Course Context

Stockholm, Sweden Capital, has emerged as a powerful and dynamic high-tech cluster in Northern Europe. Its current success has multiple explanations, which can be derived from a symbiotic and mutually supportive relationship among government, industry, and academia, as well as favorable cultural conditions. Global companies like Skype (communications), Spotify (music streaming), Klarna (online payments), and King (gaming) are products of this environment. Stockholm is second only to Silicon Valley for the number of Unicorns - billion-dollar tech companies - per capita (2015), and the density of start-ups in Sweden is four times higher than in the U.S. (OECD, 2016).

This Short-Term Study Away Program (STAP) will explore the high-tech start-up scene in Stockholm, Sweden, and students will work directly with firms in the creative industries, such as Gaming, DesignTech, FashionTech, MusicTech, MediaTech, and high-tech companies within CleanTech and MedTech. Teams of students will work on a multiphase consulting project with the goal of developing U.S. market entry plans for their Swedish clients.

Course Description

This course will explore today’s high-tech start-ups in Sweden. It will incorporate theoretical frameworks and topics relevant to international business, for example lifecycle of industries, infant industry considerations, aspects of innovation management across countries, impact of regulatory challenges, as well as clustering effects. Different examples from the high-tech sector will be used to demonstrate how these theoretical frameworks help us understand these important industries better.

In order to promote deep learning, students will be engaged in a consulting project, which features interaction with real clients in Sweden. The Swedish firms will present an issue or problem to the students, which relates to their impending or ongoing international expansion. Students will work in teams to research new market opportunities for the firm and propose their recommendations upon conclusion of the course. While in Sweden, students will meet with representatives from the real client company to discuss the parameters of the consulting project. In most projects, students will help their client identify strategic opportunities to enable them to successfully enter into or expand in the US market.
The class will travel to Stockholm, Sweden, between June 22 and June 30, 2019 (Week 6 of the course). While in Sweden, students will meet with various industry participants, including some of Sweden’s established companies. Time will be allotted during the trip for cultural site visits as well. In order to better understand the high-tech context in Sweden, there will also be opportunities for some networking with Swedish business executives.

Prior to the in-country portion of the course, students will participate in weekly synchronous sessions. Topics for this part of the course include a general course overview, team management skills and real client project expectations as well as an overview of the high-tech sector in Sweden and critical facets of the country’s business culture.

This course is eminently creative and practice-oriented. Students will be working with real clients and consulting with them to address their needs. They are expected to be highly entrepreneurial at finding the necessary sources of information to properly assess the current business landscape and develop a sound set of recommendations for their client. These sources include, but are not limited to, physical and online archives, industry experts, and potential consumers of the client’s products and services.

The ultimate objectives vis-à-vis the client is for students to formulate an actionable, strategic marketing solution that addresses the needs of a Swedish client for entry or expansion in the U.S. market.

**Client Goal 1:** Students will research necessary background information on the U.S. and Swedish high-tech market contexts, and assess global trends pertaining to their client’s specific industry using primary and secondary sources.

**Client Goal 2:** Students will assess the client’s potential for entry or expansion in the U.S. market and devise a U.S. market entry plan specific to the client’s unique circumstances.

**Client Goal 3:** Students will devise, implement, and evaluate a communication strategy that integrates in-person and remote communication and allows for continued feedback from the client to refine and improve proposed solutions.

**Course Objectives**

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Explain the development of the Swedish high-tech industry, identifying the factors that contributed to Sweden’s competitive advantage and the roles that the public sector, private industry, and higher education have played.
- Navigate the U.S. high-tech landscape and assess how federal and state-level regulatory frameworks, tariffs, trade policy, etc., impact opportunities for U.S. market entry and expansion by Swedish high-tech firms.
Syllabus

IBUS 6297: Sweden I Global Business Project: The Innovation Ecosystem and the Internationalization of High-Tech Firms

- Map and explain the roles and relationships between the client organizations’ respective stakeholder sets.
- Design and execute a custom-tailored data collection plan (inclusive of both secondary and primary research) to answer key business questions identified by the client organization.
- Implement a hypothesis-driven consulting process in order to effectively and efficiently meet client expectations.
- Provide client organizations with creative, impactful, and actionable strategic marketing solutions to key business questions via a written report and oral presentation.
- Compare and contrast the nature and quality of consultant-client communication and individual/group learning as experienced in the U.S. and Sweden
- Actively engage in team management and employ strategies to enhance productive team collaboration.

Course Structure

This course is a hybrid course, consisting of asynchronous online instruction combined with live virtual sessions and face-to-face activities during the study abroad component. In the asynchronous online instruction, you are not required to login at the same time to “attend” class; however, you must still follow the timeline of readings, lectures, assignment submissions, discussions, etc., as designated in the course schedule. You will notice that the course is divided into weeks, and within the weeks, it is divided into days. This is to help pace you throughout the course. Submissions are due on the dates indicated; however, you can vary the preparatory work (e.g. readings and videos) to accommodate your schedule. It is imperative to keep up and plan ahead in order to collaborate with your teams on the client project.

In addition to the asynchronous course components, there are also eight live sessions that students are required to participate in. All Collaborate sessions will be recorded. The face-to-face, study abroad component will take place in Sweden. While in Sweden, students will interact with the client and participate in daily site visits.

Prerequisites

Academic

N/a.

Technological

Comprehensive knowledge of international business (IB) concepts will be assumed. If you need a refresher or have a different disciplinary background, feel free to use the narrated PPTs under “Review Resources” to brush up on some of the basic IB concepts.

Required technical skills and equipment include:
Syllabus

Summer 2019

- Uploading Files/Submitting Assignments Online
- Posting To Discussion Board
- Recording And Sharing A Video Presentation Of Self
- Creating A Multimedia Presentation With Voice Narration
- Laptop Computer
- Internet Connection
- Microphone For Audio Recording - This Could Be A Headset Microphone, Internal Computer Microphone, Or Even Your Smart Phone. Please Check Audio Quality.
- Camera - For Pictures In Sweden. You Will Need Photos And/Or Video For Your Mixed-Media Presentation.
- Microsoft Word, Excel, & PowerPoint

It is up to you to ensure that you are able to properly use your technology. The online format of this course requires students to be open to learning new technologies and to be flexible when technological errors inevitably occur. We may use tools that are new to you, and I will provide resources to help you learn them. Should you have any problems, please do not hesitate to ask me or your peers.

Textbooks & Materials

Most readings and other materials will be provided to you via Blackboard. The following are required course materials:

- The McKinsey Engagement: A Powerful Toolkit for More Efficient and Effective Team Problem Solving (available on Amazon.com – check Blackboard for details)
- Modern-Day Vikings: A Practical Guide to Interacting with the Swedes. (available on Amazon.com – check Blackboard for details)

Credit Hour Policy

In the 10 week course, you will spend approximately 4 hours per week engaged in direct instruction (a combination of recorded video lectures, live synchronous sessions, interactive modules, and online discussions). Homework and other independent work (e.g. readings, course papers, etc...) is estimated at around 7.25 hours per week. This amounts to 11.25 of total hours per week and 112.5 of total hours per semester.

There are a total of 55 contact hour for this course, including:

Digital Sessions: 4 hours (presentations and short videos)

Live Sessions: 8 hours (8, 1-hour Collaborate sessions)

Team Meetings and Final Assignment Presentations: 8 hours (hourly weekly meetings and regular check-ups with teams)
In-Country Business Activities: 25 hours (business visits, class and team discussions, interim client presentations & feedback sessions)

In-Country Cultural Activities: 10 hours (cultural visits)

Total Contact Hours: 55

Assignments and Grading

All assignments are out of 100 points. Each assignment is then weighted as a percentage of your total grade. In most cases, feedback for assignments will be provided within 5 days of the submission date.

Group Work (60%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Type</th>
<th>Due</th>
<th>Total Percent of Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team Charter</td>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Ungraded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidentiality Agreement</td>
<td>After the first client meeting</td>
<td>Ungraded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft Scope of Work</td>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Ungraded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Report</td>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game Plan Report</td>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft of Client Report &amp; Presentation</td>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Ungraded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Client Written Report</td>
<td>Week 9</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Client Presentation</td>
<td>Week 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memo Portfolio</td>
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Individual Work (40%)

<table>
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<th>Due</th>
<th>Total Percent of Final Grade</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peer Review of Game Plan Report</td>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Discussion Board Participation</td>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Country Class Participation &amp; Site Visit Leadership</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed-Media Presentation</td>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The grading scale below, based on 100%, determines your final letter grade. [Note: the scale below is the default grading schema in Blackboard’s Grade Center.]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100 – 94</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93 – 90</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87 – 89</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84 – 86</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>80 – 83</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<td>77 – 79</td>
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<td>74 – 76</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>70 – 73</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 – 69</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;60</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Policies

The following are university- and course-related policies that all course participants should read and understand. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Instructor Response Time

In most cases, I will provide feedback for assignments within 5 days of the submission date.

Differences in Time Zone

All the times in this Blackboard course correspond to U.S. Eastern Time zone (e.g., Washington, DC). It is your responsibility to convert these times to the time zone of your location so you can meet this course's deadlines.

Late Work

Generally, late work is not accepted in the course. The client consulting projects demand that we keep building on previous deliverables so it is critical that all students respect all team internal and external deadlines. At the same time, "life happens" and we will work together on figuring out solutions in such cases!

Academic Integrity

This course will comply with the University's Code of Student Conduct. The Code of Academic Integrity defines academic dishonesty as "cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's work, taking credit for work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information." Common examples of academic dishonesty include cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, falsification, forgery of University academic documents, and facilitating academic dishonesty by others.

Consult GW's Academic Dishonesty Prevention resource for further information and support.

Disability Support Services and Accessibility

Any student who may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS) to inquire about the documentation necessary to establish eligibility, and to coordinate a plan of reasonable and appropriate accommodations. DSS is located in Rome Hall, Suite 102. For additional information, please call DSS at 202-994-8250, or consult https://disabilitysupport.gwu.edu.
For information about how the course technology is accessible to all learners, see the following resources:

- Blackboard accessibility policy
- Kaltura (video platform) accessibility policy
- Voicethread accessibility policy
- Microsoft Office accessibility policy
- Adobe accessibility policy

Religious Observances

In accordance with University policy, students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on the day(s) of religious observance. Please consult the university policy on religious holiday observance for further information.

Acceptable Use Policy for Computing Systems and Services

All members of the George Washington University must read and comply with the Acceptable Use Policy when accessing and using computing systems and services, including email and Blackboard. Please read the Acceptable Use Policy to familiarize yourself with how GW systems are to be used ethically.

Netiquette

Please observe the following rules of netiquette for communicating online:

- Remain professional, respectful, and courteous at all times.
- Remember that a real human being wrote each post and will read what you write in response. It is easy to misinterpret discussion posts. Let’s give the benefit of the doubt.
- If you have a strong opinion on a topic, it is acceptable to express it as long as it is not phrased as an attack. Please be gracious with differing opinions.
- When upset, wait a day or two prior to posting. Messages posted (or emailed) in anger are often regretted later.
- Proofread and use the spell check tool when you type a post. It makes the post easier to read and helps your readers understand what you are saying.
- I reserve the right to delete any post that is deemed inappropriate for the discussion forum, blog, or wiki without prior notification to the student. This includes any post containing language that is offensive, rude, profane, racist, or hateful. Posts that are seriously off-topic or serve no purpose other than to vent frustration will also be removed.
Sharing of Course Content

Unauthorized downloading, distributing, or sharing of any part of a recorded lecture or course materials, as well as using provided information for purposes other than the student’s own learning may be deemed a violation of GW’s Student Conduct Code.

Use of Student Work (FERPA)

The professor will use academic work that you complete during this semester for educational purposes in this course during this semester. Your registration and continued enrollment constitute your consent.

Copyright Policy Statement

Copyright Restriction: Materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection under Title 17 of the United States Code. Under certain Fair Use circumstances specified by law, copies may be made for private study, scholarship, or research. Electronic copies should not be shared with unauthorized users. If a user fails to comply with Fair Use restrictions, he/she may be liable for copyright infringement. For more information, see the GW Copyright Policy and Fair Use guidelines.

Emergency Preparedness and Response

The University has asked all faculty to inform students of these procedures, prepared by the GW Office of Public Safety and Emergency Management in collaboration with the Office of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.

To Report an Emergency or Suspicious Activity
Call the University Police Department at 202-994-6111 (Foggy Bottom) or 202-242-6111 (Mount Vernon).

Shelter in Place - General Guidance
Although it is unlikely that we will ever need to shelter in place, it is helpful to know what to do just in case. No matter where you are, the basic steps of shelter in place will generally remain the same.

- If you are inside, stay where you are unless the building you are in is affected. If it is affected, you should evacuate. If you are outdoors, proceed into the closest building or follow instructions from emergency personnel on the scene.
- Locate an interior room to shelter inside. If possible, it should be above ground level and have the fewest number of windows. If sheltering in a room with windows, move away from the windows. If there is a large group of people inside a particular building, several rooms may be necessary.
Shut and lock all windows (for a tighter seal) and close exterior doors.

Turn off air conditioners, heaters, and fans. Close vents to ventilation systems as you are able. (University staff will turn off ventilation systems as quickly as possible).

Make a list of the people with you and ask someone to call the list in to UPD so they know where you are sheltering and who is with you. If only students are present, one of the students should call in the list.

Await further instructions. If possible, visit GW Campus Advisories for incident updates or call the GW Information Line 202-994-5050.

Make yourself comfortable and look after one other. You will get word as soon as it is safe to come out.

### Evacuation

An evacuation will be considered if the building we are in is affected or we must move to a location of greater safety. We will always evacuate if the fire alarm sounds. In the event of an evacuation, please gather your personal belongings quickly (purse, keys, GWorld card, etc.) and proceed to the nearest exit. Every classroom has a map at the door designating both the shortest egress and an alternate egress. Anyone who is physically unable to walk down the stairs should wait in the stairwell, behind the closed doors. Firemen will check the stairwells upon entering the building.

Once you have evacuated the building, proceed to our primary rendezvous location: the courtyard area between the GW Hospital and Ross Hall. In the event that this location is unavailable, we will meet on the ground level of the Visitors Parking Garage (I Street entrance, at 22nd Street). From our rendezvous location, we will await instructions to re-enter the School.

### Alert DC

Alert DC provides free notification by e-mail or text message during an emergency. Visit [GW Campus Advisories](#) for a link and instructions on how to sign up for alerts pertaining to GW. If you receive an Alert DC notification during class, you are encouraged to share the information immediately.

### GW Alert

GW Alert provides popup notification to desktop and laptop computers during an emergency. In the event that we receive an alert to the computer in our classroom, we will follow the instructions given. You are also encouraged to download this application to your personal computer. Visit [GW Campus Advisories](#) to learn how.

### Additional Information

Additional information about emergency preparedness and response at GW or the University’s operating status can be found on [GW Campus Advisories](#) or by calling the GW Information Line at 202-994-5050.
Consulting Pointers

For this course, we rely on Paul Friga’s consulting framework, TEAM FOCUS (as outlined in “The McKinsey Engagement”), to guide our work with our clients. This does not mean that we will follow it religiously but some useful principles are worth highlighting:

**Hypothesis Testing:** Rather than starting the research process at a 30,000 foot level (i.e., pooling tons of data and then looking for recommendations within), teams should start by exploring similar business problems/challenges from similar contexts (whether marketing, market expansion, finance, etc.) and **extract strategy lessons** from those examples. These strategy examples, including the problems the strategies were devised to solve, will be used to create "**recommendation hypotheses.**" Each hypothesis will be proven or disproven based on information and data collected during the research process. In this way, the strategy hypothesis governs the types of information to be collected and keeps the scope more narrow and the research process more efficient.

Teams should plan on coming up with approximately three hypotheses to test.

**Data-Driven Testing:** Data should drive the hypothesis testing process. Hypotheses will be dismissed or maintained based on what the data reveals. For example, one example recommendation hypothesis could be "Target the 45+ year old market segment." This should be accompanied by information such as market size, demographic trends/changes, market demand, and benchmarks against other age groups. Final strategy recommendations should be accompanied by a quantification of their impact on the company, such as net-present value analysis, market segmentation analysis, benchmarking to other companies and/or industry averages, analyzing and comparing competitor strategies. Students should be aware of information bias, in other words, the cherry-picking of information in order to prove a hypothesis works when in fact other data exists that might suggest it doesn’t! **Students need to let the data guide the process in an unbiased way.**

**Governing Thought:** The governing thought is the high-level "goal (or message)" that guides the whole project, from the research process to the recommendation formulations to the final PowerPoint presentation. All of the work conducted during the consulting project should be explained in terms of how it advances/relates to/supports this goal. This is particularly important during the oral presentation to the client!

**Report Structure:** The final report and PowerPoint presentation should be structured so that it provides the recommendations upfront. Academic papers tend to focus on building the case for a proposed solution and then revealing the recommendation at the end. However, in consulting the answer should be front and center, and then followed by research and analysis that proves it is a solid recommendation. To support the proposed recommendation(s), students should use a "Situation- Complication- Resolution" framework. First, under Situation, explain what is going on right now that is problematic (keep this high-level). Second, under Complication, explain in more detail
what are the causes/contributors to the problematic situation. From the example above, have competitors come up with a more effective strategy for targeting the 45+ year old segment and that’s why sales are down? Are there internal weaknesses that need to be addressed, such as ineffective management? Is the market changing in such a way that customers want different product attributes or additional sales channels?

Finally, under Resolution, you explain exactly what needs to happen to address the problem. Here is where you are as specific as possible. The difference between the Recommendation and the Resolution is that the recommendation is a high-level summary of the resolution. So the order looks like: **Recommendation(s) --> supported by Situation, Complication, Resolution**. Note that if there is more than one recommendation, each one must be supported by its own SCR analysis. When presenting these findings as a PowerPoint, there should be no more than 8-10 slides for the SCR of each recommendation. Beyond 10 slides the details are probably too nit-picky and can be relegated to the appendix.

**PowerPoint:** First, cut the text bullet points and let the data dominate the slides. Second, each slide should have a descriptive headline (at the top of the slide) that describes the content being discussed within the slide. Rather than using something generic like "Market Expansion Strategy," use "Expand market reach by focusing on key growth demographics."