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COURSE GUIDE Intopia

- Course code: MBIB-INTOPIA-14
 - Osiris name: Intopia
 - Year of study: 4th year and 2nd year fast track
 - Period B, 2017 - 2018
 - Full Time Obligatory Conceptual Course
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 - Date: 01/11/2017
 - Sharepoint site: <https://cursussen.sharepoint.hu.nl/fem/99/intopia/default.aspx>
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- **The information included in this document will not be communicated with the students in any other form, i.e. students first must read this document and then if there is still any question, they can contact the coordinator via e-mail. If students' e-mails are about any piece of information already explained in this document, the teacher can decide not to answer the e-mail at all due to lack of time.**
 - **Emails will not be answered out of office hours (9:00 – 17:00) nor on non-HU-working days (i.e. on Fridays and weekends).**
 - **Any changes in the following statements will be communicated with the students via announcements posted on the sharepoint, Intopia page, or via e-mails.**

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1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

INTOPIA is a management simulation game which is played by Business Economics and IBMS students over the Internet.

In the past we played against students from other universities. (Aarhus, Denmark, Lund, Sweden and Munster, Germany, Nottingham, UK, Technion university in Tel Aviv, Israel).

Lecturers **mix** the students and create multi-cultural teams. In some of the teams there were people from 5 different nationalities with an equal number of different native languages.

Intopia is based on a two tier industry: Microchips (X), and Personal Computers (Y). Each firm starts with SF 10 million and attempts to maximise their shareholder value by the end of the game. The structure of a firm is a syndicate of 4-5 people each representing one company. All companies compete with each other, and in many cases, cooperate. Plus, one further competitor, Nippon (the instructor). Functional Scope of Intopia encompasses Finance, Research & development, Component production and/or sourcing, End-product assembly, Sales, Marketing & distribution, and Marketing & Sales.

2. Course goals and learning objectives

After having followed and passed this course, you should be able to

- Develop a complete financial budget
- create financial forecasts
- devise financial plans and budgets
- Can calculate costs for reasons of cost price calculations, breakeven calculations, and for decision making purposes
- Write and defend a financial plan for a (start-up) company
- Pro-actively seek and commercially evaluate business opportunities for both new and existing products/services
- Take risks in order to optimize business profit.
- *Describe and use **Classic business strategy**, economies of scale, scope, & experience, proprietary technology, brand loyalty, control of distribution systems, differential inputs (i.e. low cost labour)*
- *Describe and use **Game theory**: balancing co-operation & competition, multi-market contact and strategic alliances; **Classic international business decisions & problems**: coordination of global sourcing, market selection, choice of entry mode, large transportation costs & time lags, exchange rate fluctuations, differences in wage rates, taxes, inflation. Etc.*
- Explain why Multi-National Corporations(MNC'S) consider long-term financing in foreign currencies
- Explain how to assess the feasibility of long-term financing in foreign currencies.
- Have an understanding of corporate strategy in an international environment via this course and its interaction with the other 3rd and 4th year courses

- Describe the interactions and the interdependence of the various functions in an international organization, and how they are all necessary to achieve the overall goals and objectives of an international firm.
- Be able to work analytically, write problem solving reports and evaluate how current international business news and events that impact international financial management
- Give a small oral presentation about an aspect of a MNCs international financial management process vis a vis current events
- Take initiative and a leading role within a (project) team in order to reach a defined goal.
- Actively contribute to a group product or result.
- Explain your strengths and weaknesses and indicate how and when you intend to improve these weaknesses.
- Critically evaluate and account for your own actions;
- Take criticism and put it to good use.
- Take initiative and work independently

3. Place in the Curriculum and related courses

To further your basic knowledge and understanding of this course, there is a strong link with International Financial Management, Supply Chain Management and Strategic Marketing. This course will also help in decision-making abilities, teamwork and analytical skills.

4. Study Burden

This course is worth 5 EC's. A loose estimate of the time an average student should spend on this game is 140 hours over 10 weeks.

	Activity	Estimated time	total
1	Feedback meetings with tutor	7 weeks x 2 x30 minutes	7 hours
2	Introduction lectures		3 hours
3	Reading guides and instruction video's		30 hours
4	Writing 2 reports, 2 Press Releases and performing cash budgets		30 hours
	Team discussions for decision making and analysis of the output		70 hours
Total			140 hours

5. Pre-requisites

Understanding of Financial Accounting terms. Beginning level corporate finance, basic marketing concepts, strategic management ideas, and a general understanding of logistics. The game has been played successfully with visiting students from our partner institutes who have no strong business background

6. Exemption Possibilities

There are no exemption possibilities without permission of the Exam Board

7. Competencies

This course contributes to the development of the following competences

I.2 Intercultural Competency (level 2)

- You can recognize and appreciate cultural differences in behaviour and values

II.3 International Strategic Vision development (level 3)

- The ability to translate trends in the environment to opportunities and threats for the organization
- The ability to assess an international strategic policy for a company, clearly defining the strategic limits

II.5 Entrepreneurial Management (level 3)

- The ability to contribute, with the cooperation of others, to an optimal exploration by the company of the opportunities for both new and existing products in the market and the necessary risks involved

III.6 International Marketing and Sales Management (level 3)

- The ability to create, change, and implement a strategic international marketing plan which includes an analysis of the international environment of the company's position. The plan contains strategies, in product development, pricing, distribution and international advertising and promotion

III.8 International Finance and Accounting (level 3)

- The ability to describe and understand the consequences of the various risks inherent to international business.
- The ability to contribute to management control of a multinational organisation by means of an integrated application of his knowledge of business accounting, management accounting, financial accounting and other relevant aspects

IV.1 Leadership (level 3)

- You are able to convince others easily, using arguments

IV.2 Co-operation (level 3)

- The ability to encourage others to obtain results through co-operation by sharing ideas and giving in to the wishes of others when necessary, to progress as a group
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V.4 Business Research Methods (level 2)

- Has the ability to work in a more complex situation and write a research report and translate the findings into useful conclusions
- Has the ability to use theory concepts and apply them to a practical situation

8. Didactic Forms

The class will meet 7 hours (on average) per week for seven weeks: Each week will be devoted to negotiating decisions for the growth of the team's business goals and objectives. In addition there will be biweekly (twice a week) tutorials (feedback sessions) to discuss the progress of the teams. This course will utilize lectures, class participation (feedback sessions), team meetings, and negotiations. Being present in all these activities is obligatory for all the students.

9. Assessment

All students are required to respect the HU codes of conduct in all classes, team meeting, negotiations, etc. The students are required to be particularly polite in all circumstances while they are at school. If they do not comply with this requirement, they will be asked to leave the game.

There will be no final exam.

Grading will be determined by the firms' participation in the game, quality of a market analysis, Press release, Financial Planning and Analysis, Business Plan and Marketing Strategy.

Assessment form	Weight	Required minimum Grade
Project reports and Intopia performance	100%	5.5
For the Resit: a written exam and/or an extensive report	100%	5.5

The criteria will include **financial performance** which is 50% of the grade, **communication and teamwork**, 20% of the grade, the **quality of the company's marketing analysis and marketing strategies** 30% of the grade. A copy of the detailed criteria can be found in the Tab **Results** of <https://cursussen.sharepoint.hu.nl/fem/99/intopia/default.aspx>

- Individual team members may receive different grades from the team. This depends on how much they participate in all the team activities and if they can answer the tutors' and/or the coordinator's questions during biweekly meetings and/or at the end of the game.

- Every member of each team is required to know about all aspects of their company: from finance to production and marketing. All these aspects are required from every individual student in the biweekly (twice a week) team meetings with their tutors.

- Participation is obligatory throughout the whole game, and being absent means automatic failure in the course.

- Following the teachers' instructions and course requirements are also obligatory. This include filling and sending back the course application form sent by the course coordinator to all the students. Any delay or lack of response to these requirements after the students register for the course in Osiris results in automatic failure.

- *The report writing includes 2 major parts:* 1) Industry analysis including company performance and 2) strategy analysis. The criteria or standards for reports, and presentations are attached to this document: Appendix 1. Please, only follow this or any criteria/standards

sent to the students by the coordinator of IBS department during or at the end of the game. Do not follow any other documents and/or instructions offered by other departments or other teachers.

- Each team is required to hand in **2 reports**: the first report is on Quarter 1 to the end of Quarter 4 and the second report includes Quarter 1 to Quarter 8. Individual students are also required to add their own reflection on the game at the end of the second report.
- Each team is required to hand in **2 Press Releases (PR)**: the first PR is on Quarter 1 to the end of Quarter 4 and the second PR includes Quarter 5 to Quarter 8.
- The written assignments, oral exams (Q&A during and/or at the end of the course), presentations and biweekly tutorial meetings can and will be supervised by the course coordinator.
- Grading and assessment can/will be done by the whole teaching team supervised and guided by the coordinator.
- Reports and any written assignment handed in after the deadlines will not be accepted. This means automatic failure in the written assignments part of the course.

9.1 Resit Possibilities

- There are at least two forms of resit assessment: 1) a three-hour (or more) written exam (open questions). 2) an extensive report (or written assignments) (including cash budgets) written by individual students. 3) if necessary an oral exam will be part of the assessment. All these assessments forms will be carried out by individual students and not by groups any more.
- The minimum requirement for each assessment form is 5.5 and it is necessary to pass all forms. Failure in one form means failure in all other forms.
- A minimum grade of 5.5 is necessary to pass the resit and consequently the course.
- The resit exam, report (or written assignments) and oral exam will be supervised by the course coordinator unless it is decided otherwise. The coordinator will decide which form(s) of the assessments suits each student's conditions. This means some students have to pass all three forms of the assessment and some only 1 or 2 forms.
- There is only one resit possibility per year in periods C or E of each study year.
- If the student fails in the resit assessments (with a grade below 5.5) they have to do the course again in the next study year. Consequently, they have to abide by the requirements of the course guide of the new study year.
- The resit exam excludes the practical part of the game. It includes all the study materials offered during the game, including **cash budget construction and analysis, financial statements analysis, strategy analysis and all the concepts presented in the executive guide**, and more.
- The students are advised to download and save all the quarterly results of their company, quarterly cash budgets, study materials, etc. It is their responsibility to download and save the above mentioned materials, as at the end of the game, none of these resources could be available to the students, teachers nor to the coordinators.
- Every member of each team is required to know about all aspects of their company: from finance to production and marketing. All these aspects are required from every individual student in the resit exam.

Students who cheat or plagiarize from others or from Internet sources will be referred to the Examination Board. The Examination Board will then investigate and be in charge of the case.

The free-riders (if caught) will certainly fail in the course.

10. Course Material and Literature

BOOK (Required)	
Title:	The Executive Guide
Author(s):	Thorelli
	Book can be downloaded from the Intopia SharePoint site
Other materials	Links to websites, results, gazettes and other kinds of information and study materials can be found on the course's webpage on the Sharepoint

11. Evaluation

Evaluation by students of this course will be done at the end of the block

Appendix 1

Dear students

Below, there is a list of the points that must be covered in your report:

This report is about your business: you must have an honest and critical view to your performance, problems (including supplier credit and financial calculations showing why they happened and how they were resolved) mistakes, successes, your anticipations/reaction to: market shocks, risks, opportunities, threats, macro-economic changes, your predictions, quarterly cash budgets, learning curve etc. You must be able to write a thorough report on your company in the last 8 quarters, using all your knowledge gained in the last 4 years of Business management Studies (finance, marketing, economics, etc.). Hopefully the list below will guide you through it:

1. Title page: the name and number of your company, students' name and ID numbers, the date.
2. Introduction: **Company profile:** headquarter, introduce your company (i.e. full official name), why you are a multinational, your **core product(s)**, your **core competence** (if there is any and if there is none, the reason for that) and how this **core competence is defined**, and **your business** (if you are a wholesaler, etc. if you have mentioned it) (half a page)
3. mission, objectives, strategy (1 page)
4. First and final Quarters or market analysis: You must use graphs and/or tables to show trends in each quarter or in all 4 and eventually 8 quarters. In these graphs you can illustrate the following: **costs or expenses, prices, equities, sales, debts, supplier credits, revenues, profits**, etc. of all the companies (industry analysis) and

- those of your company (company profile). This means that the quarters can be analysed either under industry analysis or under company profile or both. (2-3 pages)
5. **Competition analysis:** the **market shares** (your company and those of your competitors). The **size of the companies** (their **production capacities**). Please, show which company(ies) is the closest competitor and which one(s) is the side competitor, if there is any, their capital structure. (2 pages)
 6. Find the weak points as well as the strengths of your main competitors and come up with a suitable strategy to encounter them. (1.5 page)
 7. You must start with the strongest competitor and end with the weakest one and **you must decide and prove** which company is the strongest and which one is the weakest competitor.
 8. **Industry analysis:** total **industry output**, The benchmark (the industry or market) price, the number of the participants or companies (national, Dutch) and international (Israelis), the products that are being produced, Porter's forces. Market or industry structure: monopoly, perfect competition, etc. and your company's position in it. (3 pages)
 9. **Company performance: consolidated income statement, financial ratios:** profitability, solvency, working capital, return on equity and return on investment, and more if necessary. Cost and expenses analysis is essential. Pricing strategy, if you had any. And if not, why not. Ups and downs (problems and success), your team of management and their know-how (experienced or young teams without much know-how), SOWT analysis, capital structure, supplier credit, profitability, market position (6 pages)
 10. Your anticipations/reaction to: significant market shocks, risks, opportunities, threats, macro-economic changes, learning curve etc. Please, keep them short and concise. Refer to only those significant events. (3 pages)
 11. **How to apply graphs.** You must adequately explain your tables and graphs. You must explain every single graph that you include in your paper and they must be related to your arguments. Don't forget the titles of the graphs (axis's) and the legends. Pay attention for your graphs/tables not to be too crowded and/or not illustrative enough.
 12. **All your graphs must be coloured in your final paper.**
 13. Graphs, tables, etc.: you must make your own graphs and tables using market research that you purchase. You cannot copy and paste them from the Intopia or any other website. If you find a useful graph or table on Intopia site, again you have to draw it yourself, even when you mention the citation and reference, you are not allowed to copy and paste graphs and tables.
 14. Take care of your **English.**
 15. Please, **do not use abbreviation whatsoever.** Or explain them in a separate page in the beginning.
 16. Your paper must **not be longer than 25 pages**, including graphs and explanations. Of course, you can always use appendices, and endnotes, but the most important pieces of information and graphs must be included in your main text.
 17. Format: Times New Roman, Size 12, 1.5 space

18. A **conclusion** to your paper is essential, just like an introduction. Without a conclusion you miss too many points.

19. Bibliography and references: in a proper format and form.

20. You need to purchase and **use Market researches** as well for your report.

Criteria for Presentations:

1. Only for 10 minutes: all group members will participate.
2. Introduction: the names and roles of each member, company profile
3. Formal with formal language using business and finance jargons.
4. You try to explain yourself to the major shareholder (your tutor) why s/he should keep you employed as their managers and/or point below:
5. Convincing the major shareholder(s) why they should keep investing in your company.
6. Briefly about your company's performance in the last 8 quarters focusing on your total consolidated equity, financial ratios mentioned above (point 9) and more if necessary. A very brief cost and expenses analysis is essential.
7. Pricing strategy, if you had any. And if not, why not.
8. Briefly explain your company's consolidated income statement in Q8.
9. Problems (including supplier credit) and the way your company coped with them.
10. Successes, why they happened: just by good luck or your managerial skills and planning.
11. Your plan for the future of this business/company (about 2 - 3 minutes)
12. Conclusion

Good luck