

Victoria University of Wellington



MASTER OF STRATEGIC STUDIES PROGRAMME

STRA 501

STRATEGY: THEORY AND POLICY

(First Trimester Course – 15 points)

2005 COURSE OUTLINE

Co-ordinator:

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Other Contributors:

Invited guest lecturers / panelists as required

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Module Dates, Times and Locations

Module One: Tuesday 15 February 2005 8:30am - 6:00pm

Module Two: Tuesday 5 April 2005 8:30am - 6:00pm

Module Three: Tuesday 31 May 2005 8.30am - 6.00pm

Locations: Pipitea Campus.
Rooms will be advised prior to each module.

Course Objectives

STRA 501 is a review of the literature of strategic studies to establish the theoretical and policy bases on which the modern practice of strategy rests. Examples of theory and policy relevant to both the New Zealand public and private sector will be discussed.

The course aims to help participants:

- Develop an understanding of the history of strategy and the multidisciplinary nature of contemporary strategic studies. The course will discuss key concepts and theories from the past as well as developments in the modern literature of strategy (readings will be based on papers by Rumelt, Schendel, Teece, Williamson, Porter, Henderson, Mintzberg, Quinn, Hamel, Prahalad, Gray, Luttwak, Garnett, Kenichi Ohmae, Rapoport, Schelling, Zeckhauser, Makridakis and others);
- Understand the links between strategy and security, the criticisms that are leveled at traditional 'hard power' strategic studies courses and the responses to these criticisms;
- Develop an understanding of the economic foundations and theory of modern strategic policy and practice and the links between strategic and public policy;
- Understand the elements of contemporary strategic analysis and strategy of choice theory (strategic analysis as a topic for strategy practitioners will be developed further in the companion tools-based first trimester course STRA 502 Strategic Analysis);
- Understand the various classes of strategy (grand strategy, emergent strategy, stretch versus fit strategies, logical incrementalism) and develop an appreciation of the applicability and appropriateness of different classes of strategy in particular circumstances;
- Understand the current New Zealand whole-of-government context for strategic policy, how statements of intent and linkages to whole-of-government outcomes are derived and operationalised and what use can be made of SOI's to drive strategic planning and management;
- Lay the foundations for creating a distinctive strategy for New Zealand as a transitional and still relatively fragile economy making its way in a world of new and complex interdependencies (this topic area is developed further in two second trimester courses STRA 503 International Political Economy and STRA 504 Strategic Issues in Foreign Policy);
- Contribute to the task of creating a new synthesis between the traditional strategic and security studies field of geopolitics and the modern business practice literature of strategic management and consulting;

- Begin to develop strategic thinking skills through class discussion and readings and involvement in individual exercises, case studies and assessments (strategic thinking skills will be further developed in the second trimester companion course STRA 511 Strategic Thinking);
- Learn how to apply these skills for competitive positioning and future advancement at the level of the individual, family, organization and business unit and, more broadly;
- Demonstrate the ability to apply modern strategic theory and practice in the New Zealand private and public sector contexts.

Readings

There are no set texts for this course but students may find it useful to have access to *The Strategy Process: Concepts, Contexts and Cases* by Henry Mintzberg and James Quinn (Prentice Hall, 1996).

Books are available from Vicbooks, Student Union Building, Gate 3, Kelburn Parade, PO Box 12337, Wellington. You can purchase textbooks in person or by mail order, telephone (04) 463 - 5515, fax (04) 471 - 2124, email: vuwtexts@vicbooks.co.nz or online: www.vicbooks.co.nz.

There are two reading packs for the course, one for Module 1 and one for Module 2. In each reading pack, readings are grouped with reference to the main learning objectives and topic areas. Readings are marked to indicate which are regarded as being 'key' and therefore likely to be discussed in class (meaning that for these readings course members may be called on to assist the course co-ordinator in leading a discussion). Other readings (not marked as being 'key') are included to meet more specialized tastes or because of their place and importance in the literature of strategic studies. With the exception of the key readings, there is no expectation that course members read closely and study all of the assigned readings, though some general familiarity is encouraged in order to facilitate class discussion and debate.

Course Structure

The course structure follows the learning objectives set out above. There are 10 - 11 main topic areas paralleling the course objectives, with 5 - 6 topics covered in each of the first two teaching modules.

Assessment

Following are the assessment requirements:

- One essay of 2,000 words (30%), reflecting course members' understanding of the overall state of strategic theory and policy. The essay topic will be distributed during Module One – *due date and time for the finished essay is 5.00 pm Tuesday 8 March.*
- A case study comprising a report of 3000 words, an annotated bibliography and a seminar presentation (combined weighting 70%), conducted on either a group or individual basis, in which class members have an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to apply the literature of strategic theory and policy to the resolution of a current problem in either the New Zealand private or public sectors – *the due date for the annotated bibliography is 5.00 pm Tuesday 17 May. Case studies will be presented and discussed at Module 3 on Tuesday 31 May. Final reports are due at 5.00 pm on Tuesday 14 June.*

General University Policies 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 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 VUW website at: 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.

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 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.

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 and staff, information from the Internet, software programs and other electronic material, designs and ideas. It also includes the organisation or structuring of any such materials.

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) and may be penalised 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.

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, Telephone: (04) 463 - 6070, Email: disability@vuw.ac.nz.

The name of your School’s Disability Liaison Person is in the relevant prospectus or can be obtained from the Administrative Assistant.

Student Support

Staff at Victoria want students' learning experiences at the University to be positive. If your academic progress is causing you concern, the following staff members will either help you directly or quickly put you in contact with someone who can.

	<u>Staff</u>	<u>Location</u>
FHSS	Ann McDonald	Student Support Coordinator, 2 Wai - te - ata Road
Law	Kirstin Harvey	Old Government Building, room 103
Science, and Architecture and Design	Liz Richardson	Cotton Building, room 150
Commerce and Administration	Colin Jeffcoat	Railway West Wing, room 119
Kaiwawao Maori	Liz Rawhiti	Old Kirk Building, room 007
Manaaki Pihipihinga	Melissa Dunlop	14 Kelburn Parade, room 109D
Victoria International	Anne Cronin	10 Kelburn Parade, room 202

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/ Email student-services@vuw.ac.nz.

VUWSA employs two Education Co-ordinators 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, Telephone: (04) 463 - 6983 or (04) 463 - 6984, Email education@vuwsa.org.nz.