

# Syllabus

for course at advanced level

**Entrepreneurial Family Firms**  
**Entreprenöriella familjeföretag**

**7.5 Higher Education**  
**Credits**  
**7.5 ECTS credits**

<b>Course code:</b>	FE6618
<b>Valid from:</b>	Spring 2022
<b>Date of approval:</b>	2021-07-07
<b>Department</b>	Stockholm Business School
<b>Main field:</b>	Företagsekonomi
<b>Specialisation:</b>	A1N - Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements

## Decision

This syllabus was approved by the Head of Department at Stockholm Business School, Stockholm University 2021-07-07.

## Prerequisites and special admittance requirements

Degree of Bachelor worth at least 180 credits, or the equivalent. English 6.

## Course structure

Examination code	Name	Higher Education Credits
6618	Entrepreneurial family firms	7.5

## Course content

This course introduces students to the widespread, but complex, phenomenon of entrepreneurial family firms. The course covers many themes relevant for starting a new business and/or for maintaining and growing the entrepreneurial capacity in established family firms. Examples of themes included in the course are: the history and characteristics of entrepreneurial family firms across the globe, strategy, innovation, governance, leadership, succession, sustainability, finance, management control/accounting, transgenerational entrepreneurship, exit, conflicts and relationships and consulting to family firms.

The course is designed for students who are interested in working in family firms (e.g. as entrepreneurs, managers, owners) or with family firms (e.g. as advisors, consultants, board members, bankers) or who come from a family firm background (e.g. next generation family owners). Given that family firms represent the most common type of business organization in most industries and countries, it is very likely students with a business school degree will work in or with family firms at some point in their careers.

The course also includes many practical learning situations with real case studies, guest lectures and company visit that cover both new family-based innovative ventures and established, long-lived family firms that have maintained and developed their entrepreneurial spirit for centuries. The course blends examples and experiences from a Swedish setting with a strong international focus and outlook.

## Learning outcomes

The aim of the course is to introduce conceptual tools and theoretical frameworks that can aid students in better understanding entrepreneurial family firms; as well as develop a skill set that allows students to apply, in practice, appropriate models, theories and experiences presented during the course, as well as to critically

examine the strengths and weaknesses of these models, theories and experiences.

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. Exhibit a deep understanding of central characteristics, opportunities and challenges that different types of family firms face and how they are different compared to non-family firms
2. Describe and integrate main theories, models and concepts within the field of family firms, and explain how these can be applied to understand different types of entrepreneurial family firms
3. Demonstrate an ability to analyse common themes essential for building and growing entrepreneurial family firms, from both a theoretical and practical perspective.
4. Integrate and reflect upon common challenges and key decisions facing entrepreneurial family firms (e.g. strategic choices, governance and control arrangements, succession, leadership, financial options and conflicts) and to build appropriate strategies to address these challenges and key decisions in practice.

### **Education**

The course workload is 200 hours equivalent to 7,5 ECTS.

The language of instruction is English.

The course uses different learning and teaching formats with the purpose to blend theories, concepts and models based on leading research, with practice and experience through examples, cases and real-life challenges.

Introductory lectures lay the theoretical, contextual and practical foundation for the course.

Course seminars focus on live cases/guest lectures/company visits, written teaching cases, and articles, and one final seminar where participants present their live project report.

The live project where student groups work throughout the course with real challenges in a family firm setting is a core component of the course format.

All sessions (lectures, seminars, presentations) are interactive and based on active involvement of participants. The instructor's role is to support and facilitate students' learning and ability to develop skills useful for acting as leader in relation to family firms. Students are given assignments in preparation for each session, and should be ready to present and discuss in class.

### **Forms of examination**

Assessment for the course will be continuous and is carried throughout the different course activities. Each assessment task is weighted in relation to its importance in the overall assessment of the course. The student's results from the different assessment tasks are added up to a total course score that will then translate into the final grade for the course.

Examination is both individual (60%) and group (40%). The individual examination consists of assignment linked to cases studies/guest lectures/company visit and a final exam. The group examination is in the form of group presentations and a written live project where the student group works with a challenge in a real business setting. Attendance in some sessions is mandatory and in some voluntary.

Students will have to pass all course assignments in order to receive a passing grade. A student's grade will depend on performance on both written (individual and group) assignment, oral presentations and level of activity in class sessions.

### **Assessment tasks**

The course contains the following weighted assessment:

1. Individual final examination: assesses intended learning outcomes 1-4; constitutes 60% of total course points.
2. Group examination: assesses intended learning outcomes 1-4; constitutes 40% of total course points.

### **Grading**

After completion of the course, students will receive grades on a scale related to the intended learning outcomes of the course. Passing grades are A, B, C, D and E. Failing grades are Fx and F. A grade Fx can be completed for a grade E.

A course comprises 0–100 course points. Receiving a final passing grade requires at least 50 course points. The scale for the final grade is tied to fixed score intervals: A: 90-100; B: 80-89; C: 70-79; D: 60-69; E: 50-59; Fx: 45-49; F: less than 45. The grades correspond to the total score points a student obtains (over a total of 100) for all the weighted assessment tasks combined as part of the continuous assessment for the course.

Each assessment task is awarded 0–100 points. The score for a single assessment task is the number of points multiplied by its percentage weight, and the combined total of score points for all weighted assessment tasks for the course are added up to a final score between 0 and 100 which then translates into a corresponding final course grade between A and F.

All assessment tasks are assessed on a 100-point scale.

The student is responsible for completing the course's assessment tasks: that a sufficient amount of course points is earned and a passing course grade is obtained. The course's final assessment task can be taken twice: 1) during the course's first scheduled occasion; and, if a passing result (at least 50 course points) was not achieved at the first occasion, 2) at the course's second, scheduled occasion. All other assessment tasks are offered once during the course.

A passing grade (A–E) in the course is obtained when a student has achieved at least 50 course points.

A failing grade (Fx or F) in the course is obtained when a student has not achieved at least 50 course points:

- If 45–49 course points are achieved, a grade Fx is obtained, which can be completed for a grade E within 3 semester weeks after receiving instructions from the course director. If a complementary task is not completed within this time limit, and the course's two final assessment tasks have been accomplished, the course grade Fx is confirmed, implying that the student must re-register for the course and that previously acquired course points are forfeited.
- If less than 45 course points are achieved, a grade F is obtained, implying that the entire course must be retaken and that previously acquired course points are forfeited.

Re-registration implies that:

- first-time registered students have priority access to the seminar groups
- the final assessment task can be re-assessed without attendance at any of the course's other learning activities and without points from the course's other assessment tasks accredited.

Students receiving a passing grade may not retake the final examination or complete a previously not completed assessment task to attain a higher grade. A passing grade may not be turned into a failing grade upon the request of a student.

#### Assessment criteria

Assessment criteria are designed as overall assessments, combined qualitative descriptions of what the student is expected to do in order to demonstrate how well the course's learning outcomes are achieved. The assessment criteria are based upon the general abilities as expressed in the degree objectives of the Higher Education Ordinance (appendix 2, System of Qualifications). The list of abilities below is a compilation of these degree objectives. To pass the course (grade E) students should demonstrate general ability to:

- recall, understand and explain course content, the course subject and its scientific basis and methodology;
- apply course content;
- critically analyse course content;
- problematise course content;
- orally and in writing, present and discuss course content;
- assess course content in terms of scientific, social, and ethical aspects;
- relate course content to current social issues;
- meet standards of written presentation and formal accuracy.

The following assessment criteria are used to decide to what extent students have demonstrated these abilities and hence fulfil the course's intended learning outcomes, whereby a grading decision can be made. A higher grade-level presupposes the abilities at lower levels.

**A (Excellent)** ☐

The student demonstrates ability to evaluate and relate to the content of the course from a comprehensive, critically reflective perspective, as well as to transfer and apply insights in new, meaningful contexts.

**B (Very Good)** ☐

The student demonstrates ability to, from an overarching and coherent perspective of the field, understand and use concepts to explain how different aspects of the course relate to each other, interconnect and become meaningful.

**C (Good)** ☐

The student demonstrates ability to discuss the content, tasks and complex issues dealt with in the course from several well-developed but mainly independent perspectives.

**D (Satisfactory)** ☐

The student demonstrates satisfactory ability to discuss the content, tasks and complex issues dealt with in the course in a way that, albeit in-depth and elaborate, is decidedly one-dimensional.

**E (Sufficient)** ☐

The student demonstrates sufficient ability to discuss the content, tasks and complex issues dealt with in the course in a way that is decidedly one-dimensional.

**Fx (Fail)** ☐

The student's knowledge, skills and abilities display minor flaws, overall or in significant parts.

**F (Fail)** ☐

The student's knowledge, skills and abilities display major flaws, overall or in significant parts.

**Interim**

If the course is discontinued, or its contents are substantially altered, students have the right to be examined according to this syllabus once per semester for three further semesters.

**Limitations**

This course may not be included in a degree together with a course, taken in Sweden or elsewhere, of identical or partially similar content.

**Misc**

Exemption from an assessment task is granted if the student presents a valid reason and a written certification (such as illness and a medical certificate), whereupon the student may re-sit the assessment task at a later date while maintaining previously acquired course points.

Application for exemption should be submitted to the Director of Studies immediately after, or during planned absences well before, the date when the assessment task is carried out. A granted exemption expires at the end of the immediately following semester.

**Required reading**

Course literature and other teaching materials will be specified on the course web approximately 2 months in advance as well as in the study guide.