Course Syllabus

**BUS 254G**
Digitalisation and Business Transformation

**Number of ECTS credits:** 6

**Time and Place:** Friday, 08:30 h – 11:30 h

Classroom: Veco 3

**Contact Details for Professor**

Name of Professor: Ulrich Penzkofer

E-mail: ulipenzkofer@hotmail.com

Office hours: Friday 11:30 h – 12:30 h

**CONTENT OVERVIEW**

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**Course Prerequisites**

BUS101G and BUS222G

**Course Description**
This course provides students with insights on key aspects of Digitalization and Business Transformation. Students will understand the disruptive nature of Digitalization and consequences for Business Strategies and Business Transformation across all industries. Students will receive a short introduction on the development of Information Technology over the last 25 years and today’s most important technologies and technology providers. Furthermore, students will gain an understanding of key technologies like Cloud Computing, Internet of Things, Big Data Analysis, and Artificial Intelligence.

Primary focus will be the effect of digitalization on the Development of Corporate Strategies, on Corporate Cultures and on Processes within enterprises and organizations. Interdependencies with the overall economy as well as with individual behavior (social networks) will also form part of the syllabus.

In order to structure the complexity of the topic, the course will analyze the current status and effects of digitalization along three dimensions:

(i) An understanding of technological building blocks;
(ii) An understanding on Leadership Challenges, Strategy Development and Process within a company in the era of digitalization.
(iii) An understanding of digitalization in different Vertical Industries, incl. Public Sector, Healthcare, and Media

Students will realize that digitalization creates enormous opportunities but also challenges and is a key success factor for successful management. In this context the “CEO point of View” is put into focus. At the end of the course, we discuss aspects of a post-digital world and projected impacts of economies and individuals.

Course Learning Objectives (CLO)

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

In terms of knowledge:

- Understand technological building blocks that form the backbone for digitalisation;
- Understanding of Leadership Challenges, Strategy Development and Process within a company in the era of digitalization;
- Understanding of digitalization in different vertical Industries, including Public Sector, Healthcare and Media;
- Identify levers for Business Transformation;
- Understand the functioning of a company along key processes and the related managerial challenges;
➢ Understand the importance of creating an innovation culture in a company which allows empowerment and initiatives to implement new ideas on a continuous basis;
➢ Understand and apply basic rules for effective leadership, specifically important in a fast changing business environment – as well as approaches to conflict resolutions;
➢ Understand the importance of Change Management, Training and Communication relating to successful Business Transformation and learn and apply certain tools and methodologies in this context;
➢ Understand the importance of values and cultural differences, in a global market.

In terms of skills
➢ Ability to do presentations on complex matters in a well structured and easy to understand way and with coherent and logic conclusions.
➢ Use appropriate referencing and bibliographic methods.

In terms of attitudes, students should develop in this course:
➢ The students will learn to discuss complex management situations based on knowledge and facts and respect for different opinions;
➢ Students will be coached to develop an attitude of open-mindedness and self-critical reflection with a view to self-improvement as well as an open attitude towards inter-cultural team-work.

LINK BETWEEN MAJOR OBJECTIVES, COURSE OBJECTIVES, TEACHING METHODS, ASSIGNMENTS AND FEEDBACK

(BA in Business Studies )

Summary:
Number of assignments used in this course:
Number of Feedback occasions in this course (either written or oral):
Number and Types of Teaching Methods:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Learning Objectives</th>
<th>Course Learning objectives addressing the Major Objectives (testable learning objectives)</th>
<th>Methods used to Teach Course Objectives</th>
<th>Methods (and numbers/types of assignments) used to test these learning objectives</th>
<th>Type, Timing and Instances of Feedback given to Student</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The bachelor has a broad knowledge of the different functional fields of business management. S/he is able to apply this knowledge in the analysis of business-oriented problems and is able to propose solution to specific business problems.</td>
<td>Understand technological building blocks that form the backbone for digitalisation; Understanding of Leadership Challenges, Strategy Development and Process within a company in the era of digitalization; Understanding of digitalization in different vertical Industries, including Public Sector, Healthcare and Media; Identify levers for Business Transformation;</td>
<td>Ex-cathedra Team work Videos Guest Lectures from Experts in the field Discussion and Reading</td>
<td>Student Project on a specific business topic / case presented in Class Exam</td>
<td>Oral and written Feed-back on Presentation Written Feed Back on Exam</td>
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<td>The bachelor has an understanding of the interrelatedness of the different functional fields of business and understands the impact of this on decision-making.</td>
<td>Understand the functioning of a company along key processes and the related managerial challenges; Understand the importance of creating an innovation culture in a company which allows empowerment and initiatives to implement new ideas on a continuous basis; Understand and apply basic rules for effective leadership, specifically important in a fast changing business environment – as well as approaches to conflict resolutions; Understand the importance of Change Management, Training and Communication relating to successful Business Transformation and learn and apply certain tools and methodologies in this context;</td>
<td>Ex-Cathedra Case Studies to read, prepare and discuss</td>
<td>Student Project, presented in Class Exam</td>
<td>Oral and written Feed-back on Presentation Written Feed Back on Exam</td>
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<td>The bachelor has insight into the broad societal context of businesses and is able to take it into</td>
<td>Understand the importance of values and cultural</td>
<td>Ex-cathedra Case studies</td>
<td>Student Project, presented in Class</td>
<td>Oral and written Feed-back on Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Major Learning Objectives</td>
<td>Course Learning objectives addressing the Major Objectives (testable learning objectives)</td>
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<td>Type, Timing and Instances of Feedback given to Student</td>
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<td>account in the analysis of business-oriented problems.</td>
<td>differences, in a global market</td>
<td>Exam</td>
<td>Written Feed Back on Exam</td>
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<td>The bachelor knows and is able to apply common qualitative and quantitative research methods and is able to apply these in the field of business studies</td>
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<td>The bachelor has an open and academic attitude characterized by accuracy, critical reflection and academic curiosity.</td>
<td>The students will learn to discuss complex management situations based on knowledge and facts and respect for different opinions</td>
<td>Open discussions</td>
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<td>The bachelor is able to identify the international dimension in business-related problems and knows how to handle these problems in an effective way.</td>
<td>Understand the importance of values and cultural differences, in a global market.</td>
<td>Open discussion</td>
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<td>The bachelor recognizes the importance of life-long learning.</td>
<td>Student will be coached to develop an attitude of open-mindedness and self-critical reflection with a view to self-improvement as well as an open attitude towards inter-cultural team-work</td>
<td>open discussions</td>
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<td>The bachelor is able to communicate clearly, fluently and accurately; as well in a written report as in an oral presentation.</td>
<td>Ability to do presentations on complex matters in a well structured and easy to understand way and with coherent and logic conclusions. Use appropriate referencing and bibliographic methods.</td>
<td>Case Studies Videos</td>
<td>Student Presentations</td>
<td>Oral and Written Feed-Back on Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>The bachelor is able to combine ethical and business-oriented judgments in the analysis of business problems and takes these ethical considerations explicitly into account in the solutions proposed for business problems</td>
<td>The student will learn about the importance of values and ethical decisions on company culture and business success.</td>
<td>Ex-Cathedra Case Studies</td>
<td>Student Project, presented in Class</td>
<td>Oral and written Feed-back on Presentation</td>
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Main Course Materials (please note that you can find the readings for each week and session in the Course Schedule section below):

The course material consists of powerpoint presentations, lecture notes and readings from the textbook. Powerpoint presentations will be made available after the respective classes have taken place. A week-by-week overview of the course readings can be found in the section below.

The syllabus, powerpoint presentations and important messages will be uploaded to the Vesalius portal ‘Canvas’. Students are expected to visit this site regularly to keep abreast of course evolutions. The professor is expected to upload relevant material in a timely manner.

Course material marked as ‘suggested readings’ and ‘additional sources’ is helpful for research and to gain an increased understanding, but is not mandatory. This material can be found online or will be made available upon individual request.

Textbooks:


Recommended References books


Active Learning and Intensive ‘Reading around the Subject’: Additional Sources, Recommended Journals and Websites:

Learning should be an active and self-motivated experience. Students who passively listen to lectures, copy someone else’s notes, and limit their readings to required chapters are unlikely to develop their critical thinking and expand their personal knowledge system. At the exam, these students often fail to demonstrate a critical approach. Students are strongly recommended to have an updated understanding of developments related to this course and related to their wider Major. Active and engaged learning will turn out to be enriching to the overall course and class discussions. Students are invited to deepen their understanding of both theoretical and current issues from a variety of sources. Please find a list of suggestions compassing the entire course below. You are encouraged to read and browse in the leading journals of your discipline.

Leading Journals in Business Studies


Further Journals Relevant for this Course:
Harvard Business Review; Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes; Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal; Strategic Management Journal

Websites of Interest:

Business week [www.resourcecenter.businessweek.com](http://www.resourcecenter.businessweek.com)
Economist [www.economist.com](http://www.economist.com)

Work Load Calculation for this Course:

This course counts for 6 ECTS, which translates into 150 – 180 hours for the entire semester for this course. This means that you are expected to spend roughly 10 hours per week on this course. This includes 3 hours of lectures or seminars per week and 7 hours ‘out of class’ time spent on preparatory readings, studying time for exams as well as time spent on preparing your assignments. Please see below the estimated breakdown of your work-load for this course.

Time spent in class: 3 hours per week / 45 hours per semester
Time allocated for course readings: 50 hours per semester
Time allocated for preparing Assignment 1: 15 hours
Time allocated for preparing Assignment 2: 15 hours
Time allocated for preparing/revising for written Mid-term Exam: 20 hours
Time allocated preparing/revising for written Final Exam: 30 hours

Total hours for this Course: 175 hours

Course Assessment: Assignments Overview

The students will be evaluated on the basis of their performance in the following assignments:

1. Presentation on Business Case 20 %
2. Written Assignment and Discussion
   On Strategic/Operational Topic 20 %
3. Mid-term Exam 25 %
4. Final Examination 35 %

Grading Scale of Vesalius College

Vesalius College grading policy follows the American system of letter grades, which correspond to a point scale from 0 – 100. **All assignments (including exams) must be graded on the scale of 0-100.** To comply with the Flemish Educational norms, professors should on request also provide the conversion of the grade on the Flemish scale of 0-20. The conversion table below outlines the grade equivalents.

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<tr>
<th>Letter grade</th>
<th>Scale of 100 (VeCo Grading Scale)</th>
<th>Scale of 20 (Flemish System)</th>
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<td>85-100</td>
<td>17.0-20.0</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>81-84</td>
<td>16.1-16.9</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>77-80</td>
<td>15.3-16.0</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>14.5-15.2</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>69-72</td>
<td>13.7-14.4</td>
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<td>C+</td>
<td>66-68</td>
<td>13.1-13.6</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>62-65</td>
<td>12.3-13.0</td>
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<td>C-</td>
<td>58-61</td>
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<td>D+</td>
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**Description of Activities, Grading Criteria and Deadlines:**

**Assignment 1**: Presentation to the Class of either a Business Case or a key aspects of Digitalization

Approx; 30 Minutes presentation, plus discussion, supported by Power Point slides on either a business case (e.g. Air B&B) or a key aspect of Digitalization (e.g. AI), according to topics defined in the syllabus and specified as Assignments at the first session.

There will be approx. 12 Presentations during the course, presented by a student individually or by a small team, subject to the number of students in the class.

**Assignment 2**: Written work and Discussion on Key Aspects of Digitalization

Topics include:
- Overviews on Key Processes within a company and effect of Digitalization, e.g. Sales and Marketing activities
- Overview on Digital Transformation in Key Vertical Industries, e.g. Health Care
- Overview on Key Technologies, e.g. Blockchain
- Overview on Key Technology Players in Information Technology, e.g. Google

Either a student individually, or a small team, subject to the overall number of students in the class, will establish a paper of about 1,000 words on one of the above referenced topics which will be distributed in class. The paper will include (i) key findings on the topic (ii) important questions (iii) opinions on the key questions. The paper will serve as the basis for a discussion in class on this topic for about 30 minutes.

**Mid-Term Exams**

The mid-term will be an in-class exam. It will be held in the week 7. The content of the exam will cover all topics we addressed during the class. The exam will consist of open-ended question and multiple choice questions. In addition, a short business case will be handed out in writing. Students will be asked to give comments on Strategic Rationale as well as operational topics in this business case.

**Final Exams**

The final exam will be held at the end of the course. It will address all topics we addressed during class. It will consist (i) of open ended questions. (ii) a business case and financial statements will be handed out. Students will be asked on their view of the strategic choices, financial success and potential issues as per the business case.

**Rubrics: Transparent Grading Criteria For Assignments 1 and 2:**
The Grading will be given for the Team’s performance

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<th>Excellent A (85%+)</th>
<th>Good B+ / C+ (84-65)</th>
<th>Pass C / D- (64-50)</th>
<th>Fail F (0 – 50)</th>
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<td>risk assessment</td>
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In case of Team Assignments the quality of the overall team will be graded. Should there be evidence that a team member had only little value-add to the team’s performance, his/her personal grading will be adjusted accordingly.

**Vesalius College Attendance Policy**

As the College is committed to providing students with high-quality classes and ample opportunity for teacher-student interaction, it is imperative that students regularly attend class. As such, Vesalius College has a strict attendance policy. Participation in class meetings is mandatory, except in case of a medical emergency (e.g. sickness). Students will need to provide evidence for missing class (doctor’s note). If evidence is provided, the missed class is considered an excused class. If no evidence is provided immediately before or after the class, the missed class is counted as an absence.
Participation implies that students are on time: as a general rule, the College advises that students should be punctual in this regard, but it is up to the professor to decide whether to count late arrivals as absences, or not.

Attendance is needed for the learning process. After two sequential absences the advisor will be informed.

Additional Course Policies
Add policies on late papers, coming late to class, etc. (an example below)

Late papers will not be accepted unless there are serious legitimate reasons. Provision of a signed medical note is required, and notice must be given prior to the deadline.

Academic Honesty Statement
Academic dishonesty is NOT tolerated in this course.

Academic honesty is not only an ethical issue but also the foundation of scholarship. Cheating and plagiarism are therefore serious breaches of academic integrity.

Following the College policy, cheating and plagiarism cases will be communicated in writing to the Associate Dean and submitted to the Student Conduct Committee for disciplinary action.

If you refer to someone else’s work, appropriate references and citations must be provided. Grammar, spelling and punctuation count, so use the tools necessary to correct before handing in assignments.

Please consult the Section “Avoiding Plagiarism” in the College Catalogue for further guidance.

Turnitin
As per College policy, students are required to upload all their written assignments via the plagiarism-detection programme Turnitin. Please contact the Education Manager Chris JANSSENS Chris.Janssens@vub.be to help you set up your turnitin account as instructor

Course Schedule (Overview)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Aug. 30</td>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong> to the Course and Overview of Course and Requirements and Assignments</td>
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<td><strong>The economic context in the 21st Century:</strong> Digital Transformation, Disruption and Global Competition</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Sept. 06</td>
<td><strong>Networks:</strong> Sales and Customer Relationship in the Digitalized Era</td>
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<td>Microsoft Company Profile – Focus AI</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Sept. 13</td>
<td><strong>The Platform Business Model</strong></td>
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<td>Amazon Company Profile – Focus Cloud Computing</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Sept. 20</td>
<td><strong>Data as “Strategic Weapon”</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Air B&amp;B Company Profile – Focus Big Data</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Sep. 27</td>
<td><strong>Innovation in the Age of Digitalization</strong></td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Oct. 4</td>
<td>Revision Session</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-term Week 7</td>
<td>Oct. 11</td>
<td>Mid-Term Exams Oct. 11</td>
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</table>
| Week 8 | Oct. 18 | **The Value Proposition in the Age of Digitalization**  
Google Company Profile – Focus Blockchain |
| Week 9 | Oct. 25 | **Strategy and Disruptive Business Models**  
IBM Company Profile – Focus Internet of Things |
| **Academic Holiday, Oct. 28 – Nov. 1** |       |                  |
| Week 10 | Nov. 8 | **The Big Picture: The Future of Work**  
Company profile SAP – Focus Enterprise Resource Planning |
| Week 11 | Nov. 15 | **The Big Picture: Liberty in the Age of Digitalization**  
Company Profile Volkswagen – Focus SCM |
| Week 12 | Nov. 22 | **The Big Picture: Education in the Age of Digitalization**  
Accenture Company profile – Focus Media Business |
| Week 13 | Nov. 29 | **Leadership and Change Management in the Age of Digital Transformation**  
**What is next?** New Technologies on the Horizon  
Focus: Disruption in the Health Care Business |
| Week 14 | Dec. 06 | Revision |
| Week 15 | Dec. 13 | **FINAL EXAMS** |

**Detailed Session-by-Session Course Outline**  
*(To be completed)*

**Week 1, Session 1 (Friday, August, 30)**

**Introduction to the Course** and Overview of Course and Requirements and Assignments  
**The economic context in the 21st Century:** Digital Transformation, Disruption and Global Competition

**Reading:**  
Compulsory: “The Digital Transformation Playbook”, Chapter 1  
Recommended: Doughnut Economics, Chapter 1 and 2
**Week 2, Session 2 (Friday, September 6, )**

**Sales and Customer Relationship in the Digitalized Era** - the paradigm shift from a one-way sales approach to a customer network model

**Microsoft Company Profile:** History, Offerings, Financials, Market Position

**Focus:** **Artificial Intelligence:** Definition, Impact, Opportunities and Threats

*Paper/Presentation:*  Boosting Sales through Digital Transformation

*Presentation:* Microsoft Company Profile

Presentation: Focus Artificial Intelligence

*Reading:*
Compulsory: “The Digital Transformation Playbook”, Chapter 2

**Week 3, Session 3 (Friday, Sept. 13)**

**The Platform Business Model** – The rise of digitally powered businesses acting as a transaction platform for different parties

**Amazon Company Profile:** History, Offerings, Financials, Market Position

**Focus:** **Cloud Computing:** Definition, Impact, Opportunities and Threats

*Paper/Presentation:*  The disruptive impact of “Platform Businesses”

Amazon Company Profile - Guest Speaker

Focus: Cloud Computing – Guest Speaker

*Reading:*
Compulsory: “The Digital Transformation Playbook”, Chapter 3
Compulsory: “T. Siebel, “Digital Transformation”, Chapter 4

**Week 4, Session 4 (Friday, Sept. 20)**

**Data as “Strategic Weapon”**- Turning Data into Assets

**Air B&B Company Profile:** History, Offerings, Financials, Market Position
**Focus: Big Data:** Definition, Impact, Opportunities and Threats

*Paper/Presentation:* The Role of Data and effective Data Management for businesses

*Presentation:* Air B&B Company Profile

*Presentation:* Big Data

*Reading:*  
Compulsory: “The Digital Transformation Playbook”, Chapter 4  

**Week 5, Session 5 (Friday, Sept. 27)**

Innovation in the Age of Digitalization: Rapid Experimentation and continuous learning

*Apple Company Profile:* History, Offerings, Financials, Market Position

*Focus:* Digital Transformation in the Public Sector (Guest Speaker)

*Paper/Presentation:* Innovation in the Age of Digitalization

*Presentation:* Apple Company Profile

*Reading:*  
Compulsory: “The Digital Transformation Playbook”, Chapter 5

**Week 6, Session 6 (Friday, Oct. 04)**

Revision

**Week 7, Session 7 (Friday, Oct. 11)**

Mid-Term Exam

**Week 8, Session 8 (Friday, Oct. 18)**

The Value Proposition in the Age of Digitalization - adapting your value proposition to stay relevant
Google Company Profile: History, Offerings, Financials, Market Position

Focus Blockchain: Definition, Impact, Opportunities and Threats

Paper/Presentation: How to define the value proposition of your business

Presentation: Google Company Profile

Presentation: Blockchain technology

Reading:
Compulsory: “The Digital Transformation Playbook”, Chapter 6

Week 9 Session 9 (Friday, Oct. 25)

Strategy Definition in the ERA of Disruptive Business Models

IBM Company Profile: History, Offerings, Financials, Market Position

Focus Internet of Things: Definition, Impact, Opportunities and Threats

Paper/Presentation: Defining a Business Strategy in the Era of Digital Transformation

Presentation: IBM Company Profile

Presentation: Internet of Things

Reading:
Compulsory: “The Digital Transformation Playbook”, Chapter 7

Week 10 Session 10 (Friday, Nov. 08)

The Big Picture: The Future of Work – The impact of New Technologies on the labor market

Company profile SAP: History, Offerings, Financials, Market Position

Focus Enterprise Resource Planning: The information backbone for Management in the digital age.
Paper/Presentation: The Future of work

Presentation: SAP Company Profile

Presentation: Enterprise Resource Planning, Definition, Importance, Transformation

Reading:
F.R. Jacobs a.o., “Operations and Supply Chain Management”, Chapter 17 - 23

Week 11 Session 11 (Friday, Nov. 15)

The Big Picture: Liberty in the Age of Digitalization – Decision Making in the age of
Big Data and Algorisms

Company Profile Volkswagen History, Offerings, Financials, Market Position: Focus
ERP and SCM

Focus SCM: Globalization and Global Supply Chains

Paper/Presentation: Semi-rational Decision Making and Manipulation through
New Technologies

Presentation: Volkswagen Company Profile

Presentation: Supply Chain Management, Definition, Importance, Transformation

Reading:
F.R. Jacobs a.o., “Operations and Supply Chain Management”, Chapter 14-16

Week 12 Session 12 (Friday, Nov. 22)

The Big Picture: Education in the Age of Digitalization – how to prepare for
“unprecedented transformation and radical uncertainty”

Netflix Company profile: History, Offerings, Financials, Market Position

Focus Media Business

Paper/Presentation: Priorities in Education in the Era of Digitalization

Presentation: Netflix Company Profile
Presentation: Digital Transformation in the Media Business

Reading:

Week 13 Session 13 (Friday, Nov. 29)
Leadership and Change Management in the Age of Digital Transformation
What is next? New Technologies on the Horizon
Focus: Disruption in the Health Care Business - Guest Speaker

Week 14 Session 14 (Friday, Dec. 06)
Revision

Week 15 Session 15 (Friday, Dec. 13)
Final Exams