

MSc in International Business (2024/25)

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# Business game. Simulation of strategic decisions.

**Professor:** Elena Golovko

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**Office hours:** Thursday 11.00-11.30

**Course type:** Compulsory

**Credits:** 3 ECTS

**Term:** 3rd Term

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## 1. COURSE PRESENTATION

### Course Description

The course combines working with simulation, real company cases, and discussion sessions. The course is structured in three blocks.

The first block “Competitive strategy and tech ecosystems” covers topics related to competition through tech ecosystems. The second block includes the simulation game. The Simulation game is a business simulation designed to bring together the theory and practice of strategy-making in the realistic environment of a dynamic organization and industry. Students are put on the board of directors in a global firm and asked to make real strategic decisions, set and implement strategy and see the impact of their decisions on financial and non-financial measures of performance of the simulated company. The simulation allows students to apply their knowledge of Strategic management, International business, Marketing, Human resources, Logistics, Accounting and Finance to decision making in a global marketing company. In particular, the Game addresses international strategy issues, such as understanding strategic positioning of a company in a global competitive environment, evaluating its strategic choices and understanding the performance implications of these choices. The simulation also allows students to improve such important skills as analyzing business situations, synthesis capacity, decision-making under time pressure and adopting long-term perspectives. Finally, the game stimulates the development of skills such as teamwork, leadership, negotiation and communication. The third block is devoted to the COVIDES case.

### Objectives

The objectives of the course are as follows. Firstly, the course is aimed at practicing

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firm decision-making in the dynamic competitive environment applying the knowledge from different areas of Management. By the end of the course, the students should be able to identify and describe strategic issues faced by a firm and select the right theoretical framework to analyze them. Second, the students should be able to provide an argued analysis of the strategic issue using available information and applying appropriate theories. Based on the analysis, the students should be able to select the solution to the strategic issue, provide argumentation for their choice, and reflect on the (expected) outcome of the decision. Secondly, the course is aimed at stimulating and developing such “soft” skills as working in teams (under time pressure and strict deadlines), negotiation and presentation.

This course is included in the subject **Strategy**, which has the following learning outcomes:

- The student will be able to identify business opportunities in foreign markets in order to analyse the viability of business activities at an international level.
- RA1. Mat.2.1 Identify the phases of internationalisation of a company (expansion, internationalisation and rationalisation of activities).
- RA1. Mat.2.2 Distinguish the internal analysis of the company to initiate the first phase of internationalisation and subsequently the consolidation of the process.
- RA1. Mat.2.3 Define the diagnosis of the feasibility of rationalising the internationalisation resources of the multinational company.
- The student will be able to decide the optimal way for the company to enter international markets by participating in international negotiation processes in the professional context.
- RA4. Mat.2.4 Evaluate the pool of countries with potential for the internationalisation of the company identifying the strategic fit of the company with the opportunity that each one represents.
- The student will be able to recognise the most advanced knowledge and core competences in the organisation and management of the activities of a foreign trade department.
- RA2. Mat.2.5 Integrate the different areas of the company in business decision making in a simulated international environment.

### Related SDGs

SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being

SDG 5: Gender equality

SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth

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SDG 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure

SDG 10: Reduce inequalities

SDG 12: Responsible consumption and production

SDG 13: Climate action

SDG 16: Peace, Justice and strong institutions

SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals

## 2. COURSE LEARNING PLAN

### Methodology

The course consists of 10 sessions, combining simulation exercises, real company cases, and discussion sessions. It is divided into three parts. Following the introductory session (Session 0), Sessions 1-3 will address competitive strategy questions within the context of tech ecosystems. Sessions 4-10 will focus on the simulation game and cover a real company case that students will have to solve, which will also include a visit to the company.

Students must assume an active and participatory role from the beginning to the end of the course. This implies attendance to class, working (in a team) on the preparation of each decision during the board meetings phase and actively participating in the class discussions.

The competences, the learning outcomes, the assessment elements and the quality of the learning process included in this Teaching Plan will not be affected if during the academic trimester the teaching model has to switch either to an hybrid model (combination of face-to-face and on-line sessions) or to a complete on-line model.

### Evaluation criteria

The overall grade for this course is based on the following components:

<b>Sessions 1-3 “Competitive strategy and tech ecosystems”</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Covides case</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Business simulation:</b>	<b>50%</b>
• Final game report (individual)	50%
• Game presentations (team)	20%
• Class attendance and participation in the class discussion	30%

### Retake conditions

Students need to obtain a minimum of 4 in the final exam to pass the course. This condition applies to both the regular exam and the retake exam. The final course grade of students that do not obtain a minimum of 4 in the exam will be the minimum between

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4 and the final grade computed from the different evaluation elements (with the weights set above).

### Retake conditions

Students that fail the evaluation of the course will have a retake exam opportunity that will be programmed in accordance with the academic calendar. If a student has to retake the exam, his or her **maximal grade for the course will be a 5,0 (out of 10,0)**.

### General Issues

Students are required to attend 80% of classes. Failing to do so without justified reason will imply a Zero grade in the participation/attendance evaluation item and may lead to suspension from the program.

Students who fail the course during the regular evaluation are allowed ONE re-take of the evaluation, in the conditions specified above. If the course is again failed after the retake, the student will have to register again for the course the following year.

In case of a justified no-show to an exam, the student must inform the corresponding faculty member and the director(s) of the program so that they study the possibility of rescheduling the exam (one possibility being during the “Retake” period). In the meantime, the student will get an “incomplete”, which will be replaced by the actual grade after the final exam is taken. The “incomplete” will not be reflected on the student’s Academic Transcript.

Plagiarism is to use another’s work and to present it as one’s own without acknowledging the sources in the correct way. All essays, reports or projects handed in by a student must be original work completed by the student. By enrolling at any UPF BSM Master of Science and signing the “Honor Code,” students acknowledge that they understand the schools’ policy on plagiarism and certify that all course assignments will be their own work, except where indicated by correct referencing. Failing to do so may result in automatic expulsion from the program.”

### Calendar and Contents

Session	Session content
Session 0	Introduction to the course Teacher: Elena Golovko
Sessions 1-3	Competitive strategy and tech ecosystems Teacher: : Marc Sansó
Sessions 4-10	Simulation. Teacher: Elena Golovko Covides case. Teacher: Christophe Marquet

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Total student workload (including self-study): 75 hours

### 3. PROFESSORS

Marc Sansó is a business and entrepreneurial consultant with extensive experience in competitive strategy, entrepreneurship and digital transformation. His professional career has led him to take on a wide range of responsibilities in both the public and private sectors and enabled him to become an international expert in the analysis of technological transformation and competitive disruption in consumer technology and B2B industries. He is a regular speaker at specialist international forums and an associate professor at various international business schools. Marc is also a seasoned investor, advisor and member of the board of directors of several startups. As a researcher, he has published several specialist articles and studies on digital competence and technological innovation. He is the author of the book *The Value Trail: How to Effectively Understand, Deploy and Monitor Successful Business Models*.

Elena Golovko is an Associate Professor at the Tilburg School of Economics and Management, Tilburg University. She also teaches at ESCI-UPF. She received the PhD in Management degree from IESE Business School in Barcelona. Her current research focuses on internationalization strategies of firms, and in particular exports, innovation strategies, and their implications for firm performance.

Christophe Marquet is an Agronomy Engineer at Purpan Toulouse (France) & International MBA at ESADE Business School in Barcelona. He is actually the Commercial & Marketing Director at Group Covides Vineyards- Wineries and is one of the Member of the Board of Directors. He had a long previous professional experience in Moët Hennessy Group (LVMH group) as Group Brand Manager for champagne & cognac Brands: Dom Perignon, Moët & Chandon and Cognac Hennessy and he has founded as a manager the Trade Marketing department in Moët Hennessy España. He is a Professor at Universitat Rovira i Virgili Faculty of Oenology Tarragona in Marketing & International Wine Business and International Branding and Exports at the Post Grau in Wine Business Administration at URV VIC Manresa in the Wine Business School Vilafranca. He also teaches in the Master of International Business in ESCI-UPF.

### 4. BIBLIOGRAPHY/RESOURCES/ READING MATERIALS

The material will be provided at the start of the course.