

Thunderbird School of Global Management boosts student engagement, with help from the Financial Times

ft.com/education



The challenge

Thunderbird wanted to engage students more effectively with current global events and macro-economic issues.

The solution

The FT enables professors to provide students with real examples from business, allowing them to put classroom theory into real-world context.

The benefits

Brings business to life for the students, encourages involvement in class discussions, and saves professors' time.



The Financial Times is required reading in my Global Political Economy course. Its contemporary reporting reinforces concepts that students are learning in the classroom - about globalization, the international monetary system and transnational corporations - and provides global, timely evidence.



Kishore Dash PhD

Associate Professor of Global Studies, Thunderbird School of Global Management

Developing globally-minded leaders

Thunderbird has over 65 years of experience in providing educational programs teaching how to manage in diverse social, economic and political environments. In 2012 its full-time MBA program was ranked No. 1 in International Business by the Financial Times for the sixth consecutive year.

Through its wide range of global management degrees and certificate programs, the school aims to develop globally-minded leaders with the business skills and social responsibility they need to create real and sustainable value for their organizations, their communities and the world. Its global alumni network now stands at 41,000 graduates in 147 nations.

The importance of real-world context

Today's employers are demanding real global awareness from their employees. Business students need to learn how to be managers in a global world, handling the differences in organizations and cultures. They also need to look at difficult issues from several angles – legal, economic, ethical and more – and to handle the conflicting needs of multiple stakeholders.

So in order to become attractive job candidates and progress their careers, Thunderbird students needed to develop strong practical abilities, a genuinely global perspective and a sound understanding of macro-economic issues.



I believe that the act of reading the Financial Times helps increase student involvement in the classroom. While students may not revisit my GPE text after they begin their careers, one good habit that may stick with them is to make it a daily habit to spend 30-40 minutes per day reading the FT. Realistically, with the demands of family and the workplace, this is something they may find the time for and enjoy it. Plus, it is amazing the basis of knowledge one can accumulate from the daily investing of such a small amount of time over many years.



Dr. Roe Goddard

Professor of Global Political Economy,
Thunderbird School of Global Management



In order to engage and inspire them towards this goal, Thunderbird wanted to show them the links between classroom theory and current events. To do this, the school had to be able to offer examples of contemporary business developments and challenges from across the world, helping students to see beyond business theory towards how business works in practice.

But putting teaching into context presented a real challenge because of the massive differences in how the world's economies operate. Thunderbird needed a source of accurate business information that spanned the whole world.

Financial Times intelligence

With almost 600 journalists around the world, the FT is able to offer an unmatched global perspective on business, finance and politics, providing trusted news, analysis and comment 24 hours a day. Bringing business subjects to life, it enables business school students to connect current events with course principles and gives them contemporary, real-world material for their assignments.

An FT Group Subscription gave Thunderbird staff and students access to this valuable intelligence via FT.com. For example, associate professor of global business Dr. Roe Goddard uses the FT in classroom discussions on the various courses he teaches, such as, 'Global Political Economy'.

"We chose the FT because it's a reliable international news source that offers the global perspective our students need, said Dr. Goddard. "I want my students to understand the need to stay informed on current events, and the best way they can do this is by reading the FT. Our classroom discussions often broaden out from the actual assigned work to the topics that are making the FT's front page news."

In addition, says Dr. Goddard, "The fact that we could make it available to all our students was also very attractive, and now all students are required to read the FT as part of the curriculum." Students can search FT.com for relevant real world material to use in their

assignments and projects, illustrating their points, supporting their arguments and helping them to build contemporary global case studies.

And Dr. Goddard explains, "We use the FT as a base for classroom quizzes and exams: I can reference articles for questions that tie in with the course material, and it allows me to show that the topics we cover are relevant in the real world."

The students can set up email alerts to deliver relevant articles and key news stories on a specific subject or company, and also choose from over 40 daily email briefings on a wide range of global industry and sector topics.



I have long read the Financial Times - because of its currency, because of its distinctly global perspective and because of the quality of its journalism; it is a perfect fit for America's unique global school of management - Thunderbird. Thunderbird's market is global, and that is why the Financial Times is a natural partner with Thunderbird with the Financial Times' own global perspective.



Dr. Larry Edward Penley

Interim Provost and Chief Academic Officer,
Thunderbird School of Global Management

Executive MBA student Jacinth Au confirms the FT's value. "From the very first trimester, we were urged to read the Financial Times on a daily basis," says the Charles Schwab executive. "With FT news by email at my fingertips, I can keep abreast of world news and business trends, which has proven to be invaluable in a global economy."

With easy integration options to get FT news into the classroom, it enables students to relate real-world events to coursework and to understand views from students and faculty in other parts of the world. Dr. Goddard says, "This will be a great way to increase student engagement still further."

The benefits for students and staff

The FT Group Subscription means that the FT's valuable content is available to all Thunderbird's staff and students, 24 hours a day, and the digital access allows users to work remotely and with complete flexibility.

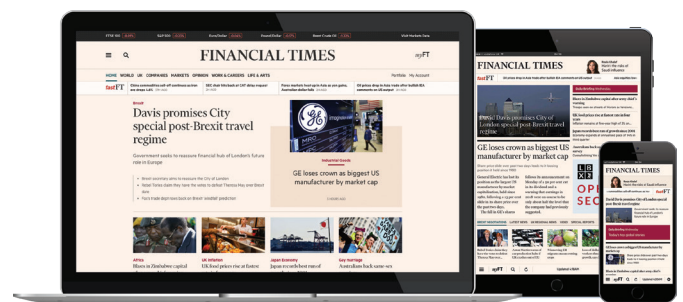
Students can use the FT to follow a topic or theme throughout the term, monitoring subjects from company and political activity to industry developments in a specific country. In addition, the FT's searchable 8-year archive enables quick and easy research: students can find background, identify trends and put key debates in a historical context.

The FT's worldwide coverage has increased students' understanding of different cultures, so they are better prepared for the real world of business. This global coverage also sits well with Thunderbird's worldwide presence: with locations in the U.S., Europe, Asia, Mexico and Russia, the school delivers Executive Education programs when and where they are needed.

And because the FT's coverage is 24/7, students can put their learnings into current and relevant context. Anne Stringfellow, PhD is Thunderbird's Academic Director of the Executive MBA Program. "The FT is

a very valuable resource for the program," she says. "Not only is it required reading in our Global Political Economy course, it's also a great source of up-to-the-minute global business examples for professors teaching business topics such as finance, management, and marketing. We particularly appreciate the FT Briefings, as they represent a very efficient way of keeping up with events around the world."

In addition to improving Thunderbird students' classwork, revision and results, FT intelligence helps to support and frame their experiences in a timely and relevant fashion. By seeing how their course theory works in the context of a range of economies and markets, and by learning the importance of a flexible approach to businesses' needs, the students leave better prepared to make their mark in job interviews and succeed in global business.



The Financial Times allows me to keep a pulse on the world economy and the direction it is headed.

Ray Morgan

Executive MBA student, Texas Instruments executive





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