

School of Government

STRA 501 STRATEGY: THEORY AND POLICY

Trimester 1 2006

COURSE OUTLINE

Contact Details

Course Co-ordinator: **Dr Lance Beath**
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Module Dates, Times and Location

Module One: Tuesday 21 February 2006 8.30am-6.00pm

Module Two: Monday 10 April 2006 8.30am-6.00pm

Module Three: Tuesday 6 June 2006 8.30am-6.00pm

Location: Classes will normally be held on the Pipitea Campus and you will be advised of your classroom one week prior to each module by email.

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 levelled 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 semester paper 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 semester papers STRA 503 International Political Economy and STRA 504 Strategy and 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 semester companion paper 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).

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 Requirements

The 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 the first module – *due date and time for the finished essay is 5.00pm on Tuesday 14 March 2006.*
- 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 5.00pm on Tuesday 23 May 2006. Case studies will be presented and discussed at the 3rd module on Tuesday 6 June 2006. Final reports are due at 5.00pm on Tuesday 20 June 2006.*

Please send / hand-in ALL assignments (unless instructed otherwise by the course co-ordinator) to:

Francine McGee,
School of Government,
Victoria University of Wellington,
Level 8 Reception,
Rutherford House,
23 Lambton Quay,
P.O. Box 600,
Wellington.
Email: francine.mcgee@vuw.ac.nz

Students should keep a copy of all submitted work.

ANZSOG candidates taking this course as an elective should note that they take it for 24 points, and not 15 points. Accordingly, the learning outcomes to be achieved by ANZSOG candidates are wider and deeper than those expected for non-ANZSOG candidates. The content of those learning outcomes, and the means whereby they will be assessed, will be negotiated and confirmed with the course co-ordinator at the start of the course.

Deadlines and Penalties

The ability to plan for and meet deadlines is a core competency of both advanced study and public management. Failure to meet deadlines disrupts course planning and is unfair on students who do submit their work on time. It is expected therefore that you will complete and hand in assignments by the due date. Marks will be deducted at the rate of five for every

working day by which the assignment is late (weekends and public holidays excluded) and no assignments will be accepted after five working days beyond the date they are due. For out of town students, two calendar days' grace is given to allow for time in the post. Electronic versions of assignments may be submitted by email but should be followed by a hard copy.

If ill-health, family bereavement or other personal emergencies prevent you from meeting the deadline for submitting a piece of written work or from attending class to make a presentation, you can apply for and may be granted an extension to the due date. You should let your course co-ordinator know as soon as possible in advance of the deadline if you are seeking an extension.

Communication of Additional Information

Any additional communication during the course will be conveyed to course members by email.

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. To check for opening hours, call the office on (04) 463-5376.

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 (EA 005) and offices EA 125a to EA 131 (Level 1). The office is available for 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.

Check with the Student Administration Office for opening times on (04) 463-5376.

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 Co-ordinator 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 (04) 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 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, phone (04) 463-6983 or (04) 463-6984, email education@vuwsa.org.nz.

Manaaki Pihipihinga Maori and Pacific Mentoring programme (Faculties of Humanities and Social sciences and Commerce and Administration)

- **What:** Academic Mentoring for Maori and Pacific students studying at all levels in the above faculties. Weekly sessions for an hour with a mentor to go over assignments and any questions from tutorials or lectures. Registered students can use the faculty's study rooms and computer suite, at any time, at Kelburn and Pipitea.
- Mature student and Post grad network

If you would like to register as a mentor or mentee, please contact the co-ordinator.

Where:

Melissa Dunlop
Programme Co-ordinator
Room 109 D
14 Kelburn Parade: back courtyard
Phone: (04) 463-6015
Email: Maori-Pacific-Mentoring@vuw.ac.nz

Please Note: A mentoring room will also be running at Pipitea Campus starting January. Please contact the Programme Co-ordinator for details.