



SYLLABUS

GLOBAL, LEGAL, SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT OF BUSINESS

Instructor: Graham Bolton

Contact Hours: 40

Class times: Wednesday 2.00 – 5.00pm

LONDON, UK

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, you will acquire an understanding of the legal and ethical environments of business and the ways they influence managerial decision-making. Specifically, you will become familiar with the legal system of the United States and how its rules pertain to business.

Because the law cannot codify all social requirements—some decisions may be ethically wrong even though they are legal—we will consider the larger ethical backdrop of conducting business, including questions of social responsibility relevant to making decisions as a professional manager.

This course will also help develop your ability to think critically and frame arguments for pursuing one line of action over another.

Every decision has different consequences for different groups, and what is good for one group often comes at the expense of another. Thus, the ability to think critically and carefully is at the core of legal and ethical decision-making and will be a major focus of this course.

COURSE GOALS

- Develop students' understanding of the legal system of the United States and critical legal principles for conducting business.
- Develop students' ability to identify ethical controversies in business, explain their complexities, and defend alternative positions.
- Develop students' awareness of contemporary law and ethics topics in the news and their relevance of course concepts.
- Develop students' understanding of their rights and responsibilities as U.S. citizens or residents.

COURSE OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, a student who earns a passing grade will be able to:

- Describe the relationship between law and ethics and their application to business.
- Demonstrate understanding of the relationship between business and government.
- Identify the legal and regulatory implications of business decisions.
- Analyze how businesses exercise influence over the formulation of public policy.
- Evaluate the impact of business operations on the larger society

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY

The sessions combine introductory lectures, student presentations, discussions and group work. Students will be expected to actively prepare for all classes. The classes will be highly participative.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorised help on assignments or examinations without express permission from the instructor. Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the students' obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act.

GENERATIVE AI POLICY

Purpose

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT, Claude AI, Microsoft Copilot, and Google Gemini are increasingly used in business environments for research, analysis, writing, and decision-making.

This course allows limited and responsible use of AI tools to support learning while ensuring that students develop their own critical thinking, writing, and analytical skills.

Students remain fully responsible for all work they submit.

Guiding Principle

AI tools may be used as learning aids, but they may not replace students' original thinking, analysis, and writing.

Assignments should demonstrate your understanding of course materials and your own reasoning.

Permitted Uses of AI

Students may use generative AI tools for the following purposes:

1. Brainstorming and Idea Development

AI tools may be used to:

- Generate topic ideas
- Explore potential research questions
- Create outlines for assignments

Students must still develop their own arguments and structure.

2. Clarifying Concepts

AI tools may help explain concepts such as:

- Legal principles
- Business terminology
- Economic models

Students should verify information using course readings and credible academic sources.

3. Editing and Writing Support

AI tools may be used to assist with:

- Grammar correction
- Sentence clarity
- Organization suggestions

However, the content, ideas, and analysis must be the student's own work.

4. Study and Review Support

Students may use AI to:

- Generate practice questions
- Summarize lecture material
- Create study guides

These uses support learning but should not replace engagement with course readings.

Restricted Uses of AI

The following uses are not permitted unless explicitly authorized by the instructor.

Submitting AI-Generated Work: Students may not submit assignments that are substantially generated by AI.

Examples include:

- AI-written essays
- AI-generated case analyses
- AI-written discussion posts

Assignments must reflect students' own writing and analysis.

AI Use During Exams

AI tools may not be used during:

- Exams
- Quizzes
- In-class assessments

unless the instructor specifically permits it.

Fabricated Information or Sources

Students must verify all facts and citations.

AI systems sometimes generate incorrect information or fake references, and students are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of their work.

Disclosure Requirement

Students must disclose any use of generative AI in their assignments.

A short statement should be included at the end of the submission.

Example disclosure:

I used ChatGPT to brainstorm ideas and review grammar in this assignment. All research, analysis, and final writing are my own.

Failure to disclose AI use may be treated as an academic integrity violation.

Student Responsibility

Students are responsible for:

- The accuracy of all information submitted
- Proper citation of sources
- Original analysis and argument development
- Compliance with university academic integrity policies AI output should be critically evaluated rather than accepted at face value.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Misuse of generative AI may constitute a violation of the university's academic integrity policy.

Possible consequences include:

- Reduction in assignment grade
- Failure of the assignment or course
- Referral to the academic integrity office

Students should consult the instructor if they are unsure whether a specific use of AI is appropriate.

ATTENDANCE

Every class (whether on- or off-site) must be attended. Please refer to the GEO attendance policy for more details.

COURSE READING

- Course reading pack (online, articles as listed in course outline)
- The Economist (or similar quality weekly journal)

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

There are many excellent books on global business issues. The course will not slavishly follow any particular text or use publishers' power-points.

The majority of your reading should be current articles and news stories.

A discussion on appropriate academic textbooks will take place during the first introductory session. Below are just three books.

The first is an expensive heavy academic tome, but written in an easy style, should you feel the need to purchase a textbook.

The second, *Prisoners of Geography*, gives an excellent introduction to and provides an explanation of geopolitics.

The third, *Planet Ponzi*, considers the current uncertainty and importantly the funding surrounding economies of countries and businesses, especially the US.

There will be copies available in the library at GEO London.

1. *Global Business Today*, Charles Hill & G Thomas Hult, McGrawHill, ISBN 978-0-07-811291
2. *Prisoners of Geography*, Tim Marshall, Elliott Thompson, 2016
3. *Planet Ponzi*, Mitch Fierstein, Bantam Press, 2012, ISBN-13: 978-0552778275, (There is a later edition of this book)

METHOD OF EVALUATION (GRADING)

Grading for each individual assessment and for the final grade will be based on the following.

A+	97-100%	A	93-96%	A-	90-92%
B+	87-89%	B	83-86%	B-	80-82%
C+	77-79%	C	73-76%	C-	70-72%
D+	67-69%	D	63-66%	D-	60-62%
F	0-59%				

BREAKDOWN OF GRADING

Term Paper 1 (Individual Assignment)	25% of Grade
Term Paper 2 (Individual Assignment)	25% of Grade
Group Presentation	25% of Grade
Spot Quiz	15% of Grade
Class Attendance	10% of Grade
Total Mark	100%

Proposed Course Sessions and Subjects

	Global Business – Spring 2026 Class Schedule: Wednesdays 1400-1700	
1	Wednesday 1 April	Introduction(s) Macro Environment
2	Wednesday 8 April	Megatrends
3	Wednesday 15 April	US Legal & Business Impact
4	Wednesday 22 April	Global Legal & Business Impact
5	Wednesday 29 April	Business Ethics
V	FRIDAY 1 May	Class Visit - Wimbledon
6	Wednesday 6 May	Geo-Politics
7	Wednesday 13 May	Global Economy
8	Wednesday 20 May	Global Trade
9	Wednesday 27 May	Global Supply Chain
10	Wednesday 3 June	Final Class Presentation
	Note: Classes subject to change depending on local circumstances	