**GENB 7397**

**INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS RESIDENCY (IBR)**

**Classes 12**

(21 April 2014)

**Information about the IBR requirements and grading for GENB 7397is provided here. This is the next step in the process of preparing you, which has been on going with my visits with you in small groups at meal times here in the Bauer College. I will continue the educational/mentoring process during the IBR by continuing to visit with you in small groups in addition to and during the IBR formal events and in the hotel.**

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GENB 7397: *Selected Topics in General Business Administration* is the course we use for the Bauer EMBA International Business Residency (IBR). I am your professor for the course.

You will go through EU immigration in Frankfurt. I will meet you in Vilnius and will be with you until you leave to return to Houston. Lucie and I will meet you in the airport where you come out after and claiming your luggage. Outside will be your mobile classroom with its operator. The plan is to visit Vilnius and Klaipeda in Lithuania and Copenhagen in Denmark.

Be prepared for a full, exciting and educational experience which you will also enjoy greatly. It is a different kind of course and it is still a course and my focus is on your learning. I do all I can maximize your learning and expect you to do the same. I want you to get full value in terms of learning for the money and time you invest. It is too valuable an opportunity to waste. Thus, claim full value from it.

**GRADES**

Your grade for the course will be based on three items: a Pre-departure Team Report in your existing teams, more on it later (35%); your participation and behavior during the formal time of the program (company visits, speaker’s presentations, cultural excursions) as well as your involvement in the group debriefings of the program events while in Lithuania and Copenhagen (30%); your individual Post-Trip Report about what you learned in on the IBR, which you had to be there to learn (35%). For the Post-Trip report, avoid facts and figures from the internet since they look the same in Frankfurt, Houston or Beijing. Instead focus on your learning of the kind of things you had to be there to learn.

You will do the predeparture reports in your old teams and the in-country debriefings after each company visit or talk in self-formed rotating groups. During the debriefing, you are to share information gained and insights developed from the event. You are expected to take notes during the debriefings to use while writing your individual post-trip report. If you do the debriefings properly and take good notes, you will make it much easier to write the report. Do it well and enhance your learning. I encourage you to take advantage of this unusually valuable learning experience. The actually writing of the post-trip report is an individual effort. I strongly recommend you do a draft on the flight home.

For taking notes during the visit during and the debriefings in the mobile classroom, iPads or other tables are ideal. The idea behind the rotating groups is to give you the opportunity to work with a variety of your classmates so you see can gather some information about how you might work together as members in your new teams to be formed after you return from the IBR. Thus, each time you return to the mobile classroom after a company visit, form a new group to sit together and debrief using the iPads are an ideal way to record ideas and thoughts shared during the debrief. It will seem to you as if you will remember everything from the visit. However, experience shows since you will be “drinking from a fire hose” during your time in China, you memory gets overloaded. The notes will help when you are writing your post-trip reports, thus help your grade and most important help with your learning.

We will have cultural excursions in the cities we visit. They are an integral part of the course and the learning experience. Additionally, there will be a balance of formal and informal time in each city. You will learn things in the formal sessions you are unlikely to learn on your own. Also, during the informal time when go out in groups to do things and experience the culture, you will learn things you will likely not learn in the formal sessions. Thus, a balance of time is planned.

Relatedly, expect Lithuania to be different from the US. Expect things and the way people do things to be different there; otherwise, why would we be going? Thus, you should observe closely how things are done and make notes of “oh that’s how they do that here.”

You will likewise receive articles about Lithuania from me via email. You should read the article and save them for use in both your **Predeparture Report** and **Post-Trip Report**, which are discussed below. Likewise the program provides you with a subscription to *The Economist*. Use it also.

You will email the team’s Pre-departure Report to me and I will get it posted on Blackboard for you to read each others’ reports in preparation for the IBR. I will well as grade it.

**PREDEPARTURE REPORTS**

One of the keys to a successful IBR Trip is preparation. An essential element of preparation is for each study team to prepare a report. The reports will be posted on Blackboard and each individual is required to study all the other reports prior to departure from Houston and/or during the trip to Vilnius. There are a lot of hours between here and there.

Each will do a report on one of the companies we are schedule to visit or a related topic..

The team assignments will be made after the company visits are scheduled based on our best estimate of what the visits will likely be. The scheduling of speakers and visits will likely to be relatively settled around mid April, which is about as early as we can do it. The companies and speakers need to have a good idea of what their demands will be around the time of our visits. Even so, it will only be a planned schedule as things can and do happen. Thus, my plan is to schedule more visit than we need. Then if we lose one of them and even if another is not as good as hoped, we will still have enough good visits for a very successful IBR. Even if we have visited a company before and things have gone well, it can and does happen that events conspire to produce a less good visit. Such risks are a part of doing business internationally and one must learn to plan for them and to be flexible.

I will assign each team one of the companies we are to visit during the International Business Residency (IBR), or a related topic, or, the global leadership topic on which to do the written report. The report will be posted on the IBR Blackboard so the rest of the class can read it.

Your focus is to prepare yourself and others for the IBR company visit so you and they can gain the maximum knowledge and understanding. The company reports should introduce and overview the company, but then focus on what is likely the strategy of the company and what cultural barriers to the implementation of the strategy does it face. Information about the company’s likely strategy can be gleaned from public sources and does not require access to company confidential information. Most executive teams find it easier to develop a global strategy than to implement it. Thus, you are to take a look at the company’s home-country culture and the host cultures involved in implementing it to assess and explain the cultural barriers which it faces. You should include cross-cultural operational issues in the implementation.

The company’s website and related ones such as industry sites can be particularly useful in gaining a quick overview of the company and what factors are shaping its likely strategy. They should be one of your starting points; however, flesh out this quick overview via electronic searches remotely through the UH library for additional information on these and other topics.

Be sure to cite and reference all sources. Failure to properly cite and reference materials is a violation of the Academic Honestly Policy. Your sources should include a few articles from both research and practitioner journals, plus books as well as articles from the business press***.*** I will be sending short articles related to our IBR and you are not only free to use them, you are encouraged to do so. Again, remote electronic searches are great aids and time savers.

The written report should be in the 10-12 pages of text, 1.5-spaced, Time New Roman font, word-processed text in 12-point type with major charts and graphs as appendices. Small charts and figures can be incorporated in the text. The 10-12 pages is meant to give you an idea of the level of effort expected and is not a rigid requirement around which you must maneuver by adjusting font sizes and margins and such.

The report should include a cover sheet with team name and members of the team in alpha order by last name, a table of content, an abstract or executive summary. In the concluding section, it should include at least three questions for the company representatives during our visit. Please email to me for posting to Blackboard. Also, please remember to check the blog and read all the other reports. The report is due May 18, 2014.

This process means for the company visits a few members of the class will know a lot about the company and can take the lead in asking questions during the discussion period. All the other members should know enough about the company to participate intelligently in the discussion. Likewise for the leadership talks everyone should be well prepared to join in discussion as well questions and answers.

**POST-TRIP REPORT**

In addition, you will individually prepare a written report of eight to ten pages of text which is due 08 June 2014 (1.5-spaced, Time New Roman font, word-processed text in 12-point type with major charts and graphs as appendices.)

The report is to build on what your learned writing the Pre-departure report with your team. Throughout the IBR, you are to observe and analyze specific behavioral scenarios which reflect cross-cultural differences. You should make notes, especially during the debriefings, on these in order to be able to integrate them into your IBR report. Additionally, you should make notes during the company visits and speaker presentations and as well as the Q & As and discussions involved during these events. In your self-formed groups, you will critique each visit and talk immediately after it or in the mobile classroom on the way to our next destination. Use your notes and observations from the visit or talk to participate in the debriefing process. Expand your notes based on the team discussion. Your notes and participation should be most extensive for the visit to the company on which your team did their report, but certainly not limited to it.

The focus of the report is what you learned during the IBR which you had to be there to learn. Avoid facts and figures from the internet as they look the same Beijing, Frankfurt or Houston.

**ON THE TRIP**

During the IBR, I will observe and evaluate your interaction and participation during and in conjunction with the company visits, speaker events and cultural appreciation excursions.

The plan is for you individually to write the above report after returning to Houston. However, you will have the information you need to draft your report on the trip home after the Bauer IBR. I really do strongly recommend you do so. Remember, you are to debrief in your rotating self-formed teams. The debriefings are to done immediately following each event in the hotel or in mobile classroom on the way to our next destination. The idea is for you to discuss and analyze the event as a team and individually to make notes to assist you in writing the report. If you are consistent and diligent in this process, you will have most of the work done for writing the report. Then, you will have less of a burden when you are back in Houston to get it done. Again, I suggest doing a draft of the report on the long flight home.

The plan is for you to achieve the most learning with the least burden.

GOOD LEARNING & ENJOY,

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