

Syllabus of Record

Program: CET Prague

Course Code / Title: PR/BUSN 350 Business in Europe: Strategy, Operations, and Transformation

Contact Hours: 45

Recommended Credits: 3

Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings: Business / Management, Data Science, Central European Studies

Language of Instruction: English

Prerequisites / Requirements: Prior coursework in Business recommended

Description

This course explores how European companies navigate a complex, fast-evolving business landscape shaped by AI, sustainability, and geopolitical risk. With a hands-on focus and strong ties to local firms, the course covers operations, leadership, sustainability, creative business models, and digital transformation. Special attention is paid to people-centric leadership, ESG frameworks, and generative AI as a business disruptor and strategic tool within a Central European context.

Objectives

Through their participation in this course, students will:

- Understand the differences between US and European business environment and culture
- Identify opportunities for conducting business in the Central European region and boosting international connections
- Employ AI and data analysis to assess business impacts, risks, and opportunities to boost efficiency and resilience
- Recognize the crucial roles that talent, progressive leadership, and intercultural teams play in successful business operations
- Evaluate the relationship between financial profit and positive impact on the environment and society

This is achieved through the lens of individual enterprises on various levels of the value chains (ranging from multinationals to small family firms).

Requirements

Active participation is essential in this course. Students are expected to attend each class and field study course component as outlined in the CET Attendance Policy. Students are expected to read all assigned materials before the relevant class session and come prepared to participate thoughtfully in class discussions. All assignments must be submitted via Canvas unless otherwise noted.

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Graded assignments include:

- **Class Participation:** Students are expected to contribute actively to class discussions, linking the concepts and terms from the readings, lectures, and presentations with their own comments and observations.
- **Group Case Study & Presentation:** Students work in groups on an individual company case study. Each group will choose from a selection of companies and analyze through the lens of the topics covered in the course. The group presentation should be cross-cutting and include as many topics as possible (e.g., intercultural management, automation, employee wellbeing, strategic leadership, etc.). The presentation is made in class and peer-reviewed by fellow students.
- **Visit/Guest Reflections:** Students will submit a total of four written reflections during the semester: two related to company visits and two guest speaker reflections. After each company visit and guest lecture, students submit a document mentioning: a) 3 key takeaways, b) 2 ideas how this can be applied to other business, c) 1 idea how this affects the student.
- **Traveling Seminar Assignment:** This is a required, credit-bearing, field study course component. Students are expected to participate in all components of the travel and complete required assignments (readings, written, oral) related to the Seminar, which are factored into the final grade as outlined below. Before the seminar, students identify one company for which they would prepare a Seminar Assignment and research the situation of the company they chose. This shall include the following: main product and added value, brief history, financial situation of the company, risk and SWOT analyses, impacts of company activities on society and environment, and ideas for innovations.
- **Final Exam:** This exam covers course material from the entire semester. It is comprised of multiple-choice questions and an essay of about 500 words. In the essay, students outline a solution to a business case, applying gained knowledge and concepts, and citing valid academic resources and cases from class readings.

Grading

The final grade is determined as follows:

- Class Participation (*see rubric below*) 20%
- Group Case Study 25%
 - Written: 15%
 - Presentation: 10%
- Visit/Guest Reflections (4 at 5%) 20%
- Traveling Seminar Assignment 10%
- Final Exam 25%

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Class Participation Grading Rubric

	A – 90-100% Exemplary	B – 80-89% Proficient	C – 70-79% Developing	D – 60-69% Unacceptable	F – 0-59% Missing
Frequency of class participation	Actively contributes 2+ times per meeting	Actively contributes at least 1 time per meeting	Actively contributes at least half of the time during term	Actively contributes less than half of the time during term	Does not contribute
Quality of class participation*	Contribution is always thoughtful, accurate, and constructive, frequently interacting with peers	Contribution is mostly thoughtful, accurate, and constructive, usually interacting with peers	Contribution is somewhat thoughtful, accurate, and constructive, sometimes interacting with peers	Contribution is rarely thoughtful, accurate, and constructive, rarely interacting with peers	Does not contribute or interact with peers
Level of class preparation	Always fully prepared and on task	Mostly prepared and on task	Somewhat prepared and on task	Rarely prepared and on task	Consistently unprepared and not on task

Readings / Resources

Accenture. 2009. *Analytics at Work*. ACC_2626_coa.

CEMS. 2020. *Leadership in a Post-Covid-19 World*. CEMS Guide. <https://www.cems.org>

Deloitte. 2023. *2023 Global Human Capital Trends*.

<https://www2.deloitte.com/insights/us/en/focus/human-capital-trends.html>

DIS Copenhagen. 2023. *The Business Potential of Generative AI*. Course Syllabus.

European Commission. 2023a. *The EU Single Market at 30*. https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/publications/eu-single-market-30_en

———. 2023b. *Transition Pathways for European Industrial Ecosystems*. <https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/publications>

European Commission. 2024. *New EU Transport Report: Current Trends and Issues*. <https://transport.ec.europa.eu>

European Environment Agency. 2023. *Europe's Path to Climate Neutrality*. <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications>

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European Institute of Innovation and Technology. 2023. *Cultural and Creative Industries in Europe*.
<https://eit.europa.eu>

European Parliament. 2023. *New European Economic Security Doctrine*.
<https://www.europarl.europa.eu>

Gosselin Group. *Sustainability Report. Edition 2025*. [Forthcoming, internal document].

Hickel, Jason. 2020. “Degrowth: Pathways for the Future.” *The Lancet Planetary Health* 4 (6):
e282–e284. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196\(20\)30122-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196(20)30122-2)

Hofstede Insights. *Country Comparison: USA vs Germany vs Czech Republic*. The Culture Factor
Group. <https://www.hofstede-insights.com>

IKEA. 2022. *Sustainability Report 2022: People & Planet Positive*. <https://about.ikea.com>

Livermore, David. 2015. *Leading with Cultural Intelligence*. Chapter 1: Intro and Tools.
<https://www.culturalq.com>

McKinsey & Company. 2022. *The Data-Driven Enterprise of 2025*.
<https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/mckinsey-digital/our-insights>

———. 2023. *The Future of European Supply Chains*. <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/operations/our-insights>

Minahan, Tim. 2021. “What Your Future Employees Want Most.” *Harvard Business Review*, May
31, 2021. <https://hbr.org/2021/05/what-your-future-employees-want-most>

Pine, B. Joseph, and James H. Gilmore. 1998. “Welcome to the Experience Economy.” *Harvard
Business Review* 76, no. 4 (July–August): 97–105. <https://hbr.org/1998/07/welcome-to-the-experience-economy>

Rossum.ai. 2023. *AI-Driven Automation in Document Processing: Case Studies*. <https://rossum.ai>

Student Prep Task. “Research Background + Create 3 Questions for the Guest Visit.” [Internal
document or assignment].

UNCTAD. 2022. *Creative Economy Outlook 2022*. <https://unctad.org/publication/creative-economy-outlook-2022>

Wingate, David, Barclay L. Burns, and Jay B. Barney. 2025. “Why AI Will Not Provide Sustainable
Competitive Advantage.” *MIT Sloan Management Review*, May 8, 2025.
<https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/why-ai-will-not-provide-sustainable-competitive-advantage/>

World Economic Forum. 2024. *Global Risks Report 2024*. <https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-risks-report-2024>

Content

Topic 1 – Business in Europe: Institutions, Cultures & Corporate Models: EU, stakeholders vs
shareholders, Czech/German/Nordic models

- Activities, cases: Lecture + simulation + EU vs US corporate culture analysis

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Topic 2 – Operations, Logistics & Value Chains in Central Europe: Resilience, trade hubs, nearshoring trends

- Activities: supply chain mapping, Visegrad case comparisons
- Cases: Lego, IKEA, Amazon, Hopi, DB Schenker, Prague airport

Topic 3 – Sustainability & Decarbonization in Business Operations: CSRD, EU Taxonomy, Scope 3, green logistics

- Activities, cases: workshop with real data
- Cases: Gosselin

Topic 4 – Generative AI as Strategic Business Disruptor: Productivity, fake vs real, reinventing workflows, geopolitical risks

- Activities, cases: Scandinavian AI case studies, prompt design, ethical dilemmas

Topic 5 – Data-Informed Business Strategy & Decision Making: Analytics, business hypotheses, fast-paced decisions

- Activities, cases: students build a decision framework for a Czech SME
- Cases: Delta International Cargo, Customs broker Zelinka, Leos Zavrel

Topic 6 – Risk, Resilience & Crisis in Supply Chains: Geopolitics, war, pandemic, energy volatility

- Activities, cases: Crisis simulation (Ukraine / Red Sea / COVID)
- Cases: selected automotive supplier (Forvia, AISIN, snop, Pisek), Metrans, Amazon, Skoda Auto

Topic 7 – Leadership, Human Capital & Talent of the Future: Mental wellbeing, cross-generational teams, resilience, burnout

- Activities, cases: Guest speaker panel + leadership self-reflection exercise

Topic 8 – Guest Visit: Leadership and Talent Development

- Activities, cases: Guest visit + guided discussion + reflection
- Options: Jana Siostronkova, coach on leadership; Jan Fronek, sustainability coach, Jitka Volfova, coach on mental wellbeing and intercultural awareness

Topic 9 – Global People Management & Intercultural Teams: Motivation, authority, cross-cultural communication, DEI

- Activities, cases: Culture clash roleplay; Case: Ikea, Siemens, VW

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Topic 10 – Creative Industries & Innovation in Experience Economies: Culture, branding, value creation through design & storytelling

- Activities, cases: Czech design firm or cultural startup
- Cases: Czech Film Studios (Barrandov), Lasvit, Czech Design Week

Topic 11 – Student Presentations: European Firms in Transition: AI, sustainability, creative strategy, leadership

- Group project presentations

Topic 12 – Wrap-Up: The Future of European Business

- Final discussion: “If you were launching a business in Prague...”

Field study and experiential learning components may include:

Guest lectures:

- Coaches on mental wellbeing and intercultural awareness, leadership, and/or sustainability
- BI analyst

Excursion / company visits:

- Metrans terminal (Plzeň)
- Lasvit (Nový Bor)
- ŠKODA (Mladá Boleslav)
- LEGO (Kladno)

Syllabus of Record is subject to minor changes in Term-specific Syllabus at faculty's discretion.