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Student View



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STRATEGIC THINKING IN TURBULENT TIMES

AREA: ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

INTERNATIONAL MBA

N° OF SESSIONS: 15

Professor: **FRANCISCO SAGASTI HOCHHAUSLER**E-Mail: fsagasti@faculty.ie.edu**Dr. Francisco Sagasti**

Professor of Innovation, Strategy and Futures, Universidad del Pacífico, Lima, Peru; Member, Global Strategic Forecasting Community, World Economic Forum; former Chief of Strategic Planning, the World Bank; senior researcher emeritus, FORO Nacional Internacional, Lima, Peru; former Chairman of the United Nations Advisory Committee on Science and Technology; former Chairman the Board, Science and Technology Program, Prime Minister's Office, Peru; former Silberberg Visiting Professor at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania

Academic background

PhD in Social Systems Sciences and Operations Research, Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania
MSc in Industrial Engineering, Penn State University
BS and PEng in Industrial Engineering, National Engineering University, Peru

Academic experience

Professor of Innovation, Strategy and Futures, Universidad del Pacífico, Lima, Peru; Visiting professor, elective courses, Instituto de Empresa, 2009-to date; professor, University for Peace, Costa Rica, 2000-2005; professor at the MBA Program of the Catholic University, Lima, 1997-2000; Silberberg Visiting Professor, Wharton School, 1986-1987; professor, Universidad del Pacífico, 1980-1986; founder and Executive Director of the think-tanks GRADE (1980-1987) and of FORO Nacional Internacional (1993-2006) in Lima, Peru.

COURSE DESCRIPTION, OBJECTIVES AND STRUCTURE

The momentous changes taking place in the international context at the beginning of the 21st century, and their implications for business, government and civil society, are the main focus of Dr. Sagasti's course. In his view "it is important to expand the repertoire of ideas with which to apprehend and understand the challenges, dangers and opportunities of the next three decades," but that "not enough emphasis has been placed on providing the next generation of managers, policy makers and leaders with the information and conceptual tools needed to make sense of the new age we are entering."

Late 16th and early 17th century philosopher and statesman Sir Francis Bacon's ideas provide the starting point for Dr. Sagasti's lectures. The Baconian program to "dominate nature through understanding" unfolded, was deployed and triumphed during the last four hundred years, but its extraordinary success ended up shifting its premises and undermining its foundations. At the twilight of the "Baconian age" there is a need to explore new ways of thinking and acting to improve the human condition. The course will explore the implications of the twilight of the Baconian age and what it means in practice for decision-making in the 21st century.

With fifty years of research, government, business, teaching and writing practice in many countries, complemented with extensive work on planning and futures research, professor Sagasti brings a rich stock of ideas and practical experience to share with course participants. He has been Chief of Strategic Planning and Senior Advisor at the World Bank, Chairman of the United Nations Committee on Science and Technology, Silberberg visiting professor at the

Wharton School, member of the Boards of the International Development Research Centre, the International Institute for Environment and Development, and the Advisory Committee of the Lemelson Foundation that supports invention, has been Chairman of the Science and Technology Program at the Prime Minister's Office in Peru, and has advised private corporations on strategy and social responsibility matters. He has lectured widely in most of the world regions, has published numerous books and academic papers, and produced and directed a TV mini-series on development challenges and responses.

"There is a need to integrate a disparate set of trends and an avalanche of information that defy our capacities to absorb and make sense of them" says Sagasti, whose course is based on a manuscript Dr. Sagasti has been working on during the last several years and will be completed in 2016.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND STRUCTURE

"We don't know what is happening to us, and that is what is happening to us."
Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset.

The main objective of the course is to enlarge the repertoire of concepts and ideas with which the participants perceive, apprehend and interpret the newly emerging context for development and business activities. Lectures aim at expanding mindsets and enhancing the capacity of participants to examine, synthesize, anticipate and respond to the challenges of a new age.

The course is designed for a maximum of 25 students and is divided into four parts. The first part, consisting of four lectures, will present a set of concepts to apprehend and interpret the change processes currently under way. These lectures will provide a historical background to appreciate and understand how and why we got where we are at the beginning of the 21st century. The key organizing concepts for the first part of the course are the articulation, unfolding, deployment and triumph of Sir Francis Bacon's program starting in the seventeenth century, and extending to the end of the twentieth century.

The second part, consisting of five lectures, will focus on the consequences the triumph of Bacon's program, indicating how it shifted its premises, undermined its foundations and brought about the twilight of the Baconian age. These lectures will examine issues such as changing conceptions of reality, matter and time; advances in biology, evolution, cognitive science, digitalization, information and communication technologies and artificial intelligence; new conceptions of human-ecosystems interactions and of the interrelations between knowledge, technology and production. The challenges these issues raise and their implications require redefining our ideas of progress and development, and an exploration of what may organize human endeavors in the post-Baconian age.

The third part, consisting of five lectures, will bring these conceptions to bear on the concerns and issues of course participants, and show how they enrich the set of concepts with which to think strategically in the twilight of the Baconian Age. The tenth to fourteenth lectures will build upon the presentations and interventions of course participants, divided into groups of 4-5 members, each of which will focus on a particular key issue for business, government and society in the next two decades. The class as a whole will discuss each of these presentations and provide feedback to the members of the presenting team. The 4-5 member teams will be formed at the end of the fourth session. At the last session the professor will summarize the key ideas discussed during the course and provide guidance how can they be used to improve strategic thinking in turbulent times.

The fourth part consists of two lectures, the first of which will propose a scheme for thinking strategically at the twilight of Bacon's age grounding the concepts and ideas developed during the course, and also placing them within a framework for strategic thinking, planning and management at the twilight of the Baconian age. The last lecture will summarize and pull together all the issues and topics discussed during the course, and will also be used to obtain feedback from the course participants on their reactions to the ideas put forward by the professor.

READING MATERIALS

A list of reading materials will be provided six weeks before the course begins. It will contain articles, reports and books, and specify which are required reading for the different sessions of the course.

PROGRAM

NEW GROUP

SESSION 1

First part: Understanding the times we are in

- Introduction to the course.
- Where do we come from? Where are we now? Brief examination of recent global changes and their impact on business, government, civil society and academia
- Interpretations of our times: new normal, scenarios for the next two decades, inflexion and singularity, changes in capitalism, anthropocene age, human extinction?

SESSION 2

First part: Understanding the times we are in

- The Baconian age: general introduction
- Who was Sir Francis Bacon and why is he important?
 - Bacon's life
 - Reactions to Bacon's life and work over centuries

- The Baconian program and its components

SESSION 3

First part: Understanding the times we are in

- Background to the Baconian age
- The unfolding of Bacon's program
 - England and Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries: scientific and industrial revolutions
 - England, Europe and the United States in the 19th century: Industrial development, colonialism and capitalism
 - The West and the rest: reactions to the unfolding of Bacon's program throughout the world
- Staging triumph: from the unfolding to the deployment of Bacon's program; from haphazard to deliberate mobilization of knowledge and technology under the aegis of capitalism

SESSION 4

First part: Understanding the times we are in

- The triumph of Bacon's program in the 20th century: harnessing knowledge to control nature and fuel economic growth.
- Consequences and manifestations of the triumph of Bacon's program: Triple crisis: changes in knowledge generation, technological base and production activities: new setting has emerged
- The dark side of success: the twilight of the Baconian age.

SESSION 5

Second part: Exploring the main features of our current age

- A changed landscape for human endeavors
- Shifting worldviews: matter, time and cosmos; biology and evolution, artificial intelligence, ecosystem linkages, human interactions.
- Beyond dualism: cyberspace and virtual reality

SESSION 6

Second part: Exploring the main features of our current age

- The emerging fractured global order:
 - Main features of the fractured global order
 - The domains of the local, the networks and the global
 - Key and enduring fractures: knowledge, technology and innovation
- Divergence in development and progress

SESSION 7

Second part: Exploring the main features of our current age

- Ambiguous success: reconsidering the Baconian program
 - New approaches to knowledge generation
 - Progress development and values
 - Institutions and organizations
- Setting the stage for a new program for humanity

SESSION 8

Second part: Exploring the main features of our current age

- Assessing the human prospect at the twilight of the Baconian age
- Towards a new program: intuitions and hints
- Post-Baconian dawn: grounding the first steps
- Envisaging a post-Baconian age

SESSIONS 9, 10, 11 & 12

Third part: Focus on the concerns of and presentations by course participants

SESSIONS 9 to 13 will be devoted to highly interactive discussions with course participants based largely on the presentations of the groups. The short notes prepared by participants and delivered at the end of seventh session, and on the presentations made by the groups of students, to organize the discussions. Reference will be continuously made to the concepts and ideas put forward in the first two parts of the course.

SESSIONS 13 & 14

Fourth part: Implications for strategic thinking, planning and management; summing up

Sessions 13 and 14 will propose a conceptual framework for strategic thinking, planning and management developed by the professor to structure the key decisions that leaders and managers have to make in steering their organizations in the turbulent times that characterize the twilight of the Baconian age.

They will cover approaches to problem solving and condition improvement, the different types of decisions that an organization makes and how are they interrelated, how to appreciate the system or organization for which planning is carried out, a nine-step guideline for strategic planning, and leadership styles.

Examples of how the conceptual framework was used in practice will be provided in session 14.

SESSION 15

Fourth part: Implications for strategic thinking, planning and management; summing up

The last session will consist of a brief summary of the course by the lecture and a general discussion with course participants. Emphasis will be placed on how to adjust mindsets and habits of thought to face the challenges of the future for government, business and civil society organizations.

EVALUATION METHOD

Participants will be evaluated on the basis of a short (6 pages) note on an issue of particular concern to him or her, which will be defined during the first session and delivered at the close of the seventh session. This paper will account for 40 percent of the final grade, and will be evaluated taking into account: (i) how clearly the paper defines the issue under consideration, places it the broad context of 21st century transformation and explains the reasons why it matters; (ii) whether it identifies the main factors that affect the development of the issue during the next decade or longer; (iii) the extent to which future options to confront challenges and take advantage of opportunities are explored and interpreted; and (iv) the conclusions and recommendations for action derived from the analysis.

Class participation will account for 20 percent, considering both the frequency and quality of interventions.

The final group project and presentation will account for 40 percent of the final grade, and each team member will be asked to make part of the presentation and respond to questions, so as to facilitate assessing individual grades. The group projects should focus on a key global issue, trend or development that is likely to affect the way in which businesses, governments and associations are managed during the next two decades. In addition to a paper that should be less than 15 single-spaced pages long, group members should prepare a presentation to be delivered in class.

Criteria	Score %
Individual work: (i) how clearly the paper defines the issue under consideration, places it the broad context of 21st century transformation and explains the reasons why it matters; (ii) whether it identifies the main factors that affect the development of the issue during the next decade or longer; (iii) the extent to which future options to confront challenges and take advantage of opportunities are explored and interpreted; and (iv) the conclusions and recommendations for action derived from the analysis.	40%
Class participation will account for 20 percent, considering both the frequency and quality of interventions.	20%
The final group project and presentation will account for 40 percent of the final grade, and each team member will be asked to make part of the presentation and respond to questions, so as to facilitate assessing individual grades. The group projects should focus on a key global issue, trend or development that is likely to affect the way in which businesses, governments and associations are managed during the next two decades. In addition to a paper that should be less than 15 single-spaced pages long, group members should prepare a presentation to be delivered in class.	40%

