

BSP2005 Asian Business Environments Outline (S2, Academic Year 2014-15)

I. INTRODUCTION

This module aims to build an understanding of the diverse range of business environments in Asia – as diverse a range as exists in the world. As such, there is no single Asian business environment, but instead many different environments that demand substantial adjustments to business strategy. A key concept is that an understanding of doing business in any specific country involves consideration of two separate levels of analysis, the country perspective and the firm perspective. While these two levels of analysis significantly influence one another, it is very important to consider them separately and acknowledge how they differ from one another. It is also expected that students will learn a basic set of descriptive facts about countries and top businesses in the region.

Students will be expected to do assigned readings in advance of lectures and tutorials. Knowledge based on the reading will be tested on a weekly basis through a pre-class survey on IVLE and through participation in tutorials. Student participation in the main lecture and especially the tutorials, through answering questions about the readings, will be rewarded. Communications with the class will occur primarily through IVLE, including an online Discussion Board where students can ask one another for clarifications and post comments on course content. Email is generally discouraged, except in exceptional cases.

II. EVALUATION WEIGHTS

Pre-class surveys	25%
Group presentation	25%
Tutorial participation	10%
Final exam	40%

III. EVALUATION COMPONENTS

Pre-Class Surveys

Students will be required to fill in a pre-class survey by a clear deadline before every class. Questions will be multiple-choice and related to the week's reading. There will also be some questions that do not have a correct answer that, instead of testing students, are intended to gather information about the class that the lecturers can discuss during class. Skipping these questions will be penalized.

Group Presentations

Each group presentation is expected to last maximum 10 minutes (minimum 8 minutes) and will be followed by a Question and Answer period. Presentations have multiple purposes. First, these will be opportunities for students to go extra deep into particular areas and to use both what they've learned in class and their own initiative to go beyond the content presented in the lectures. Second, delivering good presentations involves development of an important skill set. Learning to put together a concise, entertaining, and well-organized presentation is an increasingly important skill in today's world. The same is true for learning to stand in front of others to do the presentation. Third, and related to the other two, student presentations will help frame our discussions in the tutorial sessions, which are meant to reinforce concepts from the week's lecture and raise points of confusion

among students or complexity that was neglected in the lecture. The main criteria on which presentations will be judged will be disseminated in the Week 3 tutorial.

All students will be involved in a 3-4 person group that does extra work thinking through how to respond to an assigned question on the weekly reading. Groups will be determined during the Week 3 Tutorial.

Grades for each presentation will be based on an aggregation of the following criteria (each worth 10 points): 1) Organization; 2) Time management; 3) Public Speaking Style; 4) Factually correct; 5) Incorporation of themes from readings; 6) Provided information that was new to instructor; 7) Creative analysis or interpretation; 8) Raised interesting questions for further group discussion. Presentation grades will be provided to students before the final exam.

Tutorial Participation

Participation is important both for development of confidence with public speaking and learning how to organize one's thoughts and think on one's feet. Participation will also help students learn from one another and help the tutorial instructors to address confusion or misunderstanding around key concepts. As such, students should not be overly fearful of making mistakes or critical of others for doing so.

Students will be scored on the below 0-5 scale for their participation in each week's Tutorial. The final participation grade will result from the sum of these scores across the full semester.

0	Did not attend
1	Attended, but did not participate
2	Participated
3	Good participation
4	Very good participation
5	Excellent participant (this will be very rare)

Quality and relevance of participation are more important than quantity, though quantity does matter as well. Effective class participation is based on relevant, insightful and appropriately timed comments. Every student is a co-producer of class discussion, so please listen carefully to one another and attempt to build on or constructively critique prior comments.

In grading participation, the following questions will be considered:

- Is the student considerate of other class members and a careful listener?
- Do comments reflect careful analysis?
- Do comments move discussion forward and add to understanding of the issue at hand?
- Do comments display a willingness to try new ideas (beyond repeating case facts)?

Students will be informed during the Recess Week which quintile they are in along the class distribution for the participation grade. Final grades for participation, group presentation, and the pre-class surveys will then be provided to students ahead of the final exam.

Final Exam

The final exam will be multiple choice and will review key concepts and content learned across the semester. The weekly pre-class surveys can be used as a guide for where to focus study for the exam.

IV. LECTURER AND TEACHING ASSISTANT

This course will be taught by Dr. Markus Taussig. Dr. Taussig is an Assistant Professor in the Strategy and Policy Dept. at NUS Business School, where he also teaches the MBA level version of Asian Business Environments and does Executive Education. He obtained his BA in Politics from Oberlin College, MA in International Economics and Southeast Asian Studies from John Hopkins University and DBA in Strategy from Harvard Business School. Prior to joining academia, Markus worked in Vietnam for 11 years in both public and private sector consulting projects and as an entrepreneur. His research has been published in leading business and area studies journals, including *Strategic Management Journal*, *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization*, and the *Journal of East Asian Studies*.

The teaching assistant for the course is Dr. Yan (Jackie) Zheng. Jackie is a recent graduate of a PhD in Strategy and Policy from NUS Business School. This summer (2015), he will start as an Assistant Professor in Strategy and International Business at Hong Kong University. Jackie's research focuses on business strategies in weak institutional environments, with particular attention to variation in subnational institutions within China.

V. COMMUNICATION

Each Friday, Dr. Taussig will be available to meet with students in his office from 1-2pm. Students who wish to meet in person, but cannot make this time can speak with him before or after class to arrange an alternative time. For most issues, however, students will find that the most effective means of communication is through the Discussion Forum on IVLE. In fact, even when issues of likely interest to others in the class are sent by email or discussed in office hours, Dr. Taussig is likely to then post the question and response on the Discussion Forum to ensure everyone benefits.

VI. COURSE OUTLINE

Class Date	Class Focus
(1) Jan 16	Introduction
(2) Jan 23	The Asian Miracle
(3) Jan 30	Culture, Business, and Economic Development in Asia
(4) Feb 6	Market Institutions and Economic Growth in Asia
(5) Feb 13	Political Institutions and Economic Growth in Asia
(6) Feb 20	NO CLASS: LUNAR NEW YEAR! Country Case 1: Japan
Feb 27	NO CLASS: RECESS WEEK!
(7) Mar 6	National Institutions and Firms in Asia
(8) Mar 13	NO CLASS: E-LEARNING WEEK! Country Study 2: India

(9) Mar 20	The State as Equity Owner in Asia
(10) Mar 27	Country Study 3: China
(11) Apr 3	NO CLASS: GOOD FRIDAY HOLIDAY! Innovation in Asia
(12) Apr 10	Business and Society in Asia
(13) Apr 17	Country Study 4: Singapore
