

**Miami Business School**  
**BUS 625: Brazilian Business Environment (Global Immersion Elective)**

**Spring 2019**

**Travel Dates: May 2019**

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**Course Introduction**

Brazil, the fifth largest country in the world in terms of area and population, is by far Latin America's largest and most diversified economy. It has abundant natural resources, political stability, highly creative entrepreneurs, and a large and growing middle class, which is young and urban. For these reasons, Brazil is one of the most promising economies going forward. At the same time, however, the country faces chronic deficiencies in infrastructure and regulation that jeopardize its immense growth potential. This course offers an intensive, first-hand survey of Brazil's current business environment at this critical juncture in the country's history. Through classroom discussions, business visits, and cultural immersion experiences, students will better appreciate the opportunities and challenges of doing business in Brazil.

The business visits in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro are designed to provide students with broad exposure to Brazilian businesses. In line with the great diversification of the Brazilian economy, the visits cover a broad range of economic sectors, as well as firms of different size, age, and degree of import/export orientation. We visit both Brazilian firms and local subsidiaries of multinationals.

**Course Objectives**

Global Immersion Electives form an integral part of the MBA academic curriculum and are designed to develop the three critical components of what experts call "global savvy." Specifically, it is the combination of personal characteristics, knowledge, and skills that business leaders of the future will need in order to succeed in the global business arena. Along these lines, the objective of the course is to provide students with:

- Deeper knowledge of the business environment in Brazil, acquired through first-hand exposure to the economic and cultural dimensions of doing business in Brazil.
- Greater self-awareness on the personal traits that have been associated with success in the global business environment.
- Practice along with critical skills students need to exhibit as global managers and leaders.

**Learning Outcomes**

Upon completing this course, students should:

- Understand the culture, social norms, and business practices of the industries covered in the program, which will enhance the student's ability to manage in a global dynamic business environment.
- Appreciate the business, economic, political, social, and cultural climates within Brazil, thereby broadening the student's global perspectives.

- Gain knowledge of new and unfamiliar circumstances through an experiential and conceptual understanding of the complexities of conducting business in a globalized, rapidly changing environment.
- Develop integrative and critical thinking skills to solve problems relevant to global business.
- Develop competency in working more effectively in teams through the completion of a group project relating to Brazil in a business context.
- Develop cultural and ethical awareness in an international context through the trip component.

### Course Requirements

- Attend, and come prepared for, the mandatory pre-trip meetings (see below).
- Complete the pre-trip assignments below. These are group tasks. Students will form groups of 4 or 5 and complete all assignments with the same group.
  - **Before March 22, 2019:** All students will read some chapters from one of three books: *“Brazil on the Rise: The Story of a Country Transformed”* by Larry Rohter, or *“Brazil: The Troubled Rise of a Global Power”* by Michael Reid, or *“Brazillionaires”* by Alex Cuadros.
  - **First assignment: Due March 22, 2019 (6:00 – 9:00pm, room SB 302):** Each group will be assigned a set of chapters from the books. The group will present the key takeaways from the reading material, and lead class discussion on them. The group will also prepare a 1- or 2-page summary report to be distributed to all students. Participation in the discussion of all chapters is required and graded.
  - **Second assignment: Due March 29, 2019 (6:00 – 9:00pm, room SB 302).** Each group will be assigned a set of articles and/or book chapters covering different aspects of Brazilian history, culture, and recent economic trends. The group will present the key takeaways from the reading material, and lead class discussion on them. The group will also prepare a 1- or 2-page report to be distributed to all students.
  - **Third assignment: Due April 5, 2019 (6:00 – 9:00pm, room SB 302).** Each group will be assigned a distinct economic sector in Brazil (financial, retailing, tourism, real estate, etc.). The group will do all the required research on this sector and will present their findings in class. Special attention should be paid to the latest developments and/or news pertinent to that sector. The group will prepare a 1- or 2-page summary report to be distributed to all students.
- Attend all business and cultural visits in Brazil during the trip. Students are expected to be attentive and inquisitive at all visits. Participation is required and graded.
- Students are strongly recommended to keep a detailed personal journal during the trip. Your journal will help you collect and distill your thoughts and feelings about the trip. The journal could include what stands out to you, feels new to you, excites you, or challenges you. The journal will serve as raw material for your post-trip *Reflection Assignment*, described below.
- Complete the post-trip assignments:
  - **Attend mandatory post-trip meeting on date TBA, 2019 (6:00 – 9:00pm, room TBA).**
  - Prepare a *Reflection Assignment*. This assignment is due at the post-trip meeting. Each student will individually prepare a 3- to 5-page report on any topic(s) related to the business side of the trip. It must dig deeply into your experience in Brazil, and critically examine your own learning

through the class. We will have an open discussion about the group's experience during the meeting. All students are expected to participate actively and share their thoughts.

### **Course Evaluation and Grading**

Course participation is essential to the learning objectives of this class, and will comprise nearly half of your grade. Participation is much more than attendance. Students are expected to actively participate in classroom discussion and engage in thoughtful conversation during business trips. Our business hosts take the time to meet with us because they enjoy interacting with students and learning from your perspectives. Your contributions are critical to fostering an engaging environment that benefits all students.

Grading:	Pre-trip group presentations and reports:	40%
	Participation in pre-trip classroom discussions:	10%
	Participation during business and cultural visits:	35%
	Reflection assignment:	15%

The participation scores before and during the trip will be measured by individually tracking the quality of questions asked by each student. Exact details will be provided later.