



# DMSB 731

## Latin America Business Issues

Spring 2008, MW 2:30-3:45, BA 534

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

In the course Latin American Business Issues you will learn the key benefits and challenges of doing business in Latin America. We first analyze the economic, political, and socio-cultural characteristics of Latin American countries. This helps us understand the business opportunities that these countries offer and how to overcome the difficulties of operating there. We then discuss the benefits and challenges of undertaking international trade and international investment in the region.

### **COURSE MATERIALS:**

The materials will be available in the course website or distributed in class.

### **REQUIREMENTS:**

Learning in this course will be primarily experiential. I will lecture and explain the key concepts. However, much of the learning will occur through discussions in class, a project, and a short exam. The components of the grade are the following:

**Class attendance and participation (20%).** All class sessions involve discussion based on the readings and cases, with twin focuses on theoretical questions and practical implications. I am looking for an exchange of thoughts among class participants rather than a repetition of facts. I look forward to dynamic and engaging discussions in class. Although the discussions might raise controversy and you might disagree with other people, your comments should be directed at the issue, never at the person. Most participation will be voluntary; however, I also "cold-call."

**Exam (30%).** There will be a very short exam on Feb 13 that will test basic knowledge of previous readings and class discussions.

**Individual report (50%): Managing challenges in Latin America.** You will create a case study of a firm that has expanded into Latin America and discuss one of the topics that we analyze in the course. You will write a two part report. In the first part (7 single-spaced pages, 1-inch margin, Times New Roman 12-point font) you will describe the firm, its current operations, and the challenge that it has faced or is facing in Latin America. In the second part (3 single-spaced pages, 1-inch margin, Times New Roman 12-point font) you will analyze the challenge, its causes, and the potential solutions that the firm can take. The page limit does not include tables, figures, appendixes, and references. Be careful in acknowledging the sources of information, and provide them in a list of references.

The reports will be graded on two main areas: The quality of the analysis and the strength of the argument, and the clarity of the presentation. Please take special care with the manner in which you write the report, including spelling, syntax, and grammar, to provide a persuasive argument. Please send me the reports via e-mail by Feb 20. Late reports will get zero points. Early reports are welcome.

## **LOGISTICS:**

**Ethical behavior:** Using someone's report or copying material, including downloads from the web, without acknowledging the source is a breach of ethical behavior. Plagiarism or any form of cheating implies receiving an "F" for the course.

**Class notes:** Class notes represent the intellectual property, either direct or borrowed, of faculty members. The unauthorized distribution or sale of class notes by students for commercial purposes without faculty permission is prohibited.

**Re-grading policy:** If you want to dispute the grade assigned to a report or exam, you must do so via e-mail within 48 hours after the report or exam has been returned. You must include a specific rationale. "I think I deserve a better grade" does NOT constitute a rationale.

## **CLASS SCHEDULE:**

### **M, Jan 14. Introduction**

Introduction to the course and the region

### **W, Jan 16. Political conditions (1)**

Colonialism, independence, dictatorships and democracy

### **M, Jan 21. Political conditions (2)**

Institutional weaknesses

### **W, Jan 23. Economic conditions (1)**

Export-led development, import-substitution and the Washington consensus

### **M, Jan 28. Economic conditions (2)**

Size and development

### **W, Jan 30. Socio-cultural conditions (1)**

Migration and inequality

### **M, Feb 4. Socio-cultural conditions (1)**

Poverty and education

### **W, Feb 6. Trade and investment (1)**

Trade, limitations to trade, and regional economic integration

### **M, Feb 11. Trade and investment (2)**

Investment, limitations to investment and multinationals

### **W, Feb 13. Conclusions and exam**

### **M, Feb 20. Report due**