



Research Area  
Technology,  
Innovation, Marketing,  
Entrepreneurship

**RWTH**AACHEN  
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# INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION COURSE OUTLINE AND READING LIST

PROF. TORSTEN-OLIVER SALGE, PH.D.

School of Business and Economics

**TIME** Research Area | Innovation, Strategy and Organisation Group (ISO)

Contact: Dr. Antje Hütten | [huetten@time.rwth-aachen.de](mailto:huetten@time.rwth-aachen.de)

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*THIS IS A PRELIMINARY VERSION*

## 1 COURSE OVERVIEW

Course Name:	<b>Introduction to Business Administration</b> (ID: 16ws-41952) (Einführung in die Betriebswirtschaftslehre)
Degree Programmes:	Master Wirtschaftswissenschaft
Lecturer:	Prof. Torsten-Oliver Salge, Ph.D.
Contact:	Dr. Antje Hütten ( <a href="mailto:huetten@time.rwth-aachen.de">huetten@time.rwth-aachen.de</a> )
Location and Time:	1820 205 (Fo7, Kármán-Auditorium) Thursdays, 10:15 to 11:45 pm, 13 sessions
Content Description:	The course “Introduction to Business Administration” provides an interactive introduction to business administration and adopts a birds-eye perspective on managerial challenges and problems. Participants will become familiar with selected theoretical concepts, research methods and practical tools from the field of business administration. This includes the examination of competitive and cooperative strategies as well as external, environment-oriented and internal, resource-oriented perspectives. Additionally, contextual elements including the importance of ethics for management will be discussed. To facilitate a deep understanding of the lecture’s contents, the course builds on four different teaching concepts such as video lectures, group debates, case studies, and student’s presentations.
Qualification Objectives:	This course seeks to enhance participants’ ability to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. understand and critically discuss selected theories in business administration and management,</li> <li>2. apply concepts and tools intelligently based on a thorough understanding of their respective strengths and weaknesses,</li> <li>3. analyse and develop adequate solutions to questions arising from company practice in</li> <li>4. craft and present a thoughtful argument in support of their position, and</li> <li>5. critically reflect upon the social and ethical dimension</li> </ol>
Literature:	See readings below
Course Examination:	1. Colloquium & Presentation (weight: 50%) 2. Written Exam (weight: 50%) All components need to be passed to pass the course.
Participation Requirements:	1. Solid command of English. 2. Willingness to engage in project work in a highly interactive group context.
Group Size:	around 70 participants
Workload:	26 hours of lecturing 124 hours of individual or group preparation
Type of Teaching Event:	Lecture with integrated exercise and group debates
Language:	English
Credits:	5

## 2 COURSE ORGANISATION

The course comprises thirteen two-hour sessions, of which five will follow an interactive lecture format and five a case study-based format. The other two sessions cover administrative topics and exam preparation. The table below depicts the preliminary schedule.

### *Preliminary Schedule for Introduction to Business Administration*

	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6	Session 7
	20/10/2016	27/10/2016	03/11/2016	17/11/2016	24/11/2016	01/12/2016	08/12/2016
<b>Format</b>	Introduction	Training	Video Review Group Debate	Case Study	Video Review Group Debate	Case Study	Video Review Group Debate
<b>Content</b>	Introducing the Module	Rhetorical Training	Choice vs. Chance	Strategy Process (Honda)	Industry vs. Firm	Dynamic Capabilities (IBM)	Stability vs. Change
<b>Room</b>	Fo 7	Fo 7	Fo 7	Fo 7	Fo 7	Fo 7	Fo 7
	Session 8	Session 9	Session 10	Session 11	Session 12	Session 13	
	15/12/2016	12/01/2017	19/01/2017	26/01/2017	02/02/2017	09/02/2017	
<b>Format</b>	Case Study	Video Review Group Debate	Case Study	Video Review Group Debate	Case Study	Q & A	
<b>Content</b>	Industry Reinvention (Cirque du Soleil)	Openness vs. Closure	Firm Networks (Smart Products)	Profitability vs. Responsibility	Business Ethics (Himalaya)	Exam Preparation	
<b>Room</b>	Fo 7	Fo 7	Fo 7	Fo 7	Fo 7	Fo 7	

Do note that all participants need to watch and prepare the video lectures (topic briefings) provided via L2P in order to be able to participate in group debates and case study sessions. The following overview shows the thematic arrangement:

	Strategy Process	Strategy Content I (competitive)	Strategy Content II (competitive)	Strategy Content III (competitive)	Strategy Content IV (cooperative)	Strategy Context
<b>Part A</b> Topic Briefings	B1: Explicating the role of organizations and strategy	B2: Analyzing Industry Structures	B3: Developing Internal Resources	B4: Positioning the Firm	B5: Orchestrating Strategic Alliances	B6: Embracing Social Responsibility
<b>Part B</b> Group Debates	Introducing the Module	D1: Choice vs. Chance	D2: Industry vs. Firm	D3: Stability vs. Change	D4: Openness vs. Closure	D5: Profitability vs. Responsibility
<b>Part C</b> Case Studies	C0: Rhetorical Training	C1: Honda	C2: IBM	C3: Cirque du Soleil	C4: Smart Products	C5: Himalaya

This course will be managed via the e-learning platform L2P. All lecture slides, student presentation slides and readings will be deposited here. In addition, we will communicate all important pieces of information (e.g. ppt-Template, group allocation, room changes, course preparation) only via L2P. It is hence essential for you to sign up for our L2P course by 15/10/2016 at the very latest.

All lectures, discussions, and assignments will be in English language.

The final grade is composed of two elements (Evaluation Option A):

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|--------------------------------|------------|
| (1) Colloquium & Presentation: | 50 percent |
| (2) Exam:                      | 50 percent |

Please note, that both elements need to be passed if the course is to be passed.

### 3 READING LIST

As part of this course, five case studies from a range of industries will be discussed in class. It is hence essential to read each case study in preparation of the respective session and bring a print out with you to class. All case studies are available for download on the e-learning platform L2P.

#### *Required Readings*

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- Case 1:** Mintzberg, H. et al. (1996). The "Honda Effect" Revisited. *California Management Review*, 38(4), 78-79.
- Case 2:** Harreld, J.B. et al. (2007). Dynamic Capabilities at IBM. *California Management Review*, 49(4), 21-43.
- Case 3:** Kim, C. & Mauborgne, R. (2004). Blue ocean strategy. *Harvard Business Review*, 82(10), 76–84.
- Case 3:** DeLong, T.J., & Vijayaraghavan, V. (2012). Should You Listen to the Customer?. *Harvard Business Review*, 90(9), 129-133.
- Case 4:** Porter, M. E., & Heppelmann, J. E. (2014). How smart, connected products are transforming competition. *Harvard Business Review*, 92(11), 64-88.
- Case 5:** McCoy, B.H. (1997). The Parable of the Sadhu. *Harvard Business Review*, 75(3), 54-64.
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#### *Optional Readings*

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- De Wit & Meyer (2014). *Strategy: An International Perspective* (5th ed), Cengage Learning.
- Grant (2015). *Contemporary Strategy Analysis* (9th ed), John Wiley & Sons.
- Hit, Freeman & Harrison (2001). *The Blackwell Handbook of Strategic Management (1st ed)*, Wiley-Blackwell.
- Tidd, J., Bessant, J. (2009). *Managing innovation: Integrating Technological, Market and Organizational Change*. John Wiley & Sons.
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## 4 COURSE EXAMINATION

The examination of this course includes two parts. The first part, the case study presentation, consists of the development of a 20 minute screencast and a 5 minute in-class elevator pitch. Students will work in small, interdisciplinary teams on each case. Students will moderate the general discussion following each presentation.

The second part, the individual exam, also counts for 50% of the overall grade. The exam will consist of three parts, a general part covering theoretical concepts and models presented in the video lectures, the development of an argument with regards to a controversial issue in strategic management, and a mini case-study.

**We hope you will enjoy the course and look forward to working with you!**