

Lindner College of Business
International Programs Office

INTB 5035: Virtual Teams,16FS

I. Course Information:

Title: Virtual Teams
Course #: INTB 5035
Credit Hours: 3
Term: Fall 2016; second half
Prerequisites: INTB 3080

II. Instructor / Program Leader Information:

Name: Dr. Larry Gales
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Office Hours: Tuesday-Thursday 10-11:00 or by appointment
Communication Policy: You are encouraged to contact me anytime via email. A
response will be given within 24-48 hours except on weekends.

Ila. Co-instructor (in Austria):

Name: Dr. Evelyne Glaser
Title: Professor of International Relations, Johannes Kepler University-Linz
Email: evelyne.glaser@jku.at

III. Course Description:

This course will focus on Cross-Cultural Communications, Teamwork and Virtual Teams. UC students will work virtually with European students at our partner, Johannes Kepler University in Linz, Austria. (No travel is involved.) You will work in teams of two to three people from UC students and two to three JKU students using video conference technology, email and other tools to do research on teams, teamwork, virtual teams, and cross-cultural communication. This course has been designed in a seven-week format because of the differing semester schedules at Johannes Kepler University (JKU) and at UC. That means we will be moving at a very quick pace. We will start with some online material on virtual teams and will form teams before our first session. **Our first class session on October 22 will be a video conference with JKU students.**

We will have formal class time for which attendance is required (see below) as well as teamwork time. For the teamwork times, your teams (both local and virtual) will work independently as teams and communicate with your team members in Austria by email, web camera or video conferencing. The course will involve assigned readings on teams and teamwork, a case for analysis, as well as research in particular topical areas. **You will learn about virtual and semi-virtual teams by doing/being in one.** It is difficult (and often meaningless) to learn about teams, team processes, and teamwork without some experience. You will have opportunities to gain much experience in developing teamwork skills. **This is an experiential course.** Thus, your **active** engagement and involvement in the process is critical to your learning and is an essential part of your grade.

Attendance is required at all sessions. I will have an attendance sheet at each class session and you are required to sign in.

IV. Course Material:

- There is one Harvard Business School case that you need to purchase for this class – “Managing a Global Team: Greg James at Sun Microsystems, Inc.” To purchase the case you should go to the following site: Coursepack link: <http://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/53662078>
- You will need to register and log into the site to purchase the case (\$4.25).
- **All other listed readings for this class are available through the instructor or on Blackboard.**

V. Link to Pace:



This course aligns with PACE, the Lindner College of Business platform for developing the *total* business professional.

P – Professionalism

- Enhance oral & written **communication**, express ideas clearly, logically and persuasively.
- Develop and practice **teamwork** skills through group projects and exercises.
- Practice professional habits of punctuality, preparation, respect and participation.

A – Academics

- Develop foundational knowledge of core **business functions** and their interactions within firms.
- Begin applying functional and cross-functional knowledge **to critically analyze business problems**; for example applying techniques for business plan development.

C – Character

- Learn and apply **leadership** techniques for project management (plan, brief, execute, debrief).
- Build an understanding and initial skills of **managing diversity**, including understanding cultural differences, and challenges and opportunities of global business.
- Understand importance of **ethics and social responsibility** in business and personal settings.

E – Engagement

- Build understanding of importance and practices of **networking** through interactions with business professionals and guest speakers.
- Develop awareness and appreciation of **involvement** in social organizations, community service, and professional group opportunities.

VI. Course Format:

- **October 11 – Introduction (read assigned materials prior to first class session)**
 - Course objectives
 - Rules & expectations
 - Assignments
 - Teams – UC and JKU
 - Introduction to Virtual and Semi-virtual teams in a global context

- Why do we use them?
 - What are the key attributes?
 - What are the challenges
 - How will we use them?
- **Form teams:** I will assign teams

- **Reading:** “Comparing traditional and virtual group forms: Identity, communication and trust in naturally occurring project teams” Webster & Wong (2008)
- **Reading:** “Creating Value with Diverse Teams in Global Management” (Distefano & Maznevski)
- **Reading:** “Managing a Global Team: Greg James at Sun Microsystems, Inc.” – available on-line from HBS. Read prior to October 20 meeting.
- **Task:** Meet your teammates. After reading Distefano & Maznevski, map your local (UC) team. What are the specific cultural attributes and values of your team members toward teamwork, school, schoolwork, outside work and other issues that could impact your individual and team performance? What are potential language issues and areas of potential conflict? This is critical to complete **BEFORE October 20** as this will be part of the basis for your video conference with your JKU teammates.

- **October 13 – No Class; Reading days**

- **October 18 - Lecture and discussion: The challenges of working in multi-cultural virtual and semi-virtual teams**
 - **Exercise:** Virtual Teams exercise
 - **Lecture:** Teams and national culture
 - **Reading:** “The Tao of Leadership in Virtual Teams” (Davis)
 - **Reading:** “Five Challenges To Virtual Team Success: Lessons from Sabre, Inc.” (Kirkman, et al.)
 - **Reading:** “Language Diversity in International Management Teams” (Kassis Henderson, J., 2005)

- **October 20 – Video conference with JKU (20 minutes per team)**
 - Each team will meet with their JKU members. Discuss your cultural map and develop a map of the entire team. What are potential areas of agreement, conflict, challenges, expertise, experience, and gaps? What are team members’ commitments and obligations (jobs, travel, etc.)? How will you manage conflict, leadership and communications? What about differences in the local context at UC and JKU (differences in calendars, grading expectations, etc.)? What rules and procedures will you establish?
 - **Reading:** The Art of Managing Virtual Teams: Eight Keys to Success, Wardell

- **October 25 – Technology & Case Analysis**
 - **Lecture:** Examination of technology and technology issues for virtual teams
 - **Discussion** of technology: Skype, Google (Google Docs), Facebook, etc.
 - **Lecture & Discussion:** Introduction of “Managing a Global Team: Greg James at Sun Microsystems, Inc.”
 - This is your case for your first assignment. We will discuss the assignment and I will give you some pointers on case analysis. Case writing – how to present your analysis and conclusions.
 - **Reading:** Blackboard handout on case analysis

- **Reading:** The influence of ethnic diversity on leadership, group process, and performance: an examination of learning teams, Warren E. Watson, Lynn Johnson, George D. Zgourides
- **Lecture:** Dealing with difficult team members
 - Exercise: Developing conflict management skills
- **October 27 – First team work day**
 - **Teams should allocate this time to work on the case. No excuses for not being able to meet!**
- **November 1 – Team meeting day**
 - I will meet individually with each team for 15 minutes
 - This is also a time when teams can meet to work on the case and to video conference through SKYPE with JKU students
 - **(Second assignment will be available for review on Blackboard. Please review prior to the November 5 video conference.)**
- **November 3 – Case & Video Conference**
 - **Cases are due on November 3, 11:00 am Cincinnati time; 17:00 Linz time:** written case analysis due to both Dr. Gales and Dr. Glaser; send as an email attachment (Word document only) to both of us. Make sure that the names of team members are included.
- **November 10**
 - **Video conference with JKU teammates**
 - **Review and discuss second assignment:** global joint ventures, acquisitions, mergers and partnerships Information about the final assignment will be emailed to all students on November 3.
 - The focus of this assignment is on the integration/bridging of the two cultures in the case. What are the challenges to the companies with respect to cultural differences in communication styles? Consider the differences in things such as power distance, high/low context, monochronic/polychronic, relationship orientation/task orientation as well as typical team issues like conflict styles, in group/out group status, starting and using virtual and semi-virtual teams. Keep in mind that you **MUST USE ACADEMIC RESEARCH** to support your analysis and recommendations. (We will discuss the research process in the next class session.)
- **November 18 – Debrief on case and team experience. Researching your Joint Venture topic: on-line and library materials.**
 - **Debrief**
 - What worked in team process?
 - What technology worked or did not work?
 - Did you face conflict in the team? How did you manage it?
 - How did your team perform?
 - **Doing research and writing up your analysis and recommendations.**
 - Academic sources (journals, books, etc.); using the UC library
 - Other sources (online materials); being an informed consumer of information

- Citations, references and American Psychological Association (APA) format (required).
- What is plagiarism? How to avoid this problem.
- **November 10 – Team work day: discuss strategy for second assignment; Skype meetings with team members.**
- **November 15 - Revisiting the role of culture in management; managing diverse cultures in joint ventures**
 - **Cultural frameworks:** Hofstede, GLOBE, others
 - **How they apply to the scenarios:**
 - What are the issues?
 - Which culture leads?
 - Bridging cultural differences
- **November 17 – Team work/consultation day; I will meet with each team individually to discuss your strategy for this assignment.**
- **November 22 – Team work day**
- **November 24 – Thanksgiving holiday – no class**
- **December 29 – Discussion of virtual teams strategy for final projects.**
- **December 1 - Final Video Conference + Final project discussion**
- **Presentations – Tuesday, December 6, 1:30 – 3:30**
- **Papers due December 6 in Linz and Cincinnati (12:00 Cincinnati time; 18:00 Linz time; due to both Dr. Gales and Dr. Glaser; send Word documents as an email attachment to both of us).**

Course Requirements:

You are expected to attend **all** class sessions and team meetings. Attendance will be taken. If you miss more than one class session for any reason other than **documented** illness or job interview your total grade will be reduced by ½ point (on the 1-5 scale) for each additional missed class. This includes team meetings and teamwork sessions that are listed on the syllabus.

You have **four assignments** that balance teamwork and individual work.

- **Team-based case analysis:** You will be given a case to analyze: “Managing a Global Team: Greg James at Sun Microsystems, Inc.” You are to work with your team to produce a **written** analysis that: (1) describes briefly the situation (context), (2) defines the problems (3) recommend solutions, and (4) provides a **rationale** for your solution (this last point – the rationale – is critical).

The assignment is due on **November 5**. The paper should be 1,200 words in length. That is short so you need to think very carefully about what you want to say. You should submit the paper by email to Dr. Gales and Dr. Glaser. **The paper is to be in English and you will be evaluated on both content and writing quality.** Make sure that all team members’ names are on the paper. **Name the file as follows: MAGT(Team#).doc. The paper should be in**

Word (not a pdf). The paper will be evaluated on the criteria in the rubric for Assignment #1 (end of syllabus).

- Three individual reflective essays: These short essays (**approximately 500 words for the first two and 800 words for the last one**) are to be done individually. All papers should be submitted electronically to your professor (UC students submit to Dr. Gales through Blackboard and JKU students submit to Dr. Glaser as instructed). Your first essay is to focus on your initial impressions of your teammates, your expectations of potential benefits and problems associated with working in a virtual team, and your personal expectations for the class. This essay is due on **October 24 for the UC group**. The second essay is a mid-term re-assessment. How have your impressions and expectations changed based on your experience thus far? This is due on **November 14**. The final essay should summarize your impressions of working with your team, the leadership roles and leadership effectiveness and problems and advantages/disadvantages of working virtually. How did you and your team manage? **You need to integrate ideas from the reading materials into your discussion and assessment of your team.** This paper is due on **December 8**. These essays will be evaluated on the following criteria:
 - Insightfulness of observations: you need to provide some background and rationale for your observations. It is not enough to merely note that someone is “outgoing”, “shy”, or “productive.” You need to provide some concrete examples.
 - Your final essay **MUST** include references from the reading materials for the course.
 - Essays will be evaluated on the quality of writing (same criteria as mentioned for case).

- Peer Evaluation. **Due December 7**. You are to evaluate each team member and do a self-evaluation. See below. We will provide a format for the evaluation.
 - Individual class/team participation evaluations: At the conclusion of the class, you are to submit an evaluation of your participation and that of your teammates (1=excellent, met or exceeded all expectations and produced high quality work in all areas; 2=met most expectations and produced high quality work in most areas; 3=met at least some of team’s expectations and produced good quality work; 4=did not meet most expectations and/or produced poor quality work; 5=did not meet expectations and/or failed to produce work). **Provide a sentence or two to document your assessment of each person, including yourself. Team evaluations will be used to distribute the team grades on team assignments. Students receiving poor scores (4, 5, or 0) will receive deductions on the team assignments ranging from 1 point for a score of 4, 2 points for a score of 5 and you will receive 0 if your average team evaluation is a 0.**

- Team-based research and presentation: **Due Tuesday, December 8, 1:30 – 3:30 (exam period) for presentations; December 7 for papers** - The team research and presentation will focus on the following problem (details will be provided later):

Your company has agreed to form a joint venture, merger or acquisition with/of another global firm to provide broad market penetration, create greater efficiencies and become more competitive in the global market place. The two companies forming this joint venture are from different countries (each team will have a different pair of companies and countries). **Although the names of some of the companies may be similar to real companies, all are fictional companies.** Your job is to develop a management plan for the joint venture that focuses on culture and communication. This plan should include developing an organizational structure, organizational culture, protocol for interactions between the two partner companies (including video conferencing, email, virtual teams, and other means of communication). You need to focus on virtual and semi-virtual teams and communication as function of cultural differences. You should assume that you will have people from both of the host companies and their home

countries represented among the JV or merged management team. You will need to make decisions about where the JV/merger headquarters should be located and why. How will location affect the culture and operations? We will provide you with specific details on the two host companies and the industry.

PLEASE NOTE: It is not enough to just describe the cultures of the two countries. You must apply your knowledge of the two countries, the two companies (through the information in the case) and the other details to provide an integrated and synthesized proposal for how the joint venture will operate.

You must use academic sources as well as practical sources; must use APA format (in text citations + references). You must go beyond Hofstede and use other cultural references.

Each team will be responsible for making presentations in Linz (by the Linz part of the team) and in Cincinnati (by the Cincinnati part of the team). Your presentation should be a 20 minute (not much time; focus on the key points) Power Point slide show. You will be evaluated on the content and the quality of your presentation.

Our expectation for the written assignment is that you will provide a comprehensive analysis and design. You should produce a Word document. While we don't have a hard rule about length, **we expect about 4000 words.**

A NOTE ABOUT PLAGIARISM: We take plagiarism very seriously. This is a research project and we expect you to use various sources for your research. Please be careful not to merely import text from the Internet or other sources. It is fine to use secondary sources but **YOU MUST PROVIDE ADEQUATE REFERENCES IN THE TEXT (CITATIONS) AND IN A BIBLIOGRAPHY.** If you are taking direct quotes, make sure that you indicate with quotation marks (or check a style guide for long quotes). We want you to use the American Psychological Association format for documentation (basic information available on-line). **You must provide citations in the text as well as a reference list at the end of the document. If you are unclear about how to do citations, please ask.**

See grading rubrics for both assignment at the end of syllabus

Grading: Your grade will be judged on the basis of performance on the four assignments:

"Managing a Global Team: Greg James at Sun Microsystems, Inc." 25 percent	
Team Project	40 (15% for presentation and 25% for the paper)
Reflections (10%, 10%, 15%)	35
Total:	100 percent

Each assignment will be graded on a five-point scale, 1 = excellent – 5 = failing. Failure to complete any assignments will result in a 5.

NOTE: Late assignments will be reduced by ½ point for each day they are late.

Reminder: You are expected to attend all class sessions and team meetings. If you miss more than one class session for any reason other than documented illness or job interview your total grade will be reduced by ½ point (on the 1-5 scale) for each additional missed class.

Check with JKU students about class meeting times (remember, they are 6 hours ahead of local Cincinnati time).

Grading Rubric for 1st Team Assignment

Criteria Weight

CONTENT (70%)

1. Clarity of problem statement (10)
2. Quality of problem analysis (20)
3. Quality of recommendations based on relevant theories and frameworks (20)
4. Clarity and logical integration of conclusions (20)

STYLE (30%)

1. Clarity and flow (10)
 - clear discussion that is easy to follow
 - report sections are connected to build a convincing argument
 - all necessary components (e.g., introduction, analysis, recommendations and conclusions)
2. Quality of writing (20)
 - proper spelling, grammar, and formatting
 - clear and consistent citations and references if applicable

	Percent	Comments
Clarity of problem statement (10)		
Quality of problem analysis (20)		
Quality of recommendations based on relevant theories and frameworks (20)		
Clarity and logical integration of conclusions (20)		
Clarity and flow (10)		
Quality of writing (20)		

4 = 60 – 69

3 = 70 – 79

2 = 80 – 89

1 > 89

Grading Rubric for 2nd Written Team Assignment

Criteria Weight

CONTENT (70%)

1. Clarity of problem statement (10)
2. Quality of problem analysis (10)
3. Quality of recommendations based on relevant theories and frameworks (30)
4. Clarity and logical integration of conclusions (20)

STYLE (30%)

1. Clarity and flow (10)

clear discussion that is easy to follow

report sections are connected to build a convincing argument

all necessary components (e.g., introduction, analysis, recommendations and conclusions)

2. Writing quality and referencing (20)

proper spelling, grammar, and formatting

clear and consistent citations and references*

*Plagiarism and/or lack of adequate citations and references according to APA standards will result in a failing grade on this assignment.

	Percent	Comments
Clarity of problem statement (10)		
Quality of problem analysis (10)		
Quality of recommendations based on relevant theories and frameworks (30)		
Clarity and logical integration of conclusions (20)		
Clarity and flow (10)		
Writing quality & referencing (20)		

4 = 60 – 69

3 = 70 – 79

2 = 80 – 89

1 > 89