

(FSEM 110) Syllabus: First Year Seminar Past, Present, & Future Trends in Commerce

Course Description: This course examines how commerce has been conducted in the past and present. Students will review the evolution of commerce and review, discuss, and theorize how it will change in the future. Students will evaluate historic and current patterns of trade, research the potential of expected changes to the business environment, and summarize the advantages and disadvantages of a potential change.

More details are available at the class website.

You are responsible for checking this site for assignments and announcements.

Course Learning Objectives:

- Utilize a variety of research techniques to retrieve information efficiently, evaluate retrieved information, and synthesize information effectively to support their messages or arguments;
- Improve development and organization of written arguments;
- Demonstrate the ability to edit and revise in the writing process;
- Apply the basic theories and principles of oral communication;
- Communicate effectively in a variety of settings, including public speaking and group discussion.

Required Books:

- Bernstein, William. *A Splendid Exchange: How Trade Shaped the World* (2008)
- Hobhouse, Henry. *Seeds of Change: Six Plants That Transformed Mankind* (2005)¹
- Hobhouse, Henry. *Seeds of Wealth: Five Plants That Made Men Rich* (2004)
- Rivoli, Pietra. *The Travels of a T-Shirt in the Global Economy: An Economist Examines the Markets, Power and Politics of the World Trade* (2009)

Coursework and Weighting

Your final grade will be based upon your scores on chapter summaries, participation, leading discussions, research syntheses, a presentation and a project report. A description of each opportunity to excel follows. The percentages reflect the relative weight of your scores on your final grade.

Chapter Summaries (30%)

For this class, you will need to carefully prepare becoming to class. For fifteen classes, this preparation will include reading material (typically several chapters) before coming to class and bringing a typed chapter summary for some of the assigned readings. The class schedule shows the assigned reading for the day. Students are responsible for all of the assignment readings. The schedule also breaks down the assigned reading into two groups: (A) and (B). Students will be assigned to either Group A or B. Students are only responsible for writing chapter summaries for their assigned group.

The instructor will provide you with a rubric for chapter summaries on the first day of class. Chapter summaries are due at the beginning of class. Late summaries, including those turned

¹ Must be 2005 or later edition, the original edition (1986) did not include the chapter on coca.

in by students coming late to class, will be penalized. If a student is ill and cannot make class, the student should email the instructor the summary in Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF format. The timestamp when the instructor's email system receives the email will be used to determine if the assignment was submitted on time or is late. Each chapter summary is worth 2% of the students' final grade.

Participation (10%)

For this class, discussion involves coming up with multiple interpretations of the implications of the books, articles, and other source materials and being able to debate its validity in class. It also involves building relevant interpersonal skills; that is, learning to listen carefully and engage respectfully with opinions that may be different from your own. Finally, good discussion involves taking risks, trying out new ideas, and challenging your preconceptions about a work. Discussion does not involve coming to a consensus. At a minimum, you should have completed the reading, taken notes, and come to class with questions about a text, in order to fully participate in the discussion.

At the beginning of the semester, all students are assigned an approximate grade of C for this segment of the course. Coming to class prepared and actively engaging in the conversation will enhance your grade; occasional participation will result in little or no change to your grade; while frequent silence or failure to engage with your peers will result in a reduction of your grade.

Participation begins with attendance. Both absences and tardiness will affect your grade. You are allowed three absences. More than three absences will result in a reduction of this portion of your grade by one-third for each additional absence. For instance, if your participation grade for the semester is a B and you miss five classes, that grade will automatically drop to a C+. Arrival in class more than 10 minutes after it begins will be considered an absence.

The instructor will occasionally give students assignments that do not earn a specific grade, but will be evaluated as completed or not completed such as completing the CRAPP module. For these assignments, not completing them will adversely affect participation grades.

Discussion Leader (10%)

You will lead a class discussion this semester that will be assigned by the instructor. Details will be provided in class, but your responsibility will be to 1) ensure that all students have the opportunity to contribute and 2) ensure the discussion remains on topic, and 3) the key topics in the assigned reading are covered in 30 to 35 minutes. Your grade for this assignment will be based upon how well you achieve all three objectives.

Research Syntheses (15%)

You will be responsible for writing three research synthesis papers. Each one will be focused on business implications of a specific theoretical innovation, technology, or situation as listed in the class schedule. Each paper should be 2-3 double-spaced pages using 12 point Times (or New York Times) font.

At least one full page should be your research synthesis, where you will cite at least three sources and combine the findings into a summary of the subject you are evaluating. You should dedicate at least half a page to potential negative implications of the subject and at least another half page about possible positive implications of the subject. Finally, you should list three possible business models enabled by the subject being discussed. Each paper is worth 5%.

Similar to the Chapter Summaries, A groups will create research syntheses for half of the topics and B groups will do so for the other half. On an A day, the A group will present their

summaries and discover where they agree and disagree. The class will discuss these differences and the assumptions behind them. The A group will then discuss the positive and negative implications they foresaw. As before, the class will discuss these differences and the assumptions behind them. On B days, the roles will be reversed.

Project (35%) –Bibliography (5%), Presentation (5%) and Report (25%)

Students will be assigned an individual project by the instructor. Details will be provided in class, but students will be responsible for both a presentation to the class, an initial report, and a revised report. Before the presentations, students must visit the Speaking Center and have a practice presentation recorded and evaluated. Students must also turn in a working bibliography for the project. Projects will be assigned on or before the Research Workshop.

Class Schedule

Date	Topic
Tuesday, January 13, 2015	Introduction, Icebreakers, and How to Write Chapter Summaries
Thursday, January 15, 2015	Sumer (A) & the Straits of Trade (B)
Tuesday, January 20, 2015	Camels, Perfumes, and Profits (A) & The Baghdad Canton Express (B)
Thursday, January 22, 2015	The Taste of Trade and the Captives of Trade (A) & The Disease of Trade (B)
Tuesday, January 27, 2015	Presentation Workshop
Thursday, January 29, 2015	Da Gama's Urge (A) & A World Encompassed (B)
Tuesday, February 03, 2015	The Coming of Corporations (A) & Transplants (B)
Thursday, February 05, 2015	The Triumph and Tragedy of Free Trade (A) & What Henry Bessemer Wrought (B)
Tuesday, February 10, 2015	Collapse (A) & The Battle of Seattle (B)
Thursday, February 12, 2015	Student Led: Quinine (A) & Sugar (B)
Tuesday, February 17, 2015	Student Led: Tea (A) & Cotton (B)
Thursday, February 19, 2015	Student Led: The Potatoe (A) & Coca (B)
Tuesday, February 24, 2015	Research Workshop
Thursday, February 26, 2015	Student Led: Timber (A) & Wine (B)
Tuesday, March 03, 2015	Spring Break
Thursday, March 05, 2015	
Tuesday, March 10, 2015	Student Led: Rubber (A) & Tobacco (B)
Thursday, March 12, 2015	Student Led: King Cotton (A) & Made in China (B), also Project Bibliography due
Tuesday, March 17, 2015	Student Led: Dogs Snarling Together (A) & Perverse Effects and Protectionism (B)
Thursday, March 19, 2015	Student Led: My T-Shirt Finally Encounters a Free Market (A&B)
Tuesday, March 24, 2015	Commerce Implications of Nanotechnology (A)
Thursday, March 26, 2015	Commerce Implications of Biotechnology (B)
Tuesday, March 31, 2015	Commerce Implications of Weather Control (A)
Thursday, April 02, 2015	Commerce Implications of Self-Driving Vehicles (B)
Tuesday, April 07, 2015	Commerce Implications of Demographic Trends (A)
Thursday, April 09, 2015	Commerce Implications of Artificial Intelligence (B)
Tuesday, April 14, 2015	Writing Workshop and CRAPP Assignment: First Version of Report Due
Thursday, April 16, 2015	Student Project Presentations
Tuesday, April 21, 2015	Student Project Presentations
Thursday, April 23, 2015	Student Project Presentations
Date/Time for Section 1 final	Student Project Reports due
Date/Time for Section 2 final	Student Project Reports due

Cell Phone Policy

When entering the classroom, everyone with a cell phone should either turn it off or set it to a silent mode (vibrate is OK). This includes the instructor. If a student's cell phone audibly rings in class, his or her grade will be penalized. The degree of penalty will be up to the instructor and the student's history of cell phone offenses will be considered. If the instructor's cell phone audibly rings (not vibrates) in class, the instructor will provide a bonus to each student's grade.

Grading

Grades are earned on a percentage scale:

A	93% or higher	C	73%-76%
A-	90%-92%	C-	70%-72%
B+	87%-89%	D+	67%-69%
B	83%-86%	D	60%-66%
B-	80%-83%	F	below 60%
C+	77%-79%		

Students who have an average of a C- or below midway through the semester will be given a unsatisfactory for the mid-semester progress report. Students who have an average below a D may be flagged earlier in the semester in an attempt to help the students improve.

Guidelines for Class Participation

During the lecture portion of the class, students may participate by raising their hands if they have a question during the lecture. If the instructor asks the class a question, students are expected to answer.

During other parts of the class (e.g., activities), all students are expected to participate and be fully engaged.

The Honor System

As your instructor, I fully support the University of Mary Washington's Honor System and depend upon you to also safeguard the Honor System in accordance with your pledge.

Instructor Initiated Drop

Students who fail to attend the first class without contacting the instructor may be dropped from the class by the instructor. The instructor also reserves the right to drop students who do not participate in required team activities at any point in the course.

Informal Advising and the Law

As your instructor, I will be glad to provide you with my advice outside of the class if desired. In general, I will hold any information in confidence if requested. However, before sharing personal information you should fully understand the potential consequences of sharing certain information. As an employee of the University of Mary Washington, I am legally an employee of the Commonwealth of Virginia. As such, I am required to report any alleged instance of sexual assault to the university authorities should I become aware of it.

ADA Accommodations

This University abides by the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which stipulates that no student shall be denied the benefits of an education "solely by reason of a handicap." If you have a documented disability that may impact your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see the Disability Resource Coordinator as soon as possible to arrange accommodations. In order to receive accommodations, you must be registered with and provide documentation of your disability to the Office of Disability Resources (ODR) in 401 Lee Hall. After you are registered, I will be glad to meet with you and discuss how to provide you with appropriate accommodations to help you succeed in this class. Accommodations are not retroactive. From the moment you provide me with a letter from the ODR, I will do my best to help you. However, it is your responsibility to provide me with the letter.