



Broad College of Business MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

EDUCATION ABROAD – BUSINESS AND CULTURE IN BRAZIL

IBUS 393 Introduction to International Business

Summer 2026 – Syllabus

Instructor

Name: Thomas Rimer, MBA
Office hours: by appointment
E-mail: rimer@broad.msu.edu

Instructor Introduction

Prior to my arrival at Michigan State 9 years ago, I spent over 20 years in the financial industry, mostly in investment analysis and management. I have worked for financial services firms across the USA, managing money for ultra-high-net worth individuals, to not-so-high-net worth individuals, to helping factory workers manage their 401(k). I bring a real-world, practical perspective of what is happening in the world of Finance, and that is the perspective from which I will teach this class.

Course Information

Course Description and Overview

Introduction to the context of international business delivered on-site in foreign settings. Fundamental concepts and principles of globalization such as multinational corporations, foreign markets and economies, internal and external market transactions, international law, cultural influences, and multinational business strategies. We will look at all of these factors and how they impact the business climate in Brazil.

Course Materials

All course materials will be handed out throughout the course. There is nothing that needs to

be purchased.

Prerequisites

None

Recommended Technologies

Computer (I recommend bringing a computer with you to Brazil, but if you prefer not to, at least bring pens and paper).

D2L

The assignments and grades will be posted on D2L. We will be using the Dropbox feature on D2L to turn in assignments (the onsite assignment can be written and given to me).

Course Objectives

After successfully completing this course, students should be able to:

1. articulate the challenges faced by multinational corporations in the countries in which they do business.
2. understand and describe (at a very basic level) the mechanics of foreign exchange.
3. describe how the culture, economic, and legal climates of Brazil impacts the business climate there.
4. Define the particular risks of doing business abroad (especially in Brazil), and how corporations mitigate that risk.

Course Structure

This course is meant to be experiential, and the focus of the program will be on experiential learning. We will supplement this with several class sessions:

Before Departure:

Orientation (1 hours)

This session will acquaint you with program policies and procedures before departure as well as onsite. We will also discuss cultural and legal aspects of life in Dubai to help make your trip safe, educational, and enjoyable.

Pre-trip class session (1 hour) and Pre-trip Video (1 hours)

There will be a 1 hour class session to attend, and a 1-hour video to watch prior to departure. The class session and video will cover topics such as: the structure of multi-national

corporations; an introductory look at the risks, challenges, and opportunities of doing business abroad; foreign currency, foreign exchange, and the impact to businesses of earning revenue and paying expenses in a foreign currency; an introductory look at how culture and legal systems can impact the local business climate. We will also explore the unique business environment in Brazil at a basic level (with more in-depth study onsite).

In Brazil:

Several days in Brazil we will have an informal class session, probably in the morning, in which we discuss the significance of the previous day's events from a cultural and business perspective. During this class session, we will also go over the upcoming itinerary and discuss the significance of previous program events.

Broad College Unpacking Session

More details on this to follow

Requirements and Grading Policies

Course Grade:

Your grade in this course will be determined by the following:

Points	Description
200	Attendance
150	Participation and Professionalism
150	Pre-departure Assignment
300	Onsite Assignments (2 x 150pts each)
200	Final Assignment
1000	Total Points Possible

Attendance:

Attendance at all program events and functions is mandatory. You must attend the orientation and pre-trip class as well as watch the pre-departure video to be able to go on the trip to Brazil. In Brazil you are expected to be at all program functions and events. Missing an event, except in the case of illness, will result in the following penalties:

- First missed event: loss of 50 attendance points
- Second missed event: loss of all 200 attendance points

- Third missed event: your non-participation will be reported to the Education Abroad office, resulting in possible dismissal from program

Note: If you will need to be excused from an event due to illness, you will need to see a doctor for an excusal note.

Professionalism:

You are expected to represent the university in professional manner. **It is also very important in Brazil to be on time for everything; being late is considered very disrespectful.** Also, while the program is meant to be fun, you are expected to obey local laws and behave in a manner befitting Spartans. This includes paying attention and being courteous at all program functions and events. This is an academic program. Significant breaches of professionalism will be met with:

- First time: loss of 50 professionalism points
- Second time: loss of all professionalism points
- Third time: it will be recommended to the Education Abroad office that you be dismissed from the program

Serious breaches of MSU rules or being detained by the local police will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

Assignments:

There will be 4 Assignments to complete as part of the program:

- A pre-trip assignment consisting of a paragraph answering a question.
- 2 assignments to be completed onsite, consisting of a paragraph writeup on certain program activities in Brazil.
- A 3-page paper answering questions about the program.

More details about these assignments will be forthcoming.

Grading Scale

Grade	Points
4.0	950 – 1000
3.5	900 – 949

Grade	Points
3.0	850 – 899
2.5	801 – 849
2.0	751 – 800
1.5	701 – 750
1.0	601 – 700
0.0	0 – 600

Program Schedule

Details about the program schedule will be distributed in mid-December 2025, but here is a rough estimate of the timing of program events:

- Program orientation: early April 2026
- Pre-trip class session: early April 2026
- Pre-trip video will be available immediately after the in-person class session
- Arrival: Saturday, May 2, 2026
- The program starts at 5:00pm local on Sunday, May 2, 2026
- Departure day is Tuesday, May 12, 2026 (students must check out of the hotel by noon)