



LUND
UNIVERSITY

School of Economics and Management

EKHB90, The Firm in a Historical Setting, 5 credits

Företaget i historisk belysning, 5 högskolepoäng

First Cycle / Grundnivå

Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by The Board of the Department of Economic History on 2017-03-07 and was last revised on 2017-03-07. The revised syllabus applies from 2017-08-28, autumn semester 2017.

General Information

The course is mandatory on the program BSc International Business.

Language of instruction: English

Main field of studies

Economic History

Depth of study relative to the degree requirements

G1N, First cycle, has only upper-secondary level entry requirements

Learning outcomes

After completing the course students should be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

- independently analyse and describe the impact of firms on society as well as the impact of society on firms
- understand the role of firms in historical economic development
- evaluate the link between the theoretical explanations of the existence of firms with the empirical record
- analyse and present, orally and in writing, why the number, the structure and the scope of firms differs in different countries as well as over time
- explain what makes firms expand or disappear
- demonstrate knowledge of the essential historical record of firms in Europe and the US from ancient times until the present day
- recognize the importance of institutions (laws, rules, regulations and norms) for the development of firms

Competence and skills

- explain the basics of institutional theory
- explain the basics of the theory of the firm
- explain the basics of growth theory
- explain the basics of entrepreneurial theory
- explain the most important theoretical explanations on why firms exist
- deduce how theories relate to the current social, political and economic context

Judgement and approach

- grasp why all kinds of discrimination and non-democratic principles, in the long run, conflict with the development of firms and economies
- analyse how the values of society affect firms and how firms affect the values of society
- interpret interaction between changing values and firm structure over time
- show a firm understanding of the importance of source criticism for any historical or empirical studies (and in general)
- understand the value of implementing contextual variables
- discern the value of analysing societal and economic dynamics (change)
- hold a basic notion of possible use of contrafactuals to understand societal and economic phenomena
- comprehend the importance of institutions and/or legal frameworks

Course content

Enterprises (or firms) as legal entities are one of the fundamental realities of the modern capitalistic society. But the existence of the firm, its boundaries or development is in no way determined by nature. In this course, we focus on the role of enterprises (firms) in their context, that is, how demographic, economic, historical, legal and political factors explain the structure of firms – but also the other way around; the demographic, economic, historical, legal and political impact of firms. We start out by looking at theories on what companies are and why they exist. We then analyse organized business ventures (firms) throughout history from antiquity until the present day.

Course design

The course is designed as a series of lectures and exercises.

Assessment

Examination may draw on teaching as well as the course literature. Examination is based on both individual and group performance. The examination consists of two parts: 1) One group assignment consisting of one case study to hand in and to be discussed in class during a mandatory seminar. 2) One individual written home-based

exam that should be handed in at the end of the course period.

The case is graded Pass or Fail. Passing the case study is required for passing the course. The take-home exam is graded in accordance with the traditional A-F scale (see below).

The University views plagiarism very seriously, and will take disciplinary actions against students for any kind of attempted malpractice in examinations and assessments. Plagiarism is considered to be a very serious academic offence. The penalty that may be imposed for this and other unfair practice in examinations or assessments, includes suspension from the University.

Subcourses that are part of this course can be found in an appendix at the end of this document.

Grades

Marking scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A.

At the School of Economics and Management grades are awarded in accordance with a criterion-based grading scale UA:

- A: Excellent
- B: Very good
- C: Good
- D: Satisfactory
- E: Sufficient
- U: Fail

Grade (Definition). Characteristic

- A** (Excellent). A distinguished result that is excellent with regard to theoretical depth, practical relevance, analytical ability and independent thought.
- B** (Very good). A very good result with regard to theoretical depth, practical relevance, analytical ability and independent thought.
- C** (Good). The result is of a good standard with regard to theoretical depth, practical relevance, analytical ability and independent thought and lives up to expectations.
- D** (Satisfactory). The result is of a satisfactory standard with regard to theoretical depth, practical relevance, analytical ability and independent thought.
- E** (Sufficient). The result satisfies the minimum requirements with regard to theoretical depth, practical relevance, analytical ability and independent thought, but not more.
- F** (Fail). The result does not meet the minimum requirements with regard to theoretical depth, practical relevance, analytical ability and independent thought.

To pass the course, the students must have been awarded the grade of E or higher.

Students who do not obtain grades A-E on their written classroom exam will be offered opportunities to retake the exam, in which case the student will be assessed according to the regular procedure. In the case of home exams that are handed in after the set deadline, the teacher can: a) hand out a new exam which will be assessed according to the regular procedure, b) penalize the student by handing out a lower grade on the assignment in question unless the student can demonstrate special circumstances for the delay.

Entry requirements

General requirements for university studies in Sweden

Subcourses in EKHB90, The Firm in a Historical Setting

Applies from H17

1701 The Firm in a Historical Setting, 5,0 hp
Grading scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A