

Victoria Management School

MMBA534 STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

Trimester One 2007

COURSE OUTLINE

Contact Details

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Class Times and Room Numbers

Class sessions: Thursdays, 17.40 – 19.30, RH LT3

Mid-term exam: Friday 30 March, 18.00 – 20.00

Final examination period: 8-27 June 2007

Course Objectives

The focus of this course is upon the contribution of strategy development to organisational success and superior performance. Strategy setting is a process and methodology for determining the long-term goals and objectives for an organisation, and deciding upon a course of action to achieve these. Strategic management studies the linkages between an organisation and its environment, its capabilities and resources, and the successful implementation of the chosen courses of action.

Its study encompasses three broad areas of activity: strategic analysis, strategic choice and strategy implementation. Though conceptually separable, in practice these three aspects of strategy are closely intertwined, and it is hard to focus on one without to some extent involving the other two. However, it is useful to divide the study of strategy into these areas to facilitate the study of concepts and theories, tools and techniques associated with strategic management.

Strategic Management provides an opportunity to integrate knowledge and insights gained from other subjects studied on the MBA programme. Successful strategy development utilises concepts and tools from a variety of business-related disciplines such as economics, finance, marketing, organisational behaviour, operations management and project management, together with conceptual and creative thinking, and a certain amount of intuition and experience, with the aim of creating action.

While it is difficult to teach people to think strategically and develop winning strategies, the likelihood of this happening is increased, I believe, if one has at one's disposal certain concepts, frameworks and techniques, together with a methodology for applying these, to formulate and implement effective strategies.

The principal objectives of the course are:

1. To apply concepts and theories covered in various MBA topics to strategic issues facing organisations;
2. To introduce, and provide practice in the use of, a variety of tools and techniques that might assist with the development of strategy;
3. To provide frameworks to assist with the process of strategic planning;
4. To develop skills in strategic thinking.

The case study approach will be used wherever possible to develop analytical skills, and to practice the application of concepts to complex situations where issues are often inter-related.

A case study group assignment will be used, and the final exam will also be a case study.

Course Content

This course comprises 12 two-hour sessions (which includes lectures, case analyses, discussion of reading, class discussion) which, take place on Thursday evenings (17.40 – 19.30) commencing 1 March 2007 and concluding 31 May 2006.

Expected Workload

The anticipated workload for this course will be 10 hours per week. The following breakdown is intended as a guide:

Lectures	2 hours
Reading	2 hours
Case Preparation	3 hours
Assignments	3 hours

Group Work

This will take the form of a group case assignment (see ‘Assignment Requirements’). Groups should be no more than 4 students.

Readings

Robert M. Grant (2005) Contemporary Strategy Analysis. (5th edition), Blackwell Publishing. (*)

* As well as the textbook, this course will rely on additional case and reading material which will be made available in the course folder.

Materials and Equipment

Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments should be submitted in hard copy on white A4 bond paper, using word processing technology.

Students must prepare two copies of each hand-in and keep the second copy for their own reference. Students must also keep an electronic copy of their work archived in case the original assignment goes missing. Failure to do so will jeopardise any claim by you that your work was submitted in the rare cases where your work goes astray.

Assessment Requirements

In-term 2 hour examination (individual assessment) 25%

Written answers to questions to test knowledge of concepts and theories covered in lectures and the text.

Written case analysis (group assessment) 25%

A written report (2,000 – 3,000 words) that answers the assigned questions on the following case: *CRH plc: an evolving strategy* (due date 10 May, to be handed in at the commencement of the lecture)

Final 3 hour examination (individual assessment) 50%

Written answers to questions on a case study.

Penalties

- (i) 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. 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 a “zero” mark will be applied. Assignments more than one week late will not be accepted, and a “zero” mark will be applied. In addition, 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 requirements or 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 Controller, providing documentary evidence of the reasons of their circumstances.
- (iv) 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.
- (v) 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 Controller as soon as possible, and make application for waiver of a penalty as soon as practicable.
- (vi) Word limits should be adhered to, especially so when they provide a guide to limiting the student’s coverage of a topic. The penalty will be 1% of the grade for each 1% an assignment over the word limit, after a 10% excess allowance has been applied.
- (vii) Students are expected to attend all class sessions, read the designated sections of the textbook before class, undertake any preparatory work requested, and participate in class discussions. Up to 10% of the course mark may be deducted from individuals who fail to participate and prepare adequately.

Mandatory Course Requirements

To meet mandatory course requirements students are required to prepare for and attend classes, fully/equitably participate in class discussions, hand in assignments on time and sit the examinations.

Victoria MBA Grading Standards are as follows:**Excellent Category**

A- (75 – 79%) to A (80 – 85%) to A+ (above 85%): The learning is demonstrated to a very high level of proficiency, i.e. it is at a standard that makes it exceptional at Master's level.

Very Good Category

B+ (70 – 74%): The learning is demonstrated at a high standard. Students have reached a level that clearly exceeds "competency".

Good Category

B (65 – 69%): The learning is clearly demonstrated without being exceptional in any way. Students can be thought of as fully competent.

Satisfactory Category

B- (60 – 64%): The learning is demonstrated without being exceptional in any way. Students can be thought of as competent.

Marginal Category

C (50 – 54%) to C+ (55 – 59%): The learning is demonstrated to a minimally acceptable level. There may be flaws but these are not serious enough to "fail" the student.

Unsatisfactory / Failure Category

E (0 – 39%) to D (40 – 49%): The learning is absent or performed to a very low level, or the performance is seriously flawed.

Failure to achieve mandatory requirements category

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.

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.

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/resources/virtualref.shtml#style>).

Communication of Additional Information

Additional information and information on any changes will be conveyed to students via class announcements and Blackboard.

Lecture and Reading Schedule – MMBA 534

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date & Time</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Basic Reading</u>
1	1 March 17.40 – 19.30	- Course Introduction - The Nature of Strategy	Grant, Chs.1 & 2
2	8 March 17.40 – 19.30	- Industry Environment	Grant, Ch.3
3	15 March 17.40 – 19.30	-Inter-industry Analysis	Grant, Ch.4
4	22 March 17.40 – 19.30	- Resources & Capabilities	Grant, Ch.5
5	29 March 17.40 – 19.30	- Systems, Process, Structure	Grant, Chs.6 & 11
6	5 April 17.40 – 19.30	- Markets & Competitors	Grant, Chs.7,8,9
7	12 April	- no class	EASTER
8	19 April	- no class	EASTER
9	26 April 17.40 – 19.30	- Competitive Positioning	Grant, Chs.7,8,9
10	3 May 17.40 – 19.30	- Corporate Strategy	Grant, Chs.13,14,15,16
11	10 May 17.40 – 19.30	- Strategic Options & Choice	Grant, Chs.10, 12
12	17 May 17.40 – 19.30	- Evaluation & Selection	Grant, Chs.10, 12
13	24 May 17.40 – 19.30	- Strategy Implementation	Grant, Chs.10, 12
14	31 May 17.40 – 19.30	- Strategic Management Review	Grant, Ch.17

Case Schedule – MMBA 534

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Materials</u>	<u>Instructions</u>
1	1 Mar	Nature of Strategy		
2	8 Mar	Industry environment	Corus	Prepare answers to questions for class discussion
3	15 Mar	Inter-Industry analysis	European Brewing Industry	Prepare answers to questions for class discussion
4	22 Mar	Resources & Capabilities	Brewery Group Denmark	Prepare answers to questions for class discussion
5	29 Mar	Systems, Process, Structure	Exam 30 Mar	Exam prep.
6	5 Apr	Markets & Competitors	Skil Corporation (Part 1)	Prepare answers to questions for class discussion
7	12 Apr	No class		
8	19 Apr	No class		
9	26 Apr	Competitive Positioning	Skil Corporation (Part 2)	Prepare answers to questions for class discussion
10	3 May	Corporate Strategy	Vitalograph	Prepare answers to questions for class discussion
11	10 May	Strategic Options & Choice	Doman Synthetic Fibres	Prepare answers to questions for class discussion
12	17 May	Evaluation & Selection		
13	24 May	Strategy Implementation	Nucor (Part 1)	Prepare answers to questions for class discussion
14	31 May	Strategic Management Review	Nucor (Part 2)	

Other Administrative Details

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.