



APPLIES TO ACADEMIC YEAR 2010/2011

## EXC 3410 The Firm - Introduction Course

### Programme

Bachelor in Business Administration (BBA) (1. year), Bachelor in Shipping and Finance (1. year)

### Responsible for the course

### Department

Department of Innovation and Economic Organisation

### Term

According to study plan

### ECTS Credits

7,5

### Language of instruction

English

### Introduction

The course provides a broad introduction to the main features of the role of firms in the economy. The versatility of firms will be presented in a broader social context with the aid of historical, ethical and theoretical perspectives. The course aims to educate participants through an introduction to broad historical developments in the Western world, focusing in particular on the foundations relevant for firms and the market economy.

### Learning outcome

#### Acquired knowledge

- Familiarity with theories of why firms exist.
- Familiarity with the main features of the historical development of the firm, with an emphasis on understanding traditions underpinning the firms of today.
- Acquire knowledge with respect to the functioning of the inner life of firms.
- Understand how power structures in firms reflect different forms of legitimacy.
- Acquire knowledge of the significance of innovation, development and crises.

#### Acquired skills

- Be able to reflect on the role of firms in the economy in general.
- Be able to understand and reflect on the main features of the ethical and moral dimensions relating to firms.
- Be able to discuss situations involving moral dilemmas for firms.
- Be able to distinguish between the different roles and bases of ownership and leadership.
- Understand the many roles of the state vis-à-vis firms.
- Be able to reflect in writing on complex contexts.

#### Developed reflection

- Develop recognition of our personal responsibility as members of society.
- Develop recognition of the individual moral responsibility of both firms and employees.
- Develop recognition of the relationship between firms and society at large.
- Develop recognition of historical change and historical foundations, not least with respect to ethical and moral dimensions.

### Prerequisites

No particular prerequisites are required.

### Compulsory reading

#### Books:

Micklethwait, John & Adrian Woolbridge. 2005. The company : a short story of a revolutionary idea. New ed. London : Phoenix. Paperback edition

#### Collection of articles:

Sverre Christensen og Knut Sogner. 2010. Compendium of Articles for EXC 3410 The Firm. Oslo: Handelshøyskolen BI

## Recommended reading

### Course outline

1. Introduction
2. The firm Ltd.
3. The firm and the three industrial revolutions
4. The problem of self-interest
5. The firm's social responsibility
6. Process: Ethical issues (Writing a paper)
7. Who runs the firm?
8. Who owns the firm?
9. The firm and globalization
10. How are firms created and developed?
11. Innovation and society
12. The state and the firm
13. Process: Ethics and the firm
14. Summing up

### Computer-based tools

No specified computer-based tools are required.

### Learning process and workload

The course consists of lectures, writing an assignment for submission and discussing and summarising assignments. There are 9 course lectures based on the principal course components. In addition there will be 2 lectures in connection with writing and discussing the assignment for submission. The assignment will be distributed via It's learning at the start of the course. The assignment is to be written individually, submitted electronically and then discussed in groups of 4-6 students. On the basis of group discussions of each other's assignments, students are to submit a presentationwrite a short report consisting of the following components:

1. What did the group get out of discussing the technical aspects of writing?
2. How would the group as a *whole* summarize the academic content of the question?

After the presentation is submitted electronically, the groups present their conclusions in a seminar where they get feed-back from the lecturer and the other groups.

Summary of the process:

1. Plenary lecture on writing technique and ethics
2. Submission of individual paper on It's learning, 4-6 pages (mandatory)
3. Students are divided into groups
4. Group work on writing presentation. The presentation must be submitted on It's learning. (mandatory)
5. Group presentation seminar with feedback.

### Course work requirement

Students must have submitted both the individual paper and group presentation on It's learning and had these approved in order to take the examination for this subject.

During the semester there will be 8 multiple-choice tests of which 5 must be approved in order to sit for exam. Passing such a test requires that at least 30 % of the obtainable points be answered correctly. The students will be allowed three attempts before the deadline of the test. Information about the time period for the tests to be taken, will be given in the lectures and through It's learning.

Activity	Number of hours
Participation in lectures I	27
Preparation for lectures	18
Writing individual paper for submission	20
Colloquiums on academic papers	12
Participation in lectures II	6
Self study and colloquiums	114
Examination	3
<b>Total recommended time usage</b>	<b>200</b>

Students are required to participate in all parts of the process activities. Submission of individual papers and group presentation are registered on It's Learning.

### Use of hours

- 33 hour - Lectures
- 8 hours - Supervising groups
- 4 hours - Administration of the learning process
- 45 hour total

The course is based on a standard class size of 150 to a max. of 250 students. Small classes (less than 150) obviously allow greater resources to be used per student than large classes. If class sizes exceed 250 students, additional resources will be required for tuition. It is highly desirable that the class lecturer is in charge of group discussions.

**Coursework requirements**

Students must have submitted both the individual paper and group presentation on It's learning and had these approved before taking the examination for this subject. See Learning Process and Workload for further details. In addition the students have to pass 5 out of 8 multiple choice tests.

**Examination**

A three hour individual written exam concludes the course.

**Examination code(s)**

EXC 34101 - Individual written examination, counts 100% towards the final grade in EXC 3410 The Firm - Introduction Course.

**Examination support materials**

No support materials are allowed.

See information in our web-based Student Handbook about use of dictionary.  
<http://www.bi.edu/studenthandbook/examaids>

**Re-sit examination**

Re-sit exam is held every semester.

Students that have not passed the course work requirement must retake the exercises at the next scheduled course. Students that have not passed the written exam or who wish to improve their grade must retake the exam in connection with the next scheduled course.

**Additional information**

Colleges of Higher Education require the correct use of references in all academic work. [Link](#) to BI Library page on using citations and references, recommended for all students at BI Norwegian School of Management.