



Universidad
de Alcalá

GUÍA DOCENTE

EUROPEAN UNION AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ENVIRONMET

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

University of Alcala

2019/20

SYLLABUS (STUDENT GUIDE)

Subject :	EUROPEAN UNION AND INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT
Code:	201773
Master Program:	MBA
Department and knowledge area:	ECONOMY AND BUSINESS MANGEMENT – APPLIED ECONOMY
Character:	COMPULSORY
ECTS credits:	4
Year and quarterly:	First Year, Second Semester
Lecturers:	Elena Mañas Alcón (Syllabus Responsible) Oscar Montes Pineda
Offices hours:	
Language:	English

Abstract: European Union and International Economic Environment (Code 201773)

This is a compulsory subject addressed to students in the first year of the Master's in International Business Administration (MBA). It is taught in the second semester.

Designing the business competitive strategy of a firm recalls considering not only the firm capabilities and its own market conditions but also the general macroeconomic factors of the country or the geographic area in which the organization operates. A proper assessment of the general economic setting in which firms operate is a key issue for effective decision-making to clearly take advantage of their potential capabilities and for improving firm competitiveness.

With this purpose, this subject aims to provide students with the necessary skills and knowledge to understand, to evaluate and to effectively use the rich and complex information of the variations in the general economic environment in which the firm operates. The subject targets the Spanish and the Euro zone arena. To do so, the course is organized around five items. First, it introduces the main economic indicators of an economy and shows how to correctly read economic fluctuations. Secondly, it shows how to summarize and draw useful conclusions in what regards the economic trends and the cyclical position of the economy. Third, it shows how to monitor the economy in the short run, by presenting the basic tools and key indicators explaining the possible drivers of its performance and best use available forecasts. Fourth, it aims to ease the understanding of the macroeconomic stabilization policy impacts. Last, it shows how to assess the Spanish economic situation in the European and international contexts.

1. OUTLINE

This is a compulsory subject addressed to students in the first year of the Master's in International Business Administration (MBA).

When designing the business competitive strategy, it is important to consider not only its capabilities and its own market conditions but also macroeconomic general factors, related to the country or the geographic area in which the organization operates. GDP growth, inflation rate, unemployment trends, external economic relations and economic policies, for example, are relevant issues that should also be considered by the company managers.

In fact, monitoring general economic fluctuations is a genuine need of economic decision-making process. A correct valuation of the general conditions in which firms operate is a key issue to take advantage of their potentials capabilities and to improve competitiveness. The macroeconomic information requirements are clear: comprehensive, regular, reliable and accurate.

The basic aim of this subject is to provide students with the necessary skills and knowledge to understand, to evaluate and to use the rich and barely always complex information of the variations in the general economic environment, in which the firm operates. The subject targets the Spanish and Euro zone arena.

The main objective can be breakdown in five goals:

- ✚ To identify the main economic indicators and the reading of their fluctuations.
- ✚ To improve student capability to draw useful conclusions about the recent evolution of the general economic environment and the cyclical position of an economy,
- ✚ Learning to track the economy throughout short-run indicators, to use the basic tools to explain the possible causes of this behaviour and to use and interpret available forecasts.
- ✚ To gain knowledge for a better understanding of the macroeconomic stabilization policy impacts.
- ✚ To assess the Spanish economy situation in European and international contexts.

Leadership and management require wide and complex skills and abilities, and that includes having enough knowledge to interpret and assess changes experienced by the macro variables and their outlook, both country in which the company operates and the European Union and the international arena.

Background and recommendations

It is recommended that student carry out an on-going training.

Blackboard Learning System will be used. It provides a specific communication channel for students and teacher, allows the teacher to supply references, reports, homework, practice work and other necessary resources.

2. SKILLS

General skills:

1. Ability of comprehensive reading, and capacity for analysis and synthesis.
2. Improve the capability to collect, organize and interpret economic information in Web sites and in periodicals, both relating to Spanish and EU economy and other OECD countries or economic areas.
3. Argumentation capacity, supported by data, bibliographical references, reports and some other resources provided by the teacher.
4. Ability to communicate ideas and express oral and written correctly.

Specific skills:

1. Acquire a clear idea of the kind of changes experienced by the main variables that define the general economic environment, how these changes ought to be analyzed and interpreted and how this knowledge can improve the economic making decision process.
2. Ability to put into practice the theoretical concepts applied on the most topical concerns.
3. Use fluently the specific and scientific vocabulary related to the theory and practice of the economic environment analysis and the economic indicators in Spain, European Union and International Economy.
4. Become familiar with the behaviour of the economic agents and their impact on the evolution of the economy.

3. CONTENTS

Block of contents	Total hours
<p>BLOCK I.</p> <p>Introduction to economic environment. The short run approach: economic activity in continuous motion, business cycles and first approach to short run indicators.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 hours lectures
<p>BLOCK II.</p> <p>Some necessary tools for the analysis of monthly and quarterly data: time series components; measuring the growth; underlying growth in time series; the essential role of the forecasts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 hours
<p>BLOCK III.</p> <p>Monthly and quarterly reports of the economy behaviour. Analysis of their basic's contents: Real GDP and demand components, the labour market, prices and inflation, external sector, financial and general government variables.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 hours lectures

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. Credit distribution

Class time:	32 hours
Autonomous work:	68 hours
Total hours	100 hours

4.2. Methodological strategies, materials and teaching resources

Class time (sessions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theoretical classes. • Teaching towards the understanding of class content by means of case studies, discussions of recent and sounded macroeconomic reports... • Practical classes. • Collective meetings (office hours)
Autonomous work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings. • Practical activities and exercises, data search, treatment and interpretation. Writing up brief reports. • Familiarization with relevant Web sites.
Office hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deal with answering questions and helping student with the course work.

5. STUDENT EVALUATION

Continuous assessment will be implemented during the course, based in several practical activities that will be programmed and evaluated.

Evaluation criteria

Evaluation will consider not only learned-knowledge but also skill and abilities acquired.

Therefore, for all content's students must demonstrate throughout the course:

- Understanding definitions and main ideas of each course block
- Ease of use and application of the contents to analyse the Spanish and EU economic scenario.
- Rational use of ideas and arguments.
- Capacity of analysis and synthesis.
- Careful and rigorous approach.

6. REFERENCES

- Bernard Baumohl (2008): *The Secret of Economic Indicators: Hidden Clues to Future Economic Trends and Investment Opportunities*. Pearson Education, Prentice Hall. Second Edition.
- Garrido, R., Lucio, J., Mañas, E. y Peinado, M.L. (2003): *Análisis del entorno económico de la empresa*. Ediciones Pirámide. Madrid.
- Guide to Economic Indicators: Making Sense of Economics (6 Ed), The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), 2006
- ECB and European Commission Quarterly and Yearly Economic and Financial Reports
 - *ECB (2019) Annual Report 2018*
 - *ECB (2019) Economic bulletin*
 - *European Commission (2019) European Economic Forecast. Winter 2019*

Other web references may be recommended during the course.

- Eurostat: (<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>)
- OECD (<http://www.oecd.org/economy/>)
- Spanish National Statistical Institute (<https://www.ine.es/en/welcome.shtml>)
- Banco de España (www.bde.es)
- European Central Bank Monthly Bulletin (<https://www.bde.es/bde/en/>)
- Ministry of Economy and Business. (<http://www.mineco.gob.es/portal/site/mineco/>)
Dirección General de Análisis Macroeconómico
(<http://serviciosede.mineco.gob.es/indeco/Sie/ICEtrim.aspx>)
The Spanish economy.
(<http://www.thespanisheconomy.com/>)
- Informe Mensual La Caixa
(<http://www.caixabankresearch.com/publicaciones/im/anteriores>)
- Situación- BBVA (www.bbva.es servicios de estudios)