

IMBA6021 GLOBAL WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT
Syllabus for Fall 2026

<i>Professor:</i>	Dong Liu, Ph.D.
<i>Office:</i>	COB 4313
<i>Email:</i>	Dong.Liu@scheller.gatech.edu ; Outside of office hours and class, email is the fastest way to get a hold of me.
<i>Phone:</i>	404-894-4925

Course website:

<https://canvas.gatech.edu/>

All supplementary course materials, important updates, and announcements will be posted on Canvas.

Class Motto

Fun and Knowledge

I. COURSE OVERVIEW

In the not-so-distant past, only a small percentage of managers in organizations needed the knowledge and skills to manage employees from cultures other than their own. Today, however, virtually every manager will need these skills at some point, and some will make their careers on them. With a burgeoning global market, increased expatriate assignments, and technologies that allow people to work together virtually, it is vital that managers learn how to manage across cultures. This course complements your other business courses by developing your global awareness to better understand the issues managers face when working across international boundaries. The course provides a broad overview of the various roles managers play within unique international contexts. It introduces you to key examples of significant cultural differences and helps you to become familiar with ways to effectively anticipate and manage cultural differences to lead to organizational and individual success. A particular emphasis is placed on the unique challenges associated with managing people in an international environment ranging from the psychology of cross-cultural relationships to developing strategic HR policies to attract and retain a global workforce.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

There are five main goals this course is designed to accomplish:

- Help you understand the meaning of national culture, nationality as a socially constructed identity, and the role culture and nationality play in management.
- Help you identify the key contextual variables that influence the operations of multinational firms and develop awareness of how those contexts may be managed. The focus is on the development of meta-strategies applicable to any cross-national relations as opposed to a focus on specific countries.

- Increase your cross-cultural awareness and sensitivity. Effective international managers recognize, appreciate, and clearly articulate their own cultural values, and sensibly understand, tolerate, and respect others' differing values and perspectives.
- Develop your cross-cultural skills and help you to be more effective when dealing with and managing people from various cultures. Help you to confidently and effectively interact with individuals and groups whose objectives, attitudes, patterns of behavior, and cultural backgrounds are significantly different from your own.
- Develop your skills as a global leader – e.g., effective utilization of global human resources capabilities and minimization of the challenges of a multicultural environment through effective communication, motivation and leadership in the global environment.
- Increase your understanding of organizational practices and interventions that facilitate sustainability in different cultures.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

To meet the goals listed above, this course uses readings, lectures, videos, exercises, individual and team assignments and class discussion. These activities build and refine skills that are vital to your future success in an international business environment, including communication, critical thinking, conflict management, teamwork, and leadership. Reading assignments provide an important foundation for class discussion and must be completed prior to each class session. Lectures will be used to highlight key points from the readings as well as provide additional information. The assignments and exercises will provide you with the opportunity to apply what you have learned to real world issues. Because each of you brings unique perspectives and experiences to the class, participation in class discussions and class exercises is essential to your own learning as well as that of your class members. Class discussions will be based upon your knowledge of the readings, cases, and exercises. In addition, I encourage you to reflect on how your own experiences might illustrate—or contradict—the concepts and theories we discuss in class.

II. EVALUATION AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The following outline serves as a brief introduction to your various responsibilities throughout the semester. Additional information on these assignments will be provided in class and are posted on the course website on Canvas. Your learning will be evaluated based on the following requirements:

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Class attendance (see the instructions below) | 8 points |
| 2. Rightpath 4 and 6 online assessments (See the instructions below on page 2) | 6 points |
| 3. Team Global Challenge Project (10-minutes team presentation; see page 3 for instructions) | 42 points |
| 4. Individual Take-home Final Exam (due at Assignments of Canvas) | 44 points |

Total: 100 points

- | | |
|--------------|-----|
| 90 and above | = A |
| 80 – 89.99 | = B |
| 70 – 79.99 | = C |
| 60 – 69.99 | = D |
| Below 60 | = F |

Late submissions: 5 points deduction (less than 2 hours late); 8 points deduction (2-4 hours late); 10 points deduction (4-6 hours late); 12 points deduction (6-8 hours late); 14 points deduction (8-10 hours late); 16 points deduction (10-12 hours late). Late submissions over 12 hours will **NOT** be accepted and you will receive 0 on this project.

1. Class attendance (8 points). You will need to be in attendance at all the six sessions (including the two asynchronous sessions). For the in-person sessions, please arrive on time and leave only after a session ends. If, for some reason, you need to miss class, your first absence will be excused. Starting from the second time, each absence will result in 2 points deduction.
2. **RIGHTPATH 4 AND 6 ONLINE ASSESSMENTS (6 POINTS)**

A purpose of this class is to increase your understanding of your dispositions and thus promote your performance in the workplace. I will work with RightPath Resources (a leadership and talent development firm) to administer two complimentary self-assessments online. Please attend to my Canvas announcement. These two assessments and their easy-to-read reports work hand-in-hand to provide information that is comprehensive and meaningful. Understanding the assessment results can facilitate your workplace communication, teamwork, leadership, and career development.

Retail cost of the assessments is **\$99**. Since you are in this class, you can take these assessments at **no** cost. Rightpath will email you to help set you up for the assessments. I will also remind you through Canvas announcement.

3. TEAM GLOBAL CHALLENGE PROJECT (42 POINTS)

Habitat for Humanity International is striving to expand its business to foreign countries. Your team will act as global management consultants to do a **8-minute team presentation** for addressing the following 6 key questions related to the challenges Habitat may need to cope within a foreign country. I have randomly assigned your Capstone team to analyze a country below. If your team is more interested in analyzing a different foreign country, please let me know and you will need to select a foreign country other than the 9 foreign countries below to avoid multiple teams analyzing the same country.

Your team should make sure your proposed suggestions and solutions are sustainable (a sound balance between economic cost, environmental care, and social well-being).

- ✓ How will the key political, cultural, and legal characteristics impact the strategy and change management process?
- ✓ What are the specific lines of business that will reduce the housing deficit? Why? (Start with the generic strategy provided for country context, and then identify the few specific strategies that will have the most impact on the housing deficit.)
- ✓ What are the key funding sources for the country strategy? Why? (Funding sources are linked to the strategic lines of business. The options are small individual donors, large individual donors, corporate donors, domestic government, international government aid, earned income from services provided, equity, loan debt, others? Hint: Funding must be linked to your strategy.)
- ✓ Who are potential strategic implementing partners in the country? Why? (Partners are entities who, by working with Habitat, will complement each other's mission.)
- ✓ How should Habitat position its brand in this country? Why? What would be the slogan for Habitat in this country?
- ✓ How should recent significant events shape the strategy? (e.g. elections, natural disasters, conflicts, etc.)

A former vice president of Habitat will speak to you and provide insights into Habitat's global expansion plan. I will also post reading materials about Habitat on Canvas. Each team presentation will be evaluated by the vice president of Habitat and me. We will also provide feedback on your presentation immediately after your team presents. **No write-up is required.**

4. INDIVIDUAL TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAM (44 POINTS; please submit it through the Assignments section on Canvas) Please note that only one attempt is allowed. After you submit your answers, you won't be able to rework on the exam.

5. KNOWLEDGE SHOW (OPTIONAL EXTRA CREDIT PROJECT; 2 EXTRA POINTS)

You will have a chance to present what you have learned from class in conjunction with your **personal interests and creativity**. Knowledge show will be conducted **on an individual rather than team basis**. Each person who opts to do knowledge show (**please email me (dong.liu@scheller.gatech.edu) your intent of doing this extra credit project by noon Dec 3rd**) will be given 3-5 minutes class time depending

on how many students participating in this project to show his or her general takeaways from this class in a creative way. Past examples include:

1. Played guitar and sang a song created by the presenter to express how the knowledge from this class can be applied to the business world.
2. Discussed a picture drawn by the presenter beforehand to show your takeaways from this class.
3. Performed a short live skit to give an example of how what you learned from this class is related to the business world.
4. Played a short video clip on the presenter's interview with a CEO or executive on some global management issues that are related to and can be solved by the knowledge that the presenter has mastered in this class.

Since this is an extra credit project, you are **NOT required** to do it.

6. "REAL WORLD" APPLICATION ESSAYS (OPTIONAL EXTRA CREDIT PROJECT; 2 EXTRA POINTS)

The theories and concepts taught in this course will only contribute to your business success if you learn to apply them to "real-life" situations. The objective of the application essays is to give you some practice in looking at the world through a global workforce management lens. For this extra-credit assignment, you should choose a "real-world" example of international (mis)management and analyze it in terms of the concepts and theories from the class readings, lectures, and discussions. First, you will identify a "real world" event or problem that deals with one or more of the concepts in the course. The event or problem you choose can be drawn from your personal experience, media coverage of a current event, or a book, television program, or movie (or anywhere else you can think of). For example, you can write an analytical essay to propose solutions for addressing a sustainability challenge or achieving a sustainability goal in an international setting. Second, you should describe and diagnose the incident using knowledge from the course. You should also provide recommendations for how the situation might be improved (again, drawing on materials from the course).

An essay should be between 3-6 double-spaced pages (12-point times new roman font, 1 inch margins). Each qualified essay you submit is worth **1 extra point**. If I choose you to present an essay in the class, you will get **2 points** for the essay and presentation. Your grade for this extra-credit project is **capped at 2 extra points**.

Since this is an extra credit project, you are **NOT required** to do it. If you choose to do it, please **email me (dong.liu@scheller.gatech.edu) your essays by noon Dec 6**.

IV. Class Policies

This course requires that you uphold the following honor code standards:

- You are expected to be prepared and on time for all simulations, exercises, and case discussions.
- Do not discuss exercises or borrow/share notes with people not enrolled in the class.
- You are expected to uphold standards of academic honesty and integrity. Failure to do so (plagiarism, cheating, etc.) may result in failure of the course.
- Research evidence indicates that laptop use in class interferes with active listening and strongly undermines the quality of class discussion and student engagement in that discussion, a critical component of learning in this course. Therefore, I ***strongly discourage*** electronics use in class.
- You are expected to be aware of and abide by the Georgia Institute of Technology's Academic Honor Code with respect to all aspects of participation in the course, including Article II, Section 3 establishing student responsibilities with respect to academic integrity. Compliance with the Academic Honor Code also includes all aspects of the Honor Agreement signed by students as a condition of their enrollment in the College of Business. Any student suspected of engaging in behavior in violation of the Academic Honor Code or the Honor Agreement shall be referred to the Office of Student Integrity and the Office of the Dean of Students for appropriate action.

V. TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

This schedule is tentative. Because the amount of time required to cover each topic tends to vary, topics may be changed or omitted depending on our progress and guest speakers' availability throughout the semester.

Session	Topic
1	Introduction to the Course Cultural Framework Guest speaker: Paul Hamalian
2	Expatriate Career
3	International Human Resource Management Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Black & Decker-Eastern Hemisphere and the ADP Initiative ✓ Ellen Moore: Living and Working in Korea
4	Completing RightPath 4 and 6 assessments online by Oct 31 st . Rightpath will email you to help set you up for the assessments. I will also remind you through Canvas announcement.
5	Understanding and Coping with Cultural Differences Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Taobao Vs. EBay ✓ Hong Kong Disneyland Guest speaker: Chris Fuller
6	(a) Team Global Challenge Project ___ Team Presentations

Resource Links

1. Hofstede's cultural dimensions:
<https://geerthofstede.com/culture-geert-hofstede-gert-jan-hofstede/6d-model-of-national-culture/>
<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/product/compare-countries/>
2. For great university-based resources, this site has been a mainstay for 15 years
<http://globaledge.msu.edu/>
3. For Department of State (DOS) material
<http://travel.state.gov>
4. Also for DOS: Country notes at
<http://www.state.gov/misc/list/index.htm>

5. For overview of doing business in different countries and the employment of workers
<http://www.doingbusiness.org/> Warning: some of the linked documents from this page are in local language.
6. General country background information at BBC site
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/country_profiles/default.stm
7. Deloitte Tax Guides and Country Highlights
<https://dits.deloitte.com/#TaxGuides>
8. General IHR website with Q & A/Issue orientation
<http://internationalhrforum.com/>
9. For Foreign Travel Alerts and General Overview of conditions for countries, Check out U.S. Government Department of State
<http://www.state.gov/>
10. You can search “doing business in *country name*” at the US department of commerce’s website
<http://www.commerce.gov/>