

Victoria Management School

## **MGMT310 COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE**

Trimester Two 2010

### **COURSE OUTLINE**

---

#### **COURSE COORDINATOR**

**Urs Daellenbach**

**Room: RH 929, Rutherford House**

**Phone: 463-5732**

**Email: urs.daellenbach@vuw.ac.nz**

Whenever possible, I undertake to respond to your messages within one business day.

If you would like to see me in person, please make an appointment. Appointments can be made at any time that is mutually convenient. A regular office hour will be held most Mondays, from 12:40-1:30 pm.

#### **ADMINISTRATOR**

**Luisa Acheson**

**Room: RH 912, Rutherford House**

**Phone: 463 5381**

**Email: luisa.acheson@vuw.ac.nz**

#### **TUTORIAL COORDINATOR**

**Garry Tansley**

**Room: RH 915**

**Phone: 463 6968**

**Email: garry.tansley@vuw.ac.nz**

#### **Trimester Dates**

**Teaching Period: Monday 12<sup>th</sup> July – Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2010**

**Study Period: Monday 18<sup>th</sup> June – Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2010**

**Examination Period: Friday 22 October – Saturday 13 November 2010 (inclusive)**

#### **Withdrawal from Courses:**

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:**

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

## Class Times and Room Numbers

Lecture:	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>1:40 – 3:30pm</b>	<b>Rutherford House RH LT1</b>
Workshop Times:	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>2:40 – 3:30pm</b>	<b>Rutherford House RH LT1</b>
	<b>Monday</b>	<b>11:30am – 12:20pm</b>	<b>Railway Station, RWW202</b>
	<b>Monday</b>	<b>2:40 – 3:30pm</b>	<b>Railway Station, RWW202</b>
	<b>Monday</b>	<b>3:40 – 4:30pm</b>	<b>Railway Station, RWW202</b>

The class will meet weekly from July 14, 2010 to October 13, 2010 inclusive, with no classes on August 25 and September 1 (mid-trimester break). There will be a workshop on Monday and/or Thursday during the first half of the course (see attached schedule for specific dates). The Monday workshops will be held in RWW202 computer lab. There will also be a **compulsory Saturday all-day session on September 18, 2010** where teams from each tutorial will make business decisions for their bicycle manufacturing company against competing teams in a web-based computer simulation.

## Tutorials:

There will be six tutorials spread across the trimester in weeks 3 through 8.

Tutorial Signup Instructions: Go to the signup website at: <https://signups.victoria.ac.nz> and enter your SCS username and password to log into the system.

Click on MGMT310 and follow the instructions.

## TUTOR

**Andrew Jackson**

**Email:** andrew.jackson@vuw.ac.nz

## Course Content

MGMT310 provides participants with an understanding of the range of advantages available to an organization, the sources of any advantages and how particular strategies can leverage these, the likely impact and effectiveness of competitive moves and responses, and how the New Zealand business environment affects the types and sustainability of advantages that are pursued for local, regional and global success.

At the end of the course, participants will have added to, and be able to apply, a strategic toolkit that will enable them to approach and structure business scenarios and develop clear strategies for the organizations they work with and for. With a focus on designing strategies, the course will provide participants with an opportunity to experience both the process of deciding on a particular strategy as well as having to adapt to competitors' actions and responses.

## Course Learning Objectives

MGMT310, Competitive Advantage, has four learning objectives. The achievement of these Course Learning Objectives will be assessed through the tutorials, assignments and the final exam. By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Apply the various theories of strategic management to real-life case study situations. *This will be assessed in tutorial participation, individual assignment 1, and the final exam.*
2. Analyze the various 'strategic tensions' and paradoxes in business. *(All assessments).*
3. Discuss and apply critical thinking to a wide range of strategic management issues. *This will be assessed in tutorial participation, individual assignment 2, and the final exam.*

4. Understand the dynamic nature of strategies and advantages. *This will be assessed in individual assignment 2 and the final exam.*

### **Course Delivery**

Session content will vary during the trimester, including lectures, discussion of case histories or readings, and video material. The *twelve lectures and associated readings* are devoted to introducing the key issues and frameworks addressed with the course. Each lecture will be presented in the understanding that participants have done the assigned reading before the lecture. On occasion, guest speakers may illustrate the lecture material from their own perspectives in New Zealand organizations. The *tutorials* are devoted primarily to the discussion and analysis of case histories where competitive advantage and rivalry are central concerns. Participants are expected to take an active role in these discussions. While tutorials will typically place the emphasis on lecture material presented on the preceding Wednesday, the cases also involve an array of strategic issues that are relevant to gaining and sustaining competitive advantage. The *workshops* will serve primarily to introduce the business simulation software, *Mike's Bikes*. Due to the size of the class relative to the Railway Station computer labs, 3-4 workshop sessions will be held on Mondays. Please attend one workshop session.

### **Expected Workload**

A total of about 240 hours of work is expected from students during this course. That consists of approximately 40 hours of classes (lectures and workshops), approximately ten hours per week outside classes during teaching weeks for reading, studying and writing assignments, full involvement in the Saturday simulation (12 hours), and a further 60 hours starting prior to the mid-trimester break and culminating with the all-day simulation. The workload will be greatest during the first two weeks after the mid-trimester break.

### **Group Work**

While courses with case analyses have a tradition of study group collaboration, 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 assignment questions. Please do not formulate shared responses to questions and do not loan out or borrow parts of or completed assignments. VUW takes plagiarism seriously and electronic checks, such as turnitin.com, monitor across a class and against previous year's classes for rote copying.

There is a significant group work component in this course associated with the simulation. Some of this group work is likely to require meetings outside of normal working hours (8:30am-5:30pm, Monday to Friday). While the final reports from the simulation must be written up individually, preparation for the simulation and development of a strategy/strategic plan will occur in groups. It is every student's individual responsibility to develop an understanding of all parts of the simulation to assess how these factors contributed to their team's performance. Equitable contributions to the group's decisions during the simulation are expected.

### **Readings**

*Strategy and the Business Landscape, 3<sup>rd</sup> International Edition.* Pankaj Ghemawat (2010) Prentice Hall/Pearson, Upper Saddle River NJ, USA (ISBN: 0-13-245720-2)

Available from VUW bookshop.

It is essential that all students have access to a copy of this book and read the assigned chapters prior to class. Additional electronic resources and links to sites of interest will be available on

the MGMT310 Blackboard site throughout the trimester. It is expected that students will check the MGMT310 Blackboard site for updates regularly. All chapters referred to in this course schedule refer to textbook above, unless otherwise stated.

### Materials and Equipment

The business simulation, Mike’s Bikes, involves payment of a discounted fee of **\$55 per student**. This is paid directly to Smartsims, the software company that has developed the Mike’s Bikes software (see Mike’s Bikes folder on Blackboard for instructions). In order to complete the simulation, all students will require a login and password that gives them access to the online portion of the simulation. These are activated once the fee has been paid.

### Assessment Requirements

A student's overall grade in the course will be determined in the following manner:

Assignment	Title	Weight	Date
1	Tutorial Participation	10%	Weeks 3-8
2	Individual Assignment 1 Case analysis	15%	August 19 at 2:40pm
3	Group Assignment Mike’s Bikes Strategic Plan	5%	September 14 at 3pm
4	Individual Assignment 2 Mike’s Bikes analysis	20%	September 30 at 2:30pm
5	Final Examination	50%	22 Oct. - 13 Nov. 2010
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	

- 1. Individual tutorial participation (10%):** Contributions will be assessed on the quality of the insights offered by the participant. The MGMT310 tutor will be using the following general guide, focussing primarily on the quality of contributions, to determine your tutorial participation mark.

	<b>100% (10/10):</b> Frequent and consistent contributions which show an excellent understanding of the case and makes significant reference to the course readings and beyond. Comments demonstrate excellent interweaving of theory and practice.
	<b>75% (7.5/10):</b> Frequent and consistent contributions that show a good understanding of the case and that sometimes make reference to the course readings. Comments demonstrate good interweaving of theory and practice.
	<b>50% (5/10):</b> Sporadic contributions to class/group discussion; comments showed some understanding of the case but made little to no reference to the course readings.
	<b>25% (2.5/10):</b> Negligible contribution to class/group discussion: “I came, I listened, but only participated in the proceedings on rare occasions”.
	<b>0% (0/10):</b> Any student who attended <b>fewer than five</b> tutorials.

It is expected that you will have read the relevant case study before the tutorial. Note that attendance at most tutorials is one of the mandatory requirements of the course (see below). To make an effective contribution will require careful reading of materials and case studies prior to the class, analysis and synthesis of these readings, and organizing your ideas into a structured form that will allow you to make a material contribution to the discussion. You should identify and raise strategic issues from the cases that are relevant and related to gaining and sustaining competitive advantage.

**2. Individual Assignment 1 (15%). Due date: August 19 2010 by 2:30pm**

A case study and questions will be distributed in the workshop on August 5. You will be asked to analyze the case and write a business report using the concepts and frameworks introduced in MGMT310. In answering the questions, please make sure that you translate the material into your own words. This is an individual assignment and it is expected that you will write up the report in your own words. Details on assessment criteria will be handed out with the case questions and case, but the assessment criteria will reflect those noted in MGMT310's 'course learning objectives'.

Length: 1500 words (see note on word limits below)

**3. Strategic Business Plan (5%) (group assignment: 4-5 students per group)**

The business simulation will be completed in groups of 4-5 people from your tutorial session. The tutor will get you to form groups in the third week of class. By the end of the third week of class, you should have paid the fee for the use of the software for Mike's Bikes. This software contains both a Single-player and a Multi-player version of the simulation. The Single-player version allows you to analyze the effects of your decisions in a situation where the computer simulates your decisions against one competitor's actions. The Multi-player version, which incorporates the effects of competition, will be used for the actual simulation. The simulation will involve 8-10 simulated years of competition (a practice period is scheduled to familiarize you with the software starting September 6). The majority of the simulation will occur on Saturday, September 18, where new decisions will need to be made every hour or so.

By September 14, your group will need to hand in a strategic business plan for your company (approximately 1500 words). Preliminary business plans will be presented to your tutor, and the course coordinator where possible, in the tutorial sessions on September 6, 7 and 8. You will have a chance to revise your plans based on the feedback from that session. The strategic business plans (5% of your final grade) show your company's *intended* strategy for the simulation – thus, they are likely to deviate from the strategy/actions actually implemented once you have to adapt to competition and performance results. The plan should highlight the key aspects of your intended strategy so that you can re-assess these afterwards to determine if your strategy is/was successful in the multi-year report.

**4. Individual Assignment 2 (20%) Multi-year Report. Due date: 30 September 2010 by 2:30pm**

Drawing on your intended plan and the results of the simulation, each student will then individually produce a multi-year report (worth 20%) that briefly summarizes your company's progress over the simulation timeframe, clearly identifies why your company did well/poorly, indicates when and why your strategy was changed, and how these decisions were expected to alter your competitive situation. It should also briefly discuss the future plans of your company given the situation it is in at the end of the simulation.

Length: 2000 words (see note below on word limits)

5. **A closed-book 3-hour examination** based on a case study and essay questions (50%).

Examination dates for trimester two: Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> October to Saturday 13 November 2010 (inclusive). Students who enrol in courses with examinations are obliged to attend an examination at the University at any time during the formal examination period.

The examination is worth 50% of the total marks available for this course. It is closed book 3-hour examination. You will be required to answer questions about a case study that will require you to draw on different readings and frameworks covered in the course. All sessions during the course are examinable.

*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.*

### **Handing in assignments**

Assignments should be placed, in hard copy form, in the MGMT310 box (no. 25) on the mezzanine floor of Rutherford House by the due time on the due date.

All Hand-Ins should have: an Assignment Cover Sheet stating your name, the course name, tutorial number and day/time, assignment name and number, a word count and due date (see Blackboard for an electronic version). You should also put page numbers on each page.

Assignments received after the due time/date will be deemed to be late, and must be handed to the Administrator for this course in RH912 where your assignment will have the time, date and signature noted on the front cover by the person receiving it.

Students must prepare two copies of each hand-in and keep the second copy for their own reference. Students must also have an electronic copy of their work available that will need to be submitted electronically on Blackboard.

### **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 copies of the APA Style Guide.

### **Penalties**

- (i) In fairness to other students, work submitted after any deadline will incur a penalty for lateness. The penalty is 2 of the marks available (marks available means what the assignment is worth i.e. 20% or 20 marks) for an assignment submitted after the due time on the due date for each part day or day late. (for example if an assignment is out of 20 and the assignment receives 50% then one day late means the mark will be out of 18 and the student will receive 50% of 18). 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 fail the Mandatory Course Requirements.
- (ii) Course Outlines provide a signal to students 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 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, e.g. a medical certificate, or counsellor's report clearly stating the degree of impairment, and the dates the illness or event prevented you from undertaking your academic studies. This can be applied retrospectively.

- (iv) In the event of unusual or unforeseeable circumstances (e.g. serious illness, family bereavement or other exceptional events), that precludes an application in advance, students should make contact with the Tutorial Coordinator as soon as possible, and make an application for waiver of a penalty as soon as practicable.
- (v) 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 10% of the grade for an assignment which is 10% over the word limit.

### Grading Guidelines

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

- A+ excellent performance in all respects
- A excellent performance in almost all respects
- A- excellent performance in many respects
- B+ very good, some aspects excellent
- B, B- good but not excellent performance
- C+, C work satisfactory overall but inadequate in some respects
- D poor performance overall, some aspects adequate
- E well below the required standard

### Mandatory Course Requirements

Unless you have received the *prior* approval of the coordinator of MGMT 310, Urs Daellenbach, you must:

- (a) attend at least **five** of the six tutorial sessions;
- (b) equitably contribute to the preparation and implementation of the group assignments (strategic plan, simulation), including being present for both the group presentation and the Sept. 18 simulation day; and
- (c) submit both individual assignments.

In order to pass the course, you must satisfy the mandatory requirements noted above, and **obtain at least 50%** in the final examination.

Students who fail to satisfy all of these mandatory requirements but who obtain 50% or more of the overall course marks will be awarded a "K" 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. For example, a student who obtains an overall course mark of 35 and does not fulfil one or more of the mandatory course requirements will be given an E grade. A student who

fails to sit an examination will have their course mark calculated with an entry of Zero for the exam and their grade determined in the usual way.

Notice of Failure to meet Mandatory Requirements will be posted on Blackboard or on the Mezzanine Floor Notice-board. Students will be expected to check both places for notification.

### **Class Representative**

A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person's name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, the Course Coordinator and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students, see <http://www.vuwsa.org.nz/representation/class-reps/> for more details.

### **Communication of Additional Information**

Information on course-related matters will be announced at class and posted on the **Blackboard** website at <http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz/>. It will be crucial for you to regularly check Blackboard for messages, announcements and materials.

Messages/updates via e-mail may be necessary at times during the simulation.

### **Use of Turnitin**

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <http://www.turnitin.com>. Turnitin is an on-line plagiarism prevention tool which compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. Electronic submission via Blackboard will be required for both individual assignments. 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.

**For the following important information, follow the links provided below:**

#### **Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

#### **General University Policies and Statutes**

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>

#### **AVC (Academic) Website: information including: Conduct, Academic Grievances, Students with Impairments, Student Support**

[http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about\\_victoria/avcacademic/Publications.aspx](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic/Publications.aspx)

#### **Faculty of Commerce and Administration Offices**

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fca/studenthelp/>

#### **Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme**

[http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st\\_services/mentoring/](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/mentoring/)



## Course Schedule

Week / Date	Topic	Tutorial	Workshop
<b>1: July 14</b>	<b>Introduction: The Concept of Competitive Advantage</b> preparation: review pp. 214-226; 240-259 in Angwin, Cummings & Smith, <i>The Strategy Pathfinder</i> (MGMT205 textbook) Coyne, Sustainable Competitive Advantage		<i>Mike's Bikes (MB) Intro</i> (15/7 RHLT1)
<b>2: July 21</b>	<b>Competitive Strategies: Cost Leadership</b> preparation: Chapter 3: Creating Competitive Advantage		
<b>3: July 28</b>	<b>Competitive Strategies: Product Differentiation</b> preparation: Day, Deciding How to Compete Miller, The Generic Strategy Trap	Case: Kiwibank	<i>MB: Operations</i> (26/7 RWW202)
<b>4: August 4</b>	<b>Corporate Strategy</b> preparation: Chapter 6: Choosing Corporate Scope Marks & Mirvis, Making Mergers and Acquisitions Work	Case: Pizza in Wellington	<i>MB: Marketing</i> (2/8 RWW202) <i>MB: Finance</i> (5/8 RHLT1)
<b>5: August 11</b>	<b>Resources and Sustained Competitive Advantage</b> preparation: Barney, Resource-Based View of the Firm Chapter 5: Sustaining Superior Performance	Case: Eastman Kodak	
<b>6: August 18</b>	<b>Gaining Advantage from Intangible Resources</b> preparation: Tidd & Bessant, Innovation: What it is and why it matters Pfeffer, Producing Advantage through People	Case: NZ Merino Clothing	<i>MB: R&amp;D</i> (16/8 RWW202) <i>MB: Strategic Business Plans, Branding, HR statements</i> (19/8 RHLT1)
<b>August 19</b>	*** Midterm Case Analysis due ***		
<b>August 21 – September 5, 2010</b>	<b>Midtrimester Break ... preparation for Mike's Bikes simulation</b>		

- 7: September 8 Business Landscape**  
preparation: Chapter 2: Mapping the Business Landscape  
*Presentation of Preliminary Strategic Business plans*  
*MB: Q&A (6/9 RWW202)*  
*Practice rounds will occur this week, starting September 6*
- September 14** *Actual Simulation starts!*  
\*\*\* *Strategic Business Plan due* \*\*\*
- 8: September 15 Assessing Rivalry, Competitive Actions and Responses**  
preparation: Chapter 4: Anticipating Competitive Dynamics  
Zahra & Chaples, Competitive Blind Spots  
Case: NZ Building Supplies  
*MB: Q&A (13/9 RWW202)*  
*-hand in branding and/or HR statement (optional)*
- September 18** *Mike's Bikes Simulation Saturday session*
- 9: September 22 Developing Advantage through Cooperation**  
preparation: Walker, Chapter 7: Partnering
- 10: September 29 Advantage in Industries of the "New Economy"**  
preparation: Thompson & Strickland, The Internet Economy
- September 30** \*\*\* *Mike's Bikes Multi-year Simulation Report due* \*\*\*
- 11: October 6 Competitive Advantage for New Zealand Businesses**  
preparation: Chapter 7: Developing a Global Strategy  
Campbell-Hunt et al., Chapter 1, *World Famous in New Zealand*
- 12: October 13 Course and Final Examination Review**