

Vesalius College

Course description

Course title: Introduction to Business
Course code: BUS 101
Teacher responsible: Peter Solar
Contact hours: 42 Budgeted study time
Course description: The course has three, broadly equal, parts. First, students are introduced to key elements of business through the study of a number of historical cases, which should also give them a broad view of how the way in which businesses are organized has changed over last two centuries. Second, some key concepts for understanding businesses are developed. Students are introduced to the notions of value creation, business models, strategy, organization, finance, innovation and human resources. Third, these concepts are further developed and other aspects of business are introduced through the study of a number of contemporary cases. Teaching is primarily through class discussion of the required readings, supplemented by “mini-lectures” on various aspects of business.
Course objectives: This course is intended to introduce students to the internal organization of firms and to the legal, economic, political and social environment in which they operate. It shows how accounting, finance, marketing, operations, human resources, and innovation, all fields that students will study in more depth in subsequent semesters, contribute to realizing the objectives of the firm. Students will also start to learn how to find and analyze information about businesses. The course contributes to the development of such general skills as the ability to read and interpret texts and to write and speak clearly and concisely.
Grade weighting scheme: Midterm examination 25% Final examination 40% Written work 25% Class participation 10%
Examination method: Two written examinations; combining short answer and essay questions; several short (1-5 pages) pieces of written work

Literature consulted (titles of handbooks, reader, readings and other course material):

Joan Magretta, *What Management Is* (London, 2003); various historical and contemporary case studies; *Financial Times*