

Winter MBA Syllabus

FACULTY: The seminar faculty leaders for this program are:

- Tom Baker (tbaker@cba.ua.edu), The University of Alabama, Associate Professor of Marketing

TEXT: Each participant has been provided with Country and Host readings for the seminar. These readings provide general information about international business and host organizations for this seminar as well as information on the countries that will be visited.

STUDENT EVALUATION: For students taking the seminar for course credit, evaluation will be based on the following:

Graduate Student:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professional Contribution = 15%• Final Paper = 85%

PROFESSIONAL CONTRIBUTION: Professional behavior is expected at all times. Illustrative items that will contribute to your evaluation include: punctuality, attendance, participation with presenters during Q&A, and professionalism during company presentations (paying attention, showing interest, appropriate body language, etc.).

FINAL PAPER: When the overseas portion of the seminar is completed, participants will prepare a final written report. Final written report will be due on **March 15, 2021**. Any late papers will result in a loss of points toward your final grade. The paper will be composed of multiple parts.

Final Paper Part One:

Students should take time to appropriately reflect on their seminar, the goals they set and accomplished, plus all of the various experiences they had during their time abroad. Write one detailed paragraph about the best, most memorable and/or impactful experience that happened during your time abroad with IBS. You're welcome to choose any experience from any part of your seminar abroad.

*Your entry will be added to a book of journal entries from other alumni and may be shared in future marketing materials

Final Paper Part Two:

Students should devote approximately 2 to 3 pages for each company presentation and their academic components, associated activities, and the significance of the topical coverage. This part of the paper will be shaped more fully by faculty members during the orientation session on the first day of the seminar as well as the final wrap up session. You will also have mini-debriefing sessions after each seminar program which may prove valuable when you are writing this section of the paper.

Final Paper Part Three:

Each participant will be asked to research one company that we will visit during the seminar.

This part of the paper will require students to do individual research prior to departure for the program. This research should enable the student to become a relative expert on his/her assigned company and its general industry.

Part three of the paper will be a case analysis of one of the companies that we visit during the seminar. Although students will be assigned one of the companies to complete basic research, students will be allowed to complete this portion of the paper relative to any of the companies that are visited. This section will be about 5 to 10 pages long.

Final Paper Part Four:

#WhatILearned project: During your trip create 5 “posts” with a picture and text about something you learned. This should be very short (a typical Facebook or Instagram post) and use the hashtag **#WhatILearned**. The text of your post should loosely coordinate with the picture you include. The picture **MUST** have you in it with something in the background. It can just be you, or it can be a large group or small group photo with other IBS students and/or faculty leaders. Note: If you are an intelligence officer in the military or have some strong aversion to being in pictures, you can meet this requirement by taking pictures without you in them. Please let IBS know if you are requesting an exception. Please no alcoholic beverages in the photos.

Include in your short post something interesting that you learned (anything - large or small). It could be something interesting from the company visit, or on a city tour or side trip or local attraction. Take a minute to reflect and share what you are learning.

Examples:

It could be something as simple as you in front of a company sign at a seminar visit:

#WhatILearned: IBS students at AT&T Europe - AT&T is gaining market share in the Middle East. Brand equity is getting strong.

Or a group picture in front of the Great Wall:

#WhatILearned: "Your Name" at the Great Wall - The Great Wall is 5,500 miles long!

Another good option is when you present a plaque to the seminar visit presenters.

#WhatILearned: IBS Students thanking executives at PricewaterhouseCoopers. Learned about mergers and acquisitions in Asia.

Another good option is you giving a pre-trip visit in the hotel lobby (with the audience visible in the picture).

#WhatILearned: "Student Name" giving my pre-trip presentation on "X Company" to the group. I learned that XYZ company just sold one of their divisions.

Final Paper Part Five (Graduate Students Only):

Each student will be expected to write a short analysis of each country visited during the seminar. This analysis should be about 3-5 pages per country and should discuss their general economic and political environment. This section should be oriented towards giving a view of the competitiveness of the country in the international arena.

NOTES:

You should try to go beyond descriptive writing and engage in deeper analysis and thought. You will learn the most and generate a better paper by focusing your thoughts and contributions in the form of an analysis, question, synthesis, lessons, and connections you see to your academic courses and/or work experience. Try to seek larger patterns and find meaning from your experience. What longer-term trends, opportunities, threats, problems, issues, and implications do you see for managers?

- Send one (1) electronic copy of your paper to the IBS office, to Amanda@ibstours.com
- Send one (1) electronic copy of your paper to the faculty member assigned to you during your seminar.
- Send one (1) electronic copy of your paper to your professor at your home university.

***It is possible that your home institution might have additional requirements for you. It is also possible that they might require your paper to be turned in earlier due to grading deadlines.**

OUTLINE FOR THE FINAL PAPER:

Title Page

Table of Contents

Introduction

Reflection (Part One)

Write-up of each Company Seminar, about 2-3 pages each (Part Two)

Use sub-headings

Summarize and rate each visit on a scale of 1-10 with 10 being highest rating

Explain your ratings and what conclusions you can draw from each session

Cite references where appropriate

In-depth write-up of Assigned Company, 5-10 pages; cite references where appropriate (Part Three)

Country Analysis (Part 4/Graduate papers only)

Conclusion

SUPPLEMENTARY SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING YOUR PAPER

1. Plan before you go on the Seminar. Gather materials related to the firms, industries, institutions (e.g., E.U. or China) and countries that you will visit. Use the Internet. Identify your general objectives.

2. Identify topics or themes of special interest to use as a special focus for learning and for asking questions. Some examples might be:

a) Topics: labor issues; quality, business-government relationships; dealing with diversity & minorities, technology, strategy, forces for change, alliances and collaboration, current management practices and hot topics, participation and governance, shareholder relations, mergers & acquisitions, etc.

b) Business functions: Operations, Finance, Marketing, R&D, HRM.

c) Management Functions & Processes: Planning organizing, leading, controlling, staffing.

Management pervasive processes: coordination, decision-making, problem solving.

3. If you are currently working, use your own firm and work experience as a frame of reference for making observations about differences and similarities. Make comparisons across countries, business firms and industries, by government practices, etc.

4. Before each visit identify your personal learning objectives. List three topics that you want to learn about. Develop questions for inquiry during the visit.

5. Make everything a learning experience during the seminar. Record observations about all aspects of life, not just the formal visits to the firms. You will notice different ways of doing things as you shop, eat, tour, experience street life, night-life, hotels, language, currency, cultural and social life. Even details about your coach and driver, transportation facilities, tourist information facilities, infrastructure etc., may be interesting.

Recording your observations and pondering why they (we) do things differently will help you get more out of the seminar. Some of these notes and thoughts, especially your puzzlements and analyses, can be used in the paper, perhaps in a "miscellaneous" section.

6. Each visit to a firm provides interesting information that students can use for descriptive writing. However, you must go beyond this descriptive writing and engage in deeper analysis and thought.

There is a difference between straight descriptive reporting and interpretive writing that includes a search for deeper insights through analysis and synthesis. You will learn the most, and generate a better paper, by going beyond descriptive reporting to include your thoughts and contributions in the form of analysis, questions, synthesis, lessons, and connections to your academic courses and work experiences. Seek larger patterns and meanings from your experiences. What longer-term trends, opportunities, threats, problems, issues, lessons and implications for USA managers do you see?

7. In your paper we encourage you to generate lists of questions that occur to you even if you cannot answer them. Of particular value are issues or questions that raise important matters that are difficult for anyone to answer definitively, but that are worthy of pondering.

8. During the Seminar you have opportunities to talk with other students and the faculty to clarify what you are learning. Take advantage of the mid-point and ending sessions with faculty for raising questions and sharing observations and learning. It's also an opportunity for you to make observations and connections to your studies about group dynamics, informal organization, leadership, roles people play, stress, personal responsibility, alcohol, or cliques, etc.