



Carleton
University

Sprett
School of Business

STGY 5900 P (PMBA)
Corporate and Business Strategy
Fall 2026

Instructor: Professor Stelios Zyglidopoulos
Email: stelios.zyglidopoulos@cunet.carleton.ca

Learning Modality: This course will be delivered over two weekends: November 27/28 and December 11/12 (in person)

Course Calendar Description:

Strategic management focuses on evaluation of opportunities and threats in external environments considering an organization's strengths and weaknesses, in order to determine a sustainable competitive advantage. Emphasis on corporate and business level strategic analysis and formulation. Organizational capstone project required.

Course Description:

Strategic management is a critical managerial tool in any organizational setting. In this course, students will learn and apply the fundamental concepts of the strategic management process – strategy analysis, strategy formulation, implementation, and performance appraisal – toward a primary organizational objective of creating and sustaining competitive advantage. The first half of the course covers core concepts of strategy analysis (factors external and internal to the firm, or “SWOT”) and formulation (business and corporate level) in the context of rapidly changing competitive environments. The second half of the course will explore contemporary topics in strategy, including management of technology and disruptive innovation, corporate governance, sustainability, and evolving paradigms of the role of business in society. Students are expected to develop and employ critical thinking skills to properly interpret data and information in the service of effective strategy analysis and ethical decision making. Throughout the course, students will apply concepts to real-world business problems via interactive online activities, case studies, and a comprehensive group project.

Learning Objectives:

1. To familiarize the student with strategic thinking and its component elements, the identification of strategic options, and techniques for strategy selection.
2. To understand key strategic concepts such as corporate strategy, business strategy, driving forces, value chain analysis, core competencies, and sustainable competitive advantage.
3. To apply strategic analysis to business case studies, focusing on formulating strategic recommendations.
4. To integrate the functional knowledge acquired in past business courses by applying those functional skills to analyze a single firm and recommend appropriate strategies.



5. To enhance applied business research, writing, and presentation skills.
6. To develop an understanding of the cross-functional and interdependent nature of strategic business decisions.

Course Prerequisites: All other PMBA core courses.

Class Materials:

- Textbook: Robert Grant, *Contemporary Strategy Analysis* (11th edition)
And/or
- Hill, CWL, Schilling, MA & Jones, G. 2024. *Strategic Management Theory: An Integrated Approach*, (14th edition)
Older editions are suitable if price is a concern

Authorized access to a variety of cases, articles, and various other copyright-protected course materials is provided via a licensing agreement between Carleton University and Harvard Business Publishing. Where possible, links to access these materials are provided directly within Brightspace. Other relevant materials may also be made available to you, where appropriate.

Final Exam Date: There is no final exam in this course.

Drop Course Policy: The deadline for academic withdrawal is the last day of class (December 6, 2025).

Grading Scheme:

This course includes the following deliverables:

Strategy Reflection Paper	35%	<i>individual assignment</i>
Group Assignment Topic Pitch	10%	<i>individual assignment</i>
Group Strategy Project Presentation	15%	<i>group assignment</i>
Group Strategy Project Report	25%	<i>group assignment</i>
Contribution to Class Discussion	15%	
TOTAL	100%	

Each component of your grade will be assigned a percentage score. Your final course grade will be a weighted average of each of these components:

- Strategy Reflection Paper: Drawing on material covered in the PMBA program and particularly in the first part of this course, prepare a 3,000-word report that describes the strategy of your company / employer, critically evaluates that strategy, and offers suggestions for improvement. Be sure to address both internal-external fit and cross-functional fit.¹ Your paper should conclude with a section that specifically addresses what this means for you on Monday morning. What will you do differently? Be as specific as possible. (*Due: December 11, 2026*)

¹“Internal-external fit” refers to the way a firm’s resources, capabilities, structures, and systems contribute to its competitive advantage within a given environment. “Cross-functional fit” describes how the firm’s various functions (or functional strategies) contribute to its overall strategy.

- Group Assignment Topic Pitch: Working from your Reflection Paper, select a strategic challenge that is especially important or pressing to your company /employer. In 500 words or less, describe it and explain why it would make an interesting project to work on as a group. Base your pitch on the importance of the problem, the nature of the challenge, the availability of relevant data, and the potential to make a meaningful difference to the organization. *(Due: November 28, 2026)*
- Group Strategy Project: Form a group of 4-5. From the group assignment topic pitches generated by members of your group, select one to work on as consultants. (NOTE: The group member who proposed the project this is will act as a source of material for the case.)
 - Prepare a presentation that introduces the organization, explains the strategic challenge, proposes a preliminary solution, and describes how that solution will be implemented. Presentations should be approximately 25 minutes long. We will spend 35 minutes after each presentation critically discussing the key issues and recommendations as a class. *(Due: December 12, 2025)*
 - Working from your presentation and the ensuing discussion, prepare a 5,000-word written report for the company that describes the strategic challenge as you see it and presents your recommendations. Include appendices as appropriate. *(Due: December 18, 2026)*
- Contribution to Class Discussion: We will evaluate your overall contribution to the class discussion (both online and in-person). Although you must participate to contribute, the emphasis will be on the *quality* of your participation rather than quantity or frequency (for additional guidance, refer to the section below on preparation and participation). Your goal should be to make insightful comments that facilitate the learning of your peers.

Late Assignments:

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that we receive a copy of your assignments prior to the deadline. Normally, this is done in Brightspace. Submissions sent via e-mail will be accepted, but only if successfully received (i.e., claiming that an e-mail was sent, but not delivered, does not constitute acceptable grounds for accommodation). Requests for extension will be considered in cases of illness or other exceptional circumstances. To ensure fairness for all students, penalties will be applied to late assignments: Failure to submit an assignment on time will result in an initial penalty of five (5) percentage points, followed by an additional (2) percentage points per day thereafter. For example, an assignment that would normally merit a grade of 80% would receive a grade of 75% if submitted after the deadline on the due date, 73% if submitted the following day, and so on.

Preparation and Participation:

Given the compressed nature of the PMBA program, we expect you to be present for all of the topics covered in this course. If you are unable to attend class for any reason, please let us know as soon as possible, as limited accommodation may be possible. Missing a full day of class (or an equivalent amount of time) will compromise your learning experience and make assessment difficult; in such cases, it is generally advisable to withdraw and retake the course at a later date.

Regular contribution from all class members is essential for effective discussion and learning. Keep in mind that there is a difference between contributing to and merely participating. The latter can be achieved by saying just about anything (such as quoting a number or simple fact from a case). *Meaningful* contribution requires that you teach your peers something useful that might otherwise have gone unnoticed. Here are a few examples:

- starting off the discussion in a thought-provoking way;
- offering constructive criticism of another's ideas;
- redirecting the discussion in a useful direction when it stagnates;
- summarizing effectively;
- emphasizing generalizable learning points;
- sharing calculations;
- pursuing the logic advanced by others, not letting it die prematurely, and;
- presenting rigorous, but not stubborn, defense of a well-articulated position.

Group Work:

The Spratt School of Business encourages group assignments. They provide you with opportunities to develop and enhance interpersonal, communication, leadership, followership and other group skills. Group assignments are also an effective way to learn integrative skills for putting together a complex task. Your professor may assign one or more group tasks, assignments, or projects in this course. Before embarking on a specific problem as a group, it is your responsibility to ensure that the problem is meant to be a group assignment and not an individual one.

Contribution to Program Learning Goals ([MBA](#)):

MBA Learning Goal	Not Covered	Introduced	Taught but Not Assessed	Taught and Assessed
MB1 Leadership and Collaboration <i>Graduates will be equipped for leadership and collaboration.</i>		✓		
MB2 Communication <i>Graduates will be effective communicators</i>				✓
MB3 Critical Thinking and Problem Solving <i>Graduates will be skilled in critical thinking and problem solving.</i>				✓
MB4 Functional Knowledge <i>Graduates will have functional knowledge of all areas of business.</i>				✓
MB5 Global Business <i>Graduates will have an appreciation of the global environment of business.</i>			✓	
MB6 Ethical Reasoning <i>Graduates will be skilled in ethical reasoning and decision-making.</i>			✓	

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Course Sharing Websites:

Materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s).

Letter Grades:

In accordance with the Carleton University Undergraduate Calendar (p 34), the letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C+ = 67-69	D+ = 57-59	F = Below 50
A = 85-89	B = 73-76	C = 63-66	D = 53-56	
A - = 80-84	B - = 70-72	C - = 60-62	D - = 50-52	

Grades entered by Registrar:

WDN = Withdrawn from the course

DEF = Deferred

Academic Regulations:

University rules regarding registration, withdrawal, appealing marks, and most anything else you might need to know can be found on the university's website, here:

<http://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/>

Requests for Academic Accommodation:

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows:

- **Pregnancy**

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: <https://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf>

- **Religious Obligations**

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: <https://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf>

- **Students with Disabilities**

If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if

applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>

- **Survivors of Sexual Violence**

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and its survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support/>

- **Student Activities**

Carleton University recognizes the benefits, to both the individual student and the university, that result from participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

For more information on academic accommodation, please contact the departmental administrator or visit: <https://students.carleton.ca/course-outline/>

Academic Integrity:

Violations of academic integrity—presenting another's ideas, arguments, words or images as your own, using unauthorized material, misrepresentation, fabricating or misrepresenting research data, unauthorized co-operation or collaboration or completing work for another student—are a serious academic offence, weaken the quality of the degree, and will not be tolerated. Penalties may include; a grade of Failure on the submitted work and/or course; academic probation; a refusal of permission to continue or to register in a specific degree program; suspension from full-time studies; suspension from all studies at Carleton; expulsion from Carleton, amongst others. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and follow the Carleton University Student Academic Integrity Policy which is available, along with resources for compliance at: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>

Centre for Student Academic Support:

The Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS) is a centralized collection of learning support services designed to help students achieve their goals and improve their learning both inside and outside the classroom. CSAS offers academic assistance with course content, academic writing and skills development. Visit CSAS on the 4th floor of MacOdrum Library or online at: <https://carleton.ca/csas/>

Other Important Information:

- Students must always retain a copy of all work that is submitted.
- All final grades are subject to the Dean's approval.
- For us to respond to your emails, we need to see your full name and Carleton ID number. Please send all email from your Carleton cmail account.

Important Dates & Deadlines: Fall Term 2026

<https://sprott.carleton.ca/students/current-professional-mba-students/dates-deadlines-policies/>

Course Schedule		
Day 1: Friday, November 27, 2026	Topics	Corresponding Readings
9.00-10.00	• Introduction • What is Strategy? • What is a Good Strategy • Brief Case Discussion in Class: The Acquisition of 7Up by Phillip Morris	• Porter, Michael E. (1997) "Competitive strategy." Summary in Brightspace.
10.00-10.30	COFFEE BREAK	
10.30-12.00	• Brief Case Discussion in Class: Stick to the core or go for more? • Positioning – Porter • Value Chain Management • Resource-based view • Sustainable Competitive Advantage	• Grant, Robert M. (1991) "The resource-based theory of competitive advantage: implications for strategy formulation." <i>California Management Review</i>, 33.3: 114-135. • Porter, Michael E. (1996) "What is strategy?" <i>Harvard Business Review</i>, November-December 1996: 61-78.
12.00-13.00	LUNCH BREAK	
13.00-14.30	• Stakeholder Management • In class Exercise: Stakeholder Mapping, Value creation strategies	
14.30-15.00	COFFEE BREAK	
15.00-16.30	• Case Discussion: Diamond Estate Wines & Spirits Inc.: Growth Challenges in a Fragmented Industry	
Additional and background readings (STGY 5903P) and videos: • Porter, M.E., (2008) "The five competitive forces that shape strategy." <i>Harvard Business Review</i>, 86(1): 78-93. • Rumelt, Richard. (2011) "The perils of bad strategy." <i>McKinsey Quarterly</i>, 1.3: 1-10.		

- Ghemawat, P. & Rivkin, J. (2006) "Creating Competitive Advantage." *Harvard Business Publishing*, 9-798-062.
- Collis, David and Montgomery, Cynthia, (2008) "Competing on Resources." *Harvard Business Review*, July-August 2008: 2-13.
- What is Stakeholder Theory? By Ed Freeman: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bIRUalcvPe8>
- Competitive advantage: <https://youtu.be/Q1lkBSWreVI>
- Value chains and VRIO Analysis: <https://youtu.be/Tpb1fxt9YfU>
- Freeman, R. E., Harrison, J. S., and Zyglidopoulos S., (2018) *Stakeholder Management: Concepts and Strategies*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Day 2: Saturday, November 28, 2026	Topics	Corresponding Readings
9.00-10.00	• Brief Recap – 3 perspectives • Strategy Formulation, Emergent Strategy • The Honda Effect • In class discussion on strategies planned and emergent	• Pascale, Richard T. "The Honda effect." (1996) <i>California Management Review</i> 38.4: 80-91.
10.00-10.30	COFFEE BREAK	
10.30-12.00	• Blue Ocean Strategy • In class exercise on blue ocean innovation • Technology and Strategy • The return of Jobs at Apple: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YM4lf6YHN3s&t=977s	• Kim, C., & Mauborgne, R. (2005) "Blue-ocean strategy: From theory to practice. <i>California Management Review</i>," 47(3): 105- 121.
12.00-13.00	LUNCH BREAK	
13.00-14.30	• In class case discussion of Tesla Motors	
14.30-15.00	COFFEE BREAK	
15.00-16.30	• GROUP WORK: Meet in your groups to review Pitches and select one. Begin work on your presentation.	
Additional and background readings (STGY 5903P) and videos: • Mintzberg, Henry, and James A. Waters. (1985) "Of strategies, deliberate and emergent." <i>Strategic Management Journal</i> 6.3: 257-272. • Schilling, Melissa A. (2003) "Technological leapfrogging: Lessons from the US video game console industry." <i>California Management Review</i> 45.3: 6-32. • Dosi, Giovanni. (1982) "Technological paradigms and technological trajectories: a suggested interpretation of the determinants and directions of technical change." <i>Research policy</i> 11.3: 147-162. • Innovation Strategy: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bvjvo6M2zRI • Leveraging Technology into New Markets: https://youtu.be/15DCeacHq5M		

- Network Externalities: <https://youtu.be/Clp7TR2R4gg>
- Platform Ecosystems: <https://youtu.be/yAFSRq-NYTY>
- Schilling, MA. (2017) "What's your best innovation bet?" *Harvard Business Review*, July-August 2017: 2-9.
- Shih, W. (2013) "Competency-Destroying Technology Transitions," *Harvard Business Review*, August 2013: 9-613-024.

Day 3: Friday, December 11, 2026	Topics	Corresponding Readings
9.00-10.00	• In class discussion: Welcome on board but do not change a thing. • Strategic Change	• Miller, Danny. (1992). "The Icarus paradox: How exceptional companies bring about their own downfall." <i>Business Horizons</i>. 35.1: 24-35.
10.00-10.30	COFFEE BREAK	
10.30-12.00	• Corporate Strategy • Vertical Integration • Brief (5 mins – 1 slide) presentation of your selected projects.	• Module Note (2021) "Corporate Strategy." <i>Harvard Business School</i>, 9-720-448 • The Tower
12.00-13.00	LUNCH BREAK	
13.00-14.30	• Mergers and Acquisitions • International Diversification • In class discussion: Can this Merger be saved?	• Bartlett, C. & Wozny, M. (2005) "GE's two decades transformation: Jack Welch's leadership." <i>Harvard Business School</i>, 9-399-150.
14.30-15.00	COFFEE BREAK	
15.00-16.30	GROUP WORK: Additional work on group presentation	
Additional/Optional Readings and Videos: • Williamson, P. & Yin, E. (2014) "Accelerated innovation: The new challenge from China." <i>MIT Sloan Management Review</i>, April 23, 2014, 27-34. • Kim, W. Chan, and Renée Mauborgne. (2003) "Tipping point leadership." <i>Harvard Business Review</i> 81.4: 60-69. • Collis, David and Montgomery, Cynthia (1995) "Corporate Strategy: A Conceptual Framework." <i>Harvard Business School</i>, 9-391-284 • Porter, M. (1989) "From Competitive Advantage to Corporate Strategy." <i>Harvard Business Review</i>, May-June 1987, 2-21. • Markides, Konstantinos (1997) "To diversify or not to diversify." <i>Harvard Business Review</i>, November-December 1997:93-99 • Williamson Video on Chinese MNCs: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GksnviyqA5I • Video by Ghemawat on Globalization: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m1mIFsk836Y • Piskorski, Jan Mikola (2006) "Note on Corporate Strategy." <i>Harvard Business School</i> 9-705-449 • Video by Melissa Schilling on Mergers and Acquisitions: https://youtu.be/2dQ7mcBdpm0 • Eccles, RG, Lanes, KL, and Wilson TC, (1999) "Are you paying too much for that acquisition?" <i>Harvard Business Review</i>, 136-146.		

Day 4: Saturday, December 12, 2026	Topics	Corresponding Readings
9.00-10.00	• Recap • Discussion on the purpose of Business	• None
10.00-10.30	COFFEE BREAK	
10.30-12.00	• CSR and Strategic Management • Discussion • Video Interview with the Founder of Patagonia: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p6Vd2aPkC9w	• Carroll, A. B. (2015). Corporate social responsibility. Organizational dynamics, 44(2), 87-96. • Kramer, M. R., & Porter, M. E. (2006). Strategy and society: The link between competitive advantage and corporate social responsibility. Harvard business review, 84(12), 78-92.
12.00-13.00	LUNCH BREAK	
13.00-14.30	Group1&2 Presentations	
14.30-15.00	COFFEE BREAK	
15.00-16.30	Group 3&4 Presentations	