
COURSE INFORMATION, INSTRUCTOR, AND OFFICE HOURS

Course..... BGEN 494 500, International Collaboration Week - Belgium
Days/Times..... Spring 2027 Semester
Course Location..... MSUB & AP University Antwerp

Instructor..... **Rodrigo Lobo, PhD**
Phone..... 406-657-1637
Email..... rodrigo.lobo@msubillings.edu
Office Hours..... Mondays-Thursdays, 10:30-12:00pm
Office hours are both in person and on Canvas
My office is in the COB building (where COE is located)
Room 206 – No appointment needed, walk in/log in basis
Special meeting hours/online meetings can be arranged

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Business Week in Antwerp is a unique experiential learning program jointly organized by AP University and MSUB. Through direct engagement with a client company, student teams composed of both AP and MSUB participants will work collaboratively on a real-world business challenge. The program integrates company interaction, field visits, workshops, and cultural experiences in Amsterdam. Students will apply strategic and entrepreneurial frameworks, enhance their problem-solving and teamwork skills, and develop business acumen in an international context. Post-trip assignments will consolidate learning through reflection and structured reporting.

COURSE FORMAT

Participation Framework:

It is expected that all students are fully engaged with the course, with assignments, and with their groups. The role of the instructor is to construct a context for learning. Knowledge is not transmitted from professor to student, but rather actively created during the course assignments. Learning - and the development of the course - depends on student engagement. Therefore, student engagement is the most critical component of the course's success. The more engaged you are in the course discussions, the more you will learn and grow from the course. Discussions and group activities depend on how prepared you are. I will look for evidence of your preparedness.

The model of participation expects each student to prepare for the course discussions, allowing them to fully engage the material (includes the topics readings and successful completion of individual and group work), and each other in discussions facilitated by your instructor and/or discussion leader(s). To help facilitate discussion, the course has been structured to resemble an online knowledge depository, which requires all

participants to have fully engaged and actively thought about the material and have their questions ready for their group discussions. Students are assessed on the following: comments reflecting your preparation (in both groups or online with the instructor), the development of ideas that provide insight and direction for the group discussion, the ability to demonstrate conceptual understanding of the various topics as well as apply them in broader contexts, the organization of arguments presented, the ability to provide significant insight and the ability to integrate ideas in team activities and or projects. Listed below are characteristics reflective of active and thoughtful participation.

Course preparedness

Read the course topics' readings before the group discussions/assignments
Prepare your issue before conferences with the instructor

Participation during group discussions

Note taking
Listening to your colleagues
Contributing comments based on the readings/assignments
Giving your classmates a chance to speak

Integrating

Carrying over themes between classes
Connecting coursework from other classes
Making connections to events and activities outside of class
Demonstrating attentiveness through written work

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the program, students will be able to:

- Analyze and propose solutions to a real-world company challenge using design thinking and business strategy frameworks.
- Collaborate effectively in international, multidisciplinary teams to ethically address complex business problems.
- Integrate cultural awareness and experiential insights into strategic decision-making and entrepreneurial approaches.

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS LEARNING GOALS

In addition to the course learning outcomes stated above, this course contributes to the learning of certain skills determined by the faculty in the College of Business (COB). Accredited by AACSB since 2010, the College of Business has developed and adheres to a set of undergraduate learning goals and objectives relating to its mission and vision. These goals and objectives are:

1. Learning Goal: **Communications** (oral and written)

Students should be effective communicators in business and professional settings.

Learning Objectives:

LO 1: Oral Communication: Students should be able to prepare and properly deliver a complete, concise business presentation.

LO 2: Written Communication: Students should be able to prepare and properly format a complete, concise business document.

2. Learning Goal: **Problem Solving**

Students should be able to determine optimal solutions to business problems.

Sub-goals: **Quantitative Skills, Critical Thinking, Technology**

I. Learning sub-goal: **Quantitative Skills**

Students should be effective users of business quantitative techniques.

Learning Objectives:

LO 1. Students should be able to convert data to managerial information through the application of quantitative techniques.

LO 2. Students should be able to interpret results and draw inferences from a quantitative business analysis for business decision-making purposes.

II. Learning sub-goal: **Critical Thinking**

Students should be reasonable and reflective thinkers.

Learning Objective: Student should be able to identify and analyze alternatives and recommend a course of action for structured business problems.

III. Learning sub-goal: **Technology**

Students should be effective users of information technology.

Learning Objective: Students should be able to identify and use appropriate information technologies for business analysis and decision making.

3. Learning Goal: **Ethical Decision Making**

Students should be sensitive to the ethical ramifications of business activities.

Learning Objective: Students should be able to recognize the complex nature of ethical dilemmas in business and reach a decision.

4. Learning Goal: **Global Mindset**

Students should be knowledgeable about globalization and cultural differences for businesses.

Learning Objectives

LO 1: Global Issues: Students should be able to identify global issues and explain their implications.

LO 2: Markets and Operations: Students should be able to specify appropriate factors for consideration when assessing international markets and operations.

LO3: Cultural Differences: Students should be able to recognize the significance of cultural differences on business practice.

5. Learning Goal: **Business Knowledge**

Students should possess fundamental knowledge in all core business disciplines.

Learning Objectives:

Management:

LO1: Identify the basic functions of management.

LO2: Identify the decision-making processes and controls in the workplace.

LO3: Recognize tools and theories that can be used by managers to lead workers and address conflict management.

Marketing:

LO4: Identify marketing concepts to offer value to customers.

LO5: Apply marketing skills to establish a competitive advantage and long-term customer relationships.

LO6: Prove market demand with quantitative, research, and data analysis.

Accounting:

LO7: Prepare and interpret financial statements.

LO8: Prepare/Perform cost accounting preparation, reporting, and analysis tasks.

LO9: Identify the impact of codes/laws on business information.

Finance:

LO10: Students should be able to determine time value of money.

LO11: Students should be able to specify appropriate factors for consideration when evaluating stocks and bonds.

LO12: Students should be able to analyze capital budgeting problems.

BGEN 494 Antwerp Business Week satisfies the following COB learning goals/objectives:

COB Learning Goal: Problem Solving.

The program engages students in real-world business challenges, requiring analytical evaluation, strategic planning, and collaborative solution development, directly fulfilling the college's problem-solving learning goal.

Learning sub-goal: Critical Thinking. The course's activities require critical thinking ability to find optimal solutions to the business challenges. This is a reflective process in nature.

Learning objective: By analyzing complex scenarios, questioning assumptions, and integrating cross-cultural insights, students strengthen critical thinking skills essential for effective decision-making and innovation and learn how to recommend a course of action for business problems.

COB Learning Goal: Ethical Decision Making.

The course's learning outcomes promote ethical decision-making by engaging students in real-world business challenges, encouraging consideration of stakeholder impacts, cultural norms, and responsible strategies, fostering integrity and socially responsible professional behavior.

Learning objective: Students will evaluate business challenges considering ethical principles, stakeholder impacts, and social responsibility, fostering integrity and morally sound decision-making in professional contexts.

COB Learning Goal: Global Mindset.

The learning outcomes foster a global mindset by immersing students in cross-cultural collaboration, international business environments, and diverse perspectives, enhancing cultural awareness, adaptability, and global strategic thinking skills.

LO 1: Students analyze international business challenges, consider global market dynamics, and integrate diverse cultural perspectives to address pressing global issues effectively.

LO 2: Students apply business frameworks to real-world challenges, analyzing market dynamics and operational processes to develop effective, practical solutions.

LO 3: Students collaborate in diverse, international teams, gaining awareness of cultural differences and adapting strategies for effective cross-cultural communication.

COB Learning Goal: Business Knowledge.

The course cultivates a business mindset by engaging students in real-world challenges, fostering strategic thinking, entrepreneurial problem-solving, and practical decision-making. Cross-cultural teamwork, company interactions, and applied learning develop business acumen and professional adaptability in dynamic environments.

GRADING POLICIES

The course will have four grading items:

1. Team Presentation in Amsterdam (Final Presentation): 30 points
2. Program Participation & Engagement (on-site activities, teamwork, workshops): 20 points
3. Program Report (team submission, post-trip): 25 points
4. Individual Reflection Paper (post-trip): 25 points

Total: 100 points

Grading Scale:

Letter	100-point	Points
A	93.0 - 100	4.00
A-	90.0 - 92.9	3.70
B+	87.0 - 89.9	3.30
B	83.0 - 86.9	3.00
B-	80.0 - 82.9	2.70
C+	77.0 - 79.9	2.30
C	73.0 - 76.9	2.00
C-	70.0 - 72.9	1.70
D+	67.0 - 69.9	1.30
D	63.0 - 66.9	1.00
D-	60.0 - 62.9	0.70
F	< 60	0.00

COURSE ACTIVITIES

This course will carry the following activities:

Collaborative Activities in Antwerp

1. Joint company challenge project in mixed AP–MSUB teams.
2. Field visits: Brewery, Port of Anywerp, cultural “Future City” tour.
3. Design thinking workshop and brainstorming sessions.
4. Team-building activities and group dinners.

Post-Trip Activities

1. Two meetings with instructor (debrief, analysis, and report guidance).
2. Program Report (team submission, 10–12 pages) analyzing the company challenge, solution approach, and key lessons learned.
3. Individual Reflection Paper (4–5 pages) focusing on personal learning, cultural insights, and application to future professional goals.

COURSE POLICIES

Respect

We come to this class with different kinds of academic expertise, different life experiences, and different customs (both individual and cultural). While such differences can be a source of misunderstanding and frustration, more importantly, they can also contribute positively to the substance and quality of class discussion. Therefore, please keep in mind that active, respectful group work participation is as much about listening to and engaging the ideas of others as it is about speaking one's own mind. This also includes not being disruptive in class and not using computers, tablets/mobile phones for non-course related purposes.

Contact with Students

Any communication I need to make with you outside of class will be done via e-mail. Be sure to check your email account regularly for any correspondence. In addition, please ensure that you have room in your mailbox to receive messages. I will also post changes/announcements in Canvas, announcements section multiple times during the semester.

Contacting the Instructor:

- Email will be our primary form of communication. Constantly check your inbox.
- Please, feel free to contact me to discuss issues of concern.
- While you may contact me by phone, the BEST way to reach me is by email. I attempt to answer emails within 24 hours but may not always respond as quickly on the weekends.
- If you want an appointment to chat or talk online, just let me know.
- Emails that are not of professional quality will NOT be answered. Your email must include a subject line and your name. You must use complete and proper English. If you wish me to respond to a different address, please put it in the email.
- In addition, I will hold office hours **Mondays through Thursdays**, both in my office and in our Canvas virtual room. If you have any issue of concern, you can simply walk in or log in. No appointment needed.

UNIVERSITY STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

The university provides a variety of services to support you in your education and your life. The Student Health Services (SHS), Native American Achievement Center (NAAC), Veterans Upward Bound/TRIO (VUB/TRIO), TRIO Student Support Services (TRIO/SSS), Disability Support Services (DSS), the Academic Support Center (ASC), and MSU Billings Library each offer services that may be able to help you in various ways. A brief description of each organization and its services are provided below.

Academic Support Center (ASC)

The ASC is committed to ensuring that MSUB's students achieve their educational objectives by offering a comprehensive collection of programs and services designed to support academic performance. Some services we provide include:

- Free tutoring on the University Campus, City College, and online
- Writing resources and asynchronous paper submission available in Canvas (students should add 'ASC Writing and Resource Center' as a course)
- Supplemental Instruction for various courses
- Peer Mentoring program

Tutoring for Math, Science, Writing, and specialty subjects is available during regular operating hours. Please make appointments for tutoring using the EAB Navigate360 app.

ASC Hours:

University Campus ASC (located in the Student Union Building)

Monday – Thursday 9am-5pm

Friday 9am-4pm

Monday & Wednesday evenings 5pm – 8pm

City College ASC (located in the Tech Building)

Monday – Thursday 8:30am-3pm

Friday 8:30-noon

Online by appointment

For more information about all ASC resources, please call **406-657-1641**, email academicsupportcenter@msubillings.edu, or visit www.msubillings.edu/asc.

Student Support Services TRIO

SSS TRIO provides support for students seeking academic development and assists students with basic college requirements by motivating students toward successful completion of their college careers. Eligible students are working toward a bachelor's degree at MSUB (or are in a 2 + 2 program through City College and MSUB) and must be low income (Pell grant eligible), first generation (neither mother nor father have a bachelor's degree, or disabled (physically, mentally, emotionally). We provide the following free services: peer mentoring, tutoring (one-on-one or group), equipment check-out, free printing and copying, access to computers, referrals to community organizations and agencies, workshops, study skills, and much more. Visit us in the Library Room 141, call 406-657-2162, email l.gittingscarlson@msubillings.edu, or visit <http://www.msubillings.edu/sss/> to learn more.

TRIO is currently accepting new students!!

Disability Support Services (DSS)

MSU Billings is committed to providing equal access. If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with me so that we can discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course. If you determine that disability-related accommodations are necessary, please contact Disability Support Services (406-657-2283); located in the College of Education, Room 135). We can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations.

Veterans Upward Bound (VUB)

VUB is an education program that assists veterans with the process of enrolling in college and then provides support and services while they are enrolled. We are here to make the transition from soldier to student a little easier and to help veterans who are new to MSUB and City College connect with other student veterans on campus. We offer academic refresher classes and supplemental tutoring, help in navigating the college enrollment process, and guidance in applying for VA educational benefits and financial aid. We conduct workshops, host summer day trips, and sponsor local activities. We make referrals to help veterans connect with community resources. All of our services are free to veterans enrolled in our program and any supplies necessary are provided. VUB is located on the first floor of Cisel Hall (between the parking garage and tennis courts on North 27th) on the MSUB campus. Please stop by, check out our study areas and student/staff break room, and learn more about our services. Contact us at 406-657-2075 or visit our webpage at www.vubmt.com for complete program information.

Native American Achievement Center (NAAC)

The staff helps American Indian students succeed by providing advocacy and assistance in navigating campus and community services. The Center also provides students with a Native inspired setting that serves as a home away from home. All students are invited to use the Parents Room for infant care and lactation. *In the spring, a new sweat lodge will be constructed in the back yard at the Center.* A schedule of sweats for students is currently under construction. Contact Reno Charette at 406-657-2144, rcharette@msubillings.edu, or stop by the center at 2630 Normal Ave., on the west side of the Liberal Arts Building on the University campus.

Student Health Services

Student Health Services provides medical care, mental health counseling, wellness services and education, and violence advocacy and prevention services. Students taking 7 or more credits are automatically charged the Student Health Services fee (\$80.75 per semester). It is an optional fee for those taking less than 7 credits. Nominal fees for medical tests can be billed to the student's account. We are open M-F 8:00-5:00 at the University campus, located on the 2nd floor of Petro Hall directly above the Campus Store. At City College, we are located on the second floor of the Tech Building directly above the Academic Support Center and are open approximately 15 hours per week M-Th. Students can use Health Services even if they waive the student health insurance plan. Call us at 406-657-2153 or visit our website at www.msubillings.edu/studenthealth.

MSUB Library

The library is committed to helping students with their information needs. Physical books, journals, and documents in the MSU Billings Library are supplemented by a wide variety of digital resources, such as electronic journals, electronic books, databases, streaming video and internet resources. Electronic library resources are available, both on- and off-campus, from the [Library's home page](#). Login with your NetID and password. Materials from other libraries can be obtained through Interlibrary loan, a free service for all students. Set up your account [here](#). Friendly and helpful staff at the Ask Here Desk assist students in finding books, journal articles, websites, and other resources they need for classes. For all your research needs, contact the Library staff at the Library's 2nd floor Ask Here Desk, by calling (406) 657-1662 or by emailing library@msubillings.edu. The College of Business liaison person at the library is Nathan Sonnenchein, (406) 657-1665 email nathan.sonnenchein@msubillings.edu.

Course Schedule - Antwerp

Monday, 5/10/2027

Morning (AM): Welcome session on campus, introduction to the program, and company presentation of the challenge. Teams receive background information and key expectations.

Afternoon (PM): Team-building activity in the city, including a “Future City” cultural tour, designed to foster collaboration and provide context on Antwerp’s innovation and business environment.

Tuesday, 5/11/2027

Morning (AM): Teams begin working on the problem statement and conduct stakeholder discovery to map key players, needs, and constraints.

Afternoon (PM): Visit to a local brewery, combining cultural immersion with insights into Belgian entrepreneurship and business operations.

Wednesday, 5/12/2027

Morning (AM): Guided visit to the Port of Antwerp, focusing on logistics, trade, and sustainability practices in a global hub.

Afternoon (PM): Brainstorming session applying a design thinking approach to generate innovative solutions to the company challenge.

Thursday, 5/12/2027

Morning (AM): Participation in a class/workshop led by AP faculty and MSUB, providing additional frameworks and tools for analysis.

Afternoon (PM): Teams finalize their solutions and prepare professional presentations.

Evening: Group dinner, celebrating collaboration and international connections.

Friday, 5/13/2027

Morning (AM): Final presentations of team solutions to the client company, followed by feedback, discussion, and program wrap-up.