

Business Policy and Strategy

SYLLABUS AND SCHEDULE | Fall Quarter 2018

Course information

Course code: MGMT 4890-01
credits: 5
Location: Pigott 204
Class times: TuTh 10:15am–12:20pm
First session: 9/27/2018
Last session: 12/6/2018
Final exam: 12/13/2018

Instructor information

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Office hours: TuTh 12:30-3:30pm
and by appointment

Course description

This course introduces the most important concepts and frameworks of strategic management and helps you develop critical thinking skills for formulating and implementing strategy. We will focus on the perspectives and skills required to identify and diagnose critical strategic issues affecting firm performance, examine how firms can gain and sustain competitive advantages in the face of uncertainty and competition, and build on our understanding of complex business environment to devise realistic solutions to address those issues.

To be successful, a firm's strategy must permeate all departments and functional areas. As such, in this senior-level capstone business course, we integrate and apply knowledge and skills gained from your prior studies (e.g., accounting, economics, finance, management, and marketing) to teach you to be a better—meaning a more systematic, logical, complete, critical—thinker about strategy. In doing so, we explicitly apply a comprehensive and integrated management point of view, and will analyze strategies in light of the general manager of a corporation. The skills you learn in this class will help you in whatever job you take after graduation as well as in your personal investing and employment choices, and ultimately, help you to work more effectively in your professional careers.

Learning outcomes

On successful completion of this course (i.e., by *passing* the course), you will be able to *synthesize the set of concepts and frameworks you have gained to address challenging strategic management problems*. In particular, you will be able to:

1. Analyze industry structure and environmental trends to assess industry potential;
2. Evaluate firms' competitive positioning and assess firm-level resources and capabilities;
3. Formulate business-unit and corporate strategies to achieve competitive advantage;
4. Evaluate and manage complex ethical and social issues facing firms in implementing strategy and organizing the firm for strategic success.

Required readings and materials

CASES & READINGS

<https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/574437>

TEXTBOOK

Rothaermel, F. Strategic Management. 3rd edition
(ISBN-13: 978-1259420474 | ISBN-10: 9781259420474)

Evaluation: Overview of assignments

You will be evaluated based on both your individual and team participation. Please note that you must successfully pass both the individual and the team portions of the course. You cannot skip the final exam, or fail to submit a case write-up, or never participate in class discussions, and then still expect to pass the course based on your other grades alone.

	RELATIVE VALUE	DUE DATE
Individual components	650 points	
Engagement	250 points	
Case memo	200 points	
Case analysis (final exam)	200 points	12/13
Team components	350 points	
Case development	300 points	
Topic proposal	50 points	10/23
1 st draft	50 points	11/15
Final draft	200 points	11/29
Peer evaluation	50 points	12/13
Total available points	1,000 points	

A	1000–940 Superior	B–	829–800	D+	699–670	
A–	939–900	C+	799–770	D	669–630	Poor
B+	899–870	C	769–730 Adequate	D–	629–600	
B	869–830 Good	C–	729–700	F	599 or less	Failing

INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS (65%)

1. Engagement: Preparation & participation (250 points)

It is expected that you attend all classes and be well prepared for each class. All missed classes will be noted. The policy on missed classes is to allow each student *two* absences, no questions asked, no penalty. Each absence beyond these two will reduce the student's final grade by one increment (i.e., A- to B+). Only official university engagements, such as scheduled sports events, are excepted from this policy. Habitual lateness (and leaving class early), for whatever reason, will be noted as evidence of low engagement, and penalized.

It is expected that you play an active role in class discussion. Simply attending classes does not constitute a positive contribution to class and will not yield high engagement grade. I will ask you to speak even if you have not volunteered, so please be ready for discussion every class. *If you are particularly worried about your class participation, please check in with me within the first two weeks of the quarter and I can work with you to help.*

When evaluating your participation in the class discussion, I will consider how effectively you put forth your own arguments, as well as how well you listen to, understand, and build upon (or refute) the arguments of others. I will look for high quality (which is frequently not the same as high quantity) arguments, analyses, and questions that improve the class' collective learning. Keep in mind that comments that are redundant, tangential or seemingly irrelevant or attempts to dominate class discussion will have a negative impact on your engagement grade.

Out of 250 available points, 180 points will come from your in-class engagement and 70 points will come from your quality participation in online discussion.

2. Case memo (4 case write-ups; 200 points)

You will choose four out of six cases (Trader Joe's I & II, Marvel, Walt Disney, Ferrero Group, IKEA India, and Lego) to provide an answer to one of the discussion questions in a 1 single-space page. These memos are each worth 50 points. All assignments are due by 10pm the day before the case will be discussed.

You are required to read and be prepared for class discussion even though you are not submitting a case memo.

4. Final exam (Case analysis) (200 points)

Your take-home final exam will consist of analyzing your team's mini-case. You will provide an in-depth analysis as well a detailed strategic recommendation by synthesizing and applying various frameworks and concepts.

TEAM COMPONENTS (35%)

The class will be divided into teams comprising of four (or five) members in each team. Team membership is voluntary, but needs to reflect diversity in students' major, experience, and style. This requirement will help to ensure that each team is well rounded and best prepared for team projects.

1. Case development (300 points)

Each team will develop a mini-case by identifying a company that has recently made an important strategic decision (in the last 6 month) or is likely to make such decision in the near future, mostly due to poor performance. Your case will be 5 single-spaced pages (excluding tables and figures).

Case writing is an excellent opportunity for you to a) distinguish and articulate a critical issue, b) learn how to research this issue and collect relevant data and information, and c) deepen your knowledge and understanding of course concepts by applying principles.

Case topic proposal (50 out of 300 points)

Your proposal should include a) a brief company/industry profile, b) one to two key issues, c) concepts and frameworks you plan to apply (or through which you will organize the case), and d) a detailed plan for writing a first draft. Your team's first draft will be due by proposal will be due by 10pm on 11/15.

First draft (50 out of 300 points)

Your team's first draft will be due by proposal will be due by 10pm on 11/15.

Final draft (200 out of 300 points)

Your team's first draft will be due by proposal will be due by 10pm on 11/29.

2. Peer evaluation (50 points)

Each of you will be asked to evaluate every other team member anonymously at the end of the quarter. If you receive unsatisfactory ratings from your team, your grade will be marked down accordingly, reducing the student's final grade by one increment (i.e., A- to B+).

Instructional methods

In order to achieve the learning outcomes, this course emphasizes active learning through case discussions, experiential exercises, and interactive lectures. I will use lectures to elaborate on key theoretical models and frameworks or to reinforce crucial concepts.

I have selected a mix of business cases on a range of companies from a variety of industry settings. Each case is intended to teach us something specific, yet each can teach many things. We will not attempt to exhaust each case of all its learning experiences, but rather build up a “tool kit” of analytical tools, skills, and insights, progressively over all the selected cases. Case discussion techniques provide a chance to learn the meaning of analytical rigor in situations other than open-and-shut problems. As such, there will be many cases that do not end up neatly packaged with an “answer”. You may discover that your preparation “misses” key points of a case, especially at first. This is a normal part of the learning experience.

Success in this course comes from being well prepared, which includes doing all of the readings on time, including the required textbook chapters and assigned case study. *You should plan to spend at least 8-10 hours per week, in addition to time in class, for readings, cases, and other coursework. Active participation is also required.* I will direct class discussions; the quality of your learning experience will be directly determined by your degree of preparation, active listening, and participation. A much richer kind of learning takes place when one is challenged by other people who have different backgrounds and therefore do not necessarily share one's own point of view. So, if you miss a class discussion or activity, or if you show up unprepared to participate fully, then you not only deprive yourself of learning, but you also deprive your classmates of a learning opportunity.

General course policies

CLASSROOM NORMS

During our first week, we will jointly create classroom norms (or “agreements”) to which we will all abide so that we have the most productive and positive learning environment. Ethics and ethical reasoning is integrated throughout the course. *Plagiarism and cheating will provide sufficient grounds for dismissal and failing the class.*

CELL PHONES, LAPTOPS, AND RECORDING DEVICES

To minimize distractions and disruptions, all electronic devices (laptops, cell phones, recording, etc.) must be turned off during class except by prior agreement.

CANVAS

We will utilize Canvas as the primary tool for communications including submissions of assignments, grades, and etc. If you have questions or need assistance on how to use Canvas, please refer to the Canvas Student Guides: <http://www.seattleu.edu/canvas/>

BUSINESS PERIODICALS

You should regularly read at least one business periodical (e.g., Wall Street Journal, Business Week, or Fortune) or follow on Twitter (e.g., @WSJbusiness, @WSJD, @BW, @Forbes, @nytimesbusiness, @Inc, @FastCompany, @businessinsider, or @HarvardBiz).

Academic resources

LIBRARY AND LEARNING COMMONS

<http://www.seattleu.edu/learningcommons/> (This includes: Learning Assistance Programs, Research [Library] Services, Writing Center, Math Lab)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY TUTORIAL
(FOUND ON CANVAS AND SU ONLINE)

ACADEMIC POLICIES ON REGISTRAR WEBSITE
<https://www.seattleu.edu/redhawk-axis/academic-policies/>

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Grading Grievance Policy

Professional Conduct Policy (only for those professional programs to which it applies)

NOTICE FOR STUDENTS CONCERNING DISABILITIES

If you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an 'invisible disability' such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, you are encouraged to arrange support services and/or accommodations through Disabilities Services staff located in Loyola 100, (206) 296-5740. Disability-based adjustments to course expectations can be arranged only through this process.

OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL EQUITY

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) prohibits discrimination based on sex in educational programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. This prohibition includes sexual misconduct, which encompasses sexual harassment and sexual violence. Seattle U remains committed to providing a safe and equitable learning, living, and working environment. Seattle U offers emergency, medical, and other support resources, as well as assistance with safety and support measures, to community members who have experienced or been impacted by sexual misconduct.

Seattle U requires all faculty and staff to notify the University's Title IX Coordinator if they become aware of any incident of sexual misconduct experienced by a student.

For more information, please visit <https://www.seattleu.edu/equity/>. If you have any questions or concerns, you may also directly contact the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Institutional Equity (email: oiie@seattleu.edu; phone: 206.296.2824) University Resources and Policies

Provisional schedule

Date	Session	Topic	Readings	Individual deliverables	Team deliverables
Module 1: Introduction to Strategic Management					
9/27	1	Course Introduction	-	-	-
10/2	2	What is Strategy?	Syllabus Porter (1996) Chapter 1 & 2	-	-
Module 2: External Analysis					
10/4	3	External Analysis I	Porter (2008) Chapter 3	Info sheet Online discussion 1 (10/6 10pm* 10/8 10pm)	-
10/9	4	External Analysis II	Chapter 3	-	Team sign-up
Module 3: Internal Analysis					
10/11	5	Internal Analysis I	<i>Case: Trader Joe's</i> Chapter 4	Case memo 1 (10/10 10pm)	-
10/16	6	Internal Analysis II Case Writing Tips	Chapter 4	-	-
Module 4: Business-level Strategy					
10/18	7	Generic Strategies I Competitive Advantage	Chapter 5 & 6	Online discussion 2 (10/20 10pm* 10/22 10pm)	-
10/23	8	Generic Strategies II	<i>Case: Trader Joe's</i>	Case memo 2 (10/22 10pm)	Topic proposal (10/23 10pm)
10/25	9	Blue Ocean Strategy I	Chapter 6	Online discussion 3 (10/27 10pm* 10/29 10pm)	-
10/30	10	Blue Ocean Strategy II	<i>Case: Marvel</i>	Case memo 3 (10/29 10pm)	-

Module 5: Corporate Strategy						
11/1	11	Corporate Strategy I: Introduction	Chapter 8	Online discussion 4 (11/3 10pm* 11/5 10pm)	-	
11/6	12	Corporate Strategy II: Diversification	<i>Case: Walt Disney</i>	Case memo 4 (11/5 10pm)	-	
11/8	13	Corporate Strategy III: M&A, Strategic Alliances	Chapter 9	Online discussion 5 (11/10 10pm* 11/12 10pm)	-	
11/13	14	Corporate Strategy IV: M&A, Strategic Alliances	<i>Case: Ferrero</i>	Case memo 5 (11/12 10pm)	-	
11/15	15	Corporate Strategy V: Wrap-up	Live case (To be posted)	-	1 st draft (11/15 10pm)	
11/20	16	<i>No class</i>				
Module 6: Course Wrap-up						
11/27	17	Global Strategy	Chapter 10 <i>Case: IKEA in India</i>	Case memo 6 (11/26 10pm)	-	
11/29	18	Organization Design Corporate Governance	Chapter 11 & 12	Online discussion 6 (12/1 10pm* 12/3 10pm)	Final draft (11/29 10pm)	
12/4	19	Turnaround I	<i>Case: Lego</i>	Case memo 7 (12/3 10pm)	-	
12/6	20	Turnaround II	Lego readings (To be posted)	-	-	
12/13		Final Exam				Peer evaluation

Dates that are colored in gray are online classes.

* Preferred deadline

**Your learning is my primary concern in this course, so I may modify the schedule if, for instance, we discover we need to spend more time on a certain topic and less on another.