

Victoria Management School

MMBA 558
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

Summer Trimester 2005

COURSE OUTLINE

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Class Times: Mondays 17.30 – 20.30

Room Number: RWW313

Course Objectives:

The purpose of the course is to provide an understanding of the international business environment and challenges for organisations developing and implementing an international business strategy. The course introduces the student to the foundations of the global business environment and the predominant players on the international business stage.

By the end of this course, you should:

1. Understand the processes and consequences of regional integration and its impact on organisations involved in international business;
2. Understand the developments leading to and the dynamics stemming from a globalising business environment.
3. Understand the prerequisites and modes of internationalisation for firms;
4. Comprehend how international strategies set the requirements that need to be fulfilled by the organisational structure of the international firm;

5. Understand the rationales of different transactional and cooperative forms (inter-firm organisational forms, e.g. international joint ventures, strategic alliances, virtual corporations) and how they contribute to the overall strategic goals of the international firm.
6. Be able to apply different analytical tools that provide the inputs to international business strategy making;
7. Be able to evaluate the effectiveness of international business strategy and to have the capability to synthesise different strategic approaches.

The sessions will comprise seminar-style lectures, case-study analysis, class discussions and student presentations. The students' active contributions during class discussions are important ingredients in the synthesising lecture style.

Readings Akoorié, M.E.M. & Scott-Kennel, J. (2005) *International Business Strategy: A New Zealand Perspective*. Pearson Education, Australia.

The textbook is recommended as supplementary reading for students who have no academic background in the topic. The course will rely predominantly on materials provided before and/or during the course. This will comprise materials from a variety of sources, including practitioner and academic journals. In this course we will make extensive use of the possibilities generated through the blackboard system.

Course Assessment

Participation in Online Discussions	10%	Continuous
Individual Assignment (Case)	30 %	Week 5
Group Project	30 %	Week 6
Individual Discussion Paper	30%	Week 8

Participation in Online Discussions (10%)

After every session you will have the opportunity to join an online discussion forum in which we discuss central issues that emerged during the session. The purpose of these discussions is to deepen the conceptual knowledge introduced in class and to make the knowledge available for application. Active (number and frequency of contributions) participation and quality of contributions will account for 10% of the final mark.

Individual Assignment (30%)

You will be provided with a case study, and asked to answer a number of questions relating to it. Expected length is around 2000 words. This individual case study is due at the beginning of the session in lecture-week 5.

Group Project (30%)

A group consists of 3-4 individuals who contribute equally to the outcome of the project. The topic of the project is described as follows:

Magna International's Evolution into a Global Player

Study the characteristics of Magna International through research of web resources (e.g. www.magna.com, news, reports). Integrate the materials you gather with theoretical and conceptual knowledge from MMBA 558 and other papers in order to explain the following phenomena:

1. What are the historic developments contributing to Magna's current position in the global automotive industry?
2. How does the firm's philosophy and business vision reflect on Magna's relationships with their stakeholders?
3. Justify Magna's organisational structure and its international locations.
4. Explain how Magna's constellation (goals, strategy and structure) helps to deal with environmental complexity and turbulence.

Present your group's work in a well structured report, which includes a good introduction to the company and a well thought of integrative conclusion about the approach of this firm. Expected length is around 2500 words and the paper is due by lecture-week 6.

Individual Discussion Paper (30%)

The individual discussion paper is an exercise where you are expected to provide evidence of your learning and where you demonstrate your capabilities in synthesising different approaches. The topic of the individual discussion paper is related to the future of developing an organisational structure that can fulfil the conflicting requirements of the transnational strategy. This final paper is expected to be between 1500-2000 words and is due in the last session of this course, by lecture-week 8.

Passing the Course

In order to pass this course, students are required to obtain at least forty percent of the End of Course Test marks available, and obtain at least fifty percent of the overall course marks available.

Late Assignments

In fairness to other students, work submitted after the deadline will be subject to a penalty of 5% of the total marks available per day of lateness. Assignments more than one week late will not be accepted. A “zero” mark will be applied. In the event of unusual, unforeseen circumstances (e.g., serious illness, family bereavement), students should discuss waiver of the penalty with the course controller prior to the deadline date.

Obtaining Terms

To obtain terms in this course, students are required to actively attend classes, participate in group work and submit all assignments.

Victoria MBA Grading Standards

- Victoria MBA - **Excellent** Category
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 Master’s level.
- Victoria MBA - **Very Good** Category
B+ (70 – 74%) to A- (75 – 79%): The quality is performed at a high standard. Students have reached a level which clearly exceeds “competency”.
- Victoria MBA - **Good** Category
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.
- Victoria MBA - **Satisfactory** Category
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.
- Victoria MBA - **Unsatisfactory** Category
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.

Plagiarism

The Victoria MBA programme views plagiarism as a serious offence. Students who plagiarise put themselves at risk of expulsion from the programme.

Faculty of Commerce and Administration Offices

Railway West Wing (RWW) - FCA Student Administration Office

The Student Administration Office is located on the ground and first floors of the Railway West Wing. The ground floor counter is the first point of contact for general enquiries and FCA forms. Student Administration Advisers are available to discuss course status and give further advice about FCA qualifications.

Easterfield (EA) - FCA/Law Kelburn Office

The Kelburn Campus Office for the Faculties of Commerce & Administration and Law is situated in the Easterfield Building - it includes the ground floor reception desk (EA005) and

offices 125a to 131 (Level 1). The office, will be open from 9:00 am to 12 noon during the Summer Trimester, and offers the following:

- Duty tutors for student contact and advice.
- Information concerning administrative and academic matters.
- FCA Student Administration forms (e.g. application for academic transcripts, requests for degree audit, COP requests).
- Examinations-related information during the examination period.

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 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.

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 (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.

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) 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.

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. 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/ or email 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.

Maori and Pacific Mentoring Programme (Manaaki Pihipihinga)

This is a free programme of mentoring for Maori and Pacific students doing first year courses within the Faculty of Commerce and Administration. Weekly one hour mentoring sessions: drafting and editing assignments/discussing any questions that you might have from tutorials or lectures and going over every aspect of essay writing, either in small group sessions or on a one-to-one basis.

This includes:

- A computer suite hooked up to cyber commons for students to use to produce their assignments.
- Regular skill-based workshops with a learning adviser from Student Learning Support Services.
- Networking with other Maori and Pacific support groups throughout the university.

For more information please contact:

Melissa Dunlop, Programme Coordinator

Ph: 463 6015 or Email: Maori-Pacific-Mentoring@vuw.ac.nz

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

Course Schedule 2005/2006

SESSION Week	Content	Additional Info
7. Nov. 2005	Introduction to international business; Globalisation and the international business environment.	Additional materials on Blackboard
14. Nov. 2005	Key players on the international stage (MNE, SME, GOVT); Prerequisites to internationalisation and internationalisation processes.	Materials on Blackboard (Bb)
21. Nov. 2005	International orientations and strategies . The international business environment and efficiency, flexibility and learning.	Materials on Bb
28. Nov. 2005	Environmental Analysis. Tools and approaches to deal with the complexities of the macro-, meso- and micro environment of the international firm.	Materials on Bb
5. Dec. 2005	The structuring of the international firm. Global integration, local responsiveness and worldwide innovations: In search of a transnational structure .	See Bb. Assignment 1 Case is due.
9. Jan. 2006	Inter-firm organisational forms . How to cooperate with friend and enemy. Transactional and cooperative strategies deal with uncertainty in international business.	See Bb. Assignment 2 Group work
16. Jan. 2006	International business management . Managerial roles under conflicting conditions and the management of knowledge in the international firm.	See Bb.
30. Jan. 2006	Synthesis : What determines the international success and failure of the firm? Making sense of organising in an international environment.	See Bb. Assignment 3 Discussion Paper