

**THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS**

**School of Business
BUSI2816 – Transformative Business Immersion in Developing
Economies Summer Term, 2016-17**

GENERAL INFORMATION

Instructor: Beau Lefler

Email: blefler@hku.hk

Office: KKL1310

Phone: 3917-4218

Consultation times: By appointment

Tutor: N/A

Pre-requisites: The course is not open to Year 1 students.

Co-requisites: none

Mutually exclusive: N/A

Course Website:

Other important details: This is an experiential learning course, the majority of which takes place outside of Hong Kong.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a total immersion experience into unfamiliar geography, economy, sociality and environment. After a one-week preparation period, students will travel to a pre-selected location where they will consult with local small businesses. Students will focus on transferring fundamental business principles, as well as working with specific issues that the company faces. Students will live with local families in a homestay arrangement, allowing them to more quickly understand the local culture, customs and business practices.

This course is designed to be mutually beneficial to both the students and to the families and communities where they live and work. Students will gain experience in the practical application of business theory, will forge new friendships with people they would never otherwise meet, will gain a greater appreciation for the constraints and limitations in the development of rural places, and will hopefully make a lasting difference in the lives of newfound friends and colleagues.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Through active critical reflection of their worldview, learn through this transformative experience the opportunities that exist outside of normal career and life paths.
2. Learn ways in which their university training in business and economics can be used altruistically to benefit others.
3. Develop experience in applying theoretical knowledge learned in university classes to real-life situations.
4. Gain a deep and broad understanding, both at a micro-business level and macro-community level, how businesses and people interrelate in a setting unfamiliar to students.

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Programme Learning Outcomes

PLO1: Acquisition and internalization of knowledge of the programme discipline

PLO2: Application and integration of knowledge

PLO3: Inculcating professionalism and leadership

PLO4: Developing global outlook			
PLO5: Mastering communication skills			
COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES			
Course Learning Outcomes		Aligned Programme Learning Outcomes	
CLO1: Perform a detailed analysis of the operations of a small business in an emerging economy.		PLO2, PLO4	
CLO2: Apply theoretical knowledge learned in past courses to transmit fundamental business principals, and help solve specific issues arising from the analysis.		PLO2, PLO3	
CLO3: Analyze the effectiveness of past course consulting engagements through interviews and data gathering.		PLO1, PLO2	
CLO4: Develop a deeper, more thoughtful understanding of the culture, economy and environment through daily interaction with host families.		PLO3, PLO4	
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COURSE TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES			
Course Teaching and Learning Activities		Expected contact hour	Study Load (% of study)
T&L1. Self-study		20	16%
T&L2. Class discussions		40	30%
T&L3. Interviews and meetings		30	24%
T&L4. Analysis and report writing		40	30%
Total		130	100%
Assessment Methods	Brief Description	Weight	Aligned Course Learning Outcomes
A1. Analysis of past consulting engagements	Students will conduct interviews and data gathering to determine impact and effectiveness of past course consulting engagements.	20%	CLO1, CLO2
A2. Business Analysis and Solutions Report	Students are required to produce a detailed report on the sector and business, and their ideas for solutions or improvements.	40%	CLO1, CLO3, CLO4
A3. Video Report	Students will prepare a photographic and/or video report of their time abroad.	20%	CLO3, CLO4
A4. Reflective blogging	Students will actively contribute to a group blog that will share their experiences with the homestay and with their selected business projects.	20%	CLO4
Total		100%	

STANDARDS FOR ASSESSMENT**Course Grade Descriptors**

A+, A, A-	Demonstrate evidence of original thought, strong analytical and critical abilities as well as a thorough grasp of the principles from background reading and analysis; should demonstrate excellent organizational, rhetorical and presentational skills. Demonstrates a willingness to interact and share on an equal footing with members of the local community.
B+, B, B-	Demonstrate evidence of critical and analytical thinking but not necessarily original in their thinking; show adequate grasp of the principles from background reading and analysis; should demonstrate strong organizational, rhetorical and presentational skills. Demonstrates a reluctant willingness to interact and share on an equal footing with members of the local community.
C+, C, C-	Demonstrate evidence of a reasonable grasp of their subject but most of their information is derivative, with rather little evidence of critical thinking; should demonstrate fair organizational, rhetorical and presentational skills. Demonstrates an unwillingness to interact and share on an equal footing with members of the local community.
D+, D	Demonstrate evidence of being able to assemble the bare minimum of information, poorly digested and not very well organized in presentation. There is no evidence of critical thinking. Demonstrates an aversion to interact and share on an equal footing with members of the local community. Remains isolated and/or exhibits evidence of disruptive and unfair treatment of the local community or host families.
F	Demonstrate evidence of poor knowledge and understanding of the subject, a lack of coherence and organization, and answers are largely irrelevant. Work fails to reach degree level. Demonstrates an extreme aversion to interact and share on an equal footing with members of the local community. Remains isolated and exhibits evidence of disruptive and unfair treatment of the local community or host families. Disrupts the experience for other students.

Assessment Rubrics for Each Assessment (Please provide us the details in a separate file if the space here is not enough)

Please see separate file.

COURSE CONTENT AND TENTATIVE TEACHING SCHEDULE**Schedule**

This course is held over approximately four weeks. The first week will be at the main campus at HKU. The remaining three weeks will be spent abroad.

Hong Kong

We will meet during the first week to prepare for our time abroad. Preparation for this week is vital. You will be given a reading list that you are required to complete before this week begins. It will be crucial to our discussions in these sessions that you have a background already in place. Failure to complete the readings will be cause for final grade reduction.

Philippines

At the beginning of the second week, we will fly from Hong Kong to our destination.

For approximately three weeks, you will live and work abroad. You will work in teams at all times both to ensure safety and to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of your work.

Although your time abroad cannot be rigidly planned, the structure of your stay will generally be:

- **First week:** You will use this week as an intensive information gathering and investigation period. Spend this learning how the business operates, what are the constraints they face, what the potential market it, etc. Interlace this with constant interaction with the people you meet, figuring out what people do to make money or to feed, shelter or educate themselves. This will require a strong effort at being social, friendly and engaging.
- **Second week:** This is the time that you will take the information gathered in the first week to determining two things: 1) what fundamental business principles does the business owner lack in operations and 2) what particular issues does the business face that your group will concentrate on. Be rigorous in your continued information gathering and analysis. Take the time to be holistic in your approach, start with giving the benefit of the doubt to the local people. During this time you will create a written report on the business principles and specific issues you choose to focus on, and start putting together some proposed solutions. Ideally, you will start to put in motion the plans to execute the solution during the latter half of this period.
- **Third week:** In this week you will continue to implement fundamental principles and work on specific issues, interfacing with the local business manager/owner. Make sure that your proposed solution has been one arrived at by consensus with the local people you are working with. Continue to work with them to execute the plan and deal with unforeseen circumstances. In the final few days of your stay, you will present your client business with a written copy of the report. Roughly half of the report will be a description of the business and its economic environment (customer base, competition, etc). The other half will outline the specific fundamentals that the company should adopt, as well as suggestions on how to work on specific issues the business currently faces. These two items may overlap significantly. This second half of the report will outline steps already taken, and next steps to be taken.

During each week abroad, each student will contribute one post to a course blog. This post will be reflective in nature. Students should plan on a blog post for each of the following areas: consulting engagement, homestay, cultural learning. On an ongoing basis, the students should be documenting their trip through photographs and/or video, for use in their photographic/video report about their time abroad. This report will be due 2 weeks after returning to Hong Kong. The report will be hosted on a public site and will be linked to the course blog.

Throughout the time students are abroad, they will be working in teams. The course instructor will be available every day for consultation and working through ideas and issues. Typically once every day or every other day, the entire class will meet for an hour or so to discuss ideas and how each of the projects are progressing.

REQUIRED/RECOMMENDED READINGS & ONLINE MATERIALS (e.g. journals, textbooks, website addresses etc.)

A reading packet will be provided to students prior to the start of class.

MEANS/PROCESSES FOR STUDENT FEEDBACK ON COURSE

- conducting mid-term survey in addition to SETL around the end of the semester
- Online response via Moodle site
- Others: _____ (please specify)

COURSE POLICY (e.g. plagiarism, academic honesty, attendance, etc.)

Academic Honesty and Integrity

You are expected to do your own work whenever you are supposed to. Incident(s) of academic dishonesty will NOT be tolerated. Cheating or plagiarism of any kind will result in an **automatic F grade** for the course plus strict enforcement of all Faculty and/or University regulations regarding such behavior.

The University Regulations on academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced! Please check the University Statement on plagiarism on the web: <http://www.hku.hk/plagiarism/>.

Academic dishonesty is a behavior in which a deliberately fraudulent misrepresentation is employed in an attempt to gain undeserved intellectual credit, either for oneself or for another. It includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following types of cases:

- a. **Plagiarism** - The representation of someone else's ideas as if they are your own. Where the arguments, data, designs, etc., of someone else are being used in a paper, report, oral presentation, or similar academic project, this fact must be made explicitly clear by citing the appropriate references. The references must fully indicate the extent to which any parts of the project are not one's own work. Paraphrasing of someone else's ideas is still using someone else's ideas, and must be acknowledged.

b. ***Unauthorized Collaboration on Out-of-Class Projects*** - The representation of work as solely one's own when in fact it is the result of a joint effort.

c. ***Cheating on In-Class Exams*** - The covert gathering of information from other students, the use of unauthorized notes, unauthorized aids, etc.

d. ***Unauthorized Advance Access to Assessment Materials*** - The representation of materials prepared at leisure, as a result of unauthorized advance access (however obtained), as if it were prepared under the rigors of the exam setting. This misrepresentation is dishonest in itself even if there are not compounding factors, such as unauthorized uses of books or notes.

ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION (e.g. e-learning platforms & materials, penalty for late assignments, etc.)