

Victoria Management School

MGMT 417 ADVANCED STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

Trimester One 2007

COURSE OUTLINE

Contact Details

COURSE COORDINATOR

Dr Sean Devine

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ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT

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Class Times and Room Numbers

Lectures: Monday: 9.30 am – 12.20 pm (RHG01)

This course has a 3-hour final examination. The examination period will be from 8th-27th June 2007.

Introduction

The Advanced Strategic Management course focuses on the longer term strategic management issues faced by an organisation operating in a complex and evolving environment. It covers 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 articulated and managed (through planning and control) is thus central to this course. After introducing some key ideas, the course will examine how the strategic management processes to do with acquiring/accessing/developing new resources differ in different contexts. The course takes a broad perspective and familiarises participants with the literature on strategic management. In particular, the course will challenge students to think critically about issues that impact on an organisation's long term strategic directions.

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

Programme and Course-related Learning Objectives

This course will provide students the opportunity:

- to develop oral and written communication skills
 - through leading and actively participating in class discussion;
 - through the development and presentation of oral and written reports, using narrative, rhetoric and diagrammatic and other schema as forms of presentation;
- to develop critical and creative thinking skills
 - through exercises and assignments requiring analysis, evaluation, interpretation and synthesis;
 - through debate and classroom discussion;
- to develop leadership skills
 - through structuring a project activity;
 - through leading a class discussion or group exercise;
 - through acting as a spokesperson for a group's activities or ideas.

Overall 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 in a way that prepares managers to think and manage strategically. 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. 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, these initiatives involve implications for planning, resource allocation and control. The relevance of motivational drivers and the management processes are explored through a case study. Other topics in strategic management will be addressed in MGMT 418.

Course-related Student Learning Objectives

On successful completion of the course, students should be able:

- to demonstrate an understanding of the major theoretical frameworks and concepts relevant to strategy;
- to use these frameworks to critically evaluate or develop strategic initiatives in real management situations;
- to develop an ability to communicate/ reason/ argue/ and give recommendations on strategy formation within an overarching strategic framework.
- to recognise the importance of critical analysis techniques and management processes in strategy development.

Expected Workload

Students can expect the workload to be approximately 12 hrs per week including both scheduled contact time (lectures, tutorials, workshops) and outside class.

Group Work

While the course has a tradition of collaboration in preparing for class discussions, there are important elements in the assessment process that are strictly individual. Collaboration on individual assignments is not allowed beyond general discussion as to how one might interpret the nature of the assignment question. Please do not work together to formulate a response and do not lend out your completed assignments.

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 second or third week, you will be expected to **prepare a brief** (500 word – no more than 2 pages) 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.

Assessment Requirements

Assignment	Title	% of Marks Available	Due Date
1	Contributions to class discussion	15%	Each class
2	Essay: The concept of Strategy	20%	11 th April 2007
3	Group Diversification analysis	10%	30 th April 2007
4	Case Analysis	15%	14 th May 2007
5	Final Examination	40%	8 th -27 th June 2007
	TOTAL	100%	

1. Contributions to Class Discussion

Date: Each class

Marks: 15%

As is appropriate for a post-graduate course, classes will be conducted on the basis that course members have as 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. A two page summary of the key issues (no more than two pages) is to be circulated to other class members at the time of presentation.

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. Individual Assignment - Essay: The Concept of Strategy

Due: 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 11th Marks: 20%

Word Limit: 4,000

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 26th, 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).

I will comment on an essay draft if it is e-mailed to me from **March 23rd - March 28th**.

3. Group Diversification Presentation

Due: For class Monday Apr 30th Marks: 10%

On, April 30th 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 of 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. Individual Assignment - Case Analysis: Strategy Implementation

Due: 5:00 pm Monday May 14th Marks:15%

Word limit: 2,500

On Monday May 7th, a case study and associated questions will be distributed. You will have one week to analyse the case and answer the questions. Due on **Monday May 14th, 2007** (see note below on word limits).

5. Examination

Date: 8th-27th June 2007 Marks: 40%

A course and exam review session will be held on **Monday May 28th 2007**. The areas covered in the review 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. In the final exam. The final closed book examination is ultimately an individual undertaking.

Handing in assignments:

Assignments should be emailed to me at sean.devine@vuw.ac.nz before 5 pm on the due date, or if this creates problems, a hard copy can be placed into my mail pigeon hole on the 9th floor Rutherford House, room RH923. If I do not acknowledge the receipt of the assignment within 24 hours please contact me immediately. Students must also keep an electronic copy of their work archived and be prepared to provide a hard copy if electronic communications fail. Failure to do so will jeopardise any claim by you that your work was submitted in the rare cases where your work goes astray.

Mandatory Course Requirements

All assignments must meet the time deadlines as stipulated in the Penalties section below. In order to pass the course, a total of 50% of the marks available must be achieved. Standard fail grades (D or E) will be awarded when the student's overall course mark falls below the minimum pass mark, whether or not the mandatory course requirements have been satisfied.

Penalties- for Lateness & Excessive Length of Assignments

- (i) In fairness to other students, work submitted after any deadline will incur a penalty for lateness. **The penalty is 5% of the marks available** for an assignment submitted after the due time on the due date **for each part day or day late. Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays** will be included when counting the number of days late. Assignments received **more than 7 days after the due date** will not be accepted and the student will **automatically fail the Mandatory Requirements**.
- (ii) Course Outlines provide a signal to student of forthcoming workload, dates of submission etc, and thus student study plans should take account of course requirements across all courses. Consequently, workload issues related to other courses and employment will not be accepted as reason for dispensation from mandatory waiver of penalties. **Extensions** to submission deadlines for any assigned work will only be granted in **exceptional circumstances**.
- (iii) Students who are unable to comply with any of the mandatory requirements should make a written application for an extension to the due date for submission of assigned work or for waiver of a penalty, **in advance**, to the Course Coordinator, providing documentary evidence of the reasons of their circumstances.

All such applications must be made **before** the deadline and be accompanied by documentary evidence, eg a medical certificate, or counsellor's report that indicates the degree of impairment, and for how long the student has been impaired. Please be sure to ask at the time of consultation for the degree of impairment to be stated in any certificate you provide to support your case.

- (iv) In the event of unusual or unforeseeable circumstances (e.g. serious illness, family bereavement), that precludes an application in advance, students should make contact with the Course Coordinator as soon as possible, and make application for waiver of a penalty as soon as practicable (prior to the due date when feasible).
- (v) Word limits should be adhered to, especially so when they provide a guide to limiting the student's coverage of a topic. Word limits do not include the references. **The penalty will be up to 10% of the grade for an assignment which is over the word limit.** Since a style of writing suitable for professional reports is required, significant departures from an economical style or inattention to spelling, grammar, punctuation can also result in a lower grade.

GRADING GUIDELINES

The following broad indicative characterisations of grade will apply in grading assignments and the exam:

A+	excellent performance in all respects at this level
A	excellent performance in almost all respects at this level
A-	excellent performance in many respects at this level
B+	very good, some aspects excellent
B, B-	good but not excellent performance at this level
C+, C	work satisfactory overall but inadequate in some respects
D	poor performance overall, some aspects adequate
E	well below the required standard
K	failure to achieve mandatory course requirements and have achieved at least an average "C" over all the assessment. Note this is a failing grade.

Referencing

There are many different styles of referencing and the Faculty of Commerce & Administration at VUW has decided to make APA (American Psychological Association) referencing style the common standard across the Faculty. The Commerce and Central Libraries hold the APA Style Guide. You can also access the information from the online VUW library site (<http://www.vuw.ac.nz/library/research/reference/referencingguides.aspx>).

Communication

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.

Email Contact

Students wishing to contact staff by email should include the **Course Code**, your **Name**, your **Student ID** and the **Topic** in the subject area of the email,

Students who send email from an email address other than their VUW SCS email account and ID may find that the SPAM filter removes their email. The responsibility of ensuring that these emails get through lies with the student.

Faculty of Commerce and Administration Offices

Railway West Wing (RWW) - FCA Student and Academic Services Office

The Faculty's Student and Academic Services 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 Student and Academic Services Office on (04) 463 5376.

Easterfield (EA) - FCA/Education/Law Kelburn Office

The Kelburn Campus Office for the Faculties of Commerce and Administration, Education 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 is available for the following:

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

To check for opening hours call the Student and Academic Services Office on (04) 463 5376.

General University Policies and Statutes

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar or go to www.vuw.ac.nz/policy.

For information on the following topics, go to the Faculty's website www.vuw.ac.nz/fca under Important Information for Students:

- Academic Grievances
- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
- Student and Staff Conduct
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support

Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme

Manaaki Pihipihinga is an academic mentoring programme for undergraduate Māori and Pacific students in the Faculties of Commerce and Administration, and Humanities and Social Sciences. Sessions are held at the Kelburn and Pipitea Campuses in the Mentoring Rooms, 14 Kelburn Parade (back courtyard), Room 109D, and Room 210, Level 2, Railway West Wing. There is also a Pacific Support Coordinator who assists Pacific students by linking them to the services and support they need while studying at Victoria. Another feature of the programme is a support network for Postgraduate students with links to Postgraduate workshops and activities around Campus.

For further information, or to register with the programme, email manaaki-pihipihinga-programme@vuw.ac.nz or phone (04) 463 5233 ext. 8977. To contact the Pacific Support Coordinator, email pacific-support-coord@vuw.ac.nz or phone (04) 463 5842.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Febr 26	Introduction
March 5	Concept of Strategy
March 12	Concept of Strategy (cont.) Case: DELTEC
March 19	Strategic Planning, Strategic Intent and Vision Case: Strategic Planning at Oldelft
<i>[March 23rd</i>	<i>Draft Essay emailed in: Concept of Strategy - email to sean.devine@vuw.ac.nz]</i>
March 26	Resource Allocation Processes Strategy presentations: 10 minutes per class member
April 2	Tracking Performance: Financial and Strategic Control Systems Video: R. Moss-Kanter
Mid-Trimester Break (April 6 - April 20)	
<i>[Apr 11 th</i>	<i>Essay: the Concept of Strategy]</i>
Apr 23	Corporate Strategy: CEOs and Top Management Teams
Apr 30	Diversification: Rationales and Implications In-class presentation of company analysis
May 7	Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs): Specific issues, networking & clustering. Case Study (TAIT) material distributed.
May 14	Internal Development: Knowledge and Learning Processes Video: Handy et al.
<i>[May 14th</i>	<i>TAIT Case Study: Strategy Implementation handed in]</i>
May 21	Strategic Alliances: Motives and Process Issues
May 28	Course and Exam Review