

Module description: Business-Government Relations		
Module Code	w.BA.XX.2BGR.XX	
ECTS Credits	3	
Language of Instruction/Examination	English	
Module Description	<p>This module deals with business-government relations, meaning the professional management of the intersection between a company and its political stakeholders. In this context, the political environment of a company is meant to be understood in its broadest sense to include not only “traditional” political stakeholders such as the executive or legislative branches of government (i.e., ministries, administrations, and parliaments) but also civil society such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Especially companies in highly regulated sectors such as financial services, but also those in business-to-consumer (B2C) markets, strive to improve not only the political-regulatory framework of their business activities but also to protect and, if possible, improve their reputation in the eyes of their political stakeholders. This module is very much geared towards practical application and focuses on the concepts and methods used in the issue management/public policy management of actual companies. The primary aim of the module is to promote students’ competence to act by familiarizing them with fundamental, practically relevant concepts and tools of modern, integrated issue management/public policy management. In addition to aspects such as NGO dialogue, reputation management, and sustainability affairs, there is a particular focus on an introduction to lobbying, the representation of interests in the political process. To this end, students compare various lobbying approaches in selected jurisdictions (Switzerland, EU, US, Asia/PR China). The module is offered and taught by Dr. Manuel Rybach, Chief Corporate Affairs Officer at EFG International.</p>	
Organizational Unit	Institut für Financial Management (IFI)	
Module Coordinator	Tobias Küttel	
Deputy Module Coordinator	Maximilian Müller	
Program and Specialization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elective module (see module table) 	
Legal Framework	Academic Regulations BSc dated 29.01.2009, for the degree programs in Business Administration, International Management, Business Information Technology, Business Law, Business Law and Applied Law, first adopted on 12.05.2009	
Module Category	Module Type Compulsory Elective	Program Phase Main Study Period
Prerequisite Knowledge		
Contribution to Program Learning Objectives (by the concerned Module)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Competence • Methodological Competence • Social Competence • Self-Competence 	

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Contribution to Program Learning Objectives	Professional Competence <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Knowing and Understanding Content of Theoretical and Practical Relevance• Apply, Analyze, and Synthesize Content of Theoretical and Practical Relevance• Evaluate Content of Theoretical and Practical Relevance Methodological Competence <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Problem-Solving & Critical Thinking• Scientific Methodology• Work Methods, Techniques, and Procedures• Information Literacy• Creativity & Innovation Social Competence <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written Communication• Oral Communication• Teamwork & Conflict Management• Intercultural Insight & Ability to Change Perspective Self-Competence <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self-Management & Self-Reflection• Ethical & Social Responsibility• Learning & Change			
Module Learning Objectives	Students... <ul style="list-style-type: none">• recognize the importance of issue management/public policy management and business-government relations for companies.• get to know the key concepts and methods of issue management/public policy management (including lobbying) from a company perspective.• apply these methods while working with practical, realistic case studies.			
Module Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Part 1 - The company and its stakeholders: Improving the framework conditions and protecting the company's reputation vis-à-vis political stakeholders as the aims of issue management/public policy management• Part 2 - Foundations of issue management/ public policy management: Issue management as a three-step process: monitoring/analysis/lobbying. Selected aspects of an integrated, modern issue management, including NGO dialogue, reputation management, and sustainability affairs• Part 3 - Introduction to lobbying: instruments of lobbying, including advocacy planning, working with trade associations, etc.• Part 4 - Lobbying in selected jurisdictions: Comparison of various lobbying approaches in selected economic regions - Switzerland, EU, US, Asia/PR China• Part 5 - (Group) presentations / conclusions			
Links to other modules	This module is linked to the following modules:			
Digital Learning Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reader			
Methods of Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exercises• Interactive Instruction• Project Work• Lecture		Social Settings Used: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group Work	
Type of Instruction		Classroom Instruction	Guided Self-Study	Autonomous Self-Study
	Large Class	-	-	
	Small Class	-	-	
	Group Instruction	28 h	22 h	
	Practical Work	-	-	
	Seminar	-	-	
	Total	28 h	22 h	40 h

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Performance Assessment	End-of-module exam	Form	Length (min.)	Weighting
	-			
	Permitted Resources			
	Others	Assessment	Format	Length (min.)
	Talk/oral presentation	Grade	Gruppenarbeit	20
	Written Assignment	Grade	Gruppenarbeit	0
	Written Assignment	Grade	Gruppenarbeit	0
	Written Assignment	Grade	Gruppenarbeit	60.00
Classroom Attendance Requirement	None			
Compulsory Reading				
Recommended Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dionigi, M.K., Lobbying in the European Parliament. The Battle for Influence, Palgrave Macmillan, 2017 • Buckley, Christopher, Thank You for Smoking, Random House, 2006 • Rasch, D., Lobbying Success in the European Union. The Role of Information and Frames, Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2018 • Hugi, Andreas/Kaufmann, Ronny (Eds.): Innen- und Aussenpolitik von Unternehmen. Corporate Governance und Public Affairs in der Praxis – ein Managementbuch, Stämpfli Verlag, 2014 • economiesuisse, Corporate Social Responsibility aus Sicht der Unternehmen, 2015 • Köppl, Peter: Power Lobbying. Das Praxishandbuch der Public Affairs. Wie professionelles Lobbying die Unternehmenserfolge absichert und steigert, Linde international, 2003 • van Schendelen, Rinus: More Macchiavelli in Brussels. The Art of Lobbying the EU, Amsterdam University Press, 2010 • Schuster, C.H., Lobbying in der Praxis. Strategien und Instrumente in der Interessenvertretung von Verbänden, Polisphäre, 2015 • Zetter, Lionel: Lobbying – The Art of Political Persuasion, Harriman House, 2014 • Ruggie, John Gerard: Just Business – Multinational Corporations and Human Rights, Norton, 2013 • Buholzer, Rene P./Rybach, Manuel, Political Risk and Public Policy Management at Credit Suisse, in Habegger, Beat (ed.), International Handbook on Risk Analysis and Management. Professional Experiences, Center for Security Studies (CSS), ETH Zurich, 2008 • Fombrun, Charles J./Van Riel, Cees B.M., Fame and Fortune. How Successful Companies Build Winning Reputations, Financial Times Prentice Hall, 2004 • Günthard-Maier, Barbara, Politische Kommunikation. Ein Praxisbuch für Parteien, Gruppierungen, Vereine und Verbände, Huber Verlag, 2010 • McGrath, Conor: Lobbying in Washington, London and Brussels. The Persuasive Communication of Political Issues, Studies in Political Science Volume 26, Edwin Mellen Press, 2005 • Liebl, Franz: Der Schock des Neuen. Entstehung und Management von Issues und Trends, Gerling • Michalowitz, Irina: EU Lobbying - Principals, Agents and Targets. Strategic interest intermediation in EU policy-making. Public Affairs und Politikberatung, Vol. 4. Lit-Verlag, 2005 • Rybach, Manuel: Corporate Political Communications and the Financial Crisis. Assessing the Impact on Corporate Public Affairs in the Financial Sector, in Diego Haunreiter (ed.), Kommunikation in Wirtschaft, Recht und Gesellschaft, Staempfli Verlag, 2010 • Baeriswyl, Othmar (Hrsg.), Lobbying in der Schweiz. Partikulärinteressen unter der Bundeskuppel, Verlag mediata sa, 2005 			

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Comments

This module is offered and taught by Dr. Manuel Rybach, Chief Corporate Affairs Officer at EFG International.

The module is structured as two blocks:

Block 1 (2 days, Friday/Saturday, 20/21 February 2026): Lectures on Parts 1-4 (see above)

Block 2 (1 day, Saturday, 25 April 2026): Lectures on Part 4 (cont.) and Part 5 (group presentations/conclusions)

The performance assessments are weighted as follows:

- Written outline/proposal for group assignment/paper (20%)
- Written assignment/paper (group assignment) (60%)
- Group presentation (20%)