

# Doing business in the Global South / Elective/ 2025

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## FACULTY INFORMATION

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## FACULTY BIO



**Dr Marijn Faling** is Assistant Professor cross-sector Governance at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS), EUR. She specializes in private sector engagement in development, collaboration dynamics, sustainable business models and mission drift. Marijn prefers an action-oriented approach to research, and she collaborates with practitioners to inform practice and policy on inclusive business in the Global South. In addition to this elective, Marijn teaches a course on monitoring and evaluation to ISS MA-students.



**Dr. Caroline Witte** is an Assistant Professor for Strategic Management at RSM. In addition to this elective, Caroline teaches economics to the first-year bachelor students, non-market strategy to the MSc students. In addition, she is responsible for the non-market strategy content of the Advanced Strategy course for executives. Her research interest covers strategy, international business, and development economics. She is particularly interested in how firms manage their business in fragile economies. Before joining RSM, Caroline was assistant professor at the Copenhagen Business School and worked as an external consultant at the World Bank.

## ABSTRACT

This innovative MBA elective—co-created by ISS and RSM—explores how business and development intersect in the Global South. Through real-world cases, guest lectures, and a multidisciplinary lens, the course equips students to navigate the region's unique challenges and opportunities, fostering sustainable, inclusive business aligned with global development goals and EU expectations.

## EDUCATIONAL GOALS

Learning areas	Educational Goals. Upon completion of the course, participants can
I. Content- related	<b>Assess opportunities and challenges for businesses in the Global South</b> , considering political, economic, social, and regulatory dynamics across macro, meso, and micro levels.
	<b>Examine supply chain and value chain strategies</b> used by firms operating in the Global South.

II. Skills-related	<b>Apply intercultural communication and collaboration skills</b> in the context of doing business and development, and in building partnerships in diverse Global South environments.
	<b>Analyze how businesses can navigate complex ecosystems</b> , including through stakeholder engagement, institutional dynamics, and cross-sector collaboration.
III. Attitude-related	<b>Critically reflect upon the role of business in contributing to development and sustainability</b> , based on different interpretations of development and the SDG framework.

## TEACHING METHODS AND WORKLOAD

This MBA elective, a unique collaboration between the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) and RSM, operates at the intersection of business and development studies, offering a timely response to today's grand societal challenges. Rooted in RSM's mission to be a force for positive change and ISS's commitment to social justice, equity, and inclusiveness, the course combines academic rigor with real-world relevance.

The course is built on a participatory and student-centred approach to learning. Students actively shape their own learning journey, engaging in discussions, teamwork, and co-creation with faculty. Emphasizing collaborative and interdisciplinary learning, it draws on the strengths of both institutions in jointly developing and teaching the course.

Through case studies, several guest lectures, and student-generated content, the course provides rich, practical insights into conducting sustainable and inclusive business in the Global South—encouraging students to critically reflect, engage deeply, and master their own transition as responsible leaders.

Description	Calculation	Total
In-Class sessions:	6 sessions x 3 hours	18 hours
Class Preparation: (average 2 hours for every 1 hour spent in class)	18 in-class session hours x 2	36 hours
Team Assignment(s)		12 hours
Individual Assignment(s)	6 sessions x 3 hours	18 hours
Total Course Hours		84 Total hours
EC (Number of study credits)	3 EC x 28	84 Total hours

## GRADING AND ASSESSMENT

Course: Insert name	Assessment formats		
Educational goals per course (formulated using action verbs (Bloom's Taxonomy))	Portfolio	Role Play	Total
After following this course, students will be able to:			
<b>Assess opportunities and challenges for businesses in the Global South</b> , considering political, economic, social, and regulatory dynamics across macro, meso, and micro levels.	X		
<b>Examine supply chain and value chain strategies</b> used by firms operating in the Global South.	X		
<b>Apply intercultural communication and collaboration skills</b> in the context of doing business and development, and		X	

in building partnerships in diverse Global South environments.			
<b>Analyze how businesses can navigate complex ecosystems</b> , including through stakeholder engagement, institutional dynamics, and cross-sector collaboration.	X	X	
<b>Critically reflect upon the role of business in contributing to development and sustainability</b> , based on different interpretations of development and the SDG framework.	X		
Weighting factor	60%	40%	100%
Minimum grade required	5.5	5.5	5.5
When failed, resit option within academic year (Yes/No)**	Yes	Yes	
Form of examination (e.g. MC, Open-book, etc.)	Portfolio assignment	Role play	
Group / Individual assessment (Group/Individual)	Individual	Group	

In order to pass the course, each assessment or deliverable (component grade) with a resit option, needs to be at least 5.5. Components with no resit option bear no minimum grade required, but to pass the overall course, the final grade needs to be at least 5.5.

Grades are rounded according to the rounding provisions included in the Examination Regulations (ER) of the programme, and are expressed with 1 decimal point. Not meeting the minimum grade required for either a component grade or the overall course grade determines a fail for the course. Participants can resit a failed component only once. There is no capping of the grade for a resit examination, unless determined by the faculty. The only exception is when the nature of the failed assignment allows for an improvement effort of the same assignment (capped at 5.5 for that component). For this particular course, the faculty has decided that **all assignments allow for an improvement effort**.

Grade penalties for unauthorized late submissions will be automatically imposed. Penalties for unauthorised late submissions range from 10% to 20% deduction from the examination component depending on the hours/days late. Unauthorised late submissions 4 days or longer after the deadline without prior notification and a reasonable explanation for the late submission, will not be accepted.

#### **Fraud, Plagiarism / Self-plagiarism (Appendix B on Code of Conduct, Examination Regulations -ER-)**

The Examination Board defines fraud as *“the action or negligence of a student because of which it is impossible, entirely, or partially, to form a correct judgment about the knowledge, insight, and skills of them or another student”* (ER, 2024-2025). Examples of fraud are cheating, cribbing, plagiarism, freeriding in a team assignment, availability of unauthorized (study) material during a test such as mobile phones, contract cheating/outsourcing/ghost-writing, unauthorized use of generative AI, identity fraud, theft.

Confirmed cases of fraud/plagiarism will lead to (appropriate and proportional) sanctions as defined by the Examination Board in the Rules and Guidelines section of the Examination Regulations (ER). Repetitive cases of fraud/plagiarism lead to expulsion from the programme.

Plagiarism is presenting another person’s work as one’s own. Plagiarism includes any paraphrasing or summarising of the work of another person or group without acknowledgment, including submission of another student’s work as one’s own. Plagiarism frequently involves a failure to acknowledge the quotation of paragraphs, sentences, or even a few phrases written or spoken by someone else.

Using ideas from your own prior work (assignment) without referencing the work in your assignment is considered self-plagiarism.

Participants are required to adhere to the 6 principles outlined in the RSM AI guidelines with regard to the use of Artificial Intelligence Platforms such as ChatGPT and related software/tools. The unauthorised use constitutes violation of plagiarism/ fraud policy. For this particular course, the faculty **promotes an embraced use of AI**.

For more information about academic integrity and AI please refer to the Programme's Examination Regulations and RSM AI guidelines documents on the Student Hub.

Assessment / Deliverable:	Individual or group:	(Due) date and hand in location:	% of final grade:
Portfolio	Individual	Sunday, November 9 2025, 23:59, Canvas	60 %
Role play	Group	Sunday, November 16 2025, 23:59, Canvas	40 %

**For all Canvas submissions, please make sure to include the student name and programme name in the title of the file submission, as well as within the document itself (on the cover page).**

## DETAILED COURSE SCHEDULE

Session 1 <b>Introduction</b> <i>October 27 2025, 18:30 – 21:30</i>	
Topics:	<p>This session explores:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Key trends (current and expected) affecting the business landscape in the Global South.</li><li>• Corresponding opportunities for businesses.</li><li>• Key challenges foreign businesses and new entrants face.</li></ul> <p>We will do so by reflecting on several instances where businesses failed or succeeded and the factors that contributed to this.</p>

Session 2 <b>Understanding the role of business in development (the macro level)</b> <i>October 28 2025, 18:30 – 21:30</i>	
Topics:	<p>Development as a concept has many meanings. This session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• explores the role(s) of business in development for society and focuses on what this looks like, depending on the interpretation of development.</li><li>• examines why development engages business in addressing grand challenges.</li></ul>

### Session 3 **Knowing and navigating global south ecosystems (the meso-level)**

*October 29 2025, 18:30 – 21:30*

#### Topics:

This session:

- focuses on defining - social, infrastructural, cultural economic, political and legislative - characteristics of Global South ecosystems that must be strategically navigated for successful business operations.
- provides you with insight into stakeholder engagement and cross-sector collaborations for sustainability, to understand their essential role in creating legitimacy, institutional structures, and inclusive representation, inter alia.
- We will dive into case studies of companies that navigated the ecosystem and learn about tools that can help to do so.

### Session 4 **Multinational Enterprises and Supply Chain Management in the Global South (micro-level)**

*October 30 2025, 18:30 – 21:30*

#### Topics:

This session explores how multinational enterprises (MNEs) organize their operations in the Global South, with a particular focus on their strategies for managing supply chains and establishing global value chains (GVCs). We will analyze the ways in which multinationals adapt their business models and operational strategies to the complex and dynamic environments in emerging markets. This session:

- Cover key approaches used by MNEs to expand and operate, including joint ventures (JVs), mergers and acquisitions (M&As), greenfield foreign direct investment (FDI) and outsourcing.
- Explores the complexities of supply chain management (SCM) and Global Value Chains (GVCs) in the Global South, focusing on how businesses can design resilient and sustainable supply chains.

### Session 5 **Global interpersonal and intercultural communication and skills**

*October 31 2025, 18:30 – 21:30*

#### Topics:

This section will focus on learning- also by practice- interpersonal and communication skills as needed in doing business with the global South:

- the Inner Development Goals as related to the SDGs,
- definitions of culture and the analytic tool of Cultural Web,
- intercultural communication, and
- ethical issues

### Session 6 **Applying knowledge and skills on doing business in the Global South**

*November 1 2025, 09:30 – 12:30*

#### Topics:

This final session will challenge you to recollect the knowledge and insights from the previous sessions and apply it in a role play.

- The role play is about a partnership that aims to link business interests and development needs in a particular value chain in the Global South.
- It focuses on the challenges, opportunities and tensions related to the collaborative business model and strategy development by actors with diverse interests.
- In small groups you dive into the role of one of these actors, trying to bring the cooperation to a successful conclusion.

## ASSIGNMENTS DESCRIPTION

### Individual portfolio assignment

As part of this elective, participants will complete a series of short individual assignments—one following each class session—that together form a personal learning portfolio. This portfolio serves as a comprehensive and authentic method of assessment, designed to capture your development, insights, and engagement with the course over time.

Each entry in the portfolio will consist of a brief written piece that demonstrates your understanding of the session's content through a concrete output—such as a reflection, applied case insight, or analytical response. This enables you to reflect on your learning process, connect new ideas to your own professional context, highlight challenges encountered, and identify areas for further growth. These reflections are meant to deepen your critical thinking and encourage metacognitive awareness. Together, these components will provide a well-rounded view of your learning journey, blending theory and practice in ways that are meaningful, personal, and professionally relevant.

### Group role play

In the final session, participants will engage in a group role play that brings together key insights from the course. Each group represents a stakeholder in a multi-actor partnership aiming to align business interests with development needs in a Global South value chain. The exercise challenges you to navigate the tensions, opportunities, and complexities of building a collaborative business model with diverse actors.

This assignment emphasizes two key learning objectives: developing intercultural communication and collaboration skills and critically reflecting on the role of business in sustainable development. Group performance in the role play will be graded collectively, based on strategic thinking and ability to manage differing perspectives. Additionally, each group will submit a brief reflection on the role play and its relevance to business in the Global South.