



APPLIES TO ACADEMIC YEAR 2013/2014

EXC 3410 The Firm - Introduction Course

Programme

Bachelor of Business Administration (1. year), Exchange Program

Responsible for the course

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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 about ownership, leadership, multinational companies, innovation, and the state's relations to firms.
- Know the problems related to self-interest, and possible solutions and answers to this.
- Knowledge with respect to what is meant by corporate social responsibility, and challenges related to it.
- Knowledge about ethical theories and challenges in business

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 and try to solve moral dilemmas in business.
- 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 and Adrian Wooldridge. 2005. The company : a short story of a revolutionary idea. Modern Library. Paperback edition

Collection of articles:

Sverre Christensen og Knut Sogner. 2012. Collection of Articles for EXC 3410 The Firm. 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. Corporate social responsibility
6. Process: Ethical theories and issues
7. Management
8. Process: Group work and discussions
9. Ownership
10. Multinationals and globalization
11. Innovation and entrepreneurship?
12. Innovation and society
13. The state and the firm
14. Process: Summing up
15. 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 summarizing assignments. There are 9 course lectures based on the principal course components. In addition there will be 3 lectures in connection with writing a paper, about the group discussions and summing up. 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 presentation and write a short report consisting of the following components:

1. Comments and evaluations on each paper
2. And new complementary question regarding the individual assignment
3. How would the group *as a whole* summarize the academic content of the learning process?

The group presentations are submitted individually and electronically, nobody submits on behalf of anyone else.

Summary of the process:

Plenary lecture on writing technique and ethics

Submission of individual paper on It's learning, 4-6 pages (mandatory)

Students are divided into groups and there is a lecture about the group discussions

Group work on writing presentation. The presentation must be submitted on It's learning. (mandatory)

The process is summed up by the lecturer.

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.

Recommended workload in hours:

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	9
Self study and colloquiums	111
Examination	3
Total recommended time usage	200

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.

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 except a bilingual dictionary.

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 Business School.