



## Victoria Management School

### MGMT 417 ADVANCED STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

Trimester 1 2005

## COURSE OUTLINE

### COURSE COORDINATOR

**Sean Devine:**

**Room:** Rutherford House (RH) 928

**Phone:** 463-5143,

**E-mail:** sean.devine@vuw.ac.nz

Whenever possible, I undertake to respond to your messages within one business day.

Appointments can be made at any time that is mutually convenient, and a regular office hour will be held from 3-4 p.m. on Tuesdays.

### ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT:

**Tricia Lapham**

**Room:** Rutherford House (RH) 919

**Phone:** 463-5381

**E-mail:** tricia.lapham@vuw.ac.nz

### CLASS TIME AND ROOM NUMBERS

**Start Date:** 3 February 2005

**Format:** one 3-hour session each week

**Lecture:** Wednesdays 1:40 – 4:30 pm.

**Location:** Rutherford H2ouse G02

The examination time is yet to be notified, but will be held during the **period 2<sup>nd</sup> June to 18<sup>th</sup> June 2005.**

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

The objective of this course for BCA(Honours) in Management is to provide an overall understanding of strategic management as a field of scholarly enquiry. The focus of the course will be on seminal works from the strategic management literature. The general areas of study cover: the definition of the strategy concept; strategic planning; strategic intent/vision; organisational purpose; resource allocation; tracking performance (through financial and strategic control systems) and stakeholder issues. Your essay on strategy will

assess your understanding of these areas. These sessions provide perspectives on how organisations design, refine and elaborate their strategies as well as providing key mechanisms for both strategic momentum and change. Other topics in strategic management will be addressed in MGMT 418. Later, the course will consider some of the main ways in which organisations gain access to new/additional resources through strategic alliances, and internal development. As with ongoing strategy making, such initiatives involve implications for planning, resource allocation and control. These are examined by considering motivations and the management processes and are assessed in the case analysis and exam.

## **COURSE CONTENT**

Advanced Strategic Management surveys management issues involved in directing an entire organisation over the longer term within a complex and evolving environment. Its focus is on the range of decisions that are strategic to the organisation as well as the forces that influence the evolution of strategy over time. Understanding how strategies can be managed (through planning and control) is thus central to this course. Once these aspects have been introduced, the course will examine how the strategic management process differs across important contexts for acquiring/accessing/developing new resources. The course takes a broad perspective and familiarises participants with the literature on strategic management.

Session content will vary during the semester, including discussion of case histories, readings, lectures and video materials. Your active contribution to these sessions is an important element of the learning experience

## **READINGS**

The class will meet once a week and each week will be devoted to the topic as listed in the schedule below. A reading list for each topic will be distributed along with copies of selected articles/book extracts. You are expected to have studied each of the readings distributed, and to contribute to the seminar's discussion of each of these readings.

Approximately every other week, you will be expected to prepare a brief (500 word – about 2 page) summary of one of the assigned readings and will be asked to lead the seminar's discussion of that article or book chapter. A copy of your summary should be made for each participant in the course.

When studying an article (or book chapter), pay close attention to:

- the theoretical justifications provided for the research questions;
- defining the author's contribution to the literature;
- points of convergence with, and departure from, the other articles;
- aspects of the article that you feel deserve critique;
- its implications for future research,

and additionally, for empirical analyses,

- the operationalisation and measurement of the concepts (how well do these actually measure the constructs they are aiming to);
- the implications of the research methodology and data collection methods for the findings and interpretations; and
- possible empirical issues for future research.

In order to complete an effective summary and lead the discussion, it may be necessary to do some additional reading from other articles referenced by your article (or book chapter).

Examination of case material will focus on the issues raised in the readings for that week and typically occur in the last part of the class.

**WORKLOAD**

Previous participants in the course indicate that they required approximately 6-7 hours per session, in addition to class time.

**SEXIST RACIST LANGUAGE**

Victoria University of Wellington has a policy of non-sexist and non-racist language, part of which reads: Sexist and racist language are “often unthinkingly perpetuated and [have] become so deeply embedded in the language that it requires conscious effort to avoid [them] ... old habits die hard.” In writing your assignments, please try to avoid sexist or racist language. There are usually alternatives available, which avoid gender or ethnic specific language. Any sexist or racist language contained in readings prescribed as part of the course is regretted.

**ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS**

The course will be assessed as follows:

Contributions to class discussion	15%
Essay: The Concept of Strategy	20%
Diversification analysis	10%
Case analysis	15%
Final examination	<u>40%</u>
Total	100%

**1. Contributions to Class Discussion (15%)**

As is appropriate for a post-graduate course, classes will be conducted on the basis that course members have much to learn from each other as well as from the course director. Course members will be expected to lead class discussions and also contribute to these discussions when others lead. When you are leading a discussion you will need to carefully read the materials/case studies prior to the class, provide a detailed analysis of your assigned reading, and assemble your ideas into a structured form that allows you to effectively lead the discussion.

I encourage you to discuss the readings with other class members prior to class, as this will help to reinforce your understanding, as well as provide an opportunity for other interpretations to be considered.

I undertake to provide you with feedback on your in-class contributions after Session 6; and will make an effort to facilitate your class contributions and to ensure that each student has the opportunity to contribute to the discussions. Contributions will be assessed on the quality of the insights offered by the course member, over the whole semester, into strategic

management concepts/theory and other issues raised by the reading material and case histories.

## **2. Essay: The Concept of Strategy (20%)**

Due dates: e-mail draft by **March 20th**; final essay by 12:00 p.m. **Friday, April 1st, 2005**

During the first part of the semester, you will be required to write a short essay that defines and describes the strategy concept as you understand it. Similarities with and differences from the existing definitions in the literature should be clearly indicated. The essay should also describe what is considered to be part of strategy/strategic management and what is not and why. In doing this, it may be useful to link strategy to other key aspects of the strategic management process. Feedback will be given on your draft so that it can be revised before a grade is assigned. On March 23, also be prepared to make a short presentation, up to 10 minutes, on the key aspects of your concept of strategy. Length guide for essay: 3000-4000 words (see note below on word limits).

## **3. Diversification Presentation (10%)**

On Wednesday April 27, each group (2-3 per group) will do a 20-minute presentation on the history, motives, implementation and success (current and future) of a diversified company. Your analysis should assess how the current diversification posture was achieved, the modes through which it was achieved (mergers, acquisitions, internal development) as well as the gathering information on the processes used to create value through diversification. Only a presentation is required, but please keep all documentation, as it may be useful for generating case histories in the future.

## **4. Case Analysis: Strategy Implementation (15%)**

On Wednesday May 4th, a case study and associated questions will be distributed. You will have one week to analyse the case and answer the questions. Due in class on Wednesday May 11th, 2004. Length guide: 2500 words (see note below on word limits).

## **5. Final Exam (40%)**

A course and exam review session will be held on Wednesday May 25<sup>th</sup> 2005. Earlier in the semester, you will be given details on the areas to be examined in the final exam. In the final exam, you will be asked to respond to 2 out of 3 questions. These areas will still be somewhat broad and you will need to do some reading in addition to that covered in class. An extended bibliography for each session will direct you to some potentially relevant articles. The final exam is ultimately an individual undertaking. While some informal, verbal discussion of the questions may take place in preparation for the exam, the notes below on plagiarism should be recognised at all times.

## **MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT**

No other materials or equipment are required. Your assignments may require the collection of secondary data from media and internet sources.

## **PENALTIES**

### **Word limits**

The word guidelines are based on an economical style of writing suitable for professional reports. Some variation may be warranted, depending on the situation being discussed. However, since a style of writing suitable for professional reports is required, significant departures from an economical style or inattention to spelling, grammar, punctuation, formatting, ... may reduce the marks awarded to the report by up to 10% of the original mark.

### **Penalties for lateness**

In keeping with standards of professionalism appropriate to an honours degree programme, it is expected that assigned work will be completed and due dates met. In fairness to students who complete work on time, work submitted after the due date/time will incur penalties for lateness. The penalty is up to 5% of the report's grade per day (or part thereof) late. If the report is over 1 week late it will not be accepted and will earn a score of 0 marks. Unusual or unforeseeable circumstances (e.g., serious illness, family bereavement) may lead to a waiver of this penalty but this will need to be discussed with the course director as soon as possible (prior to the due date when feasible).

## **MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

In order to pass the course, a total of 50% of the marks available must be achieved.

### **VMS Grading Standards:**

- **Excellent**  
A (80 – 85%) to A+ (above 85%): The quality is performed to a very high level of proficiency, i.e. it is at a standard that makes it exceptional at Honour's level.
- **Very Good**  
B+ (70 – 74%) to A- (75 – 79%): The quality is performed at a high standard. Students have reached a level which clearly exceeds "competency".
- **Good**  
B- (60 – 64%) to B (65 – 69%): The quality is clearly demonstrated without being exceptional in any way. Students can be thought of as competent in respect of this quality.
- **Satisfactory**  
C (50 – 54%) to C+ (55 – 59%): The quality is demonstrated to a minimally acceptable level. There may be flaws but these are not serious enough to "fail" the student on this quality.
- **Unsatisfactory**  
E (0 – 39%) to D (40 – 49%): The quality is absent or performed to a very low level, or the performance is seriously flawed in this respect.

## **COMMUNICATION OF INFORMATION**

An e-mail list of all students will be created in the first class and will be used to communicate changes, updates, and information to all class members. Please inform the course coordinator of any changes to your email.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

- February 23** Introduction
- March 2** Concept of Strategy
- March 9** Concept of Strategy (cont.)  
Case: Deltec Telesystems
- March 16** Strategic Planning, Strategic Intent and Vision  
Case: Strategic Planning at Oldelft
- [March 20th Draft Essay emailed in: Concept of Strategy - email to sean.devine@vuw.ac.nz]*
- March 23** Resource Allocation Processes  
Strategy presentations: 10 minutes per class member
- Mid-Trimester Break** (March 28 - April 10)
- [Apr 1st Essay: the Concept of Strategy]*
- April 13** Tracking Performance: Financial and Strategic Control Systems  
Video: R. Moss-Kanter
- April 20** Corporate Strategy: CEOs and Top Management Teams
- April 27** Diversification: Rationales and Implications  
In-class presentation of company analysis
- May 4** Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs): Specific issues, networking & clustering. Case Study material distributed.
- May 11** Internal Development: Knowledge and Learning Processes  
Video: Handy et al.
- [May 11 Case Study: Strategy Implementation handed in]*
- May 18** Strategic Alliances: Motives and Process Issues
- May 25** Course and Exam Review

## GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICY AND STATUTES

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly those regarding assessment and course of study requirements, and formal academic grievance procedures.

### **Student Conduct and Staff Conduct**

The Statute on Student Conduct together with the Policy on Staff Conduct ensure that members of the University community are able to work, learn, study and participate in the academic and social aspects of the University's life in an atmosphere of safety and respect. The Statute on Student Conduct contains information on what conduct is prohibited and what steps can be taken if there is a complaint. For queries about complaint procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct, contact the Facilitator and Disputes Advisor. This Statute is available in the Faculty Student Administration Office or on the website at: [www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StudentConduct](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StudentConduct).

The policy on Staff Conduct can be found on the VUW website at: [www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StaffConduct](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StaffConduct).

### **Academic Grievances**

If you have any academic problems with your course you should talk to the tutor or lecturer concerned or, if you are not satisfied with the result of that meeting, see the Head of School or the Associate Dean (Students) of your Faculty. Class representatives are available to assist you with this process. If, after trying the above channels, you are still unsatisfied, formal grievance procedures can be invoked. These are set out in the Academic Grievances Policy which is published on the VUW website:

[www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/AcademicGrievances](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/AcademicGrievances).

### **Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means **no cheating**. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. Plagiarism is **prohibited** at Victoria.

The University defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not.

*'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea, even if it is presented in your own style. It includes material from books, journals or any other printed source, the work of other students or staff, information from the Internet, software programmes and other electronic material, designs and ideas. It also includes the organization or structuring of any such material.*

***Plagiarism is not worth the risk.***

Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct ([www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct)) and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- suspension from class or university
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course.

*Find out more about plagiarism and how to avoid it, on the University's website at: [www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html).*

**Students with Disabilities**

The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities. The policy aims to give students with disabilities an equal opportunity with all other students to demonstrate their abilities. If you have a disability, impairment or chronic medical condition (temporary, permanent or recurring) that may impact on your ability to participate, learn and/or achieve in lectures and tutorials or in meeting the course requirements, then please contact the Course Coordinator as early in the course as possible. Alternatively you may wish to approach a Student Adviser from Disability Support Services to confidentially discuss your individual needs and the options and support that are available. Disability Support Services are located on Level 1, Robert Stout Building, or phoning 463-6070, email: [disability@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:disability@vuw.ac.nz). The name of your School's Disability Liaison Person can be obtained from the Administrative Assistant or the School Prospectus.

**Student Support**

Staff at Victoria want students' learning experiences at the University to be positive. If your academic progress is causing you concern, please contact the relevant Course Co-ordinator, or Associate Dean who will either help you directly or put you in contact with someone who can.

The Student Services Group is also available to provide a variety of support and services. Find out more at [www.vuw.ac.nz/st\\_services/](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/st_services/) or email [student-services@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:student-services@vuw.ac.nz).

VUWSA employs two Education Coordinators who deal with academic problems and provide support, advice and advocacy services, as well as organising class representatives and faculty delegates. The Education Office is located on the ground floor, Student Union Building, phone 463 6983 or 463 6984, email [education@vuwsa.org.nz](mailto:education@vuwsa.org.nz).