

Vakbeschrijving Study tour preparation (19188084X, 5EC) (ter informatie)

Overview

This course aims at preparing students for their study tour before arrival in the destination country. We will examine the characteristics of the tour's destination country as well as those of the Netherlands. We will explore those international contexts comparing countries and regions in terms of their current situation coupled with their development. Throughout the course, students are expected to perform research on these topics, write and report results to colleagues and lecturers and review colleagues' work.

Course objectives

The main goal of this course is to prepare the students for the study tour guiding their learning about the destination country and how to compare it to their own. After the course and when starting the visit, students should be able to describe the destination country to an acceptable level. Students should also be capable of describing the industry and phenomena they set out to research in both the Netherlands and destination country. Country specific knowledge should go beyond the classic PESTLE analysis and integrate official reports, popular press and further sources of information.

More generally, students will gain skills in researching different and remote contexts, integrate relevant information from different sources and critically analyze an unknown country or region.

Approach and Lectures

The course will be animated mostly by students' work and presentations. Lecturers will give general presentations on topics such as country contextualization, international comparisons and sources of data as triggers to students' research about the tour destination country.

Research results will be periodically presented to both class and lecturers. These sessions will consist of critical debate between presenters and peers about the findings and their implication for the study tour. Student presentations might be preceded by a short presentation by the lecturers.

Lecture 1 (2h) – Only for the committee. Introductions, Who is who?, Study tour theme and objectives, Responsibilities, Schedules, Rules of the game

Lecture 2 (3h) – General Lecture for all students. Country contextualization; Current situation vs development; PESTLE analysis; History and Culture; Sources of data. This lecture requires home readings. The materials will be provided to students by the committee two weeks before the lecture.

Lecture 3 (4h) – For all students. Student presentations on cross country comparisons.

Lecture 4 (2h) – Theme Lecture for all students. Industry comparisons; Current situation vs development; Sources of data. This lecture is highly dependent on the study tour's theme.

Lecture 5 (4h) – For all students. Student presentations on theme specific cross country comparisons.

Assignments

Assignment #1a (group work) – General assignment: General comparison of the destination country/ies over time, with the Netherlands, and with a reference country. The students are expected to research and write a report comparing the Netherlands, the destination country/ies and relevant regions in terms of the current situation and relevant historical political, economic, social, technological, legal, and/or environmental developments. Each group will be graded separately. The grade for Assignment #1a accounts for 40% of the final grade for participants.

Assignment #1b (committee work) – Review of general assignment. Committee members are expected to prepare a 2-page structured review of Assignment #1a of a given group and orally present their questions and remarks to class. The grade for Assignment #1b accounts for 20% of the final grade for committee members.

Assignment #2a (group work) – Theme assignment: Industry/sector/theme comparison of the destination country/ies over time, with the Netherlands, and with a reference country. The students are expected to research and write a report comparing the Netherlands, the destination country/ies and relevant regions in terms of the current situation and relevant historical developments of the specific theme to research. Each group will be graded separately. The grade for Assignment #2a accounts for 40% of the final grade for participants.

Assignment #2b (committee work) – Review of theme assignment. Committee members are expected to prepare a 2-page structured review of Assignment #2a of a given group and orally present their questions and remarks to class. The grade for Assignment #2b accounts for 20% of the final grade for committee members.

Assignment #3 (committee work) – Final report. Integration of Assignments #1 and #2 into a final preparatory report. Integration is done by the committee and includes editorial work as well as writing overall introductions and conclusions. One grade will be given to all participants and the committee. The grade for Assignment #3 accounts for 20% of the final grade for the groups of participants and for 60% of the final grade for the committee.

Length, format and contents of the final version of each assignment will be discussed with the research coordinator.

Presentations

Presentations of both the general and theme specific research are an important part of this course. As such, we provide here some guidelines for all participants. Each group will have a maximum of 45 minutes divided as follows:

- Every group should present its work for max 15 minutes; a maximum of two members of each group will be assigned to present.
- After each presentation, one member of the committee will present orally its respective review. At least three content-related comments/questions/remarks should be articulated. This shouldn't take more than 5 minutes and no slides should be prepared.
- Each group should address the review comments. The remainder students are also invited to join the discussion. Preferably, different group members than the presenters should answer the questions raised by the review.

- Finally, the lecturers will present their comments, if any, and questions to the presenting group, reviewing group and all other students. Together with the previous step, this shouldn't take more than 15 minutes.

Two presentations will take place during the whole course. Regardless of how you choose to organize the groups, all students should be presenters and discussants throughout both presentations.

Grading

Grading will be primarily based on the written assignments #1, #2, #3, as indicated above. Furthermore, based on the students' preparation for the lectures and their participation during the lectures, the lecturers can decide to increase or decrease the final grade for a group or individual students with a maximum of 1 point.

More specifically, this concerns:

- Lecture preparation. All students are expected to read and summarize several texts (cross-country reports, international business analysis, ...). Further, short oral summaries about the main points of each text will be randomly asked to students.
- Lecture presence, presentations and participation. All students are expected to participate in the discussion of the texts as well as answer crucial questions about the reading material. The students are expected to present orally their part of the theme assignment research. All students are expected to critically discuss their colleagues' results.

The lecturers intend to promote lively classes where everyone participates and knows the subjects being discussed to an acceptance level. Further, we encourage creativity in analyzing international contexts, innovative presentation methods and new insights being brought to discussion.

Examples of data sources

Almanacs and Yearbooks

CIA World Factbook - The World Factbook is a reference resource produced by the Central Intelligence Agency of the United States of America with almanac-style information about the countries of the world. The Factbook is available in the form of a website, which is partially updated every week. It is also available for download for use off-line. It provides a two- to three-page summary of the demographics, geography, communications, government, economy, and military of 267 entities including U.S.-recognized countries, dependencies, and other areas in the world.

Eurostat - Eurostat is a Directorate-General of the European Commission located in Luxembourg. Its main responsibilities are to provide the European Union with statistical information at European level and to promote the harmonisation of statistical methods across the Member States of the European Union, candidate countries and EFTA countries. The organisations in the different countries which actively cooperate with Eurostat are summarised under the concept of the European Statistical System. Eurostat publishes yearly the "Eurostat yearbook 2010" containing a comprehensive selection of statistical data on Europe including economy; population; health; education; the labour market; living conditions and welfare; industry and services; agriculture, forestry and fisheries; trade; transport; environment and energy; and science and technology indicators.

OECD - The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is an international economic organisation of 34 countries founded in 1961 to stimulate economic progress and world trade. It defines itself as a forum of countries committed to democracy and the market economy, providing a platform to compare

policy experiences, seeking answers to common problems, identifying good practices, and co-ordinating domestic and international policies of its members. OECD publications include Outlooks, Country Surveys and Other statistics covering a wide variety of topics, all dedicated to helping governments and citizens understand and take on the challenges of a globalised world.

Other sources

Human Development Reports - Annual milestone publication by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) aiming at placing people at the centre of the development process in terms of economic debate, policy and advocacy. The yearly report contains the Human Development Index computed for a series of countries weighting several indices measuring life expectancy, education and income.

Oxfam International - International confederation of 14 organisations working with over 3,000 partners in around 100 countries to find lasting solutions to poverty and injustice. The Oxfam International Secretariat leads, facilitates, and supports collaboration between the Oxfam affiliates to increase Oxfam International's impact on poverty and injustice through advocacy campaigns, development programmes and emergency response. Oxfam produces reports and several paper on specific products and how political measures affect populations and communities.

Popular Press

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| The Economist | http://www.economist.com/ |
| Bloomberg Businessweek | http://www.businessweek.com/ |
| Time | http://www.time.com |
| Newsweek | http://www.newsweek.com/ |
| Der Spiegel | http://www.spiegel.de |
| Spiegel International | http://www.spiegel.de/international/ |