

**THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG  
HKU BUSINESS SCHOOL**

**STRA3703A Multinational Corporations  
1st Semester 2021-2022**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

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Consultation times: Wednesdays 12:30 pm – 1:00 pm  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course studies the multinational enterprise (MNE) and the theoretical approaches that have been formulated to explain the growth and operation of this form of business on an international scale. Recent general theories will be considered in a critical manner to allow judgments to be made on their strengths and limitations.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. To provide a detailed understanding of the theories of international business, multinational corporations' external and internal environments, and international business strategy
2. To provide an understanding of the challenges and opportunities that multinational corporations face in a global environment
3. To prepare students for career in the international business field

**Programme Learning Outcomes**

PLO1: Acquisition and internalization of knowledge of the programme discipline

PLO2: Application and integration of knowledge

PLO3: Inculcating professionalism and leadership

PLO4: Developing global outlook		
PLO5: Mastering communication skills		
<b>COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES</b>		
<b>Course Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Aligned Programme Learning Outcomes</b>	
CLO1 Explain the international business theories and concepts	PLO1	
CLO2 Develop cultural sensitivity to manage cross-cultural employees and develop skills necessary to conduct effective cross-national negotiation	PLO1, 2, 3, 4	
CLO3 Explain the complex business opportunities and problems in a global context	PLO1, 2, 3, 4	
CLO4 Apply theories and concepts to analyze international management problems and issues; and to formulate and implement international business strategies	PLO1, 2, 3, 4	
CLO5 Demonstrate effective communication skill	PLO5	
<b>COURSE TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES</b>		
<b>Course Teaching and Learning Activities</b>	<b>Expected contact hour</b>	<b>Study Load (% of study)</b>
T&L1. Lectures	36	28%
T&L2. Case analyses	30	24%
T&L3. Group discussion	25	20%
T&L4. Self study	35	28%
Total	126	100%
<b>Assessment Methods</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Aligned Course Learning Outcomes</b>
A1. Group Project Group project presentations	40%	CLO1,2,3,4,5

A2. Class participation	20%	CLO1,2,3,4,5
A3. Individual case write-up	40%	CLO1,2,3,4,5
	Total	100%

### **A1. Group Project**

Each team will be responsible for making presentations of a **new** foreign investment project. The investment project involves making or selling a specified product or service in a host country. Your team will choose one multinational corporation, one industry, and one host country. Examples of the topics of your presentation include Kweichow Moutai Co., Ltd.'s entry in Switzerland and octopus card in Africa. Students assume the role of international managers and present your analysis and recommendations to the senior management of your company. Your analysis should be focused primarily on organizational and management issues rather than marketing/finance issues.

You have to submit the topic of your group project to Teaching Assistant on or before **Oct 6** and get approval from your instructor beforehand. No two teams can work on the same topic. To secure your topic, you can submit your topic for approval as soon as your team has made a decision.

#### Presentations

Each group is responsible to present twice. Your presentation should be about 15 minutes. Each presentation will be followed by a Q&A session (5-10 minutes). There are no rules for the selection of presenter(s). The presentation portion of the grade will be the same for all members of the team.

The first group presentation will be held on **Oct 20**. The second group presentation will be held on **Nov 24**.

### **A2. Class Participation**

You are encouraged to actively participate in all class activities and discussions. Your class participation is crucial to successful learning. Active class participation will not only facilitate your learning process but also make the class discussions lively and exciting.

Class participation will be evaluated based on the quantity and quality of an individual's contribution. I will greatly reward students who actively participate in the discussion of cases and role-play activities, make insightful comments and connections to course materials, constructively analyse classmates' arguments, and introduce a unique perspective into a discussion. It is important that you are prepared for the class by having covered the case materials. I may call upon you to make the opening statement describing the facts of a case or to address a specific issue during class discussion. Unexcused absences will affect the participation grade.

### A3. Case Write-Up

You are required to submit one case write-up. You are expected to identify the main issues in the case, to evaluate the alternatives and to make recommendations.

Your case write-up should be no more than 5 pages (excluding cover page, tables, figures, appendices, references, and endnotes). I will not read any writing beyond the page limit. The case write-up should be double-spaced and typed in 12-point type with one-inch margins. It is due at **5:00pm, Dec 1**. You should upload your case write-up to Moodle. **No late assignments will be accepted.**

The following guiding principles may help you prepare for your case write-up:

- The questions provided at the end of the case help you streamline the issues to be addressed. The case write-up can be built around answering the questions.
- You can use the organizing frameworks discussed in class or those from other sources.
- You are not required to repeat the case situation in your write-up. The case facts should be used as supporting evidence in your analysis.
- You can append tables and figures to support your analysis. All tables and figures should be referred to in the text and relevant to the discussion.

## STANDARDS FOR ASSESSMENT

### Course Grade Descriptors

A+, A, A-	Strong evidence of superb ability to fulfill the intended learning outcomes of the course at all levels of learning: describe, apply, evaluate and synthesis.
B+, B, B-	Strong evidence of ability to fulfill the intended learning outcomes of the course at all levels of learning: describe, apply, evaluate and synthesis.
C+, C, C-	Evidence of adequate ability to fulfill the intended learning outcomes of the course at low levels of learning; such as describe and apply, but not at high levels of learning such as evaluate and synthesis.
D+, D	Evidence of basic familiarity with the subject.
F	Little evidence of basic familiarity with the subject.

### Assessment Rubrics for Each Assessment

#### A1. Group Project (Presentation)

Grade	Criteria:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Focus</li><li>- Logic</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Understanding of topic</b></li> <li>- <b>Presentation skills</b></li> <li>- <b>Timing</b></li> </ul>
<b>A+, A, A-</b>	<p><u>Content of presentation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The presentation was highly successful at communicating the essential elements of the analysis and conclusions to the audience in a logical manner.</li> <li>▪ Concepts were thoroughly explained and clarified when necessary.</li> <li>▪ The presentation demonstrated a deep understanding and comprehension of the topic (theory and practical application).</li> <li>▪ There was clear evidence of independent and critical thinking.</li> </ul> <p><u>Execution of presentation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The presenter(s) displayed excellent verbal skills and delivered a highly interesting and coherent presentation.</li> <li>▪ Visual aids were appropriately used and clear.</li> <li>▪ The presentation was completed within the time limit.</li> </ul>
<b>B+, B, B-</b>	<p><u>Content of presentation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The presentation was successful at communicating the essential elements of the analysis and conclusions to the audience in a logical manner.</li> <li>▪ Most concepts were thoroughly explained and clarified when necessary.</li> <li>▪ The presentation demonstrated a sound understanding and comprehension of the topic (theory and practical application).</li> <li>▪ There was evidence of independent and critical thinking.</li> </ul> <p><u>Execution of presentation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The presenter(s) displayed good verbal skills and delivered an interesting and coherent presentation.</li> <li>▪ Visual aids were appropriately used and clear.</li> <li>▪ The presentation was completed within the time limit.</li> </ul>
<b>C+, C, C-</b>	<p><u>Content of presentation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The presentation adequately communicated the essential elements of the analysis and conclusions to the audience in a logical manner.</li> <li>▪ Most but not all concepts were thoroughly explained and clarified when necessary.</li> <li>▪ The presentation demonstrated an acceptable level of understanding and comprehension of the topic (theory and practical application).</li> <li>▪ There was limited evidence of independent and critical thinking.</li> </ul> <p><u>Execution of presentation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The presenter(s) displayed mediocre verbal skills and delivered a somewhat interesting and coherent presentation.</li> <li>▪ Visual aids were appropriately used and clear.</li> <li>▪ The presentation was completed within the time limit.</li> </ul>
<b>D+, D</b>	<p><u>Content of presentation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The presentation only covered some basic elements of the analysis and conclusions to the audience in a somewhat logical manner.</li> <li>▪ Very few concepts were thoroughly explained and clarified when necessary.</li> <li>▪ The presentation demonstrated very limited level of understanding and comprehension of the topic (theory and practical application).</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There was very limited evidence of independent and critical thinking.</li> </ul> <p><u>Execution of presentation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The presenter(s) displayed minimal verbal skills and the presentation lacked in coherence.</li> <li>▪ Visual aids were somewhat appropriately used but unclear.</li> <li>▪ The presentation was completed within the time limit.</li> </ul>
<b>F</b>	<p><u>Content of presentation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The presentation failed to address the basic and key issues of the analysis and conclusions.</li> <li>▪ The presentation did not demonstrate sufficient understanding and comprehension of the topic.</li> </ul> <p><u>Execution of presentation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Verbal skills were inadequate.</li> <li>▪ Visual aids were inadequately used.</li> <li>▪ The presentation was not completed within the time limit.</li> </ul>

## A2. Class Participation

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Assessment criteria:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Attendance</b></li> <li>- <b>Voluntary and consistent participation</b></li> <li>- <b>Quality of comments (accuracy, clarity, relevance)</b></li> <li>- <b>Analytical ability</b></li> <li>- <b>Link to theory and concepts</b></li> </ul>
<b>A+, A, A-</b>	<p>Attended all case sessions and missed minimal amount of lectures.  Consistently participated voluntarily in case discussions and other class discussions. All or almost all contributions to the discussion are relevant, clear, well articulated and insightful and consist of relevant and helpful examples and analyses, creative and insightful solutions, thereby appropriately challenging assumptions and perspectives, showing outstanding ability to apply theory and concepts to practical examples.</p>
<b>B+, B, B-</b>	<p>Attended all case sessions and missed minimal amount of lectures.  Consistently participated voluntarily in case discussions and other class discussions. Most contributions to the discussion are relevant, clear, well articulated and insightful and consist of relevant and helpful examples and analyses, creative and insightful solutions, thereby appropriately challenging assumptions and perspectives, showing strong ability to apply theory and concepts to practical examples.</p>
<b>C+, C, C-</b>	<p>Attended all case sessions and missed minimal amount of lectures.  Occasionally participated voluntarily in case discussions and other class discussions. Some contributions to the discussion are relevant, clear, well articulated and insightful and consist of relevant and helpful examples and analyses, showing some creative and insightful solutions, thereby showing moderate ability to apply theory and concepts to practical examples.</p>

<b>D+, D</b>	Attended all case sessions and missed minimal amount of lectures. Occasionally participated voluntarily in case discussions and other class discussions. Few contributions to the discussion are relevant, clear, well articulated and insightful and consist of limited relevant and helpful examples and analyses, showing very limited creative and insightful solutions, thereby showing very limited ability to apply theory and concepts to practical examples.
<b>F</b>	Missed multiple case sessions and/or failed to participate voluntarily or simply recited comments made by others.

### A3. Individual Case Write-up

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Criteria:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Identification of critical issues</b></li> <li>- <b>Understanding and correct application of theory</b></li> <li>- <b>Articulation of arguments</b></li> <li>- <b>Relevance, logic and creativity of recommendations</b></li> <li>- <b>Structure</b></li> <li>- <b>Use and correct citation of relevant sources of information</b></li> <li>- <b>Language and style (grammar and spelling)</b></li> </ul>
<b>A+, A, A-</b>	<p><u>Analysis and application of theory:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Demonstrates an outstanding understanding of, and the ability to apply theory and concepts to the case chosen.</li> <li>▪ All relevant aspects were addressed and researched in sufficient depth.</li> <li>▪ Draws widely from relevant sources and cites sources correctly.</li> </ul> <p><u>Recommendations and Conclusions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Outstanding ability to adopt a critical perspective and provide adequate, feasible and creative recommendations.</li> <li>▪ Conclusions follow logically from analysis.</li> </ul> <p><u>Writing and Structure:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Logical structure of report as a whole.</li> <li>▪ Excellent development of arguments and offers a logically consistent and well-articulated analysis and insight into the subject.</li> <li>▪ No spelling or grammar mistakes.</li> </ul>
<b>B+, B, B-</b>	<p><u>Analysis and application of theory:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Demonstrates a good understanding of, and the ability to apply theory and concepts to the case chosen.</li> <li>▪ Most relevant aspects were addressed and researched in sufficient depth.</li> <li>▪ Draws widely from relevant sources and cites sources correctly.</li> </ul> <p><u>Recommendations and Conclusions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Good ability to adopt a critical perspective and provide adequate, feasible and creative recommendations.</li> <li>▪ Conclusions follow logically from analysis.</li> </ul> <p><u>Writing and Structure:</u></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Logical structure of report as a whole.</li> <li>▪ Good development of arguments and offers a logically consistent and well-articulated analysis and insight into the subject.</li> <li>▪ No spelling or grammar mistakes.</li> </ul>
<b>C+, C, C-</b>	<p><u>Analysis and application of theory:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Demonstrates a sufficient understanding of, and the ability to apply theory and concepts to the case chosen.</li> <li>▪ Some relevant aspects were addressed and researched in depth.</li> </ul> <p><u>Recommendations and Conclusions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mediocre ability to adopt a critical perspective and provide adequate, feasible and creative recommendations.</li> <li>▪ Conclusions follow logically from analysis.</li> <li>▪ Draws widely from relevant sources and cites sources correctly.</li> </ul> <p><u>Writing and Structure:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Logical structure of report as a whole.</li> <li>▪ Good development of arguments and offers a logically consistent and well-articulated analysis and insight into the subject.</li> <li>▪ No spelling or grammar mistakes.</li> </ul>
<b>D+, D</b>	<p><u>Analysis and application of theory:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Demonstrates limited understanding of, and the ability to apply theory and concepts to the case chosen.</li> <li>▪ Some relevant aspects were addressed and researched to a moderate degree.</li> <li>▪ Limited use of sources of information but correct citation of sources.</li> </ul> <p><u>Recommendations and Conclusions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mediocre ability to adopt a critical perspective and provide adequate, feasible and creative recommendations.</li> <li>▪ Link between analysis and conclusions drawn is weak.</li> </ul> <p><u>Writing and Structure:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Flaws in the logic of the structure of report as a whole.</li> <li>▪ Mediocre development of arguments offering limited insight into the subject.</li> <li>▪ No spelling or grammar mistakes.</li> </ul>
<b>F</b>	<p><u>Analysis and application of theory:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Demonstrates lack of understanding of, and the ability to apply theory and concepts to the case chosen.</li> <li>▪ Relevant aspects events were not addressed.</li> </ul> <p><u>Recommendations and Conclusions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inability to adopt a critical perspective and provide adequate, feasible and create recommendations.</li> <li>▪ Conclusions do not follow logically from the analysis.</li> </ul> <p><u>Writing and Structure:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Flaws in the logic of the arguments and the structure of the report.</li> <li>▪ Failure to use available software for grammar and spelling checks, resulting in poor writing, typos and grammatical errors.</li> </ul>



## COURSE CONTENT AND TENTATIVE TEACHING SCHEDULE

Teaching Week	Date	Topic(s)
1	Sep 1	Introduction to Multinational Corporations
2	Sep 8	Chapter 1: Assessing the Environment–Political, Economic, Legal, Technological
3	Sep 15	Chapter 2: Managing Interdependence–Social Responsibility and Ethics
4	Sep 22	Public Holidays
5	Sep 29	Chapter 3: Understanding the Role of Culture Chapter 4: Communicating across Cultures
6	Oct 6	Chapter 5: Cross-cultural Negotiation and Decision Making <i>Case: Hamilton Real Estate</i>
7	Oct 13	Reading Week – No class
8	Oct 20	1 <sup>st</sup> Presentation of Group Projects
9	Oct 27	Chapter 6: Formulating Strategy
10	Nov 3	Chapter 7: Global Alliances and Strategy Implementation
11	Nov 10	Chapter 8: Organization Structure and Control Systems
12	Nov 17	Chapter 11: Motivating and Leading
13	Nov 24	2 <sup>nd</sup> Presentation of Group Projects

### REQUIRED/RECOMMENDED READINGS & ONLINE MATERIALS (e.g. journals, textbooks, website addresses etc.)

The required textbook is Deresky, H., *International Management*, Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson Prentice-Hall.

Both classic and recent cases are used to discuss what business decisions that MNCs can make to

maintain good firm performance. The classic cases focus on decisions that MNCs made in the past. The recent cases focus on emerging business issues.

Cases will be posted on the course's website before each class.

#### **MEANS/PROCESSES FOR STUDENT FEEDBACK ON COURSE**

- conducting mid-term survey in addition to SETL around the end of the semester
- regular discussion with students

#### **COURSE POLICY (e.g. plagiarism, academic honesty, attendance, etc.)**

- The University Regulations on academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. Please check the University Statement on plagiarism at <http://www.hku.hk/plagiarism/>.
- Students are required to attend all classes on time. If you have some reasons for not being able to attend a class, you should inform the instructor beforehand.

#### **ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION (e.g. e-learning platforms & materials, penalty for late assignments, etc.)**

Lecture notes will be posted on the course's website before each class.

##### **Course Structure:**

Class format is a combination of short lectures, group and classroom case discussions, and activities.

Lecture notes will be posted on the course's website before each class.

##### **Group Member Sheet:**

All groups should submit the Group Member Sheet to Teaching Assistant on or before **Sep 15**.