

School of Management

## **MGMT417 ADVANCED STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT**

Trimester 1, 2014

### **COURSE OUTLINE**

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#### **Names and Contact Details**

##### **Dr Urs Daellenbach**

Room: RH905, Rutherford House

Phone: 463 5732

Email: urs.daellenbach@vuw.ac.nz

Website: www.victoria.ac.nz/som

##### **Administrator, Misa Ito**

RH 1022, Rutherford House

463 5397

or misa.ito@vuw.ac.nz

#### **Trimester Dates**

Teaching Period: Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March – Friday 6<sup>th</sup> June

Study Period: Monday 9<sup>th</sup> June – Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> June

Examination Period: Friday 13<sup>th</sup> June – Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July (inclusive)

#### **Withdrawal from Course**

1. Your fees will be refunded if you withdraw from this course on or before Friday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2014.
2. The standard last date for withdrawal from this course is Friday 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2014. 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**

Fridays 11:30 - 14:20 Railway West Wing RWW413

#### **Course Delivery**

The course is delivered through weekly three-hour sessions. These involve discussion of assigned readings and case studies on select topics in Strategic Management, and some lectures to summarise the material covered during each class. Students are expected to actively participate in discussion. Participants have as much to learn from each other as from the lecturer. Hence, effective preparation for each class session is a key expectation of all participants in an Honours course. For effective contribution you will need to read the materials and case study fully before the session and structure your thoughts on the various issues covered. You should also note questions that you have about the material and be prepared to raise these in class.

#### **Group Work**

Research on a recent merger and acquisition (post 2010) merger or acquisition will culminate in a 15 minute presentation to the class. This group assignment will be completed in pairs. Groups will

be formed in the first three weeks of the trimester and should begin to actively collect data on their chosen merger or acquisition early in the trimester. The written component of the merger assignment will be completed individually and should take into account feedback from the presentations.

### **Expected Workload**

Students can expect the workload to be approximately 9 hours per week, including both scheduled contact time (lectures) and student work outside class. The remaining hours are associated with assignment / final examination preparation and the group presentation and will require more intensive effort in the weeks preceding completion of these assessments.

### **Prescription**

An advanced level survey of strategic management issues arising from the interaction between an enterprise and its environment, the integration of key resources and functional areas across the enterprise, and the processes that shape the goals, strategy and competitive advantage of the enterprise. The course takes a broad perspective and familiarises participants with the advanced strategic management literature.

### **Course Learning Objectives**

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Appraise current thought on select topics in strategic management in the light of contemporary debates (All Assessments);
2. Engage in knowledgeable discussion on those topics (Assessment 1, 2b, 3);
3. Reflect critically on strategic management more broadly as well as the topics covered specifically (Assessments 1 & 3);
4. Apply the theoretical perspectives covered (Assessment 2a & 2b, 3).

The assessment for the course is structured to develop and gauge students' understanding and knowledge of the topics, their ability to apply the frameworks/perspectives discussed and their ability to engage critically with issues in strategy.

### **Course Content**

This strategy course focuses on the longer term strategic management issues faced by an organisation operating in a complex and evolving environment. After introducing some key ideas and perspectives, the course will examine how strategic management processes, those that address acquiring/accessing/ allocating/developing resources, differ across contexts. It will examine the range of decisions that are strategic to an organisation, as well as the factors that influence the evolution of strategy over time. The course is designed to provide an understanding how strategies can be articulated and managed through appropriate planning and control. It takes a broad perspective and familiarises participants with key 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 across multiple levels. The latter half of the course concentrates on corporate strategy and mergers/acquisitions in particular. This will give participants the opportunity to evaluate and apply the different perspectives on mergers and acquisitions to a recent real world corporate initiative.

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 readings for this course will be issued in class before the start of each section. A broader reading list will be distributed as well and this can be drawn on for the assignments associated with each section. In class, students are expected to have covered the readings for that session and to contribute to the discussion. As part of this general discussion, each student will be required to prepare a one-page summary/analysis of one of the readings in each section to present to the others in class.

## Assessment

From Trimester 1, 2014, a revised Assessment Handbook will apply to all VUW courses: see <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf>.

In particular, there will be a new grade scheme, in which the A+ range will be 90-100% and 50-54% will be a C-.

| Assessment | Title                               | Weight      | Date   |
|------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|--|
| 1          | Strategy Essay                      | 20%         | 3pm, Thurs. 3 April 2014                         |
| 2          | Merger Assignment                   |             |  |
| 2a         | - Merger presentation               | 10%         | In class, 23 May 2014                            |
| 2b         | - Individual merger analysis report | 20%         | 9:30am Tuesday<br>3 June 2014                    |
| 3          | Final examination                   | 50%         | during examination period<br>13 June-2 July 2014 |
|            | <b>TOTAL</b>                        | <b>100%</b> |  |

### *1. Strategy Essay*

Date: by 3pm Thursday 3 April 2014

Marks: 20

During the first section of the course, 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 20 March 2014, each student will be asked to provide a short informal presentation, of 4-6 minutes, on the key aspects of 'your' concept of strategy. Length guide for essay: 3000 words (see note below on word limits).

### *2a. Group Presentation*

Marks: 10

To be completed in pairs (unless permission is granted by course coordinator for altering this)

Time: In class (11:30-14:20) Friday 23 May 2014

The merger assignment involves choosing a recent merger or acquisition situation, researching it fully from public sources and then analysing it by drawing on the various perspectives covered in the merger and acquisition literature covered in class. The presentation covers primarily a presentation of the merger itself, the stated motives and some evaluation of the outcomes since it was announced. Feedback will be given in the form of questions and a summary e-mail following the presentation.

*-additional details on the assessment criteria will be handed out in class*

Length: 15 minutes followed by questions and discussion

## **2b. Individual Analysis and Report**

Due: 9:30am Tuesday 3 June 2014

Marks: 20

### *Analysing a merger's integration*

Following on from your group presentation of a recent merger/acquisition, based on public sources this report will focus on analysing its motives and identifying the implications for the subsequent integration.

*-additional details on the assessment criteria will be handed out in class*

Length guide for essay: 3000 words (see note below on word limits).

## **3. Final examination** Marks: 50

The closed-book exam during the exam period will comprise of two essay questions. Topics and format details will be handed out in class in Session 11.

### **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:

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> June – Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July (inclusive)

### **Mandatory Course Requirements**

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

- a. Attend at least 8 out of the 11 sessions; and
- b. Submit all assessments within the allowable timeframe (see Penalties section).

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to

[www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat)

### **Penalties**

- (i) In fairness to other students, work submitted after any deadline will incur a penalty for lateness. The penalty is 10% 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. 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 Course Coordinator as soon as possible, and make application for waiver of a penalty as soon as practicable.

### **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.

### **Class Representative**

A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person's name and contact details made 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.

### **Communication of Additional Information**

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

### **Student feedback**

Student feedback on University courses may be found at [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback\\_display.php](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php)

### **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.

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## ANNEX A

### Session Outline

| <i>Week / Key Date</i>            | <i>Topic</i>  |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| One:     March 6                  | Course Introduction<br>Concept of Strategy  |
| Two:     March 13                 | Concept of Strategy (cont.)<br>Case study: DELTEC   |
| Three:    March 20                | Strategic Planning<br>Case: Strategic Planning at Oldelft<br>Strategy Essay presentations: about 5 minutes per class member |
| Four:     March 27                | Mission, Strategic Intent and Vision  |
| Five:     April 3                 | <b>Strategy Essay due</b>   |
| April 4                           | Resource Allocation Processes   |
| Six:     April 11                 | Corporate Strategy, Diversification and Performance   |
| Seven:    April 18                | No class – Good Friday  |
| <b><i>Mid-Trimester Break</i></b> |   |
| Eight:    May 9                   | Merger and Acquisition typologies   |
| Nine:     May 16                  | Merger and Acquisition management   |
| Ten:      May 23                  | Merger presentations  |
| Eleven:   May 30                  | Market Power and Multi-point Competition  |
| Twelve:   June 3                  | <b>Merger assignment due</b>  |
| June 6                            | Competitive Advantage, RBV and Exam review  |

Additional case study details will be provided during the trimester.