

**MASTER COURSE:**  
**MICROECONOMICS OF COMPETITIVENESS (MOC)**  
**PROF. DR. PHILIPPE GUGLER**

**Spring term 2025**

**Monday, 11.15am - 2.00pm**



Prof. Philippe Gugler and Prof. Michael E. Porter

Competitiveness of the University of Fribourg ([www.unifr.ch/competitiveness](http://www.unifr.ch/competitiveness)). The course has been developed by Professor Michael E. Porter & his staff and by affiliates of the Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness (HBS).

Successful economic development viewed from a bottom-up, microeconomic perspective. While sound macroeconomic policies, stable legal and political institutions, and improving social conditions create the potential for competitiveness; wealth is actually created at the microeconomic level. The sophistication and productivity of firms, the vitality of clusters, and the quality of the business environment in which competition takes place are the ultimate determinants of nation's and/or region's productivity.

The MOC course explores the determinants of competitiveness and of Microeconomics of Competitiveness: Firms, Clusters, and Economic Development (MOC) is a university-wide graduate course offered to students from the Harvard University as well as to students from affiliated foreign universities such as the Center for

The course Moodle consists of case studies and other written materials plus an extensive library of video content that can be used in class including lectures by Prof. Porter for all sessions and recordings of case protagonists including heads of state, senior ministers, governors, (...).



## Microeconomics of Competitiveness (MOC) Michael Porter (HBS) Concept

### COURSE ORGANIZATION - 9 IMPORTANT INFORMATIONS

**I) Registration:** Each student **needs to be registered** in order to get access to the course material via the Harvard electronic platform, **in addition** to the usual registration procedure of the University of Fribourg. Each student will get an invitation to Moodle and the course documentation, which comprises *inter alia* the case studies as well as other publications.

**II) Registration: February 14 - March 14 2025** (Patrizia Conforti, Office G 402, Monday-Friday, **08.30-11.30**). We strongly advise to be **registered at the beginning of the semester (February 17<sup>th</sup>) in order to attend the course from the beginning (participation constitutes part of the grading).**

**III) Registration costs: 70 CHF** (Patrizia Conforti, Office G 402, Monday-Friday, **08.30-11.30**, please bring the exact change). This includes the course documentation and copyrights. Once registered with access to the course material, **we cannot refund** the registration fee due to copyrights agreements with the HBS.

**IV) Course documentation (with the case studies): The course documentation will be provided when the registration occurs.**

**V) Textbook: “On Competition”, by M. E. Porter, Harvard Business Review Book, 2008 (the textbook will be provided on Moodle).**

**VI) Usual sessions will run every Monday from 11.15am until 2.00pm.** Sessions will run for three hours (3x45 minutes). Each session will comprise:

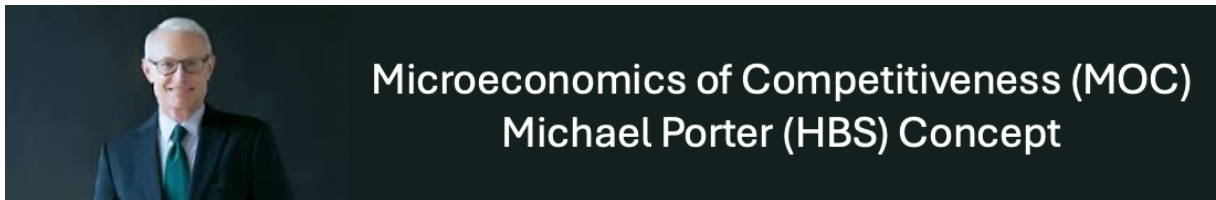
- A case discussion (60 minutes);
- A lecture (75 minutes);

**VII) Students will be asked to apply their learning in a team project, which analyzes the level of competitiveness of a selected country (or region in a large country) and one of its clusters. Groups include 3 to 4 students.**

**VIII) Grading:** There won't be any exam (oral or written) at the end of the spring term. The grading will be based on the average of the two following assessments:

- Assessment 1: **Class participation** (mainly during the case studies discussions).
- Assessment 2: **Report and presentation**.

**IX) Please note that students have to register for the course at the beginning of the spring term according to the faculty regulations, even though there won't be an actual exam at the end of the term. Students who do not register for the course (and therefore for the exam) lose the right to validate the course. Students **who fail** at the spring term assessment will have to take a written exam (90 minutes). This exam will take place at the fall exam session (end of August – beginning of September 2025).**



# Microeconomics of Competitiveness (MOC)

## Michael Porter (HBS) Concept

### COURSE SCHEDULE

(Schedule subject to minor changes)

Date	Session Topic	Case study (course documentation)	Reading (available on Moodle)
February 17th 11.15am-2pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Course presentation and organization</li> </ul> <b>Chapter 1:</b> Competitiveness : overall Framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teams organization and topics allocation</li> </ul>		
February 24th 11.15am-2pm	<b>Chapter 1:</b> Competitiveness : overall Framework (continued) <b>Chapter 2:</b> Firms' strategies and operations	ON (HBS case)	"On Competition", Introduction and Chapter 1, 2, and 8
March 3rd 11.15am-2pm	<b>Chapter 3:</b> Competitiveness and Blue Ocean Strategies <b>Chapter 4:</b> Competitiveness, disruptive, non-disruptive and value-based innovation	CitizenM Case (LBS case)	"On Competition", Introduction and Chapter 1, 2, and 8
March 10th 11.15am-2pm	<b>Chapter 5:</b> Created Shared Value (CSV) Strategies	Patagonia: « Earth Is Now Our Only Shareholder" (HBS case)	"On Competition", chapters 12, 13, and 14
March 17th 11.15am-2pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Michael Porter videos: strategy and CSV</li> <li>Autonomous preparation by the teams</li> </ul>		
March 24th 11.15am-2pm	<b>Chapter 6:</b> Quality of the Business Environment: the Diamond Model <b>Chapter 7:</b> Clusters and Clusters Development	I) "The Californian Wine Cluster" (HBS case) II) "The Australian Wine Cluster" (HBS case)	"On Competition", Chapter 6 and 7
March 31st 11.15am-2pm	<b>Team Project Review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medical device cluster in the region of Freiburg-in-Breisgau (video)</li> <li>Medtech cluster in Galway Region (video)</li> </ul>		Dublin Construction Cluster (Agakhanova, Eyer, Mavrogonatou, Premand) The Medtech cluster in Galway (Cousa, Jam, Quirighetti, Rossier)
April 7th 11.15am-2pm	<b>Chapter 8:</b> MNEs and Location Competitiveness	Attracting Foreign Direct Investments: How Economic Freedom, Strong Institutions, and the Rule of Law Make a Difference (Atlantic Council)	"On Competition", Introduction and Chapter 1, 2, and 8
April 14th 11.15am-2pm	<b>Chapter 9:</b> Globalization of Locations and Firms	How Netflix expanded to 190 countries in 7 years (HBS case)	"On Competition", Introduction and Chapter 1, 2, and 8
April 28th 11.15am-2pm	<b>Chapter 10:</b> Economic Strategy at the National and Regional Levels	Invest in Singapore: Create what next (EDB) The Role of Multi-Level Governance in Shaping Regional Growth and Competitiveness in the Basque Country (C. Gray)	"On Competition", Chapter 6 and 7
May 5th 11.15am-2pm	<b>Chapter 11:</b> Economic Strategies at the City level: Smart and Innovative Cities	Making Madrid Smart (Center for Competitiveness Case)	"On Competition", chapters 10
May 12th	Autonomous preparation by the teams		
May 19th	Team project presentations		
May 26th	Team project presentations		