

School of Management

**MGMT 417/ MMMS 514 ADVANCED STRATEGIC
MANAGEMENT**

Trimester 1, 2013

COURSE OUTLINE

Names and Contact Details

COURSE COORDINATOR

Dr Sean Devine

Room: RH914, Rutherford House

Phone: 463 5141

Email: sean.devine@vuw.ac.nz

LECTURER

Kieran Nolan

Room: RH914, Rutherford House

Phone: 463 5141

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ADMINISTRATOR

Tricia Lapham

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Trimester Dates

Teaching Period: Monday 4 March – Friday 7 June

Study Period: Monday 10 June – Thursday 13 June

Examination Period: Friday 14 June – Wednesday 3 July (inclusive)

Withdrawal from Course

1. Your fees will be refunded if you withdraw from this course on or before Friday 15 March 2013.
2. The standard last date for withdrawal from this course is Friday 17 May. After this date, students forced to withdraw by circumstances beyond their control must apply for permission on an '*Application for Associate Dean's Permission to Withdraw Late*' including supporting documentation. The application form is available from either of the Faculty's Student Customer Service Desks.

Class Times and Room Numbers

Lecture: Friday

Time: 9:30 am to 12:20 pm.

Venue: Railway Building: RWW126

Course Delivery

At the beginning of each session the topic of the day will be introduced by the Lecturer. Those assigned the readings for the week will present their perspective on their reading and lead the class discussion. Additionally, some sessions may involve discussion on case studies that will have been circulated previously or may involve a video presentation related to the topic under discussion. Students will be contacted during the course through email.

Expected Workload

Students can expect the workload to be approximately 10-12 hours per week of student work, including both scheduled class time (three hours weekly for 12 weeks) and time outside class including work for assignments. Total workload is 150 hours.

Course Learning Objectives

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

- to develop an understanding of scholarly research and the capability to access developments in the field of strategy through the appropriate international literature (Assignments 1 & 2).
- to demonstrate an understanding of the major theoretical frameworks and concepts relevant to strategy and to use these frameworks to critically evaluate or develop strategic initiatives in real management situations (Assignments 2 & 3).
- to develop an ability to clearly communicate, reason, argue and give recommendations on strategy formation within an overarching strategic framework in both written and oral work (Assignments 1 & 3).
- to recognise the importance of critical analysis techniques and management processes in strategy development (Assignments 2 & 3).

Course Content

This strategy course focuses on the longer term strategic management issues faced by an organisation operating in a complex and evolving environment, including the use of design concepts in business strategy.

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. It will examine the range of decisions that are strategic to an organisation, as well as the forces that influence the evolution of strategy over time. The course is designed to provide an understanding how strategies can be articulated and managed through planning and control. It takes a broad perspective and familiarises participants with the literature on strategic management, building on previous studies of strategy in a way that will challenge participants to

think critically about issues and assumptions that impact on an organisation's long term strategic directions.

The latter half of the course concentrates on the use of design in business. While a relatively new insight to better lift firm performance and to create sustainable advantage, design and the approaches used by designers, are being utilised by organisations to develop new strategies; to innovate and differentiate and to provide better products and services to customers. This section of the course will allow participants to understand and apply the design concepts in strategic management situations.

At the end of the course, it is expected that the participants will have developed their own workable understandings of strategy that will allow them to bring a fresh perspective to strategy development in a changing world.

Readings

The class will meet once a week and each week will be devoted to the topic as listed in the schedule on page 8. 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 these readings as discussed below for assignment 1.

“Strategy Safari: a guided tour through the wilds of strategic management”, by H Mintzberg, B Ahlstrand and J Lampel provides a background to the many different approaches to strategy. Students who are less familiar with strategy should first read selections from *“The Strategy Pathfinder; Core Concepts and Micro-Cases”* by D. Angwin, S. Cummings and C. Smith (Blackwell 2008). A small number of copies of the latter will be available for class and students will be expected to share these.

Assessment Requirements

| Assignment | Title | % of Marks Available | Due Date |
|------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | Class Contribution | 10% | Each class |
| 2 | Essay: The concept of Strategy | 20% | 24 th April 2013 |
| 3 | Case Analysis | 15% | 29 May 2013 |
| 4 | Final Examination | 55% | 14th June-3rd July 2013 |
| | TOTAL | 100% | |

1. Class Contribution

Date: Each class

Marks: 10%

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 coordinator.

Course members will be expected to both lead class discussions and contribute to class discussions when led by others. Approximately every fourth week (depending on class numbers), you will be asked to lead a seminar to discuss an article or book chapter provided for that week.

You must also **prepare a brief** (500 word – **absolutely no more than 2 pages**) summary of one of the assigned readings. A copy of your summary should be made for each participant in the course.

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. 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 critiquing;
- what the article leaves unfinished.

and additionally, for empirical analyses,

- address how well the concepts 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.

Both the oral presentation and the two page summary will be used to assess the grade for the contribution based on the issues raised in the reading being discussed.

We 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. The lecturers will be able to facilitate your class contributions and to ensure that each student has the opportunity to contribute to the discussions.

2. Individual Assignment - Essay: The Concept of Strategy

Due: 5:00 p.m. Wednesday April 24th Email to sean.devine@vuw.ac.nz

Marks: 25%

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. On April 12th also be prepared to make a short presentation, of no more than 10 minutes, on the key aspects of your concept of strategy. Length guide for essay: 3000-4000 words (see note below on word limits).

3. Individual Assignment - Case Analysis

Due: Midday, Wednesday 29th May Email to kieran.nolan@vuw.ac.nz

Marks: 15%

Word limit: 2,000 (see note below on word limits)

On Friday May 17th, a case study will be distributed. The case will be based on the application of design concepts in business. Students will be required to evaluate and critique the case and put forward recommendations as appropriate (this may include answering specific questions that may be distributed with the case).

4. Examination

Examination date will be between: Friday 14 June – Wednesday 3 July (inclusive).

The examination is worth 55% of the total marks available for this course. It is a closed book 3-hour examination and no computers (except with prior written approval for medical reasons) or electronic calculators will be allowed in the examination room. Essay style answers are expected.

A course and exam review session will be held on **June 5th**. 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.

All material covered during the course is examinable unless otherwise stated in writing.

Penalties - for Lateness & Excessive Length of Assignments

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 **automatically 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.
- iii **Extensions** to submission deadlines for any assigned work will only be granted in **exceptional circumstances**. 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.

Documentary evidence may include 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 **Course Coordinator** as soon as possible, and make 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. Word limits do not include the references. **The penalty will be 2.5% of the grade for an assignment which is 5% 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.

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. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and submitted to Turnitin. A copy of submitted materials will be retained 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.

Examinations

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 final examination for this course will be scheduled at some time during the following period:

14 June – 3 July

Mandatory Course Requirements

In addition to obtaining an overall course mark of 50 or better, students must ...

- i. Meet the assignment requirements including length and deadlines, subject to the penalties outlined in the Penalties section below;
- ii. Submit all assignments within the allowable timeframe (see Penalties section);
- iii. Obtain at least 40 per cent (i.e. 20 marks out of 50) of the final examination marks available.

Students who fail to satisfy the mandatory requirements for this course but who obtain 50% or more overall, 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, regardless of whether the mandatory course requirements have been satisfied or not.

Notice of Failure to meet Mandatory Course Requirements will be notified directly by email to the student concerned in the final week of the course.

Class Representative

Students will select a representative for the postgraduate programme at the start of the semester.

Communication of Additional Information

An email 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. Other information will be communicated by Blackboard.

Email Contact

Students wishing to contact staff by email should adhere to the following instructions:

Include the **Course Code**, your **Name**, your **Student ID** and the **Topic** in the subject area of the email. All students should use their VUW SCS email account and ID where possible. Otherwise, email may be classified as Spam and not read.

Link to general information

For general information about course-related matters, go to

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/vbs/studenthelp/general-course-information>

Note to Students

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

Course Schedule next page.

COURSE SCHEDULE

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| March 5 | Introduction |
| March 15 | Concept of Strategy |
| March 20 | Concept of Strategy (cont.) Case study: DELTEC |
| Easter Break | (March 28 th – April 3 rd inclusive) |
| April 5th | Strategic Planning, Strategic Intent and Vision Case: Strategic Planning at Oldelft |
| April 12 | Resource Allocation Processes Voluntary Essay Strategy presentations: 10 minutes per class member |
| April 19 | Corporate strategy: CEOs and top management. |
| Mid-Trimester Break | (April 22 nd – April 26 th inclusive) |
| <i>[Apr 24</i> | <i>Essay: the Concept of Strategy emailed to sean.devine@vuw.ac.nz]</i> |
| May 3rd | Strategy, Innovation and Creativity |
| May 10th | Design in Business |
| May 17 | Design Thinking – Concepts |
| May 24 | Design Thinking – Process and Applications |
| <i>[May 29th</i> | <i>Case Study emailed to kieran.nolan@vuw.ac.nz]</i> |
| May 31 | Design Thinking for Corporates and Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) |
| June 7 | Course and Exam Review |