

**MASSACHUSETTS/WORLD BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC ISSUES:  
A Collaborative Distance Learning Honors Course**

**Spring 2006**

## **FACULTY TEAM:**

[Prof. Mzamo P. Mangaliso](#), Isenberg School, UMass at Amherst, MA

[Prof. Nancy Ovitsky](#), Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, North Adams, MA

[Prof. Ben Kahn](#), Mass. College of Liberal Arts, North Adams, MA

[Prof. Bradford Knipes](#), Westfield State College, Westfield, MA

[Prof. Mary Rogers](#), Framingham State College, Framingham, MA

### **Recommended Resources:**

CD ROM: Multi-media Business Library Comprehensive Edition, Irwin-McGraw-Hill  
(Includes the following):

Fundamental Accounting Principles, 14th Ed.  
Basic Marketing, 12th Ed.  
Business law and the Regulatory Environment, 9th Ed.  
Human Resource Management, 6th Ed.  
Advertising and Promotion, 3rd Ed.  
Strategic Management, 7th Ed.  
Organizational Behavior  
International Business, 2nd Ed.  
Fundamentals of Corporate Finance, 3rd Ed.  
Fundamentals of Investment Management, 5th Ed.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

There are several primary objectives for the course, including the development of:

- A mastery of the theoretical content represented by the text, video lectures, and readings;
- Experience in using these theoretical models to address critical business and economic issues facing our regions and the World;
- Skills in multimedia collaboration;
- Experience in organizing team efforts and managing joint accountability;
- An appreciation of the decision making process in organizations;
- Skills in research; and
- An ethical and international vision for the future.

## PREREQUISITES:

The minimum standing for admission into the course is Junior status. You are welcome to discuss any special graduation requirements you might have with your professor. Beyond that, within the context of the course, you are expected to take initiative in applying knowledge you have acquired in prior courses and experience.

## GENERAL INFORMATION:

- **Attendance:** Information exchanges and interactions are an essential part of this course. Therefore, class attendance and participation is expected and evaluated. Students are responsible for all material presented in class. If you are absent from class when a written assignment is due, you must arrange for the material to be shared before the scheduled class meeting. Please consult with the professor if you must be absent from class or unavailable for collaboration.
- **Teaching Methods:** Students are expected to be active participants in all class activities. Student initiated multi-media interactive projects are used as the primary teaching method. Other teaching methods employed will include guided discussion and video lectures.
- **Evaluation:** Your work in this course will be evaluated based on realism, collaboration, reasoned analysis, and quality of presentation. All work must focus on resolving issues identified in this course.
- **Grade Distribution:**

Course participation/DB assignments	15%
Midterm	20%
Contribution to group effort	15%
Project Presentation	20%
<u>Project Write-up</u>	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. **Class Participation:** Clearly, participation begins with access, and all students are expected to attend all classes, and to make frequent contact through available media. Absence from class discussion will result in a zero for participation that day. If you have a documented excuse, with approval of the professor you may submit a 2-page analysis for that class session, and make a brief presentation. The project materials should include documentation of multimedia collaboration.
2. **Discussion Notes:** Discussion notes on the appropriate material should be prepared before each class meeting. These notes will assist you in making a substantive contribution to the discussion, whether with the entire class, or with your team. Whenever possible, you are expected to volunteer input to discussions. The professor will ask direct questions.
3. **Project Teams:** Small multi-campus project teams of 4-6 students will be formed to research issues of concern to the global issues and their effect on various economies. Groups will be responsible for all aspects of making decisions from the perspective of a real Massachusetts organization. At the end of the semester, the teams will make live presentations to the entire class. Details about these presentations will be discussed during the semester.
4. **Peer Evaluations:** Group members will complete peer evaluations of one another at the end of the project. Additionally, feedback can be given to any other collaborator during the course. Based on both of these types of evaluations, the professor might adjust your course grade accordingly.
5. **Academic Honesty:** Intellectual honesty is essential to human communication and sustainable enterprise. Integrity is essential to academic life. Consequently, students are expected to maintain high standards of academic honesty and scholarly practice. They shall be responsible for familiarizing themselves with the published policies and procedures regarding academic honesty. Please consult the college catalogues for a detailed description of academic honesty and the college procedures for dealing with infractions. **LINKS OR THREADED DISCUSSION ON BULLETIN BOARD** Lack of knowledge of the policy is unacceptable as an excuse for plagiarism or dishonest efforts. Additionally, mutual respect should be shown to everyone at all times.
6. **Assignments:** Written assignments are due and should be posted on the Discussion Board by the beginning of class for which they are assigned.
7. **Syllabus Changes:** Students are responsible for any announced change in this syllabus. We strive for continuous improvement.

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES:

Wednesday	Video/Topic	Facilitated by
Jan. 25	Introductions, Policies, Expectations/info on <b>BB</b>	
Feb. 1	<p>State of the State/State of the Nation/State of the World</p> <p><b>Writing Assignment: Research current issue of interest and post to Discussion Board (DB)</b></p> <p><b>Reading Assignment: “State of the State”, State of the Nation”,</b>  <b>“A Democratic Blueprint for America's Future”,</b>  <b>“General Assembly Opening Session Statement”</b></p>	Trial connection for each campus.
Feb. 8	<p>“How the World Became Flat”</p> <p><b>Writing Assignment: Post ethical issues around your topic choice to Discussion Board (DB)</b></p> <p><b>Reading Assignment: <u>The World Is Flat</u> by Thomas Friedman Chapters 1,2,3,4</b></p> <p><b>Group Assignment: Form tentative groups based on issue interest and mixed location</b></p>	<p><i>Panel Discussion:</i></p> <p>Prof. Kahn, Knipes, Mangaliso, Ovitsky, Rogers</p>
Feb. 15	<p>”America and the Flat World”</p> <p><b>Writing Assignment:</b></p> <p><b>Reading Assignment: Read Panalba case for the discussion,</b>  <b><u>The World Is Flat</u> by Thomas Friedman Chapters 5,6,7,8</b></p> <p><b>Group Assignment: Solidify group make-up</b></p>	Prof. Ovitsky, Rogers
Feb. 22	<p>“Developing Countries and the Flat World”</p> <p><b>Writing Assignment:</b></p> <p><b>Reading Assignment: <u>The World Is Flat</u> by Thomas Friedman Chapter 9</b></p> <p><b>Group Assignment: Create Charter for group and post to DB</b></p>	Prof. Mangaliso, Rogers and guests (UKZN)

March 1	<p>“Companies and the Flat World”</p> <p><b>Writing Assignment:</b></p> <p><b>Reading Assignment:</b> <u>The World Is Flat by Thomas Friedman Chapter 10</u></p> <p><b>Group Assignment: Research non-profit organization or company around the group topic issue and post to Discussion Board (DB)</b></p>	Prof. Mangaliso
March 8	<p>“Geopolitics and the Flat World”</p> <p><b>Writing Assignment:</b></p> <p><b>Reading Assignment:</b> <u>The World Is Flat by Thomas Friedman Chapters 11, 12</u></p> <p><b>Group Assignment: Post Project Proposal Draft to Digital Drop Box</b></p>	Prof. Knipes
March 15	<b>Midterm Objective Test-No Videoconference (UMASS, MCLA, WSC, FSC Spring Recess)</b>	
March 22	<b>Midterm Objective Test-No Videoconference (WSC, UMASS, FSC in session) (MCLA Spring Recess)</b>	
March 29	<p>“Conclusion Ch. 13”</p> <p><b>Group Assignment: Post Finalized Project Proposal to Digital Drop Box</b></p> <p><b>Reading Assignment:</b> <u>The World Is Flat by Thomas Friedman Chapters 13</u></p>	<p><i>Panel Discussion:</i></p> <p>Prof. Kahn, Knipes, Mangaliso, Ovitsky, Rogers</p> <p>Proposal discussion</p>
April 5	<p>Mass MOCA/Model of Collaborative Community Solutions</p> <p><b>Writing Assignment:</b></p> <p><b>Reading Assignment:</b></p> <p><b>Group Assignment: Post First Draft of Topic Research Report to Digital Drop Box</b></p>	Prof. Ovitsky, and guests
April 12	<p>Class Discussion: The Global Village: Sustainable Development/Sustainable Ecology</p> <p><b>Writing Assignment:</b></p> <p><b>Reading Assignment:</b></p> <p><b>Group Assignment: Post First Draft of Topic PowerPoint to Digital Drop Box</b></p>	Prof. Ovitsky, Rogers, and guests.
April 19	Panel Discussion: The Enlightened Organization	<p><i>Panel Discussion:</i></p> <p>Prof. Mangaliso, Kahn, Knipes, Ovitsky &amp; Rogers</p>

April 26     **Due: Video Conference: Student Presentations, Part 1**  
**Group Assignment: Post Topic PowerPoint to Digital Drop Box**

May 3        **Due: Video Conference: Student Presentations, Part 2**  
**Group Assignment: Post Topic Research Report to Digital Drop Box**

Note: Syllabus subject to change as needed for obtaining stated objectives.