

**BIT 5954 Study Abroad "Decision Making in Multinational Enterprises"
INTOP Seminar in St. Michael, Austria**

Course Syllabus

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Credits: 3 Credit hours during Fall Semester 2007.

Materials: Required texts: *INTOP III: Management Decision Making in Multinational Corporations* by Baetge, and supplemental material will be provided in the course pack.

Optional text: *IBM and the Holocaust: The Strategic Alliance between Nazi Germany and America's Most Powerful Corporation*. Edwin R. Black. Crown Publishing Group, 2002.

Course Description: This course brings together students from different countries and many disciplines of business in an International TOP (INTOP) management decision-making simulation game involving multinational enterprises. You will experience decision-making as a member of a multinational management team comprised of fellow students from the University of Muenster and Virginia Tech. The INTOP seminar will be conducted in English using a computer-based simulation game. We will also travel to Salzburg and Munich, ski in the Austrian Alps, and experience European culture.

Course Objectives: This is a study-abroad class and is not intended as a substitute for the body of knowledge in any other of the classes listed in the University Catalog. A majority of the learning experience is from experiencing the German and Austrian cultures, interacting with fellow students from the University of Muenster, and reflecting on your experiences in your class journal. For this reason the structure of the class is different from the traditional on-campus courses that include lectures, exams, written cases, and traditional textbooks. The course objectives are

- 1) To experience German and Austrian culture.
- 2) To develop an understanding and awareness of cultural variables, such as value orientations, communication styles, non-verbal communication, social and political values, and business and economic values.
- 3) To reflect on the similarities and differences between German and Austrian cultures and American culture.
- 4) To reflect on the importance and meaning of cultural variables and their importance in business and in your own life.

Travel: We will depart as a group from Washington, D.C. on January 1, 2008 and will return on January 13, 2008. During the trip we will travel to Munich, Germany and Salzburg and St. Michael, Austria.

Daily Activities: Most days of the trip will be spent in St. Michael working on the INTOP simulation, skiing, and socializing with your international business colleagues. In Munich, we will visit Dachau Concentration Camp, and you'll have some time to experience the city center and enjoy some of Munich's business and cultural districts. In Salzburg, we will have time to experience one of Austria's most beautiful cities, explore a medieval fortress, tour Mozart's birthplace, and visit other cultural attractions in the city made famous in the musical *The Sound of Music*.

Grading:

<i>Preparation and Participation</i>	300
<i>Class Journal Seminar Paper</i>	200
<i>Post-travel survey</i> Total Points	100
	25
Final Grades will be based on the standard university +/- scale.	625

Participation and Participation: Includes class travel preparation and participation during the group meetings prior to our departure, during the time we are traveling, and during INTOP class sessions while in St. Michael. Your attendance and participation is required for all scheduled travel and INTOP class sessions. You should ensure that you adequately prepare for

travel and class sessions, arrive on-time, and participate productively as a positive member of your INT OP team. It is extremely important that you arrive on-time ready-to-go for all travel meeting times. Arriving late or being absent will result in an unsatisfactory grade and may result in you having to pay additional travel costs if you miss a flight, train, or bus. Our travel is pre-paid and scheduled and we cannot wait for someone who is late—so make sure to be on time.

Class Journal: You must write a series of journal entries during the trip. You are expected to record your thoughts about your daily activities. You should observe business and life around you. Although you may choose to briefly summarize what you did or sites you visited in your journal entry, make sure to reflect on aspects of the culture and their meaning or impact upon you or upon business as you see it. You might reflect on various aspects of the cultures including (but not limited to) economic, social, political, and legal and/or various aspects of business including (but not limited to) products, processes, marketing, working conditions, employees, and finances. You may find some of the resources on Blackboard helpful.

In addition, you are expected to read Chapter 1 from *IBM and the Holocaust* and Chapter 3 from *The Culture Code*, which are provided in the course pack and on the Blackboard website, and include the following two additional journal entries:

1. One entry reflecting on your experience visiting the Dachau Concentration Camp. This entry should be at least two typed pages in length, single-spaced and should focus on your thoughts about what the experience of visiting Dachau meant to you, what you learned, and how it impacted you. It should not be only a list of what areas of the camp you visited or only a description of what it looked like. You might consider the following questions to get you started thinking about your journal entry:
 - a. What role did businesses and corporations play in the holocaust? What does this understanding mean to you as you prepare to enter the business world?
 - b. How did the world economic climate at the time contribute to the Nazis' rise to power? What effects did the Great Depression in the U.S. have upon the European and German economies at the time?
 - c. What role did cultural variables (such as value orientations, communication styles, non-verbal communication, social and political values, and business and economic values) play in the holocaust? How are these cultural aspects similar or different from contemporary cultural aspects?
 - d. How has the world response of governments and non-governmental organizations to the Holocaust compare or contrast with the responses of governments and non-governmental organizations to mass killings today?

2. One entry reflecting on your experience working with a multinational team on the INTOP simulation. This entry should be at least two typed pages in length, single-spaced and should focus on the importance of cultural variables or cultural aspects (such as value orientations, communication styles, non-verbal communication, social and political values, and business and economic values) in business and/or in your own life. You might consider the following questions to get you started thinking about your journal entry:
 - a. In what ways do the German and Austrian cultures differ from the American culture? In what ways are they similar?
 - b. In what ways did the German and/or Austrian business that you observed (shops, restaurants, etc.) differ from U.S. business? In what ways were they similar?
 - c. What were the strengths and weaknesses of your multinational INTOP team? How did individual communication styles differ among team members?
 - d. How did the recreational and social interactions with your German and Austrian colleagues differ from interactions with fellow VT students? How were they similar?

Although the journal is due on January 31, 2008 by 5pm, you are expected to be writing daily during the trip. We will collect and review it during our travel (dates to be announced) and may hold informal or formal discussions with you. To submit the final copy of the journal, you can either upload your word document to the digital drop box on Blackboard or submit a printed copy in person or to Gary's mailbox in 1007 Pamplin by the due date. If you choose to hand write the daily journal entries, you should submit at least the handwritten entries in person or to Gary's mailbox in room 1007 Pamplin. Be sure to keep a copy for your records, especially if you are submitting it to Gary's mailbox just in case something mysteriously happens to your electronic, printed, or handwritten copy, and we don't receive it. If we do not receive your journal, you will not receive any credit for the assignment.

Seminar Paper: You must write an 7 to 10 page typed, double-spaced seminar paper on a topic agreed upon in consultation with the instructor. The seminar paper is due January 31, 2008 by 5pm and should be submitted to the digital drop box on Blackboard.

Plagiarism: Presenting as your own the work or ideas of another is considered academic dishonesty (as is assisting another student in such misrepresentation) and if you engage in academic dishonesty, the university may assess serious penalties against you (see <http://www.honorsystem.vt.edu>). The Virginia Tech Honor Code will be strictly enforced in this course. All assignments submitted shall be considered graded work, unless otherwise noted. All aspects of your coursework are covered by the Honor System. Any suspected violations of the Honor Code will be promptly reported to the Honor System. According to the Constitution of the Virginia Tech Honor System "The fundamental beliefs underlying and reflected in the Honor Code are: (1) that trust in a person is a positive force in making that person worthy of trust, (2) that every student has the right to live in an academic environment that is free from the injustices caused by any form of intellectual dishonest, and (3) that the honesty and integrity of all members of the university community contribute to its quest for Truth."

Students with Disabilities: If you need adaptations or accommodations because of a disability (learning disability, attention deficit disorder, psychological, physical, etc.), if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements, please let me know as soon as possible or contact the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office at 150 Henderson Hall, 231-3788(Voice), 231-1740 (TTY), Susan P. Angle, spangle@vt.edu, (<http://www.ssd.vt.edu>) before November 28, 2007.

Expectations for Student Conduct: Participation in this study abroad course requires that you agree to conduct yourself in accordance with the guidelines outlined in Virginia Tech's Principles of Community (<http://www.vt.edu/principles.php>) and the Virginia Tech Student Code of Conduct (<http://www.judicial.vt.edu/upsl.php#studentcode>).

If you have any questions or concerns about anything related to the course, study abroad, or travel, please let us know since strong communication is a key to a successful, exciting, and fun experience for all of us.