

SYLLABUS

ST408E

Political Behaviour of the Firm

ACADEMIC AREA :	MANAGEMENT AND STRATEGY
PROGRAMME :	MASTER IBNG / PGE / UGTC LEVEL 4 PGE
PERIOD :	SPRING
COORDINATOR :	Mr. Jean-Baptiste LE MOULEC
INSTRUCTOR(S) :	Dr. Hamid MAZLOOMI-KHAMSEH Mr. Jean-Baptiste LE MOULEC
CONTACT HOURS :	24.0 hours
STUDY TIME :	null hours (Class preparation, homework and assessments)
CREDITS :	4.0 ECTS
AOL :	NO

PRE-REQUISITE MODULES :

MODULE DESCRIPTION :

The Political Behavior of the Firm module discusses, analyzes and appraises overall instruments and practices used to interact with public authorities and policymakers as part of a corporate systematic strategy to weigh on government policy and to shape laws.

CONTRIBUTION TO PROGRAMME LEARNING OBJECTIVES :

- Develop a sustainable strategic vision to Connect (eco-)systems #ConnectSystems

The module places firms in their multilayer and multidimensional societal environment.

By doing so, it highlights the complexity of their role as an economic actors with political, social and environmental objectives as well as responsibilities.

MODULE INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES (ILOs) :

1. Identify the political actors, processes, and procedures that impact corporate activities and objectives and map the power structures
2. Understand and analyze the content of instruments of a public affairs strategy
3. Analyze and compare lobbying tools to be able to test and combine in genuine corporate political strategies.
4. Produce a situation analysis and develop a plan to engage in the policy and law-making process

TOPICS COVERED :

- The stakeholders of public affairs (political institutions, civil society, in-firm players) - Policy making (procedures and processes) - Transparency, corruption and legitimate influence in developed and developing countries - Formulation of Public Affairs Strategy and development of relations with government officials - Various Lobbying regulations and possible corporate frameworks and when to use each

RESEARCH-LED TEACHING :

- The module content relies on an up-to-date review of the academic literature in the related fields of knowledge (management, political science).
- During the sessions, case studies will be discussed and analyzed through the lens of existing evidence-based theoretical frameworks.
- Best practices are also presented and their relevance in various contexts is discussed.
- In their homework and group assignment, the students engage in academic research projects that involves working with scientific literature.

CSR AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS :

Analyzing existing public affairs strategies and formulating new ones requires a good understanding of CSR and the UN's SDGs. A firm's political behavior is determined by such principles and processes.

CSR NB HOURS :

8

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS COVERED :

- 04 - Quality education
- 05 - Gender equality
- 08 - Decent work and economic growth
- 09 - Industry, innovation and infrastructure
- 10 - Reduced inequalities
- 11 - Sustainable cities and communities
- 12 - Responsible consumption and production
- 13 - Climate action
- 16 - Peace, justice and strong institutions

TEACHING METHODS :

- Interactive teaching (flipped classroom)
- Case studies
- Document (readings, videos) analysis and discussion
- In-class workshop from session 3 onwards: research, strategy formulation, final-group presentation

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT :

Continuous/Final	Group/Individual	Assessment	Weight	Duration	ILOs assessed
Continuous	Group	Oral Final exam	40%	15 Minutes	All
Final	Individual	Final written exam	60%	2 Heures	All

Assessment 1 details:

- Oral Presentation based on workshop final output
- Instruction provided on workshop guidelines and explained on session 3
- Written synthesis of the group work provided on the day of the presentation

Assessment 2 details:

- 4 questions on the theoretical inputs and related examples such as presented in class.
- 1 essay-question related to the course's ILOs and contents

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY :

Academic misconduct encompasses various behaviors or actions that violate the principles of academic integrity, fairness, and honesty, thereby undermining the credibility of academic work, assessments, or research. Examples of academic misconduct include:

- Cheating
- Plagiarism
- Fabrication
- Gaining an unfair advantage
- Assisting others in committing academic misconduct, such as by utilizing generative AI
- Falsification of records or official documents
- Unauthorized access to restricted information or data
- Unauthorized or unethical use of generative AIS

Academic misconduct is a serious offense and can result in consequences such as module failure, research project failure, or even expulsion from the school. To prevent unintentional academic misconduct, it is essential to consult with your instructor to understand the specific rules and instructions pertaining to the use of AI in learning and assessment.

For more comprehensive information on academic integrity rules, principles, and disciplinary procedures, please refer to the Academic Integrity section of the Student Handbook.

BIBLIOGRAPHY :

Campos, N. (2009) In pursuit of policy influence: Can lobbying be a legitimate alternative to corruption in developing countries? Chr. Michelsen Institute (Bergen), U4 Brief 2009:1, 4 p. PDF available : <https://urls.fr/PejPc4>

Guéguen, D. (2012). European Lobbying. Brussels, Europolitics. PDF available : [ebook <https://lc.cx/FL6chi>]

Harris, P., & Fleisher, C. S. (2005). The handbook of public affairs. SAGE Publications Ltd, <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781848608108>
PDF available : <https://urls.fr/e6FTQe>

Olson, Mancur (1971). The Logics of Collective Action. Harvard University Press.
Book available : <https://urls.fr/53yGCd>

Weymouth S. Firm lobbying and influence in developing countries: a multilevel approach. Business and Politics. 2012;14(4),1-26.

Additional Reading

Alt, J. E., Carlsen, F., Heum, P., & Johansen, K. (1999). Asset Specificity and the Political Behavior of Firms: Lobbying for Subsidies in Norway. International Organization, 53(1), 99–116.

Apollonio, D. E., & Bero, L. A. (2007). The creation of industry front groups: The tobacco industry and “get government off our back”. American Journal of Public Health, 97(3), 419–427.

Apollonio, D. E., & Malone, R. E. (2010). The “We Card” program: Tobacco industry “youth smoking prevention” as industry self-preservation. American Journal of Public Health, 100(7), 1188–1201.

Bitonti, A., Harris, P. (2017). An Introduction to Lobbying and Public Affairs in Europe. In: Bitonti, A., Harris, P. (eds) Lobbying in Europe. Palgrave Macmillan, London.

Bitonti, A. and Harris, P. (eds.) (2017). Lobbying in Europe. Public Affairs and the Lobbying Industry in 28 EU countries, Palgrave Macmillan, London.

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Campos, N. F. and Giovannoni, F. (2007). Lobbying, Corruption and Political Influence. Public Choice, 131, 1–21.

Chen, Hui, David Parsley, and Ya-Wen Yang (2010), “Corporate Lobbying and Financial Performance,” University of Colorado Boulder Working Paper.

HATVP (2023). Regulating Lobbying: International Comparative Table. Available at URL: [https://hatvp.fr/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/International_comparative_lobbying_table_2023.pdf].

Nohrstedt, Daniel and Tim Heinmiller (2024). Advocacy coalitions as political organizations. Policy and Society, 43-3, 304–316.

International Labor Organization (2005) , The Effective Employer's Organization, Guide 3 Advocacy: Maximizing the Impact of the Voice of Business.

Kerr, William R, William F Lincoln and Prachi Mishra (2011), "The Dynamics of Firm Lobbying," NBER Working Paper 17577.

Masters, Marick F, and Gerald D Keim (1985), "Determinants of PAC Participation Among Large Corporations," Journal of Politics 47.

Moss, D., McGrath, C., Tonge, J., & Harris, P. (2012). Exploring the Management of the Corporate Public Affairs Function in a Dynamic Global Environment. Journal of Public Affairs, 12(1), 47-60.

OECD (2012). Lobbyists, Governments and Public Trust, Volume 2: Promoting Integrity through Self-regulation. Paris, OECD Publishing.

Rich, Andrew et alii (2011). Think-Tanks in Policy-making: Do they matter? Briefing Paper Shanghai, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

Ridge, Jason W., Amy Ingram, and Aaron D. Hill (2017). Beyond Lobbying Expenditures: How Lobbying Breadth and Political Connectedness Affect Firm Outcomes. Academy of Management Journal, 60, 1138–1163

Somerville, I. (2011). Managing public affairs and lobbying: persuasive communication in the policy sphere. In Public Relations: A Managerial Perspective (1-31). SAGE Publications.

Timbate, L., Kim, D., Asrat, D. et al. (2024) Correction: Firm-level political uncertainty, corporate lobbying and risk-taking. Humanities and Social Science Communication, 11-365.

Weber, T. J., Joireman, J., Sprott, D. E., & Hydock, C. (2023). Differential Response to Corporate Political Advocacy and Corporate Social Responsibility: Implications for Political Polarization and Radicalization. Journal of Public Policy & Marketing, 42(1), 74-93.

MODULE PLAN SESSIONS :

Plan Session 01 :

Introductory Session

- Housekeeping presentation: ILOs, assignments, student engagement
- Short article reading followed by questions and discussion
- Warm-up Quiz on politics, policy and government-business relations followed by debrief
- 1 wrap-up PPT: The value of political affairs management for firms
- Homework explanation (reading and questions)

Plan Session 02 :

The political situation of firms

- Collective debrief on the reading (topic: the political dimension of business and corporations)
- Flipped classroom 1: Where does political action start for firms?
- Theoretical input: In-firm politics and their link to the external political environment of companies in the era of mass

media and social networks

- Short video documentary on lobbying in the USA followed by debrief and discussion: How can firm usually try to shape policy-making?
- Theoretical input on the objectives and components of public affairs strategy balanced by the legal and reputational risks
- Homework: reading the guidelines for the Political Strategy Workshop (part-time in-class exercise on session 3 to 8)

Plan Session 03 :

The Stakeholders of Political Affairs Management

- Debrief of homework
- Flipped-classroom: What relationship is there between CSR and political strategy of firms?
- Theoretical input on Stakeholder identification and analysis
- Case study using the "Regional stakeholder maps and analyses of decision flows" from the Baltic Environment Forum
- Homework: Reading the guidelines for the Political Strategy Workshop (part-time in-class exercise on session 4 to 8)

Plan Session 04 :

Political Targets and Policy Agendas

- Flipped classroom: What recent policy changes or announcement call for corporate engagement? from whom? towards whom? How so?
- Theoretical input on political regimes, policies and law-making procedures and processes
- Debrief on the Workshop guidelines
- Launching of the workshop:
 - Group composition
 - Choice of firm among the options proposed in the Guidelines
 - Step 1: research on the firm's identity, political environment and stakes (continued as homework)

Plan Session 05 :

Formulating a Political Affairs Strategy

- Submission of step 1 Company's Political Situation and Challenges
- Flipped classroom: What are the prerequisites of strategic formulation?
- Theoretical input on Political Affairs Strategy formulation (objectives, audience and targets, developing an argument, evaluating usable resources)
- Workshop:
 - Debrief on Step 1 Research
 - Step 2: Stakeholder identification on chosen political challenge (continued as homework)

Plan Session 06 :

Working with the Stakeholders 1: Political Decision-makers

- Flipped classroom: Is lobbying possible in dictatorships?
- Fast reading of S. Weymouth article on lobbying in developing countries. Discussion
- Theoretical input on political engagement of firms, contact programs, and firm positioning
- Document-based discussion on conflicts of interests
- Workshop:
 - Debrief on Step 2 (stakeholder identification)
 - Step 3: target identification and strategy formulation (1)

Plan Session 07 :

Working with the Stakeholders 2: Media and Platforms

- Flipped classroom: The advocacy-linked opportunities and threats provided by social networks
- Case-study on media use by a firm
- Theoretical input on media communication channels, development of media relations, campaign management and crisis management
- Workshop:
 - Debrief on strategy formulation
 - Step 4: Media strategic plan

Plan Session 08 :

Measuring the Success of a Political Strategy

- Flipped classroom: What criterion to assess the success of political strategy of the firm?
- Reading of the role of think-tanks in media plans followed by discussion
- Theoretical input on evaluation modes of political strategies
- Final presentations (15 min. per group with PPT) of group workshops