



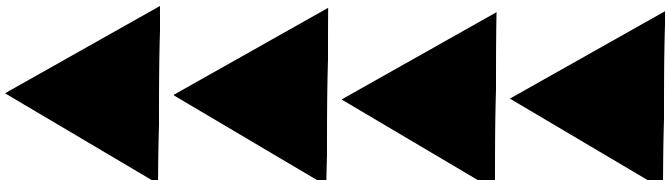
# BUSINESS AND INNOVATION IN CHINA



NORDIC CENTRE  
SUMMER COURSE 2026  
SHANGHAI, CHINA

## COURSE SYLLABUS

FOR ORIENTATION  
MINOR CHANGES MAY OCCUR  
VERSION 1.0 LAST UPDATED 12/01/2026



# BUSINESS AND INNOVATION IN CHINA

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JULY 10 - JULY 24, 2026

NORDIC CENTRE / FUDAN UNIVERSITY  
SHANGHAI

## 欢迎 WELCOME

to the cohort of 2026!

We are very much looking forward to meeting you in Shanghai in July. The Summer Course 'Business and Innovation in China' is an intensive MA-level course for students from the member universities of the Nordic Centre.

The course is designed to provide Nordic students with an opportunity to gain insight into the exciting and ever-changing business world in China. The course is intended for students with little or no previous knowledge about China, but those familiar with China are also very welcome to take part. Whether you are interested in China for work, further studies or simply because of a general interest in a country of immense global importance, the course has something to offer you.

The course includes academic lectures, practitioners' guest talks, company visits, teamwork exercises as well as individual assignments through which the course takes its participants on an exciting journey full of discoveries about China and what doing business and innovation here involves. This journey will lead through theory and practice of various organizational levels, business processes and complex contexts surrounding them.

# COURSE PROFILE

**PERIOD**

July 10 - July 24, 2026

**FORMAT AND LOCATION**

On-site at Fudan University in Shanghai

The intensive program of the course includes academic lectures, practitioners' guest talks, company visits, teamwork as well as individual assignments

**LEVEL**

Graduate\*

\*The course is designed for Master level students, but graduating Bachelor students may also be enrolled

**ECTS:**

5 (depending on each university's policies)

**PARTICIPATION FEE**

1000 RMB (app. 130 EUR)

## AIM AND CONTEXT

The aim of the course is to introduce the students to the basic principles of business and innovation in China.

Over the past few decades, China has experienced a tremendous economic growth and transformation. Initially, these developments were driven by manufacturing, establishing China as the 'factory of the world' as well as the largest exporter of manufactured goods. More recently, the Chinese policies have shifted the focus towards a knowledge economy and innovation-based growth. While maintaining its leadership in supply chain excellence, China has attracted innovation-related investment on a large scale, and the country is clearly emerging as a promising hub of innovation. The growing domestic market also has a great potential for Chinese and international companies, with innovation being a vital key to success in this extremely competitive and dynamic environment.

# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Following the successful completion of the module, the students will:

- Develop an understanding of the evolution of business and economy in China after 1980,
- Understand innovation as a core business process and will gain insights into its routines, measures and models,
- Be able to position core business processes (including innovation) in the dynamic context of modern China,
- Gain insights into the local business culture and Chinese consumer needs,
- Develop the ability and confidence in evaluating and implementing solutions relevant to the Chinese market.

# LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Learning activities of the course balance a theoretical foundation with engaging students in supervised practice. This balance between theory and practice in the course is sought through a variety of interactive activities of the course, including:

- Approx. 60 hours of lectures/presentations/ company visits
- Work on course assignments in cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary groups
- Pitching of business ideas by groups
- Supervision offered by instructors
- Social activities
- Study trips to neighbouring cities (e.g. Hangzhou and/or Suzhou)

The sessions of the course are designed around numerous reflection rounds and exercises that help students to connect theoretical insights to action. All activities of the course are based on the real-life cases of companies (including both Western companies operating in China as well as Chinese companies seeking to establish their activities outside China).

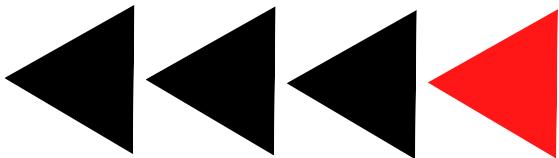
The course materials comprise a compendium of articles, cases and book chapters (app. 300-400 pages). For orientation, in the section Readings and Materials, please find a preliminary reading list of the course. The final reading list will be distributed to the participants in advance before the beginning of the course.

# COURSE EXAM

The course evaluation activities consist of two parts:

- Part 1: An assignment performed in groups during the course. This part is assessed through an oral group presentation arranged on the last day of the course.
- Part 2: An individual written assignment (a reflective essay on a topic related to the course activities; length 2.000-2.500 words) performed after the course and due for submission on September 1, 2026.

The course evaluation and sending out the course diplomas is expected to be completed by mid-September 2026.



## READINGS AND MATERIALS

In the days leading up to the course, you are very welcome to start familiarizing yourself with its literature. It will ease your entry into the topics, which we will be working with during this course. The reading list is divided into several areas which you can tackle in the order that works best for you. Perhaps, start with the area that you are the most curious about and then gradually expand to the remaining areas.

Additional materials (including supplementary media materials, cases, popular business press articles and special reports) will also be used during the course and will be introduced during the respective sessions.

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### WELCOME TO CHINA...

1. Marshall, T. (2016). China. In Tim Marshall, *Prisoners of Geography*. Elliott and Thompson Limited, London, pp. 33-61.
2. Zhang, M. Y., Dodgson, M., & Gann, D. (2022). *Demystifying China's innovation machine: chaotic order*. Oxford University Press (Chapter 1, pp. 1-29).
3. Xi, J. (2017). What is the New Normal in China's Economic Development? In Xi Jinping, *The Governance of China II*. Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, pp. 268-274.
4. Mitter, R., Johnson, E. (2021). What the West Gets Wrong About China. *Harvard Business Review*. Vol. 99, No. 3, pp. 42-48.
5. Prud'homme, D., & von Zedtwitz, M. (2025). The New Rules of Doing Business With China. *MIT Sloan Management Review*. Vol. 66, No. 4, pp. 17-19.

**CHINA AND THE (FAST CHANGING) WORLD**

1. Mathews, J.A. (2006). Dragon Multinationals: New Players in 21st Century Globalization. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, Vol. 23, No. 1, pp. 5-27.
2. Ghemawat, P. (2017). Globalization in the Age of Trump. *Harvard Business Review*. Vol. 95, No. 4, pp. 112-123.
3. Farrell, H. and Newman, A.L. (2020). Chained to Globalization: Why It's Too Late to Decouple, *Foreign Affairs*, January/February, pp. 70-80.
4. Li, J., Qian, G., Zhou, K. Z., Lu, J., & Liu, B. (2021). Belt and Road Initiative, Globalization and Institutional Changes: Implications for Firms in Asia. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, pp. 1-14.
5. Black, J.S., Morrison, A.J. (2021). The Strategic Challenges of Decoupling. *Harvard Business Review*. Vol. 99, No. 3, pp. 49-54.
6. Vertinsky, I., Kuang, Y., Zhou, D., & Cui, V. (2023). The Political Economy and Dynamics of Bifurcated World Governance and the Decoupling of Value Chains: An Alternative Perspective. *Journal of International Business Studies*, pp. 1-27.
7. Prashantham, S. & Woetzel, L. (2025). How Chinese Companies Expand Globally Despite Headwinds. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, Vol. 66, No. 3, pp. 19-21

**UNPACKING INNOVATION**

1. Kennard, M. (2021). *Innovation and Entrepreneurship*. Routledge, London, pp. 1-12.
2. Posner, B., Mangelsdorf, M.E. (2017). 12 Essential Innovation Insights. *MIT Sloan Management Review*. Vol. 59, No. 1, pp. 28-36.
3. Mudambi, R. (2008). Location, Control and Innovation in Knowledge-intensive Industries. *Journal of Economic Geography*, Vol. 8, No. 5, pp. 699-725.
4. Norman, D. (2013). *The Design of Everyday Things*. Basic Books, Philadelphia (pp. 217-221).
5. Osterwalder, A., & Pigneur, Y. (2010). *Business Model Generation: a Handbook for Visionaries, Game Changers, and Challengers*. John Wiley. (pp. 15-55).

**CHINA'S PATH TO INNOVATION**

1. Abrami, R.M., Kirby, W.C., McFarlan, F.W. (2014). Why China can't innovate and what it's doing about it. *Harvard Business Review*. Vol. 92, No. 3, pp. 107-111.
2. Fu, X. (2015). Introduction. In Xiaolan Fu, *China's Path to Innovation*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 3-9.

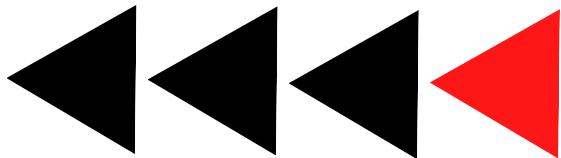
3. Lee, K.-F. (2018). *AI Superpowers: China, Silicon Valley, and the New World Order*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Boston, pp. ix-22.
4. Li, L. (2018). China's Manufacturing Locus in 2025: With a Comparison of "Made-in-China 2025" and "Industry 4.0". *Technological Forecasting & Social Change*, Vol.135, pp. 66-74.
5. Prud'homme, D., & Von Zedtwitz, M. (2018). The Changing Face of Innovation in China. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, Vol. 59, No. 4, pp. 24-32.
6. Konda, P., Slepnev, D. & Jin, J. (2022): From Transaction to Co-creation in Geely's Acquisition of Volvo Cars: Impact on Innovation Output and Market Performance, *Asian Journal of Technology Innovation*, pp. 1-25.

## MANAGING IN CHINA

1. Paine, L.S. (2010). The China Rules. *Harvard Business Review*. Vol. 88, No. 6, pp. 103-108.
2. Schotter, A., Teagarden, M. (2014). Protecting Intellectual Property in China. *MIT Sloan Management Review*. Vol. 55, No. 4, pp. 41-48.
3. Ngoma, T. R. (2016). It Is Not Whom You Know, It Is How Well You Know Them: Foreign Entrepreneurs Building Close Guanxi Relationships. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 239-258.
4. Meyer, E. (2017). Being the Boss in Brussels, Boston, and Beijing. *Harvard Business Review*, Vol. 95, No. 4, pp. 70-77.

## ADAPTING TO THE CHINESE CONSUMER NEEDS

1. Giunta, V. (2016). IKEA in China: A "Glocal" Marketing Strategy. In Christiane Prange, *Market Entry in China*, Springer, London, pp. 73-93.
2. Whitler, K. A. (2019). What Western Marketers Can Learn from China. *Harvard Business Review*. Vol. 97, No. 3, pp. 74-82.
3. Greeven, M.J., Xin, K. and Yip, G.S. (2021). How Chinese Retailers Are Reinventing the Customer Journey Five Lessons for Western Companies. *Harvard Business Review*, Vol. 99, No. 5, pp. 84-93.



## CONTACT INFORMATION

NORDIC CENTRE, FUDAN UNIVERSITY  
220 HANDAN ROAD  
200433 SHANGHAI CHINA  
TEL. +86 21 6564 2267  
[WWW.NORDICCENTRE.NET](http://WWW.NORDICCENTRE.NET)

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**VELI-MATTI PALOMÄKI**  
PROGRAMME MANAGER  
[VELI-MATTI.PALOMAKI@NORDICCENTRE.NET](mailto:VELI-MATTI.PALOMAKI@NORDICCENTRE.NET)

**DMITRIJ SLEPNIOV**  
COURSE INSTRUCTOR  
[DS@BUSINESS.AAU.DK](mailto:DS@BUSINESS.AAU.DK)

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