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Application Form

Innovative Teaching Award 2021[1]

APPLICANT
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GENERAL INFORMATION
Course level master's **Course number:** 1491, 1492, 1638 **Semester**: WS2020/21 **ECTS credits:** 5 **Course title:** Models of Internationalisation
Further information on the course: (e.g. prior knowledge of students, position in the curriculum/program, number of students) In total, there were 131 students taking this module. There were 70 students on the Masterprogramme Export- and Internationalisationmanagement; 36 students on the Masterprogramme International Business at LUISS, and 25 students on the Masterprogramm International Management at the Universidad Pontificia Comillas in Madrid.
If applicable links to the course's online environment: Here you can provide the jury with links to the contents of your course's online environment for review. https://learn.wu.ac.at/dotlrn/classes/pool/1491.20w/one-community?page_num=0

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[1] Courses held during the 2020 calendar year (summer semester 2020, winter semester 2020/21) are eligible for the 2021 Innovative Teaching Award. Courses held over two semesters (WS 2019/20–SS 2020) can also be nominated.

[2] Please name all the people involved in the development of the course design. The people named in this field will also receive the award in case of a successful application.

1. SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE DESIGN (max. 180 words)

If your course is selected for an award, this text will be published on the WU website along with the submitted application form.

Models of Internationalization is a course taken by students on the *Export- and Internationalisierungsmanagement* Master during their first semester at the WU. The course is driven by a problem-based learning approach that integrates the direct exposure to managerial practice through work on a real-life business case with collaborative online international learning (COIL).

Students work with the managers of a pharmaceutical firm to develop recommendations for the global launch of a new drug. In so doing, they learn how to gather and compile data from various databases, which they then analyze using sophisticated analysis methods of market research. Groups receive ongoing coaching from the module leaders and the managers through web-based meetings. Based on their analyses students develop recommendations for the pharmaceutical firm and present these recommendations through two videos that are shared and discussed with the managers of the firm.

Students are combined into small teams with students at LUISS University in Rome and the Universidad Pontificia Comillas in Madrid, both partner universities of the WU. Virtual teamwork takes place through digital communication and project management tools, allowing students to develop their inter-cultural, team-working and digitalization competences.

2. DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE DESIGN

2a.)   Overview

- What are the learning outcomes to be achieved by the students?
- What are the content elements of the course and how is the course structured?
- What are the elements on which the final grade is based?
- How is the learning environment of your course designed?

The Master-level course *Models of Internationalization* discusses theoretical key concepts of international business (IB) taught in the introductory class of the Master by focusing on a practical application of these concepts, theories and strategies in the form of a real-life business case. The class aims at deepening students' understanding of fundamental IB content, fostering their critical thinking and analytical skills while, at the same time, facilitating inter-cultural, team-working and digitalization capabilities. In order to achieve that goal we integrated the following two major components into our course design:

(1) *Collaborative online international learning*. Our students work in multicultural teams with students on Masterprogrammes at the LUISS University in Rome and at the Universidad Pontificia Comillas in Madrid, both partner universities of the WU. Through working in culturally diverse teams our students seamlessly learn to collaborate and exchange knowledge with students of different nationalities and located in different institutional contexts.

(2) *Real-life business case*. Our students are able to interact with the managers of a large pharmaceutical firm in developing recommendation for the global launch of a novel drug. This allows students to experience and learn about the relevance and applicability of theoretical frameworks in the context of an actual problem for management practice. This will enhance students' ability to bridge the domains of academia and practice and thus their employability.

Overall, the course aims to provide students a broad set of learning outcomes:

Method skills

On completion of this course, the participants will be able to:

- Select and critically asses the usefulness of theoretical models and frameworks to solve practically-relevant problems
- Assess, analyze, and manage real-life management situations in a complex international business context.
- Interconnect specific scientific knowledge with a real-life business case.

Self-competence (intrapersonal) skills

On completion of this course, the participants will be able to:

- Succinctly and convincingly present potential solutions for practically-relevant problems based on existing theory.
- Think outside the box and apply divergent thinking in structuring and solving a real-life business case.
- Employ solution-oriented approaches and deliver well-structured recommendations in both oral and written form.

Social competence (interpersonal) skills

Finally, on completion of this course, the participants will be able to:

- Work and collaborate with international students across borders.
- Organize themselves in a diverse team setting and divide work among international team members.
- Provide and deal with constructive feedback as a team on others' efforts.

The course structure, content and learning environment are closely aligned with the aforementioned learning outcomes. Specifically, the course consists of three interdependent layers (see figure 1).

The first layer deepens participants existing knowledge of fundamental IB theories and concepts and provides the foundation for the other two layers of the course. The first layer consists out of five prerecorded sessions (lecture casts) that are provided through the LearnWU platform.

The second layer of the course focusses on three specific themes that are particular topical and specifically relevant for the real-life business case analysed in the third layer of the course: digitalization and internationalisation, de-globalisation, and the speed of internationalization. These three themes are

introduced and explained through synchronous online sessions and lecture casts. Students are also provided with an extensive reading list including the key research on the three themes.

The third layer of the course consists of groups of students working together in multi-national student groups on a real-life case study on the global launch of a new drug by a US pharmaceutical firm. Online sessions are provided in which the course leaders and a company representative provide information on the company and the task. Further online sessions are organized to allow for on-going coaching of the student groups and provide feedback on student work. Each group prepares two video presentations and receives feedback from both the academic course leaders and the company representative.
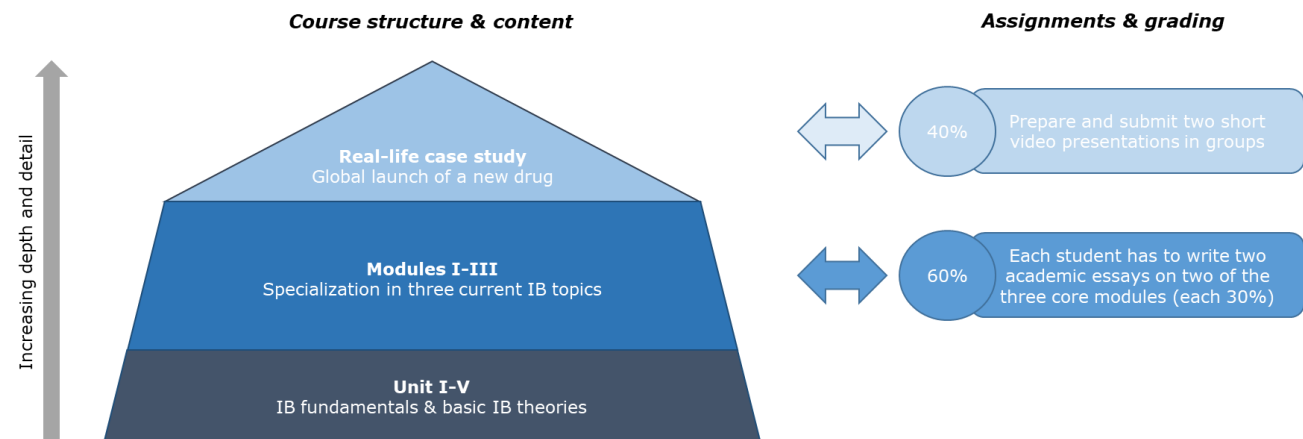
Figure 1: Course structure, content, and grading

Assignments and grading

The final grading consists of individual and group work (see figure 1).

Each student has to write two essays focusing on two of the three core modules (digitalization and internationalization, de-globalization, speed of internationalization). In these essays, students are expected to select a recent peer-reviewed article and discuss this article in the context of the existing research on the particular theme, paying particular attention to the practical relevance of the study's findings. Students are specifically encouraged to take a critical viewpoint and grading is accordingly geared towards rewarding critical reflection over mere summarizing.

For the second part of the assessment, students are allocated into multinational teams and work on a real-life case study concerning the global launch of a new drug. The group work consists of two sub-tasks (each accounting for 20% of the final grading):

Task I

- Groups have to identify the most important criteria for market selection and the most promising country markets for the new drug.
- Groups have to determine the optimal speed of the product launch as well as the launch sequence by country.

Task II

- Groups have to recommend the best way for the company to sell the new drug in the different countries they have suggested in Task 1.
- Groups need to identify at least three criteria that the firm should use to assess the success of the product launch.

In order to solve these tasks, students have to combine knowledge from the first layer (IB fundamentals and basic IB theories), the knowledge of the three themes discussed in the second layer, and the specific information provided by the guiding practitioner. Students have to submit two short video presentations (max. 4 minutes), one for each task, on the LearnWU platform. This diverse mix of exercises ensures that participants improve their knowledge of the subject area, enhance their ability to approach this knowledge in a critical manner and gain experience in the application of this knowledge to develop solutions for the practice of international business.

- Which teaching methods do you use to help your students achieve the intended learning outcomes?
- What role does the learning environment, or more specifically the context in which students learn, play in your course design?
- Why did you choose this/these particular method(s)? What specific advantages does it/do they offer in your teaching? What do your students learn through the use of this/these method(s)?
- In which way do the students benefit from the teaching methods used in the course?

For a successful and educational course design, it is crucial that learning outcomes, teaching methods, and assessment forms of a course are closely aligned in a way that students can benefit from a multi-level learning experience. The extensive sets of learning outcomes and assessment techniques as defined above call for innovative teaching methods. Hence, we connected digital and analog learning methods in order to ensure a holistic approach of a wide range of different yet intertwined teaching methods (see figure 2):
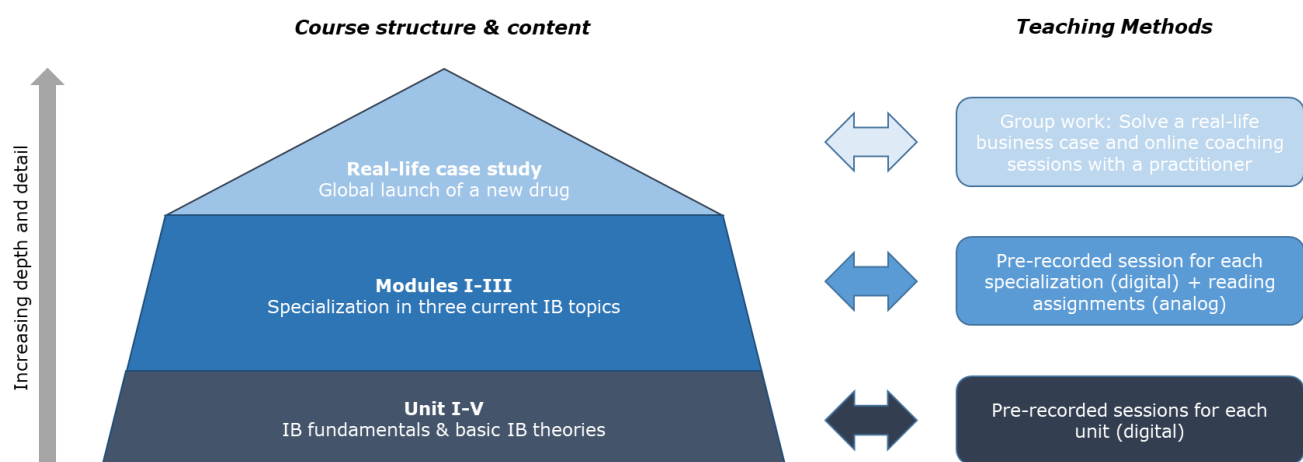

Figure 2: Teaching methods

1) Five lecture casts are provided that explain fundamental IB concepts and theories.
2) Synchronous online sessions and further pre-recorded lecture casts are provided that provide knowledge on three specific and current IB topics (digitalization and internationalization, de-globalization, speed of internationalization).
3) Extensive online coaching of groups through the course leaders and the company representatives

We constructed a learning environment that was international as well as both digital and analogue, integrating a number of teaching methods to ensure that students would obtain the above mentioned learning outcomes. Figure 3 provides in-depth information about the construction of the course. The course design was structured according to the *Collaborative Online International Learning* (COIL) approach. This novel approach extends authentic opportunities for intercultural and transnational learning to students within the curriculum of university classrooms. Through co-developed and co-taught modules, virtual exchange supports the development of 21st-century workforce skills and provides opportunities for applied learning experiences.

Overall, the diversity of the applied teaching methods was expected to challenges students while also keeping their level of motivation high. Students benefit from a wide range of teaching methods – synchronous online sessions, lecture casts, online coaching sessions, reading assignments, group and individual tasks, real-life case study, and finally writing essays (analog) and recording their own videos (digital).

Teaching Methods & Assignments

- Creation of two short videos
- Work in diverse, international groups
- Solve a real-life business
- Online coaching session with practitioner/instructors

- Write two academic essays
- Reading assignments (analog)
- Pre-recorded session for each specialization (digital)

- Pre-recorded sessions for each unit (digital)

Learning Outcomes

- Work and collaborate with **international students across borders**.
- Organize themselves in a **diverse team setting** and divide work among international team members.
- **Think outside the box** and apply divergent thinking in structuring and solving a real-life business case.
- Foster their **solution-oriented** approaches and deliver well-structured recommendations based on given case study
- **Interconnect** specific scientific knowledge with a **real-life business case**.
- Use of **digital teaching methods** (creation of videos, work online across borders)

- Enhance **writing skills** by composing two well-structured academic essays on current IB topics.
- **Deepen** basic **knowledge** by studying and reading about key IB topics.
- Combining and fostering **digital skills** (online teaching content) with **analog skills** (reading and writing assignments)

- **Revise** and **refresh** fundamental IB concepts and topics in order to establish a **common ground of knowledge** in an internationally diverse group of students

Figure 3: Teaching methods and learning outcomes

2c.) Innovative character of the course

- In which dimension (see call section 2) do you place your submission?
- Which didactic elements of your course design do you consider particularly innovative with regard to the focus of this year's award "Seamless Learning: Designing Learning Environments"?
- Transferability: In which ways can your course design be adapted for other courses? Which didactic elements of your course can also be used in other courses?
- Which elements could be improved/reconsidered in a second edition of the course?

Seamless Learning Dimensions

The course design provides for a seamless learning environment and allows for an integration of teaching elements across multiple dimensions.

First, the course design enables seamless learning across analogue and digital domain, and between offline and online learning. The course used online and offline digital teaching, through synchronous as well as asynchronous virtual sessions. Students had to use online communication platforms in order to communicate with their internationally disperse colleagues as well as with the instructors and the external practitioner. Finally, through the creation of two creative videos students incorporate digital technologies in order to present their solution of the real-life business case in novel ways. The course also included analogue learning for students. Real-life teaching in a physical classroom took place at locations where this was still possible. In these cases lectures where streamed live to students that were not able to participate.

Second, the course design facilitates seamless learning across institutional borders, through its use of collaborative learning with students at two overseas partner universities. Working with individuals with different cultural backgrounds and studying at different overseas universities creates a learning environment that combines the skills and knowledge obtained by individuals in different cultural, national and institutional contexts. Given the restrictions on physical exchange for students as a result of the covid-19 pandemic, this collaborative online international learning was expected to provide students with an alternative type of international experience.

Third, the course design allows for seamless learning across the academia-practice divide by giving students the opportunity to work on a real-life business case with practitioners. Representatives of the firm provided synchronous online sessions to introduce the company and the group task and ongoing coaching for students. Company representatives also provide feedback on students' work.

The course uses an innovative didactic-methodological concept

The innovative character of this course lies in its combination of teaching methods that seamlessly integrate (1) international borders, (2) the academia-practice divide, and (3) the analogue-digital divide.

Transferability of the course design

The three key elements of the course design can be transferred to other courses, either individually or in total.

1) International collaborative learning

The international collaboration between students from different universities can be transferred. This is particularly the case considering the possibilities of virtual international collaboration in teaching which allows for collaboration of both students and instructors. In the current course, online sessions related to the case study were held jointly, i.e. with both instructors and students from all three universities, whereas the bulk of the content teaching was carried out separately. It is planned to increase the collaborative element further on this course, which may be difficult for synchronous online sessions due to timetabling issues. While short-term exchanges by students may not be possible, however, we suggest that short-term teaching visits by instructors would be feasible and beneficial for student learning.

2) *Hybrid learning*

Due to the Covid-19 restrictions, most of the teaching of this course was carried out online (synchronous and asynchronous). While we expect a greater return to in-person teaching, experience with the particular design of this course underscore the particular merits of digital teaching methods, which can be used on this and other courses in the future. Of particular use is the provision of "basic knowledge" through pre-recorded lecture casts, which would allow for a course design similar to the "flipped classroom". A second approach that can be used on this and other courses is the intensive use of virtual collaboration platforms for student work and as a means for instructors to provide coaching or feedback outside the (real) classroom.

3) Involvement of practitioners

The involvement of practitioners through a real-life case studies that students can work on is certainly one of the elements that can and should be transferred to other courses. We believe such an involvement allows for

both a problem-based approach to learning, but also enhances students' motivation by allowing them to clearly explore the relevance (or lack thereof) of theoretical concerns. The intensive involvement of practitioners as used in this course might not always be feasible. However, the use of virtual means of collaboration allow for greater involvement of senior managers, in particular, those based overseas, who usually do not have the time to travel to campus.

Reflection on the course concept

Various discussions took place among the instructors at the WU, LUISS and the Universidad Pontificia Comillas that also included a company representative about the course concept to identify areas for improvement. We also surveyed the students at the three universities to obtain additional feedback on the course design from the students' perspective. A first concern was the fact that the course was carried out entirely online for students taking the course at the WU. We would have liked to have at least some "real" sessions with the students, but this was not possible due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This was also raised by students, but may have been exacerbated by the fact that all WU students were part of the new intake of students that had not met in person since the start of the programme. Under normal conditions students would have met one another in person in other courses and an exclusively online course would have been less of an issue. In any case, however, the course is expected to run as a hybrid course in the future, with both offline and online elements.

Second, those students that were exclusively taught online commented on the need for regular communication and interaction with the teaching team. Although the teaching team clearly and frequently communicated expectations and provided feedback, some students would have liked more information. In part, this is likely to have been due to different online learning platforms being used by the different institutions as well as inexperience with the use of the shared online platforms among students (and the teaching team).

Third, students commented on the unequal distribution of WU, LUISS and Comillas students in the groups. This was due to the fact that there were 70 students from the WU and roughly 30 students from LUISS and Comillas. As we wanted to have students from each university in each group, this imbalance could not be avoided. In the future, we intend to form teams consisting of WU students with either LUISS or Comillas students. We are also discussing the inclusion of students at a UK university, which may also help improve the balance in terms of nationality in the teams.

Overall, we believe the course concept has been very good at delivering the course's learning outcomes. The course has not been formally evaluated at the WU, but we carried out our own survey of the students, particularly focusing on the collaborative task. The participants' feedback was positive, as shown in the selected comments below:

"Participating in the activity has certainly helped me in interfacing with people who are different from me in terms of culture, mentality and rhythms and this will certainly be very useful in a future working world, increasingly global and international." (LUISS student)

"The creativity part (choosing the drug's name) was fascinating. The different ways people chose to find the perfect name, depending on what they want to express with it was interesting. Furthermore, I liked that we had to deal with a real life case." (WU student)

"I really enjoyed to practically find solutions for a real-life case. It made me understand that what I study could be applicable in real-life." (WU Student)

"Working with people from different countries is always a pleasure. It allows us to debate in English and share very different points of view. Adding more countries and nationalities to the project would be great." (ICADE Student)

"I liked the integration of a company which should be expanded to other courses as well. This provides practical insights, contact to a company and opportunities for the career start after graduation. And I liked the collaboration with different nationalities/cultural exchange which should be expanded to presence workshops at our WU campus." (WU student)

Support from [lecturers] and their flexibility were great! Business Partner was fantastic and the topic fascinating! Challenging thoughts on a unfamiliar topic for most is a rewarding task. (WU student)

Note: By sending the application form and documents, the applicant confirms that the course design has not received any other awards or grants.

Attachment: Please attach evaluation results, if available.