Syllabus for Economics BUSI 4375-001
Special Problems: Discovering Business, Costa Rica
(Fall 2023)

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In-Person Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday: (9:00 – 11:00a.m.)
Online Office Hours: Monday through Thursday: (2:30 – 3:30 p.m.)
I encourage you to take full advantage of office hours this term. For more available times and to ensure your slot please book via https://calendly.com/phelpsrt/availability.

Lectures: Tuesdays (5:30 – 7:00 p.m.)
Location: See Schedule Below

Course Description
This three-hour course will give students an introduction to the business perspective and to the basic terms and concepts used in a business context. This will be accomplished via a text and immersive and transformational experiences. The text will be discussed thoroughly during class sections and will empower students to get more out of our business site visits. These site visits will take place both in Costa Rica and in Nacogdoches and will include several small to mid-sized business. The travel component is required for credit in this course.

Course Objectives
Upon successful completion of the course, the student should be able to:

• Demonstrate a basic understanding of several issues facing small to midsized businesses with a focus on opportunities and limits to growth.
• Demonstrate a working knowledge of basic business terms and concepts.
• Communicate the implications of market changes from the perspective of an entrepreneur.
• Explain the foundational differences between doing business in the U.S. vs. Costa Rica.

Eligibility
This course is limited to incoming freshmen and non-business majors. All participants must interview and receive permission from the instructor. Class size is limited. Availability is first-come-first-serve. No spot is guaranteed until payment is received in full. There are no pre-requisites for this course.

Program Learning Outcomes
Program learning outcomes define the knowledge, skills, and abilities students are expected to demonstrate upon completion of an academic program. These learning outcomes are regularly assessed to determine student learning and to evaluate overall program effectiveness. You may access the program learning outcomes for your major and particular courses in the Curriculum Management Handbook at https://www.sfasu.edu/sites/default/files/2019-01/RCOB_curriculum_mgt_handbook_2019.pdf

Course Materials
The text for this course is Roadside MBA: Back Road Lessons for Entrepreneurs, Executives and Small Business Owners by Michael Mazzeo, Paul Oyer, and Scott Schaefer.
• Students are expected to read and take notes on this book prior to our departure.
• Students will read scheduled sections again prior to our fall meetings.
Teaching Philosophy & Methods

I love teaching and look forward to interacting with you throughout the course. I am available to discuss your concerns (class-related or other). The course is designed to be a transformative learning experience. We are going on an adventure together. There will be challenges, obstacles, and inspirational events that will bring us closer together. I will assume that you have worked through the text. Our time together will include discussions and interactions that depend on it. We, myself included, must face all of our site visits from the perspective of students. We will work to learn and to capture as much as we can. I hope that you plan to engage and participate in every opportunity.

My Goal for this Course

Your interest in the material is your most important learning tool. I hope to fuel that interest by choosing relatable content and by scheduling impactful events. Businesses clammer for every minute of your attention and at the same time literally make your survival possible. I hope to reveal to you the ways that businesses are changing your life. Becoming aware of these connections will help you to discover the value of understanding the business perspective.

Travel Conduct Requirements

Violating any of the below requirements will end your participation in our international travel and will result in an “F” in the course. You will be sent home at your own expense.

- Failure to attend scheduled activities (We are moving as a group so this would be intentional.)
- Behaving in a disruptive manner
- Illegal or inappropriate behavior

Suggestions

This course is the most fun when students:

- Keep a positive attitude and keep communications open.
- Read our text once before we travel and the assigned sections again prior to each of our scheduled meetings.
- Participate actively in all class discussions and activities.
- During our travel, keep a daily journal. Time will erase many of your experiences.
- Speak softly and be courteous. Keep in mind that you represent the U.S. and SFA.
- Focus on in-person interaction rather that technology.

Grading System

Your final grade for the course is based on the distribution below.

A: 100 points, B: 80 points, C: 70 points, D: 60 points. You will be able to keep up with your performance via the D2L course page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation in all travel events</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Journal</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in all class events</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretravel Meeting, Hotel Lobby</td>
<td>7-Aug</td>
<td>7:00 PM</td>
<td>SpringHill Suites Houston Intercontinental Airport Lobby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airport Shuttle Meetup</td>
<td>8-Aug</td>
<td>6:00 AM</td>
<td>SpringHill Suites Houston Intercontinental Airport Lobby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Conclusion</td>
<td>14-Aug</td>
<td>1:00 PM</td>
<td>IAH Airport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Journal</td>
<td>25-Aug</td>
<td>11:00 PM</td>
<td>Turn in to D2L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road Side MBA Chapters 1-3</td>
<td>19-Sep</td>
<td>5:30 PM</td>
<td>BU 443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turner Fabrication Site Visit</td>
<td>26-Sep</td>
<td>5:30 PM</td>
<td>Turner Fabrication Nacogdoches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road Side MBA Chapters 4-6</td>
<td>3-Oct</td>
<td>5:30 PM</td>
<td>BU 443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Business Interview</td>
<td>10-Oct</td>
<td>5:30 PM</td>
<td>To be Determined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road Side MBA Chapters 7-8</td>
<td>17-Oct</td>
<td>5:30 PM</td>
<td>BU 443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Business Interview</td>
<td>24-Oct</td>
<td>5:30 PM</td>
<td>To be Determined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road Side MBA Chapters 9-11</td>
<td>31-Oct</td>
<td>5:30 PM</td>
<td>BU 443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guest Speaker</td>
<td>7-Nov</td>
<td>5:30 PM</td>
<td>BU 133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>14-Nov</td>
<td>5:30 PM</td>
<td>BU 133</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Disclaimer**

I reserve the right to make changes and amendments to this syllabus through classroom announcements during the semester.
**RULES OF THE TRIP:**
This list is informed by years study abroad (SAB) experience. Rules can be divided into two classes: cardinal rules and strong suggestions. Breaking cardinal rules can get you sent home that very day.

**Cardinal Rules:**
1. Never, ever, ever travel by yourself outside our accommodations for any reason. You will have a travel partner, and you must stay together unless you are at our accommodations. There are no exceptions to this rule. None.
2. Keep lines of communication open. If you are ill, allergic to things, made uncomfortable by a fellow traveler, confused, unhappy, exhausted, or having difficulties of any sort, please tell us. Chances are, we have faced or are facing similar issues. We will listen and may offer solutions when appropriate. Try us!
3. Harassment of any sort bullying, racist or bigoted talk, unwanted touching or interference etc. Will not be tolerated.
4. If you run afoul of the local authorities for drinking related, drug related activities or the like, we need to know. We cannot assume liability. Please also call your parents or caretakers. SFA will not assume responsibility or liability for illegal activity of any sort.
5. We are not in the business of making you tell on your colleagues, but if you see or sense unsafe behavior or planning, we expect you to bring this to us. This is also true for any manner of harassment or bullying. Please tell us. This sort of thing can quickly ruin someone’s trip, and we won’t have that.
6. The safety of the people on this trip will always trump any other consideration. Always. If you regularly engage in unsafe or risky behavior on this trip, whether or not it is listed above, you will be sent back to the US at your cost.

**Strong Suggestions:**
1. Carry only the cash you need. Bring a card for big purchases. Carry both in a front pocket or secure place on your person. Backpacks are for food, water, raincoats etc.
2. Water. Stay hydrated as dehydration can sneak up on you and cause a host of unpleasant symptoms. If you are not feeling well drink some water.
3. The drinking age in Costa Rica is 18 for beer, wine, and liquor. Being drunk is frowned upon more than here, and the loud, obnoxious, and drunk American is a constant trope in comedy. Do not be a joke. Remember that you represent both SFA and the United States. Be the exception. Public drunks are often carted off to the police station to sleep it off. They then charge you a fine and your overnight upkeep. We will leave you there. Do not be this person.
4. Guard your passport with your life. If you do lose your passport, tell us ASAP. Have multiple photocopies of your travel documents and your credit card numbers.
5. Bring a spiral binder and a pen/pencil. You will want to journal often and your device may not be functional.
General Student Policies:

Academic Integrity (A-9.1)
The Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outlines the prohibited conduct by any student enrolled in a course at SFA. It is the responsibility of all members of all faculty, staff, and students to adhere to and uphold this policy.

Articles IV, VI, and VII of the new Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outline the violations and procedures concerning academic conduct, including cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and misrepresentation. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) Copying from the test paper (or other assignment) of another student, (2) Possession and/or use during a test of materials that are not authorized by the person giving the test, (3) Using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of a non-administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program, or using a test that has been administered in prior classes or semesters without permission of the Faculty member, (4) Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for one’s self, to take a test, (5) Falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other records or academic work offered for credit, (6) Using any sort of unauthorized resources or technology in completion of educational activities.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source or the use of one’s own previous work in another context without citing that it was used previously, without any indication of the original source, including words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, and other expression or media, and presenting that material as one’s own academic work being offered for credit or in conjunction with a program course or degree requirements.

Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any provision of the rules on academic dishonesty, including disclosing and/or distributing the contents of an exam.

Misrepresentation is providing false grades or résumés; providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual or to injure another student academically or financially.

Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (5.5)
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the coursework because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course to compute the grade point average. For additional information, go to https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf.

Students with Disabilities
SFA values students’ overall well-being, mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, emotional well-being, alcohol and other drugs, identities, finances, etc.

If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help, SFA provides a variety of resources to support students’ mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

The Dean of Students Office
(Rusk Building, 3rd floor lobby)
www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents
936.468.7249
dos@sfasu.edu

SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic
Human Services, Room 202
www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp
936.468.1041

The Health and Wellness Hub:
East College and Raguet St.
• Health Services
• Counseling Services
• Student Outreach and Support
• Food Pantry
• Wellness Coaching
• Alcohol and Other Drug Education
www.sfasu.edu/thehub
936.468.4008
thehub@sfasu.edu

Crisis Resources:
Burke 24-hour crisis line:
1.800.392.8343
National Suicide Crisis Prevention:
9-8-8
Suicide Prevention Lifeline:
1.800.273.TALK (8255)
Crisis Text Line:
Text HELLO to 741-74