lectures will also be given in order to learn from practical examples of how different MNCs manage the challenges addressed in each theme. After each theme, which is structured with a lecture followed by a literature seminar, a quiz will be held to test the knowledge and understanding of that particular theme. The students are expected to read the course literature for each lecture in advance and be prepared to discuss as well as form and defend their own opinions and ideas. The literature seminars require interactive activities and a high degree of engagement by the students, that is, active participation. The course is guided by a firm belief that education can be both fun and professionally rewarding. The setup with a lecture followed by a literature seminar builds on the notion that the students will

have a chance to interact and discuss key concepts with each other and the teacher in order to gain a deeper understanding of the literature. By discussing each theme and by testing the knowledge with a quiz will lead not only to a deeper understanding of the subject but also better preparation for the final individually written home exam.

The course is thus examined by individual written quizzes during the course, active participation during the seminars and a final written take-home exam. If a student is absent and will miss a quiz the chances for a high score on the course decreases as the number of credit also decreases.

Before each literature seminar all groups need to prepare a written document with questions and answers. Thus the literature seminar will be evaluated in groups, whereas the quizzes and take-home exam is individually evaluated. The following four learning outcomes are assessed through the individual written home exam as well as the various written hand-ins before the seminar discussions and the participation in the discussions during the seminars.

Learning outcomes	Qualitative target covered	Assessment method used (Learning outcome assessed individually)	Assessment method used (Learning outcome assessed in group)
1	Knowledge and understanding Skills and abilities Judgement and approach	Written quizzes (one for each theme) Written home exam	Written literature seminar hand-ins (one for each theme) and active seminar participation
2	Knowledge and understanding Skills and abilities	Written home exam	Written literature seminar hand-ins (one for each theme) and active seminar participation
3	Skills and abilities Judgement and approach	Written home exam	Written literature seminar hand-ins (one for each theme) and active seminar participation

4	Skills and abilities Judgement and approach	Written home exam	Written literature seminar hand-ins (one for each theme) and active seminar participation
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A student who has failed a test twice has the right to change examiner, unless weighty argument can be adduced. The request shall be sent to the Graduate School and has to be in writing.

The Graduate School is obliged to offer the exam at least five times during the course of each two-year period. Students who have made five unsuccessful attempts to pass an exam have lost the possibility of obtaining the Master of Science Degree.

Language of instruction: English

Assessment

Grades

The grading scale comprises: Pass with Distinction (VG), Pass (G) and Fail (U). For Pass on the course, Pass is required on all examination forms detailed above. For Pass with Distinction on the course, Pass with Distinction grade is required on individual written home exam and the individual quizzes.

Examination form	Levels of grades awarded	Credits
Individual written home exam	Pass with Distinction/Pass/Fail	1,5 Credits
Individual quizzes	Pass with Distinction/Pass/Fail	4 Credits
Written literature seminar hand-ins (one for each theme) and active seminar participation	Pass/Fail	2 Credits

Course evaluation

The course will be evaluated upon completion. The results of the evaluation will be communicated to the students and will function as a guide for the development of the course.

Additional information

The syllabus in English is the official binding document.