

## COURSE SYLLABUS



### **MANAGING A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS PROJECT**

IFSA-Butler Reimagining Europe Semester Program in Prague

**Suggested US semester credit hours:** 4 credits

**Contact Hours:** 60

**Course Level:** 300

**IFSA-Butler course code:** MG380-08

**Course length:** Semester

**Delivery method:** Face to face

**Language of Instruction:** English

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is assessed by a Pearson-set assignment. The project brief will be set by the center, based on a theme provided by Pearson (this will change annually). The theme and chosen project within the theme will enable students to explore and examine a relevant and current topical aspect of business in the context of the business environment. The aim of this course is to offer students an opportunity to demonstrate the skills required for managing and implementing a project. They will undertake independent research and investigation for carrying out and executing a business project which meets appropriate business aims and objectives. On successful completion of this unit students will have the confidence to engage in decision-making, problem-solving and research activities using project management skills. They will have the fundamental knowledge and skills to enable them to investigate and examine relevant business concepts within a work-related context, determine appropriate outcomes, decisions or solutions and present evidence to various stakeholders in an acceptable and understandable format.

#### STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students who successfully complete this course will:

- Establish project aims, objectives and timeframes based on the chosen theme
- Conduct small-scale research, information gathering and data collection to generate knowledge to support the project
- Present the project and communicate appropriate recommendations based on meaningful conclusions drawn from the evidence findings and/or analysis
- Reflect on the value gained from conducting the project and its usefulness to support sustainable organizational performance
- Strengthen critical thinking skills
- Become familiar with resources available for further research on project management

- Make cognitive connections between learning in this course and other learning experiences in the IFSA-Butler Reimagining Europe Semester Program in Prague

COURSE DELIVERY

Students are expected to read or view resources in advance and be prepared to actively discuss them in class. In each meeting, the instructor will overview the topic and then facilitate a group discussion, drawing out relevant themes, following up on specific lines of inquiry, and prompting students’ thoughtful engagement with the topic. Students are encouraged to bring their prior learning experiences into class discussions and to make cognitive connections between this course and others in the IFSA-Butler Reimagining Europe Semester Program in Prague whenever possible. Theories of experiential learning and integrative learning therefore undergird the dynamic learning environment of this course.

This course utilizes an interactive approach to teaching that focuses on the individual student’s needs. This approach to teaching and learning aims to foster a challenging but caring environment that allows students to explore, create, and test themselves and their ideas in a safe place.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Weeks	Content Delivery
1 - 3	<p><b>Establish project aims, objectives and timeframes based on the chosen theme</b></p> <p><b>Project management:</b>            What is project management and what does it involve?            The key stages of project management.            The advantages of using project management and why it is important.</p> <p><b>Initiation of the project and project planning phase:</b>            Scoping a project – defining objectives, scope, purpose and deliverables to be produced.            Steps and documentation required in the initiation phase.            Developing the project plan, including planning for timescales and time management, cost, quality, change, risk and issues.            The work breakdown structure.            Use of Bar and Gantt Charts for effective planning.</p>
4 - 6	<p><b>Conduct small-scale research, information gathering and data collection to generate knowledge to support the project</b></p> <p><b>Project execution phase:</b>            Selecting appropriate methods of information gathering, data collection and material resourcing. The distinct phases which support a coherent and logical argument. Use of</p>

	<p>secondary research to inform a primary empirical study. Qualitative and quantitative research methods.</p> <p><b>Field work:</b>  Selecting a sample of the consumer market, businesses or individuals (those who meet certain characteristics relevant to the research theme) is used to gather data (qualitative or quantitative). Sampling approaches and techniques, including probability and non-probability sampling.</p> <p><b>Ethics, reliability and validity:</b>  All research should be conducted ethically – how is this achieved and reported?  Research should also be reliable (similar results achieved from a similar sample) and valid (the research should measure what it aimed to measure).</p> <p><b>Analyzing information and data:</b>  Using data collection tools such as interviews and questionnaires.  Using analytical techniques such as trend analysis, coding or typologies.</p> <p>Written Report</p>
7 - 9	<p><b>Present the project and communicate appropriate recommendations based on meaningful conclusions drawn from the evidence findings and/or analysis</b></p> <p><b>Communicating outcomes:</b>  Consider the method (e.g. written, verbal) and the medium (e.g. report, online, presentation).  Both method and medium will be influenced by the project research and its intended audience.</p> <p><b>Convincing arguments:</b>  All findings/outcomes should be convincing and presented logically where the assumption is that the audience has little or no knowledge of the project process.  Developing evaluative conclusions.</p> <p><b>Critical and objective analysis and evaluation:</b>  Secondary and primary data should be critiqued and considered with an objective mindset. Objectivity results in more robust evaluations where an analysis justifies a judgement.</p>
10 -15	<p><b>Reflect on the value gained from conducting the project and its usefulness to support sustainable organizational performance</b></p> <p><b>Reflection for learning and practice:</b>  The difference between reflecting on performance and evaluating a project – the</p>

	<p>former considers the research process, information gathering and data collection, the latter the quality of the research argument and use of evidence.</p> <p><b>The cycle of reflection:</b> To include reflection in action and reflection on action. How to use reflection to inform future behavior, particularly directed towards sustainable performance.</p> <p><b>Reflective writing:</b> Avoiding generalization and focusing on personal development and the research journey in a critical and objective way.</p> <p><b>Generalization:</b> Many studies result in generalized findings. Research which has its basis in a specific field such as Human Resource Management (HRM) and in a specific context should avoid generalized conclusions. Outcomes should be specific and actionable.</p> <p>Individual Presentation</p>
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## EVALUATION METHODS

The course instructor will determine specific assignments (including paper topics), projects, and exams for the course. Your work on individual assignments and projects will be guided by grading rubrics provided by the course instructor. Your final grade in the course will be arrived at through assessment methods determined by the course instructor and according to the percentages attached to each assignment and exam by the course instructor. Participation will constitute a determined percentage of your grade. Participation includes attendance, preparation, engagement in discussion, civility, and respect.

Assignment Number	Type of Assignment	Description and Areas Assessed
1	Written Report	Material covered during weeks 1 to 6
2	Individual presentation	Material covered during weeks 7 to 12 based on selected organization

### **Timely Submissions**

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be accepted at the discretion of the course instructor and generally only in the event of a documented illness or emergency.

### READING LIST

#### **Recommended Resources**

COSTLEY, C., ELLIOT, G. and GIBBS, P. (2010) Doing Work Based Research: Approaches to Enquiry for Insider-researchers. London: SAGE.

FLICK, U. (2011) Introducing Research Methodology: A Beginner's Guide to Doing a Research Project. London: SAGE.

GRAY, D. (2009) Doing Research in the Real World. 2nd Ed. London: SAGE. SAUNDERS, M., LEWIS, P. and THORNHILL, A. (2012) Research Methods for Business Students. 6th Ed. Harlow: Pearson.

#### **Journals**

International Journal of Quantitative and Qualitative Research. Qualitative Research Journal.

### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Any academic endeavor must be based upon a foundation of honesty and integrity. Students are expected to abide by principles of academic integrity and must be willing to bear individual responsibility for their work while studying abroad. Any academic work (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill an academic requirement must represent a student's original work. Any act of academic misconduct, such as cheating, fabrication, forgery, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty, will subject a student to disciplinary action.

IFSA-Butler takes academic integrity very seriously. Students must not accept outside assistance without permission from the instructor. Additionally, students must document all sources according to the instructions of the professor. Should your instructor suspect you of plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty, you may receive a failing grade for the course and disciplinary action may result. The incident will be reported to the IFSA-Butler resident director as well as your home institution.