AIB Fellows – Opening Plenary Session

Dimensions of Context in IB
Distinguished Speakers

♦ Klaus Meyer, CEIBS
♦ Geoff Jones, Harvard Business School
♦ Alan Rugman, Reading University
Good research in IB requires proper understanding of contextual factors: relevant institutions; relevant history; relevant geographical context.

Problem characterizing an increasing volume of empirical work: overgeneralization of statistical or case-based results, because context is neglected. This largely explains contradictory results.

Is there still a place for high-level theorizing in IB? Yes, but with ‘nested’ models in the application sphere.
Challenge Ahead for IB Scholars?

- Mainstream management journals require generalizable contributions to theory and state-of-the-art methods: Context as a set of control variables.

- Outcomes:
  - Artificial discovery of ‘new’ IB-phenomena, ‘packaged’ around buzzwords and ‘sold’ as truly novel in the academic market place.
  - Authors and reviewers choose to neglect the relevant institutional context, the firms’ histories and the compounded distance among countries and regions that affect IB transactions and that explain, e.g., the idiosyncratic bundling of resources.