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UNIVERSITY OF
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FINAL EXAMINATION

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Programme Name	:	BA (HONOURS) BUSINESS IN COLLABORATION WITH UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH
Course Code & Name	:	MAL3035 INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS COMMUNICATION
Duration	:	3 HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES:

1. Please read the instructions given in the question paper **CAREFULLY**.
2. The question paper consists of **FOUR (4)** questions.
3. Answer **ALL** questions in the question paper.
4. Answers to the questions are to be written into the examination booklet.
5. Electronic dictionaries, lecture notes, files or any unauthorised materials except writing equipment are strictly prohibited.

This question paper must be submitted along with all used and/or unused rough papers and/ or graph papers (if any). Candidates are **NOT ALLOWED** to take any examination paper(s) used or unused out of the examination hall.

WARNING:

The Examination Board of Peninsula College Georgetown regards cheating as a very serious offence and will not hesitate to mete out the appropriate punitive actions according to the severity of the offence committed, and in accordance with the clauses stipulated in the Students' Handbook, up to and including expulsion from Peninsula College Georgetown.

(This booklet contains 8 printed pages including this page)

DO NOT OPEN THIS BOOKLET UNTIL YOU ARE ALLOWED TO DO SO

Answer **ALL** questions on the separate sheet provided.

[100 marks]

1. a) Fill in the blanks using **ONE (1)** of the words given.

seamless	transform	anticipate
morale	perpetuate	dilemma
afloat	hinder	conventional
universal	genuine	unrealistic
priority	competent	compromise
remuneration	dilemma	scrutiny

- i) The manager organized a team-building retreat to boost employee _____ after a stressful project. (2 marks)
- ii) Despite being new to the job, she quickly proved herself to be a _____ and reliable team member. (2 marks)
- iii) Instead of following the _____ method, the researcher experimented with an innovative approach. (2 marks)
- iv) Ensuring customer satisfaction should always be a top _____ for any business. (2 marks)
- v) The event organizers _____ a large crowd and have arranged extra seating. (2 marks)
- vi) Spreading false information can _____ harmful stereotypes and misunderstandings. (2 marks)
- vii) The new software update ensures a _____ transition between different applications. (2 marks)
- viii) The politician's financial records came under intense _____ after allegations of corruption surfaced. (2 marks)

b) Make **ONE** sentence using each of the following words. Your sentence must be more than **EIGHT (8)** words and illustrate the meaning of the words.

- i) resilient
- ii) delegate
- iii) bottom line

Total: [25 marks]

2. a) Read the text and choose the best answer **A, B, C** or **D** for question (i) to (vi).

DeepSeek - how a Chinese AI company just changed the rules of tech-geopolitics

Geopolitically, the arrival of China's tech startup DeepSeek signals potentially far-reaching effects on two fronts, says the National University of Singapore's Alex Capri.

SINGAPORE: The day after TikTok, the embattled Chinese-owned streaming video app, went dark in America, another Chinese product emerged to reshape the tech-geopolitical landscape. AI startup DeepSeek released a large language model (LLM) that reportedly matches, or perhaps surpasses, OpenAI's ChatGPT. Yet the real story is how DeepSeek built this AI—by fine-tuning open-sourced generative AI without relying on Nvidia's high-end chips.

DeepSeek adapted a pre-trained model, gleaned from ChatGPT's open-source code, to its needs for just US\$6 million, a fraction of what others have spent building proprietary systems. This assertion—especially the part about not using Nvidia's top AI chips—rattled financial markets. Nvidia's share price plunged, wiping out hundreds of billions in market capitalization. Altogether, US tech stocks saw a sell-off exceeding US\$1 trillion.

Far-reaching geopolitical effects

DeepSeek's feat has sweeping implications. First, it challenges the idea that cutting-edge AI is inherently tied to controlling advanced semiconductors. Chips have been viewed as the "gateway technology" for everything from supercomputing to biotech, but DeepSeek's reliance on open-source code suggests that the playing field might be more level than assumed—especially for those locked out by export controls.

Second, this development threatens to undermine a key enforcement tool in tech-geopolitics: Washington's grip on advanced semiconductor technology. If open-sourced AI can circumvent the need for premium chips, US export controls and sanctions become less potent. That could reshape the "chip war" dynamic highlighted by economic historian Chris Miller, raising questions about how much leverage governments really have over advanced tech.

DeepSeek's emergence must be seen through a techno-nationalist lens, where national security, economic competitiveness, and social stability depend on a country's technological clout. For Beijing, this breakthrough is a gift: Despite heavy curbs on high-end chip access, a Chinese startup seems poised to compete at the leading edge of generative AI. If others follow suit, it may loosen Washington's hold over where advanced AI can flourish.

American levers diminished?

The US and its allies have enjoyed a decisive advantage by controlling crucial chipmaking assets, from extreme ultraviolet lithography (EUV) machines produced by the Netherlands' ASML to specialized design software. These chokepoints were thought to lock China (and certain other states) out of the race for top-tier AI. Yet the DeepSeek model suggests that leaning on open-source software can mitigate the lack of next-generation semiconductors.

This possibility complicates the broader strategy the US has pursued against China. In December 2024, the outgoing Biden administration rolled out expansive export controls restricting Chinese access to advanced chipmaking tools, software, and older manufacturing processes. The move was part of a "small-yard-high-fence" approach—allowing free rein to close allies but excluding China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea. Several "middle countries," including much of Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East, now face tighter scrutiny and face pressure to choose sides.

The world divided into 3 tech camps

Washington's scheme effectively sorts nations into three technology camps: privileged allies, the ambiguous middle group, and a final cluster of adversaries subject to stringent bans. Yet if any of these groups can adopt open-source AI to build powerful systems without top-end semiconductors, the US may find it harder to enforce its high fences. Middle-tier countries, in particular, could seize the opportunity to develop advanced AI locally, sidestepping the most critical chip chokepoints.

DeepSeek's arrival thus challenges a fundamental assumption: that the most sophisticated AI work depends on the most sophisticated chips. It also suggests a shifting geopolitical terrain in which open-sourced AI could diffuse technological power more broadly. For Beijing, this spells a clear boon. For others, it may offer room to maneuver without picking sides between Washington and Beijing. And for the US, it forces a reconsideration of how export controls and sanctions can remain effective in an AI-driven era.

(Source: Adapted from CNA)

- i) What is the key aspect of DeepSeek's accomplishment, according to the article? (2 marks)
- A** It created a social media platform to rival TikTok.
 - B** It developed a large language model without using open-source software.
 - C** It built a competitive large language model without relying on Nvidia's top-tier AI chips.
 - D** It partnered with Nvidia to mass-produce low-cost AI chips.
- ii) Why did Nvidia's stock plunge, as mentioned in the article? (2 marks)
- A** Investors discovered Nvidia was producing defective chips.
 - B** Markets reacted to the revelation that high-end chips might not be critical for top-tier AI.
 - C** Nvidia announced it would cease manufacturing AI chips.
 - D** A government ban on chip exports caused panic selling.
- iii) Which best describes one of the "far-reaching geopolitical effects" of DeepSeek's accomplishment? (2 marks)
- A** It guarantees China will dominate global AI without competition.
 - B** It undermines the notion that controlling advanced chips is the only path to top-tier AI.
 - C** It forces the US to increase semiconductor exports to China.
 - D** It permanently eliminates US sanctions on Chinese tech firms.
- iv) What is the "small-yard-high-fence" approach mentioned in the article? (2 marks)
- A** A new farming method designed to improve global crop yields.
 - B** A security policy limiting visitors to US government facilities.
 - C** A strategy by the US to grant free technology access to all countries equally.
 - D** A set of export controls designed to restrict access to advanced US technology.

v) According to the article, how are countries categorized under Washington's export control strategy? (2 marks)

- A** Based on population size.
- B** Based on their degree of economic reliance on oil exports.
- C** Into three tech camps: allies with free access, middle countries under pressure, and adversaries under tight restrictions.
- D** Into four groups: two favorable and two hostile blocs.

vi) What broader implication does DeepSeek's model have for US-China tech relations, according to the article? (2 marks)

- A** The US will completely remove all chip-related sanctions on China.
- B** It may reduce Washington's leverage by circumventing dependence on advanced chips.
- C** China will immediately stop all AI development to focus on social media apps.
- D** Middle-tier countries will have no choice but to align fully with the US.

b) Read the text and choose the best answer **A**, **B**, **C** or **D** for question (i) to (vi) and write your answer for question (vii).

What are tariffs and why is Trump threatening to use them?

President Trump has introduced tariffs on goods from China, which retaliated with its own duties on US products. He has also threatened tariffs against Canada and Mexico, though these have been postponed by 30 days after both agreed to increase border security.

According to Trump, tariffs are needed to strengthen the American economy and protect the country from illegal immigration and deadly drugs. He also suggested that tariffs on European goods could be introduced "pretty soon," but indicated a deal might be arranged with the UK.

What are tariffs and how do they work?

Tariffs are taxes levied on goods imported from other nations. If a 10% tariff is applied to a product worth \$10, for example, an extra \$1 is charged. Trump initially planned to impose a 25% tariff on goods from Canada and Mexico but paused those plans for a month. Firms importing goods pay tariffs to the US government.

Why is Trump using tariffs?

Tariffs were a key campaign promise for Trump, who argues they will help boost US manufacturing, protect jobs, raise revenue, and grow the economy. He also says they are part of an effort to combat the opioid crisis, specifically fentanyl—a potent drug that causes tens of thousands of overdose deaths each year in the US. Trump's administration believes chemicals from China, as well as Mexican gangs operating labs in Canada, fuel the supply.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, however, insists that less than 1% of the fentanyl entering the US comes from Canada. Trump has also expressed a desire for Canada to join the US as the 51st state, an idea Trudeau has firmly rejected. China, Mexico, and Canada together supplied over 40% of all imports to the US last year, making these tariffs potentially significant for the American economy.

What is happening with China, Canada, and Mexico?

China

A 10% charge on all Chinese goods entering the US took effect on 4 February. In response, China imposed a 15% tariff on US coal and liquefied natural gas from 10 February, with a 10% tariff on crude oil, agricultural machinery, and large engine cars. China's embassy in Washington stated that "trade and tariff wars have no winners."

Canada

Trump's proposed 25% tariff on Canadian goods was paused for 30 days while both countries discuss a potential deal. Trudeau, who had planned retaliatory tariffs of 25% on US\$107bn worth of US imports, also halted his measures. In return, Canada agreed to a \$1.3bn border security plan, adding technology and personnel to curb fentanyl trafficking—although much of that plan had been announced in December. Trump said this delay would allow the US to see if a final economic agreement could be reached with Canada.

Mexico

Proposed tariffs against Mexico have similarly been delayed a month, as have Mexican countermeasures. Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum agreed to deploy 10,000 National Guard troops to the US-Mexico border to help stop drug trafficking, particularly fentanyl. In exchange, the US pledged to crack down on high-powered weapons being smuggled south.

Which products will be affected?

During Trump's previous time in office, more limited tariffs were placed on Chinese goods. Now, tariffs appear to apply to virtually all Chinese imports, with the possibility of expanded duties on products from Mexico and Canada as well. Industries likely to bear the brunt include car manufacturing, as vehicle parts often cross the US, Mexican, and Canadian borders multiple times before assembly. Financial analysts suggest the average US car price could rise by around \$3,000 if such tariffs are implemented. Fruit, vegetables, spirits, and beer from Mexico may also be subject to higher costs, while Canadian steel, lumber, grains, and potatoes would likely see a spike in prices. Canadian energy would face a 10% tariff rather than 25%.

Will the UK and Europe have to pay tariffs?

Trump told the BBC that the UK could be "worked out," but warned tariffs on EU goods might come "pretty soon," citing what he sees as an unfair trade relationship. The UK's business secretary, Jonathan Reynolds, argues the US should exempt Britain since it buys more American goods than it sells. Last year, the US recorded a \$213bn trade deficit with the EU, which Trump called "an atrocity." EU officials have vowed to "respond firmly" if the US imposes fresh tariffs, with European tariffs previously hitting US brands like Harley Davidson and whiskey distilleries.

Do tariffs cause inflation?

Economists note that part of the cost of tariffs is often passed on to consumers as importers raise prices. Between 2018 and 2023, tariffs on washing machines caused prices for laundry equipment to jump by 34% before eventually falling once the tariffs ended. Some experts warn these new levies risk igniting a broader trade war and pushing inflation higher, with one research group suggesting annual inflation could rise from 2.9% to 4% in the US due to the latest measures.

(Source: Adapted from BBC)

- i) According to the article, what is the main reason President Trump says tariffs are necessary? (2 marks)
- A** To encourage more tourism to the US
 - B** To protect the country from illegal immigration and drugs
 - C** To increase competition among American businesses
 - D** To reduce the cost of foreign goods

- ii) How do tariffs generally work, as described in the article? (2 marks)
- A** They are taxes on domestic goods sold to other countries.
 - B** They are fees on products that American companies export abroad.
 - C** They are taxes on foreign goods paid by importing companies.
 - D** They are special permits required for trade between nations.
- iii) Why did Canada and the US temporarily suspend their reciprocal tariffs? (2 marks)
- A** The two countries have agreed on a comprehensive new trade deal.
 - B** Canada took full responsibility for fentanyl entering the US.
 - C** Canada and the US decided to work on stricter border security measures first.
 - D** The World Trade Organization forced them to pause tariff measures.
- iv) Which statement best describes China's response to the US tariffs? (2 marks)
- A** China refused to impose any tariffs in return.
 - B** China agreed to limit its exports voluntarily.
 - C** China stated it would impose new tariffs on specific US imports.
 - D** China immediately filed a lawsuit against the US in US federal court.
- v) According to the article, what is one major concern if tariffs on car manufacturing are implemented? (2 marks)
- A** Car manufacturers will relocate all factories to Europe.
 - B** Vehicle prices in the US could rise significantly.
 - C** Car sales in the US will become illegal.
 - D** Canada and Mexico will ban the sale of American cars.
- vi) In your opinion, do you think tariffs are an effective way to protect a country's economy, or do they cause more harm than good? Why? (3 marks)
- Total: [25 marks]

3. Imagine you work in the Student Service Department of Penang University. You have received feedback from some parents who expressed concerns about their children's employability upon graduation.

Write an **email** to the Vice Chancellor of the university, Prof. Judy Dench, to suggest **FIVE (5)** strategies to improve students' employability and **justify** each of the strategies proposed.

Total: [25 marks]

4. Imagine you work in a consulting firm McKinzer. You received an assignment for an important client – Slurp, which sells kitchen appliances.

Your client would like to market their products to Japan and has decided to consult your company.

As a consultant, you are required to propose **FIVE (5)** practical market entry strategies that Slurp can implement to successfully introduce its kitchen appliances in Japan.

For each strategy, provide:

- A clear explanation of the approach (how it works and why it is relevant to the Japanese market).
- Key advantages of using this strategy.
- Potential challenges or risks associated with the strategy.

Total: [25 marks]

- END OF QUESTIONS -