TE WHARE WĀNANGA O TE ŪPOKO O TE IKA A MĀUI

VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

School of Government

STRA 502
STRATEGIC ANALYSIS
(15 Points)

Trimester One / 2010

COURSE OUTLINE

Names and Contact Details

Course Coordinator:	**Dr Lance Beath**
	Room RWW 505, Level 5, Railway West Wing, Pipitea Campus
	Telephone: 027 4365 234
	Email: lance.beath@vuw.ac.nz
Masters Administrator:	**Darren Morgan**
	Room RH 821, Level 8, Rutherford House, Pipitea Campus
	Telephone: (04) 463 5458
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	Email: darren.morgan@vuw.ac.nz
Office Hours:	8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday

Trimester Dates

Trimester Dates:	Monday 1 March – Wednesday 30 June 2010
Teaching Period:	Wednesday 24 February – Wednesday 23 June 2010

Class Times and Room Numbers

Module One:	Wednesday 24 February 2010	8.30am – 6.00pm
Module Two:	Wednesday 14 April 2010	8.30am – 6.00pm
Module Three:	Wednesday 9 June 2010	8.30am – 6.00pm
Locations:	Classes will be held on the Pipitea Campus of Victoria University in Wellington and you will be advised of your classroom one week prior to each module by email.	

Withdrawal Dates

Notice of withdrawal must be in writing / emailed to the Masters Administrator. Ceasing to attend or verbally advising a member of staff will NOT be accepted as a notice of withdrawal.

Students giving notice of withdrawal from this course after **Tuesday 9 March 2010** will NOT receive a refund of fees.

Associate Dean (Students)'s approval required for withdrawal from this course after **Friday 14 May 2010**.

See more information available via:

- **Withdrawal dates: Late withdrawals with Associate Dean (Students) permission (See Section 8: Withdrawals – from the Personal Courses of Study Statute)**
  http://policy.vuw.ac.nz/Amphora!~~policy.vuw.ac.nz~POLICY~000000001743.pdf
- **Withdrawal dates: Refunds:**
  www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawlsrefunds.aspx

Course Content

The course follows, in broad outline, the chapter headings in the course textbook (Geoff Coyle's *Practical Strategy: Structured Tools and Techniques*, Prentice Hall 2004). Working in syndicates, course members will be required to use a variety of the strategy analysis tools in the Coyle textbook to explore and develop a case study on a strategic question of their choosing.

Other strategy analysis tools and techniques will also be explored by way of introduction during the course.

For the benefit of those taking STRA 502 as a stand alone elective, and also as a refresher for those who may be re-entering the strategic studies field after a break of some years away, the course will commence with an introductory session designed to answer the following questions:

- What is strategy and how is it related to policy?
- Key vocabulary and concepts
- Strategy as 'fit' versus strategy as 'stretch'

Course Learning Objectives

A broad qualitative survey of the main futures tools used in long-range strategy assessment and formulation of strategic options in both public and private sector contexts. Practical tools illustrated, discussed and explored by students taking this paper will include environmental scanning and assessment, scenario analysis, mind maps, impact wheels, influence diagrams, futures methodologies, field anomaly relaxation, congruence and force field analysis, and morphological analysis.

Course Delivery

Strategic Analysis will be taught in the first semester over three day-long modules on Wednesdays, 24 February, 14 April and 9 June 2010. Each module will commence with a short presentation by the Course Coordinator presenting key concepts and points at issue followed by class discussion. Towards the end of the first module students will be formed up into syndicates to work through a strategic question identified in class using the methodology outlined in the course textbook (Coyle: see the following section on course readings). The course will conclude with syndicate presentations at the final module.

Expected Workload

The learning objectives set for each course are demanding and, to achieve them, candidates must make a significant commitment in time and effort to reading, studying, thinking, and completion of assessment items outside of contact time. Courses vary in design but all require preparation and learning before the first module. Regular learning is necessary between modules (students who leave everything to the last moment rarely achieve at a high level). Expressed in input terms, the time commitment required usually translates to 65-95 hours (excluding class contact time) per course.

Readings

The course textbook is Geoff Coyle's ***Practical Strategy: Structured Tools and Techniques***. This text is published by Prentice Hall (2004) and is available for purchase through VicBooks, the university bookshop (www.vicbooks.co.nz).

Other texts which provide useful additional reading are:

- Peter Schwartz (1991). *The Art of the Long View.* Doubleday, New York (an indispensable guide to anyone interested in scenario analysis and long range planning).
- Suzanne Turner (2002). *Tools for Success: A Manager's Guide.* McGraw Hill, London (a useful compilation and beginner's guide to ninety or more of the most commonly used strategic analysis tools).

Course members will also find it useful to download the *Strategy Survival Guide* available online from the UK Prime Minister's Strategy Unit. The 200-plus pages in this guide provide useful practical advice on a range of issues that strategy managers and analysts are concerned with. Although the guide is intended primarily for people working in a public sector context, there is much in it that will be very helpful to private sector analysts and managers as well. Go to www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy.aspx.

An additional text that course members may find helpful is the RAND book *Shaping the Next One Hundred Years: New Methods for Quantitative, Long-Term Policy Analysis* by Robert Lempert et al. This can be downloaded from the RAND website at www.rand.org.

Blackboard

A range of other readings (see the list below) will be made available to course members as additional background and for class discussion as opportunity presents. These readings can be viewed via Blackboard (Victoria University's online environment that supports teaching and learning by making course information, materials and other learning activities available via the internet) through the myVictoria student web portal. To access the Blackboard site for this course:

1. Open a web browser and go to www.myvictoria.ac.nz.
2. Log into myVictoria using your ITS Username (on your Confirmation of Study) and password (if you've never used the Victoria University computer facilities before, your initial password is your student ID number, on your Confirmation of Study, Fees Assessment or student ID card – you may be asked to change it once you've logged in for the first time).
3. Once you've logged into myVictoria, select Blackboard (from the options along the top of the page) to go to your Blackboard homepage.
4. The "My Courses" box displays what courses you have access to (please note that only courses that are actually using Blackboard will be displayed), so select "10.1.STRA502: Strategic Analysis" for the course-specific Blackboard site.

You are recommended to ensure that your computer access to Blackboard is working before the course starts.

If you have any problems with myVictoria or Blackboard, you should contact the ITS Helpdesk on (04) 463 5050 or its-service@vuw.ac.nz, or visit the Helpdesk on level 2 of the Railway West Wing, Pipitea Campus (see www.victoria.ac.nz/its/student-services/ for more information).

…on forecasting techniques and associated issues:

- *A Futurist's Toolbox: Methodologies in Futures Work (2001).* Introduction and Futures Methodologies. UK Cabinet Office.
- *Leading the Revolution (2000).* Gary Hamel. Ch. 9: The New Innovation Solution. Harvard Business School Press, Boston.
- *Shaping the Next One Hundred Years: New Methods for Quantitative, Long Term Policy Analysis (2003).* Robert Lempert et al, RAND Corporation. Introduction and Chapter Two: A History of Thinking About the Future.
- Making the Most of Uncertainty. Hugh Courtney in The McKinsey Quarterly, 2001 Number 4.
- All Models are Wrong: Reflections on Becoming a Systems Scientist. John Sterman in Systems Dynamics Review Vol. 18, No. 4, (Winter 2002): 501-531.

…on definitions; on strategy versus tactics; on the various classes of strategy and the vocabulary associated with these classes; on the dimensions of strategy; and, on criteria for effective strategy:

- Strategies for Change. James Quinn in *The Strategy Process: Concepts, Contexts, Cases.* Ch 1, Reading 1.1. Prentice Hall 1996.
- Five Ps for Strategy. Henry Mintzberg. Ibid. Reading 1.2.

- Crafting Strategy. Henry Mintzberg. Ibid. Reading 5.2.
- Strategic Intent. Gary Hamel and C. K. Prahalad. Ibid. Reading 2.3.
- Strategy as Stretch and Leverage. Gary Hamel and C. K. Prahalad in *The Strategy Reader.* Edited by Susan Segal-Horn. Blackwell. 1998.
- Logical Incrementalism. James Quinn and John Voyer. Ibid. Reading 5.1.

…on a number of commonly met fallacies in the field of strategic planning:

- *The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning.* Henry Mintzberg. The Free Press. 1994. Ch 5: Fundamental Fallacies of Strategic Planning.

…on the analogies between strategy for war and strategy for business:

- *Forecasting, Planning and Strategy for the 21st Century.* Spyros Makridakis. The Free Press. 1990. Ch 8: Competitive Strategy.

…on strategy formation and a critique of the 10 principal schools that make up the strategic management literature:

- The Strategic Management Beast. Henry Mintzberg, Bruce Ahlstrand and Joseph Lampel in *Strategy Safari: A Guided Tour through the Wilds of Strategic Management.* The Free Press. 1998. Ch 1, Introduction.

…and, on the Japanese approach to strategy:

- Getting Back to Strategy. Kenichi Ohmae in *Strategy.* Harvard Business Review. Edited by Cynthia Montgomery and Michael Porter. Harvard Press. 1991.

Assessment Requirements

There will be two pieces of written assessment in this course. The first will be a short essay (1,500 words) based on Chapter One (The Keys to the Practical Strategy Box) and part of Chapter Two (Unravelling Complexity) of the course textbook: Geoff Coyle (2004) *Practical Strategy: Structured Tools and Techniques.* **Please note that this essay is due for handing in at the first course module on Wednesday 24 February 2010**. The first essay will be worth 30 % of the final mark for the course.

The second assignment is a 3,500 word essay based on your individual conclusions and reflections based on the work of your syndicate. This essay is due for handing in no later than **5.00pm on Wednesday 23 June 2010** i.e. two weeks after the third teaching module. The second essay is worth 70% of the final course mark.

Details of each assignment follow:

- One essay of 1,500 words (30%) in three parts: First, you are required to examine and comment on Geoff Coyle's definition in Chapter One of the course textbook on what comprises a strategic question. Second, and based on the Coyle definition, you are required to provide a sample strategic question of your own that you would be interested in having examined by one of the student syndicates in STRA 502. Finally, you are required to draw a simple mindmap showing some of the factors that will need to be examined in getting to grips with your strategic question. For a definition of mindmaps and a simple discussion, see page 19 of the Coyle textbook (Chapter 2: Unravelling complexity) or google on Buzan 1993. *The due date for handing in the finished essay is at the first teaching module on Wednesday 24 February 2010.*
- A 3,500 word essay (70%) based on a case study devised according to the Coyle criteria of what constitutes a good strategic question. Working in class syndicates, the purpose of the case study is to allow you to demonstrate your ability to understand and apply the Coyle strategic analysis methodology to a current strategic issue in either the New Zealand public or private sectors. There are four separate stages involved in the case study:
    - (a) Forming up the syndicates and identifying strategic questions for case study. This will be done at the first module on Wednesday 24 February 2010.
    - (b) Refining the strategic questions and providing a preliminary report back on progress by each syndicate. The preliminary report back and class discussion will take place at the second class module on Wednesday 14 April 2010.
    - (c) A final oral presentation (up to 40 minutes, but with time to be confirmed once the number of presentations have been established) of the completed case study to the class when it meets for the third module on Wednesday 9 June 2010.
    - (d) A written report on the case study by each class member. The written report will comprise both an individual critique of the Coyle methodology and description and individual comment on the case study itself. *Final reports from individual class members are due at 5.00pm on Wednesday 23 June 2010.*

Please submit all assignments IN HARD COPY to:

> Post Experience Programmes,
> School of Government,
> Victoria University of Wellington,
> Level 8 Reception,
> Rutherford House,
> 23 Lambton Quay,
> P.O. Box 600,
> Wellington.

Assignments that are submitted in person should be placed in the secure box at School of Government reception (Level 8, Rutherford House, Pipitea Campus) during office hours of 8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday. The assignment box is cleared daily, and assignments will be date stamped.

Note: Your assessed work may also be used for quality assurance purposes, such as to assess the level of achievement of learning objectives as required for accreditation and audit purposes. The

findings may be used to inform changes aimed at improving the quality of FCA programmes. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential, and the outcome will not affect your grade for the course.

Students should keep a copy of all submitted work.

Class Attendance

The School expects you to attend all three modules for the course. If, before enrolment for a course, you are aware that you will not be able to attend a module, you must notify the Director of Master's Programmes when you enrol explaining why you will not be able to attend. The Director of Master's Programmes will consult with the relevant course coordinator. In such circumstances, you may be declined entry into a course.

If you become aware after a course starts that you will be unable to attend a module or a significant part of a module (i.e. more than two hours in any given day), you must advise the course coordinator before the module explaining why you will be unable to attend. The course coordinator may excuse you from attendance and may also require you to complete compensatory work relating to the course content covered during your absence.

Deadlines and Failure to Meet Due Dates

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 per cent for every day by which the assignment is late and no assignments will be accepted after five working days beyond the date they are due. For example, if you get 65% for an assignment, but you handed it in on Monday when it was due the previous Friday, you will get a mark of 50%.

If ill-health, family bereavement or other personal circumstances beyond your control 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 coordinator know as soon as possible in advance of the deadline (if circumstances permit) if you are seeking an extension. Where an extension is sought, evidence, by way of a medical certificate or similar, may be required by the course coordinator.

Mandatory Course Requirements

Submit or participate in all pieces of assessment required for this course.

Communication of Additional Information

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

Academic Integrity, Plagiarism, and the Use of Turnitin

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, you must still acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- material from books, journals or any other printed source
- the work of other students or staff
- information from the Internet
- software programs and other electronic material
- designs and ideas
- the organisation or structuring of any such material.

Acknowledgement is required for all material in any work submitted for assessment unless it is a 'fact' that is well-known in the context (such as "Wellington is the capital of New Zealand") or your own ideas in your own words. Everything else that derives from one of the sources above and ends up in your work – whether it is directly quoted, paraphrased, or put into a table or figure, needs to be acknowledged with a reference that is sufficient for your reader to locate the original source.

Plagiarism undermines academic integrity simply because it is a form of lying, stealing and mistreating others. Plagiarism involves stealing other people's intellectual property and lying about whose work it is. This is why plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria.

If you are found guilty of plagiarism, you may be penalised under the Statute on Student Conduct. You should be aware of your obligations under the Statute, which can be downloaded from the policy website (www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy/students.aspx). You could fail your course or even be suspended from the University.

Plagiarism is easy to detect. The University has systems in place to identify it.

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine www.turnitin.com. Turnitin is an on-line plagiarism prevention tool which compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted materials on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions will not be made available to any other party.

There is guidance available to students on how to avoid plagiarism by way of sound study skills and the proper and consistent use of a recognised referencing system. This guidance may be found at the following website: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx.

If in doubt, seek the advice of your course coordinator.

Plagiarism is simply not worth the risk.

Other Information

For the following important information, follow the links provided:

- **Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**
  www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx
- **General University Policies and Statutes**
  www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy
- **AVC (Academic) Website: information including Conduct, Academic Grievances, Students with Impairments, Student Support**
  www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic/Publications.aspx
- **Faculty of Commerce and Administration Offices**
  www.victoria.ac.nz/fca/studenthelp/
- **Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme**
  www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/mentoring/