

**Syllabus**  
**Management Simulation (GMT6141)**  
**and Business Planning (GMT6111)**  
**MBA in International Management**

**Prof. Eckart Liesegang**

Please read this syllabus carefully. Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

**Course:**

A total of 5 SWS, 8 Credits, English, Level 3 for both (the sum of) the management simulation and the business planning.

**Lecturer:**

Professor Eckart Liesegang, colloquium by appointment. Please contact me during the course or via e-mail: [eckart.liesegang@hs-pforzheim.de](mailto:eckart.liesegang@hs-pforzheim.de).

**Qualification and Learning Goals:**

**Management Simulation**

After the course you will be able to quickly become acquainted with business-oriented questions regarding the management of a company, have the professional skills to understand those questions, analyze them and apply your own problem solving approach.

You will be able to look at an international, market-oriented business in its entirety. You will be able to estimate the influence of managerial decisions on the company's results. You will know essential strategies to increase the company's value and will be aware of how to apply those strategies to the company functions. You will acquire the skills to goal-orientedly lead a company (especially strategic and operational planning processes) as well as to react professionally to complex decision making situations which will have to be solved under time pressure and based on an unknown outcome for the future. You will also train to handle conflicts within a team professionally.

**Business Planning**

By the end of the course you will be able to

- understand the importance and the use of business plans for corporations in start-up or development phases
- develop a business plan for your virtual corporation in the management simulation
- contribute to business planning in corporations you will work for in the future.

## Course contributions to the MBA program goals / learning outcomes

Goal	Course Contributions to Goal	Assessment
<b>1 Responsible leadership in organizational contexts</b>	Managing an international industrial corporation over a period of 5 business quarters, including development of a business plan for 3 periods. The students work in teams.	Qualitative and quantitative results of the corporation in its business areas and on the overall level. Quality of the business plans.
<b>2 Creative problem solving skills in a complex business environment</b>	The management of the corporation is very complex. The students take decisions, achieve results in a competitive environment, analyze the results and take new creative decisions accordingly.	Creativity of the qualitative and quantitative decisions of the corporation in its business areas and on the overall level. Creativity and quality of the business plans.
<b>3 Research Skills</b>	---	---
<b>4 Management of Innovation</b>	An important part of the business decisions consists of the development of new product generations in a competitive business environment.	Qualitative and quantitative results of the corporation in its business areas and on the overall level. Quality of the business plans.
<b>5 Management of the challenges of global sustainability and awareness for social and corporate responsibilities</b>	---	---

### How I see myself as a lecturer:

My task is to provide you with the best support possible during your learning experience. Please feel free to ask questions during our class, to challenge the contents and to evaluate your understanding responsibly. If necessary, I will also be happy to provide you with further help and guidance outside of our regular meetings in class.

In this winter semester we may have to take into account the special situation of limited possibilities to meet each other physically in class. Originally a course that was designed to meet each other every day, we will include online sessions in it wherever it is necessary or makes sense.

If you need further help or guidance or have comments on your learning experience, please use the opportunity to receive further information in a personal discussion during my colloquium or by appointment.

### What I expect from you during the course:

I will only be able to fulfill my task successfully if you are willing to adjust to the challenges of the course, to commit to your successful learning and to take over the responsibility for your learning independently. In compliance with these requirements we will create a well-founded environment for a professional cooperation in order to reach our learning goals.

Furthermore, management simulation courses (as well as the business planning course) are highly complex and require a special commitment from all participants: they mainly consist of teamwork which can only be completed successfully as a group. The learning process and success of other team members depend on your dedication! The courses require a high rate of commitment and consideration for your fellow students.

The following requirements are mandatory for the course:

- Please read this syllabus carefully (and assume that I am serious about it 😊)
- Please be prepared for each session! In this course this means:
  - become acquainted with the course contents before the first session using the available documents, especially the participant's manual and the information about the organization of the course
  - read (or watch) and work through documents and presentations that have been made available on our e-learning platform as online learning material or as helps for decision taking for the next course session. Please take your time to do this work before the start of the next part of the course if it was announced this way. In a blended learning course structure it is indispensable to prepare your online or physical course hours beforehand
  - analyze the most recent results of the various teams that have been made available to you and take notes on questions that you would like to have covered in class. The course contents are very complex and need to be prepared thoroughly!
- Please always have all required documents and materials with you (manual, other documents already distributed such as reports, economic forecasts, learning modules, calculator). It will be very helpful to bring your notebook as well. However, please avoid using your notebooks during our sessions if you do not need to research or take notes about any data relevant for the course at that time. The same goes for your cellphone.
- Please treat your fellow students/teammates with respect and fairness.
- Please arrive on time (physically or online as required) and do not leave before all joint tasks of your team are done and handed in together. Attendance, participation and support of your team are mandatory during all phases of the course (and should come naturally). A time schedule of the course will be published on the e-learning platform.
- Please start asking questions regarding the course contents and the results of the simulation as early as possible – the tasks will get more complex over time.

In case you have questions or suggestions for improving the simulation, please do not hesitate to contact me. As a member of the Institute for Management Simulation of our business school since 2006, I very much appreciate your constructive feedback. We are always keen on developing the management simulations and our courses further.

#### **Requirements for participating in the course:**

- Foundations in Business Management (especially processes, functions and decision making, cost accounting, balancing of accounts, factoring, strategic management)
- Previous knowledge of (other) management simulations is helpful but not necessary
- Please note: You cannot take part in this course if you have already participated in a course using this special simulation „TOPSIM **Global** Management“. In this case, please get in touch with me personally.

### **Workload:**

The total course amounts to 5 SWS and equals 8 credits. In addition to the sessions at the university, you are also expected to invest enough time in order to prepare thoroughly for the next session, to review the previous class, and to write the business plan (in teams) for your virtual corporation. You will be able to write the plan during the course (as part of our course agenda) and also outside of it.

The first 1 ½ days (the complete first day and the next morning) consist of an intensive introduction of the variables available for decision making within companies as well as the interdependencies of the simulation. You will be working with the manual and the company's reports, by preparing introductory questions and questions regarding the different company's business functions. During each session you will deepen your knowledge which I will have asked you to have prepared at home.

The following days of our management simulation course consist mainly of plenary sessions including joint evaluations of the respective decision rounds of the day before, of modules in order to prepare the upcoming decision rounds as well as of group sessions in order to prepare and take the company's decisions.

We will integrate a total of roughly 3 days for the business planning part of the course into the decision rounds of the simulation. During this phase you will be asked to write a business plan for your virtual corporation for the remaining decision rounds of the management simulation. (Only) this business plan will be evaluated in order to give your grades for the course. It will consist of common, but also of individual contributions of the team members.

The final time table of the course, especially the decision where and how we can meet will depend on the actual situation concerning the Corona pandemic, regulations issued by the responsible ministry and our rector's office regarding our possibilities to meet physically in our course (see also below).

### **Essential Contents:**

In line with the execution of the Management Simulation „TOPSIM Global Management“ the following contents will be covered:

- Leading a virtual, internationally oriented company as part of a management team over a period of five business quarters
  - Analyzing the company's situation based on the available reports and forecasts and solving managerial problems
  - Conducting extensive business oriented (strategic and operational) planning processes taking into account all essential functions of a company
  - Solving complex business-oriented problems within a team under time pressure and without data security
  - Executing group work and presentations
- => „learning business by doing business“.

The professional focus lies in the areas of Business Management (processes, functions and decision making, cost accounting, balancing of accounts, financing, strategic management).

The contents of the business planning part of the course will be to actively and jointly develop a business plan for the virtual corporation that you will manage during the management simulation phase. The plan will be based on two quarters' results and experience (first simulation phase), and will be developed for three more business quarters (second simulation phase). It will be applied (and tested) during the final decision rounds, too.

## **Time table**

Blocked course in a total of seven and a half days.

The two **simulation blocks** will take place between Thursday 21 January, 10.00 a.m. and Saturday 23 January 2021, 1.30 p.m. and Tuesday 11 February, 1.45 p.m. and Saturday 13 February 2021, 1.30 p.m.

The **business planning** days will take place on Monday 25 January, Monday 1 February and Tuesday 2 February 2021 between 9 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.

The final deadline for handing in your written business plans will be fixed in the course.

A detailed schedule will be announced on the e-learning platform separately. It may change over time due to changes in the regulations concerning our possibilities to meet physically at our university. Please make sure you can attend during all parts of the course, and keep yourself informed about potential changes of the timetable!

## **Performance Record:**

Your grade for this course will be determined by writing a business plan for the corporation you will be managing in the simulation phase of the course. Only this business plan will be evaluated in order to give your grades for the course. It will consist of common, but also of individual contributions of all team members.

The exact assignment of your task will be uploaded onto Moodle in a separate file in due time.

For obvious good reasons, the economic result of your company will not be included into your grade 😊.

## **Important buzzwords**

Management, international management, strategic management, strategy, business plan, strategic planning, operational planning, planning process, management simulation, holistic thinking, strategy map, balanced scorecard, SWOT – analysis.

## **Didactic concept of management simulation courses**

General information on Management Simulations:

In 1000 BC already, so-called strategy games fascinated people(s). This fascination has been transferred to modern times. In a further developed form, as a management simulation for example, those “games” (rather: simulations) represent a promising method of “learning by doing”. They offer the possibility to introduce different target groups to multilayer, complex questions of different areas as well as their interdependency.

Management simulations...

- encourage a cross-linked, integral (“holistic”) way of thinking
- communicate business oriented content
- bring forward key qualifications such as decision making and responsibility, method and social skills
- train the handling of complex problems while implementing them in practical examples.

The Institute of Management Simulation focuses on Business Management issues which is essential for business oriented studies. During the Management Simulation contents of Business Management will be repeated together, deepened as well as used.

During the course professional core knowledge will be repeated and immediately implemented into a concrete task for the virtual company. The results of this task will be reflected and commented on during class. A solution to the problem will be found. Thus, a major and sustainable success will be achieved.

Regarding this course:

The course is organized as a seminar. There will be constant change between group work, plenary sessions and presentations. We may have constant change between online and physical attendance sessions, too.

Especially in this simulation it is very important to distribute the complex workload onto the course participants who will each have an individual role within the virtual company (in the form of a company function). Thus, it is essential that you do not miss a single session of the course and prepare yourself thoroughly for each session!

Your success mainly depends on how intensively you work with the questions during the management simulation, how well you find answers and how you transfer your new knowledge onto the virtual company.

#### **Bibliography (textbooks):**

- current version of the participant's manual for the management simulation "TOPSIM Global Management" (will be available on Moodle)
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Barrow; Paul                Planning Shop; 6 edition (2014)  
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Norton, D.P.                operations for competitive advantage. Harvard  
   Business Review Press, London 2008.  
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- Kaplan, R.S.                Strategy maps: converting intangible assets into  
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   and securing your company's future  
Tustin, CA : Out of Your Mind...and Into the Marketplace, 2013  
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