

Course Syllabus
WCOB 230v
China Study-Abroad Program
Summer 2017



Instructors:

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Course Description:

The Walton College study-abroad course in China is designed to give participants exposure to the business practices, economic and political environments, and culture of China. At the end of the trip, students should have a broad understanding of each of these in comparison to U.S. environments and practices. An emphasis is placed upon the application of this understanding to the changing business environment in China, including opportunities and challenges of doing business as a multinational in China. Of course, it is impossible in a few weeks to develop an in-depth understanding of a country whose civilization is over 5000 years old and whose written history is over 3500 years old, but by the end of your travels you should have at least an introduction to China.

Our role in this course is strictly that of facilitators. Business careers demands self-initiated life-long learning. This requires you to ask questions and seek information about the world, organizations, technology, regulatory environments, specific business tasks, the potential list is endless. Your professional advancement will depend on your ability to sort through information, identify relevant issues and information, internalize that information, and communicate the importance or relevance of that information to others. As a result you are expected to take an active role in the learning process during the study abroad experience. This includes critical thinking, problem identification, and self-initiated inquiry.

Preparation and Attendance

You are expected to be fully prepared for each activity on the trip. This means that you should read relevant background information prior to talks by our speakers or our field trips. For our article discussions, you must do more than read through an article. You should be able to discuss the primary points in the article and relate them to what you have learned during the trip. You are expected to fully participate in every activity and to be *on time*.

Academic Honesty

“Academic dishonesty involves acts that may subvert or compromise the integrity of the educational or research process at the University of Arkansas, when such acts have been performed by a UA student. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, any act by which a student gains or attempts to gain an academic advantage for him/herself or another by misrepresenting his/her or another’s work or by interfering with the independent completion, submission, or evaluation of academic work.”

“As a core part of its mission, the University of Arkansas provides students with the opportunity to further their educational goals through programs of study and research in an environment that promotes freedom of inquiry and academic responsibility. Accomplishing this mission is only possible when intellectual honesty and individual integrity prevail.” (2013-14 University of Arkansas Undergraduate Catalog)

As a University of Arkansas student, you are required to be familiar with and abide by the University’s Academic Integrity Policy which may be found at <http://catalogofstudies.uark.edu/2882.php>. If you have questions about how these policies apply to this course or an assignment, then please see me.

Readings

Please read these carefully (see Assignments below for details on due dates and deliverables). You will need this information when we get to the business visits.

You will need to purchase these from the website indicated below.

Case Studies

- Walmart in China (University of Hong Kong, Asia Case Research Center 2012). Ali Farhoomand. <http://hbsp.harvard.edu/list/partners> (look under author’s last name)
- Li and Fung (Harvard Business School 2012). Warren McFarlan, Michael Shih-Ta Chen, Keith Chi-Ho Wong <http://hbsp.harvard.edu/> (search for Li & Fung)

You will receive these via email from us.

The Business Environment in China

1. Business environment in China: Economic, political, and cultural factors
2. Impacts of business environment changes on global manufacturing outsourcing in China
3. Understanding China’s Business Risk Environment

Manufacturing in China

1. China’s employment and compensation costs in manufacturing through 2008
2. Moving up the Value Chain in Manufacturing for China

Multinationals in China

1. The global strategy of emerging multinationals from China
2. Multinational companies and China: What future?

Retail in China

1. Retail in China

2. China powers of retailing 2010
3. The case for China retail: Issues and opportunities

The influence of Chinese culture on business life

1. The influence of Chinese culture on business life

Assignments and Grade

Please email all assignments at or before the due dates indicated to both instructors at the emails listed on this syllabus. There will be a penalty for late or incomplete submissions. Note that not all components apply to all students, depending on whether you are graduate or undergraduate.

Your grade on the course will be based on the following components:

Pre-Trip

1. **(15 points)** A four-page single spaced essay on Walmart China and a four-page essay on Li and Fung (20 points). You should include factual information, describe the challenges and opportunities they face in the current economic, business, and political climate, and describe the organizational structure.
Due 6PM on Saturday May 3
2. **(10 Points)** Identify a topic or issue that you have particularly interest. Think creatively and broadly. (If you were a dairy vendor it might be cheese consumption. If you were an economist it could be currency values.) Identify 5 China articles from Businessweek.com that relate to your topic. (Hint: Go to Businessweek.com and simply search on China). Based upon the articles, provide a one-page summary of the topic and why it is a business concern in China prior to the trip departure (also provide a list of articles you used). While on the trip be observant for how the issue comes up during our business visits or from your own direct observation while we are traveling. You will be asked to write a short essay of your observations after the trip. **Due 10PM on Thursday May 10.**
3. **(10 Points)** Two questions that you would like to ask each of the following individuals:
 - a. The Chief Executive Officer of Walmart China
 - b. The Chief Operating Officer of Walmart China
 - c. The Chief Merchandising Officer of Walmart China
 - d. The group chairman of Li and Fung
 - e. The president of the direct sourcing group at Li and FungThe questions should be based on careful research and you should know who these individuals are – though we have no guarantee that we will meet them!
Due 6PM on Monday May 19.

During and Post-Trip Assignments

4. **(15 Points)** Based upon the topic you've identified in Assignment 2 above, provide an essay of how the issue manifested itself during the trip (15 Points). It could be based upon discussions during our Business Visits or your own personal observations while in China (Length = 2 pages). Also comment on how your observations contradicted or

complemented the issues as discussed in the articles that you identified? **Due 6PM on June 7**

5. **(15 Points)** Essay titled, “Retail in China.” (15 points) Maximum length = 4 pages single spaced. Minimum length = 2 pages. Make any types of observations you wish: competition, customer-base, store innovation, signage, pricing, promotions, assortment, shelf layout, check stand, departments, cleanliness, service, etc. Make comparisons to the US. Email this while in China.

Due 6PM on June 14

6. **(15 Points)** Web-Based Photo Album: Assemble your 20 favorite photos and publish it to the web, giving access to the instructors and your classmates. Every photo should have a written description as to what stands out about the photo or why you chose it. Your album should reflect your key observations from the trip.

Due 6PM June 21.

Participation

(20 Points) You should participate fully as an ambassador for the Walton College. You are expected to participate in each class discussion either with our group or with external speakers and other people we meet. You should be polite, which means being on time and actively engaged in each class and field trip. We will assign these points, based on our holistic assessment of your comportment, your enthusiasm, and your professionalism. When embarking on a study abroad trip it is common to feel stretched or be taken out of your “comfort zone.” International travel requires flexibility and patience. You will experience different customs and norms. However, these are also the moments that make such trips much more rewarding. A portion of your participation grade will also reflect your ability to adapt to the rigors of the trip.