

Global Commerce and Culture Capstone (IDST 480)

Christopher Newport University, Spring 2025

Professors	Dr. Chris Tweedt chris.tweedt@cnu.edu	Dr. Frank Garmon frank.garmon@cnu.edu
Class	Ferguson 220 TR 3-4:15	Office Hours: McM 202 TR 11-1:15 McM 308 TBD
Textbook, Materials	There is no textbook for this course. Readings will be hyperlinked below. If a link is broken, check the Readings tab on Scholar or email one of the professors. Additional readings, which are not on this syllabus, may also be assigned. Please check Scholar for these readings. The dates will appear on the title of the reading in the Readings tab on Scholar, and we will alert you in class, at least one class ahead of time, that a new reading was posted. Slide decks and handouts will also be posted on Scholar within a week of their use in class. Guest speakers' materials will be provide if the speakers allow.	
Objectives	Students should demonstrate: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Awareness of, and the ability to locate, primary and secondary sources concerning a given problem, including primary sources of data on global commerce and related measures,2. The ability to identify various problems of global commerce and the various factors that drive those problems,3. Analysis of data relevant to various problems of global commerce,4. Application of material learned in earlier courses in the major, and5. The ability to formulate a cogent and well-evidenced argument for a solution, including the ability to distinguish between anecdotes, correlation, and causation in evaluating/presenting evidence.	
Global Data Sources	The World Bank: https://databank.worldbank.org/home.aspx United Nations Conference on Trade and Development: https://unctad.org/statistics Gapminder: https://www.gapminder.org/ Our World in Data: https://ourworldindata.org/ Annual Reports: https://www.annualreports.com/	

Schedule

Day	Topic
Jan 14	Introduction to the Course (Drs. Garmon, Tweedt) Getting to know each other, what to expect in class Introduction of the final project
Multiculturalism and Globalization	
Jan 16	Introduction to International Commerce (Drs. Garmon, Tweedt) Key concepts and theories Globalization and its impact on international commerce

Jan 21	Cultural Dimensions (Dr. Tweedt) GLOBE, Hofstede's Cultural dimensions Reading: GLOBE Cultural Dimensions Play around with this: https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison-tool
Jan 23	Cultural Clusters (Dr. Tweedt) Introduction to cultural clusters Select and learn about at least two clusters here: https://www.muditaconsultancy.com/en/resource-center/visuals/introductions-to-culture-clusters/
Economics	
Jan 28	Economic Foundations of Global Business (Dr. Garmon) Comparative Advantage & International Trade Reading: David Ricardo, <i>On the Principles of Political Economy and Taxation</i> (chapter on comparative advantage)
Jan 30	Economic Foundations of Global Business (Dr. Garmon) Case Study: Singer Sewing Machine Co. Reading: Paula A. de la Cruz-Fernández, "Multinationals and Gender: Singer Sewing Machine and Marketing in Mexico, 1890-1930," <i>Business History Review</i> 89 (2015): 531-549.
Feb 4	Financial Markets in a Global Context (Dr. Garmon)
Feb 6	Student Presentations on Cultural Clusters pt. 1 * Half of the enrolled students read a blog post, anecdote, or statistic about a prechosen cultural cluster to demonstrate how that cluster is different from ours
Feb 11	Student Presentations on Cultural Clusters pt. 2 * Half of the enrolled students read a blog post, anecdote, or statistic about a prechosen cultural cluster to demonstrate how that cluster is different from ours
Economics	
Feb 13	Religion's Effect on Global Business: Buddhism * Guest Speaker: TBD
Feb 18	Religion's Effect on Global Business: Islam * Guest Speaker: TBD
Management	
Feb 20	Management Structures and Business Models around the World * (Dr. Garmon) Case Study: Toyota v. Ford and GM Reading: <i>The Toyota Way</i> , Introduction
Feb 25	Import/Export Management (Dr. Garmon) Facilitating transactions across borders
Feb 27	Global Supply Chain and Logistics Management* (Dr. Garmon) International Trade Agreements and Organizations The Role of Multinational Corporations in Global Trade Case Study: Nestle

Reading: “Nestle: The Visions of Local Managers”

Mar 4-6	No Class: Spring Break
Analytic Tools	
Mar 11	Creating a Competitive Analysis, SWOT Analysis (Dr. Tweedt) Reading: https://www.business.qld.gov.au/running-business/planning/swot-analysis
Mar 13	Creating a Breakeven Analysis, Reading Financial Reports (Dr. Garmon) Bring laptop/tablet with you to class so we can look at Starbucks’ 2023 Annual Report together. Read the “Cautionary Note Regarding Forward Looking Statements” section closely (page 4-5 in the PDF), and skim Item 1: Business and 1A: Risk Factors sections (pages 6-26 in the PDF)
Government	
Mar 18	International Trade Law* Guest speaker: TBD
Student-Led Discussions	
Mar 20	Student-Led Discussion Day 1
Mar 25	Student-Led Discussion Day 2
Marketing & Sales	
Mar 27	Marketing in International Business* (Dr. Tweedt)
Apr 1	Ethics in International Commerce: Challenges and Solutions* (Dr. Tweedt) Business and Human Rights: Corporate Social Responsibility Globalization and Maximizing Shareholder Value Zwolinski (2007) “Sweatshops, Choice, and Exploitation”
Ethics	
Apr 3	Systems Thinking in a Global Context* Guest Speaker: TBD
Apr 8	Sustainable Commerce: Environmental and Social Responsibility* (Dr. Tweedt) Zero sum games Tragedy of the Commons Sustainable Development Goals Readings: Schmidtz (1994) “The Institution of Property” Know the U.N.’s Sustainable Development Goals: https://sdgs.un.org/goals
Research Week	
Apr 10	Research Day 1
Apr 15	Research Day 2
Apr 17	Research Day 3

Apr 22 Student Final Presentations Day 1

Apr 24 Student Final Presentations Day 2

Assessments: 100 points total

<p>Participation 20 points</p>	<p>*For each of the asterisked class times, students are expected to do some research ahead of time to find something interesting and true to say about the topic. In class, students are expected to share what they’ve learned in 5 of the classes with an asterisk. Students will receive 2 points up to 5 times for each in-class contribution of this kind for 10 total points.</p> <p>The rest of the 10 points will be awarded based on participation in class discussions.</p>
<p>In-Class Cultural Cluster Presentation 10 points</p>	<p>You must pre-select a cultural cluster, then in class read or summarize a blog post, anecdote, or statistic that shows the difference between that cluster and ours. After you read or summarize, you should provide some insight into how what you read shows a difference between that culture and ours. What cultural dimension does it indicate a difference in? How does it how that business is done differently in that cultural cluster than in ours?</p>
<p>Student-Led Discussion Day 20 points</p>	<p>Your group is to lead a 30-minute discussion on your proposed topic for your final project. You are not expected to have a solution in mind; instead, you must have background information sufficient to ask questions and lead a discussion with the class in order to discover new problems, garner new insights, and open up new paths of research for your final project.</p>
<p>Final Project 50 points</p>	<p>You are hired as an external consultant and need to make a proposal to the board of directors of to a publicly traded corporation. As an external consultant, you need either to solve a problem or propose a new market.</p> <p>You must pick a real corporation and either a real problem that has not yet been solved or a market that has not yet been entered. You must interview at least two people for this project and cite those people in your final project. The project contains two parts:</p> <p>Part 1: Written Proposal (25 points)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction: Describe your client (the corporation) and the problem you will aim to solve/new market opportunity. This is your three-minute elevator pitch. Use precedents either as a model or a foil. 2. Describe the cultural differences between American culture and the new market’s culture 3. Competitive Analysis: If you are solving a problem, present the various options with a cost-benefit table. If you are proposing a new market, present a competitive analysis. 4. Present your solution/market with a SWOT analysis of your decision 5. Give an operations plan. 6. Describe the financial costs and benefits. Include imports/exports, trade issues, supply lines, and a breakeven analysis. Ensure you have real price quotes and have investigated all laws and trade agreements pertinent to your proposal. 7. Describe how your project will contribute to sustainability and maintain corporate social responsibility. 8. As an addendum, include who you interviewed, about what, and the dates of those interviews, including insights you learned from the interviews.

9. Elements 1-7 must be at least 10 pages, single spaced.

Part 2: Presentation to the class as if to the board of directors (25 points)

1. The presentation must involve all of the proposal elements.
2. The presentation must involve a PowerPoint presentation and/or a printed handout/packet distributed to each member of the board.
3. There must be quantitative features to many of the PowerPoint slides and/or distributed handout/packet.
4. The presentation must be 20 minutes. A 10-minute Q&A will follow.

Examples of kinds of projects: (All projects must use particular, concrete, real businesses and markets. These are examples of kinds of projects one could search for. Students are responsible for ensuring that the problems have not already been solved.)

1. Lyft is considering how to expand its international reach.
2. Tesla is considering selling vehicles in India and wants to know how to most effectively do so.
3. A small clothing retailer in Ukraine is considering branching out into e-commerce and wants to know whether it is worth doing and how to do so.
4. A company from England that broadcasts cricket games is considering broadcasting on foreign channels but does not know where else to broadcast or how to do so.
5. Carnival cruise lines is considering how to dispose of its waste in more sustainable ways while maintaining robust profitability.
6. Shien has been criticized for its labor practices. How can it improve labor conditions while maintaining profitability?
7. Starlink wants to become more profitable. What paths should it pursue internationally?
8. Strava would like to gain more users internationally. How should it do so?
9. The U.S. National Football League would like to gain international popularity. How should it do so?

A	100-93	B+	89-88	C+	78-79	D+	69-68
A-	92-90	B	83-87	C	73-77	D	63-67
F	59-0	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	62-60

University Syllabus Statements:

Honor Code	<p>By being enrolled in this class, each student is expected to read, understand, and abide by the CNU's honor code. CNU reserves the right to penalize any student whose academic conduct at any time is, in its judgment, detrimental to the University. This conduct includes plagiarism, collusion, cheating, giving or receiving or offering or soliciting information in examinations, the use of AI or LLMs for assignments.</p> <p>Class Policy: You'll receive an automatic F in the course if you display any of the conduct in the above paragraph. The purpose of these assessments is to test your knowledge. If you provide other students with the questions or answers, it undermines the assessment process. If you have someone or something else do your work, it does not show me what you know. If you discover someone sharing questions and report it to me, I will buy you ice cream or a dairy-free equivalent. Also, I'll report all seeming-plagiarism to CHECS and give the seeming-plagiarizer a 0 for the course. I won't argue with you whether you did it intentionally. We all know how that will go. You'll argue that you didn't mean to do it, just like people who do it intentionally argue. So I'm not even going to ask. Please be intentional about not doing it.</p>
Copyright, Permissions	<p>All content created and assembled by the faculty member and used in this course is to be considered intellectual property owned by the faculty member and Christopher Newport University. It is provided solely for the private use of the students currently enrolled in this course. To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not make available any of the original course content, including but not limited to lectures, discussions, videos, handouts, and/or activities, to anyone not currently enrolled in the course without the advance written permission of the instructor. This means that students may not record, download, screenshot, or in any way copy original course material for the purpose of distribution beyond this course. A violation may be considered theft. It is the student's responsibility to protect course material when accessing it outside of the physical classroom space.</p>
Disability, Accommodation	<p>In order for a student to receive an accommodation for a disability, that disability must be on record in the Office of Student Affairs, 3rd Floor, David Student Union (DSU). If you believe that you have a disability, please contact Jacquelyn Barnes, Student Disability Support Specialist in Student Affairs (594-7160) to discuss your needs.</p> <p>Students with documented disabilities are to notify the instructor at least seven days prior to the point at which they require an accommodation (the first day of class is recommended), in private, if accommodation is needed. The instructor will provide students with disabilities with the reasonable accommodations approved and directed by the Office of Student Affairs. Work completed before the student notifies the instructor of his/her disability may be counted toward the final grade at the sole discretion of the instructor.</p>
Academic Support	<p>I want you to succeed in this course and at Christopher Newport. I encourage you to contact me during office hours or to schedule an appointment to discuss course content or to answer questions you have. During the Coronavirus pandemic, our conversations may need to be via electronic means. If I become concerned about your course performance, attendance, engagement, or well-being, I will contact you first. I also may submit a referral through our Captains Care Program. The referral will be received by the Center for Academic Success as well as other departments when appropriate (Counseling Services, Office of Student Engagement). If you are an athlete, the Athletic Academic Support Coordinator will be notified. Someone will contact you to help determine what will help you succeed. Please remember that this is a means for me to support you and help foster your success at Christopher Newport.</p> <p>The Center for Student Success (CSS) provides numerous free resources to help students succeed in their courses. These resources include individual peer tutoring and group/test review sessions. The Center also houses the Alice F. Randall Writing Center. Writing consultants can help you at any stage of the writing process, from invention to development of ideas, to polishing a final draft.</p> <p>You may contact the Center for Student Success to request a tutor, meet with a writing consultant, or make an appointment to talk with a staff member about study skills and strategies. The Center is located in Christopher Newport Hall, first floor, room 124. You may email studentsuccess@cnu.edu, call (757) 594-7684, or visit https://my.cnu.edu/academicsuccess/.</p>
Diversity, Inclusion	<p>The Christopher Newport University community engages and respects different viewpoints, understands the cultural and structural context in which those viewpoints emerge, and questions the development of our own perspectives and values, as these are among the fundamental tenets of a liberal arts education.</p> <p>Accordingly, we affirm our commitment to a campus culture that embraces the full spectrum of human attributes, perspectives, and disciplines, and offers every member of the University the opportunity to become their best self.</p>

Understanding and respecting differences can best develop in a community where members learn, live, work, and serve among individuals with diverse worldviews, identities, and values. We are dedicated to upholding the dignity and worth of all members of this academic community such that all may engage effectively and compassionately in a pluralistic society.

If you have specific questions, suggestions or concerns regarding diversity on campus please contact Diversity.Inclusion@CNU.edu

Public Health

The university will provide guidance on public health issues, and students will be expected to comply with university protocols.