

“Business on the Frontlines” by Professor Viva Bartkus
Impact of local and MNC business in post-war reconstruction societies

4 credit course, October 29, 2008 - March 16, 2009

Objectives of the course:

- 1) Increase the understanding of future business leaders as to how business can be a force for good (or bad) in society
- 2) Lay the foundation of developmental economics and politics
- 3) Explore in detail, through field visits to war-torn countries, the specific political, cultural, and economic challenges faced by business, culminating in case studies of the positive/negative impact of those business activities

Format of the course (elective worth 4 credits):

- 2 credits (October – December, 2008) for weekly two hour seminar dedicated both to themes in developmental economics and politics and to describing the early findings of a specific country study
- 2 credits (January – March, 2009) for post-field visit case study of impact of business on the frontlines – once again weekly two hour seminar to work with partner organization (eg Catholic Relief Services and US Institute for Peace) to determine lessons learned
- Final presentation of case for the leadership of partner organizations, such that they can benefit from insights gained.
- By competitive application and interview
 - o Note: fully 25% of Notre Dame’s graduating class of 200 MBAs applied for the course, with nearly 50 applications
- Limit of 12 students

Field Visit

- Field visits to two formerly war-torn regions scheduled for about Friday, January 2, 2009 through Sunday, January 11: Bosnia and Lebanon
- Contributions of Notre Dame:
 - o Design of case studies, interview questions, interview scheduling with business leaders/academics/journalists, examination of specific reconstruction challenges, financial subsidy for field visit expenses
- Contribution of Partner organization – CRS’s s
 - o Security, logistics, access to business leaders/government ministers, civic and religious leaders, etc, implementation of in-country field visits

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Syllabus

Week 1: Introduction to “Business for Good”

Sen, Amartya. “The Perspective of Freedom”, *Development as Freedom*, 1999
The Economist. “The Poor and the Rich”, 2008

Week 2: Principles of Development Economics

Acemoglu, Daron. “Root Causes: A Historical Approach to Assessing the Role of Institutions in Economic Development”, and Rodrick, Dani and Arvind Subramanian. “The Primacy of Institutions”, *The Development Economics Reader*, 2008
Wolf, Martin. “The ‘Magic’ of the Market”, *Why Globalization Works*, 2004

Week 3: Continue with Development Economics

Selections: Jane Nelson, *The Business of Peace*
Birdsall, Nancy. “Inequality Matters”, *The Development Economics Reader*, 2008

Week 4: Principles of International Relations/Development Politics

Collier, Paul. “The Conflict Trap”, *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*, 2007
Wolf, Martin. “Physician, Heal Thyself”, *Why Globalization Works*, 2004
Selections: Tim Fort, *Business, Integrity, and Peace*, and *Prophets, Profits, and Peace*,

Week 5: Discussion the United Nations Global Compact

Examination of challenges faced by partner organization: CRS
“CRS Strategic Program Plan”, Catholic Relief Services, 2006
United Nations Global Compact reports

Weeks 6, 7 Launch of Specific Case Studies/ Preparation for field visits

Wall, Barbara. “Conflict zones sometimes mean investment opportunities”, 2008
McKinsey Quarterly, “*From risk to opportunity: How global executives view sociopolitical issues*”, 2008
Collaboration with partner organization (CRS) on preparation for field visit and case study, including interview scheduling, logistics, security briefing, vaccinations, visas

Post-Field Visits to Bosnia and Lebanon

Weeks 1, 2, 3: Discussion of initial findings, including themes regarding ex-patriot investment, exacerbation of sectarian divides, infrastructure, micro-finance among refugees

Week 4 Initial review of case study findings with leaders in partner organizations (CRS) to gain their feedback.

Week 5, 6 Complete case studies on positive/negative impact of business in war-torn areas

Week 7 Final review of case studies and lessons learned with senior leaders of partner organization