

**Course:** MG4123 Family Business Management  
**Time:** Monday 11.00-13.00  
**Location:** O' Rahilly Building Room 1.23  
**Lecturers:** Linda Murphy (Co-ordinator), Dr Carol Linehan (Lecturer)  
Alan Crosbie

### **Overview**

Family Business is a most complex form of organisation. Almost half of all entrepreneurial businesses begin with relatives or eventually employ relatives. Many students may come from a family business background, may end up working in a family business or may be owners of a family business sometime in the future. This course will benefit those coming from business owning families, as well as those seeking careers in entrepreneurship, consulting to or advising family firms, or investing in private companies.

### **Module objective:**

Particular objectives of this course are:

1. To gain a greater understanding of family business as a complex, but manageable system using systems theory and by examining the evolution of family businesses.
2. To highlight the importance of family business as a social and economic contributor.
3. To explore the unique challenges facing family business and how they differ from non family businesses.

### **Teaching/Learning Strategy:**

There will be one 2-hour lecture per week. This course will involve lectures, video case studies, and in-class discussion. Guest speakers will also be invited to discuss topics relevant to family business management.

### **Course Content:**

- 1. Introduction to Family Business Management (24<sup>th</sup> September, 2007)**  
Course outline  
Project assignment
- 2. The Performance, Problems and Paradoxes of Family Enterprises (1<sup>st</sup> October, 2007) Lecturer: Linda Murphy**  
Why family business?  
What is a family business?  
Family business: their importance and contribution in Ireland and worldwide  
Family business lifecycles  
Video case study: *Too Hot Too Handle* (from the BBC series by Gerry Robinson).

**3. Balancing Family and the Business (8<sup>th</sup> October, 2007)**

**Lecturer: Linda Murphy**

'Shirtsleeves to shirtsleeves in three generations'

The family v the business (the three circles model)

The family's approach to the business

Guest Speaker: Robert Stewart of Bob Stewarts

**4. The Family Business and You (15<sup>th</sup> October, 2007)**

**Lecturer: Dr Carol Linehan & Alan Crosbie**

Making career choices

The life stage context

Guest speaker: Alan Crosbie

**5. Family Dynamics (22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2007)**

**Lecturer: Dr Carol Linehan**

Family and business systems

i. Different spheres of influence and expectations

ii. Psychological contracts

Cast of Characters

iii. Founders, sons, daughters and their relationships

Managing the overlapping systems

**6. Can't live with him and can't fire him! Human Resource challenges in family businesses (5<sup>th</sup> November, 2007)**

**Lecturer: Dr Carol Linehan**

Challenges of recruitment, development, remuneration and appraising performance for family businesses

Video case study: *To the Manor Born* (BBC Series by Gerry Robinson)

**7. Untangling Conflict in Family Businesses (12th November, 2007)**

**Lecturer: Dr Carol Linehan**

Nature and layers of conflict

Case: The ghost in the business, Miller HBR 2000

Exploring the dynamics of the conflict

Managing conflict

The family strategic plan

**8. Group Presentations (19<sup>th</sup> November, 2007)**

**Teaching team: Dr Carol Linehan & Linda Murphy**

Room 2.63 on Floor 2 of O'Rahilly Building. List of presentation times will be posted on Blackboard.

**9. Family Business Strategy and Competitive Advantage (26<sup>th</sup> November, 2007)**

**Lecturer: Linda Murphy**

Strategies for family firms' v non family firms

'Familianness' as a source of competitive advantage

Video case study: *Arsenic and Old Lace* (BBC series by Gerry Robinson)

**10. Succession – The Final Test of Greatness (3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2007)**

**Lecturer: Linda Murphy**

The challenge of succession

Dilemmas for successor

The transition

Case: Siblings and Succession (Harvard Business Review)

**11. Governance and Ownership (10<sup>th</sup> December, 2007)**

**Lecturer: Linda Murphy**

Professionalizing the family firm

Independent directors

Roles and responsibilities of ownership

Family constitution/protocol

Family offices, family foundations and family investment companies

**Text/Readings:**

A number of books are available on family business (see section 658 on Q+2). A full list of books and journals will be posted on Blackboard. For electronic journal articles, please log on to EBSCO or ABI Global Inform to download articles on family business.

**Blackboard and module website**

This module is part of the Blackboard system (see <http://barra.ucc.ie/>). Case studies, information on guest speakers, a comprehensive reading list and a list of project topics for this module will be posted on blackboard. Students must use their UCC email address for all correspondence regarding this module.

## Assessment

The assessment for this course is based on a group presentation and an individual report. Each group (3-4 per group) is required to complete a project on a family business topic of their choice and write up an individual report on the research conducted. Marks will be allocated as follows:

- A fifteen-minute presentation to the course team which will take place on 19<sup>th</sup> November (worth 25%)
- A final written report due on/or before 14<sup>th</sup> December (worth 75%).

There is no terminal examination for this module.

Students are encouraged to explore a topic that interests them from the various topics covered. The possibilities are virtually unlimited. This presentation and report must focus on a family business issue. Do not devote disproportionate amounts of space to an issue (e.g. geographical data, industry information) unless it is directly relevant to a business issue.

At a minimum the report will incorporate readings from academic literature, relevant company reports/news material and the internet. However in addition to these 'traditional' materials students should try to gather information from other sources such as direct interviews, book-length treatments of the company/country, videos etc.

All students should seek approval of their topic choice. This will be granted on a 'first-come, first-served' basis. Topic choice should be submitted to Linda Murphy by email ([Linda Murphy@ucc.ie](mailto:LindaMurphy@ucc.ie)) no later than 8<sup>th</sup> October 2007.

The report should be submitted by 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2007 to the main departmental office before 1pm. It should not be more than 4,000 words, excluding appendices. It should be typed and should be bound by a single staple. Projects submitted in binders will not be accepted.

Late submission will result in penalties. Please refer to <http://www.ucc.ie/academic/modules/descriptions/MG.html#MG4123> for details of penalties incurred for late submission. Students' attention is drawn to the department's policy on plagiarism which is available on the department website at <http://www.ucc.ie/academic/mgt/studentresources/plagiarism.php>.

### **This course is available to:**

B.Comm IV

B.Comm Euro IV

HDMM (FT)

VSUS

VSEU

