

ECO 6936: International Competition Policy Syllabus (Spring 2017)

Instructors:

Roger Blair

Office: 342 Matherly Hall

Telephone: (352) 392-0179

Email Address: rdblair@ufl.edu

Thomas Knight

Office: 340 Matherly Hall

Telephone: (352) 392-5892

Email Address: thomas.knight@ufl.edu

Teaching Assistant:

Wenche Wang

Office: 337 Matherly Hall

Telephone: (352) 392-0160

Email Address: wangwc121@ufl.edu

Required Text:

- 1. *Antitrust Economics* by Roger D. Blair and David L. Kaserman (BK)**
- 2. Blair and Knight Course Pack**

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the course is to introduce the P2MBA student to competition policy (or antitrust policy) in a global context. Over 90 countries have competition policies. The focus here will be on North America (Canada and the U.S.), Europe (the EU), and Asia (China, Japan, and South Korea). Students will learn which business practices are apt to get their company in trouble in domestic and international markets. The economic rationale for prohibiting such practices will be explained to enhance understanding of the policies that they will encounter. Strategies for avoiding antitrust violations will be discussed and evaluated. In order to get a good appreciation for international antitrust law and the economic analysis that drives it, we will read some case excerpts as well as some economic analyses of market structure and business practices. The specific assignments are contained in the course outline provided below.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- You are expected to attend and participate regularly in this course. While we will not take attendance, we observe attendance patterns. Irregular attendance and/or weak in-class participation often correlate negatively with course performance.**
- There are four team projects that are required for successful completion of this course.**
- There is a cumulative Final Exam that is required for successful completion of this course. This exam is closed-book and to be taken individually. As the course progresses, we will explain the structure and composition of the exam.**

TEAM PROJECT GUIDELINES AND DUE DATES

Each team project involves writing a memorandum to your superior on a specific antitrust issue. You should assume that your superior knows little, if anything, about economics or competition policy, but is generally intelligent and a quick study. Further instructions can be found at the end of this syllabus. The grades on these projects will depend on the quality of the analysis presented. There will be no payoff for length. In fact, the inclusion of largely irrelevant material will result in a grade reduction. Logic, clarity, and economic analysis are the important determinants of the grades.

All Team Projects should be submitted to the Teaching Assistant at wangwc121@ufl.edu by the posted due date and time. Late submissions will not be accepted. Additionally, submissions must adhere to the following guidelines:

- 1) All submissions should be typed (including math equations) and sent in a .doc or .docx file.
- 2) Your name should appear at the top of each page.
- 3) All graphs should be legible and accurate. Approximations are rarely sufficient for receiving credit.

The four team projects are due the Monday before class by 5pm, on January 23rd, February 20th, March 20th, and April 17th. Again, late submission will not be accepted.

GRADING POLICY

Grades are calculated as follows:

Team Project 1	20%
Team Project 2	20%
Team Project 3	20%
Team Project 4	20%
Final Exam	20%

We will use this calculation to determine each student's within class standing and assign final grades based on that information.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

You are expected to abide by the University's rules for academic honesty. These are available for your review at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.php>.

We take these rules very seriously and are committed to upholding the policies and integrity of the University of Florida and the UF MBA program. Cheating, plagiarism, or any other behavior that violates these rules will be prosecuted to the fullest extent.

COURSE OUTLINE (AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE)

**L1 December 18 Syllabus and The Case for Competition
 *Chapters 2-5 (BK)***

MEMORANDUM 1 due January 23rd (5pm)

**L2 January 28 Monopoly Power
 *Chapters 6&7 (BK)***

**L3 January 29 Exclusionary Practices
 *Chapter 8 (BK)***

MEMORANDUM 2 due February 20th (5pm)

**L4 February 25 Price Fixing
 *Chapter 9 (BK)***

**L5 February 26 Oligopoly and Non-price Collusion
 *Chapter 10 (BK)***

MEMORANDUM 3 due March 20th (5pm)

**L6 March 25 Horizontal Mergers
 *Chapter 12 (BK)***

**L7 March 26 Vertical Restraints
 *Chapter 14-20 (BK)***

MEMORANDUM 4 due April 17th (5pm)

L8 April 22 FINAL EXAM

MEMORANDUM 1 – Due Monday, January, 23, 5:00pm

NCAA v. Board of Regents

Make sure you read Chapters 4 and 5 in Blair and Kaserman for a foundation.

Your memo should answer the following questions in essay form:

- 1. Who is the plaintiff?**
- 2. Who is the defendant?**
- 3. What is the restraint on competition? What is the plaintiff's argument? What is the NCAA's argument?**
- 4. How did the Supreme Court justify its rule of reason treatment of the restraint?**

5. How did the Supreme Court rule? Do you agree or disagree with its analysis? Explain.

MEMORANDUM 2 – Due Monday, February 20, 5:00pm

Aspen Skiing v. Aspen Highland Skiing

Make sure you read Chapter 4 in Blair and Kaserman for a foundation.

Your memo should answer the following questions in essay form:

1. Who is the plaintiff?
2. Who is the defendant?
3. What are the relevant markets? What is the evidence of market power?
4. What is the alleged antitrust violation? Explain the conduct that led to the litigation.
5. What was the court's conclusion? What was the basis for its conclusion? Do you agree with the court's conclusion? Why or why not?

MEMORANDUM 3 – Due Monday, March 20, 5:00pm

FTC v. Actavis

Make sure you have read Chapters 6, 7, and 8 in Blair and Kaserman for a foundation.

Your memo should answer the following questions in essay form:

1. Who is the plaintiff?
2. Who is the defendant?
3. What are the relevant markets? What is the evidence of market power?
4. What is the alleged antitrust violation? Is there a conflict between patent law and antitrust?
5. What was the court's conclusion? What was the basis for its conclusion? Do you agree with the court's conclusion? Why or why not? How did the court reconcile the conflicting positions of the FTC and Actavis?

MEMORANDUM 4 – Due Monday, April 17, 5:00pm

American Needle v. National Football League

You should be sure to read Chapter 9 in Blair and Kaserman for a foundation.

Your memo should answer the following questions in essay form:

1. Who are the plaintiffs?
2. Who are the defendants?
3. What is the nature of the alleged antitrust allegation?
4. Does the allegation make economic sense? What was the alleged benefit to the defendants?
5. What issue did the Court address? Is this relevant to American Needle?