



STGY 5900A
Corporate and Business Strategy
Fall, 2018

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Course Calendar Description

Strategic management focuses on evaluation of opportunities and threats in external environments in light of 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.

Prerequisite(s): all other MBA core courses.

Course Objectives

This course has three main objectives:

- To provide a theoretical framework for understanding the aims, practice and outcomes of corporate strategy and strategic decision-making.
- To work through the steps of formulating business and corporate strategies in order to demonstrate the features of the process and the limitations that decision makers face.
- Finally, as this is a capstone course, it is designed to draw on the information and models presented in earlier courses showing how consideration of the various approaches impact on strategy and strategic thinking.

1. Understanding context

When embarking on a review of corporate strategy, it is important to understand the context in which a business operates in order to make reasonable and effective decisions. This is especially true when considering operations that may involve several layers of political and economic institutions often extending across several countries. Identifying the relevant environmental factors, understanding how they impact on one another and their possible effects on future business prospects is one of the key elements in developing an effective strategy. As part of the course we will examine a number of possible contextual elements and discuss how they may be evaluated in practice.

2. Organizational capacities and limitations

Implementing strategic initiatives almost always involves changes to the organization itself. These may include adding personnel, shifting resources, altering structures or changing product focus. Even experienced managers often overlook the implications of their strategic moves assuming that whatever resources are required can be either generated internally or acquired with minimal effort and disruption. As part of the course work we will discuss some of the stresses that shifting or refining strategy can make on the structure of a firm and its managers.

3. Strategy Process

Although some writers would like to believe otherwise, strategy formulation is inherently messy. While it needs to be structured, an important element in the process involves making predictions about the political and economic future of various parts of the world, a notoriously difficult task. Given the role of judgement in constructing strategy, it is easy for one's biases to influence significant decisions. As a major part of the course we will work through the process of developing a strategy for an existing firm and use this as the basis for examining the elements of the process and how they shape the final outcome

Conduct of the Course

Each session of the course will consist of two main activities. One segment consists of a lecture that will explain current theoretical thinking about some aspect of business strategy. The second part of the session will involve either an exercise designed to apply some of the principles that have just been discussed to an existing company or the analysis of a case that illustrates the issues that arise in the course of making strategic decisions. From time to time we will take a few minutes to discuss the progress of the teams' investigations into their companies and how this reflects the various themes presented in the course.

Text: Strategic Management Theory: An Integrated Approach (12 ed.) by Charles W.L. Hill, Melissa A. Schilling and Gareth R. Jones, Cengage, 2017.

Cases: Cases are available from iveycases.com

Course Schedule

Week 1 Sep. 12

- Lecture 1: What Is Strategy?
- Case: Deep Roots Distillery (9B16M032)

Reading: chapter 1

Week 2 Sep.19

- Lecture 2: The Context of Strategy
- Activity: The context of a company and its impact on strategy

Reading: chapter 2, pp. 42-67

Week 3 Sep. 26

- Lecture 3: The Macro-environment
- Activity: Linking a company to its macro-environment

Reading: chapter 2, pp. 67-70

Week 4 Oct. 3

- Lecture 4: Competitive Advantage
- Activity: Defining a company's competitive advantage

Reading: chapter 3

Week 5 Oct. 10

- Lecture 5: Functional Level Strategy
- Activity: Defining and articulating functional level strategy

Reading: chapter 4

Week 6 Oct. 17

- Lecture 6: Business Level Strategy
- Activity: Evaluating a company's business strategy

Oct. 22-26 Fall Break

Oct. 29-Nov 2 Exam Break

Week 7 Nov. 7

- Lecture 7: Strategy and Technology
- Case: Alibaba Group: Technology, Strategy, and Sustainability (9B16E036)

Reading: chapter 7

Week 8 Nov. 14

- Lecture 8: International Strategy
- Activity: Deciding where to expand abroad

Reading: chapter 8, pp. 239-260

Week 9 Nov. 21

- Lecture 9: Modes of Entry
- Activity: Choosing a mode of entry

Reading: chapter 8, pp. 261-271

Week 10 Nov. 28

- Lecture 10: Corporate Level Strategy: Expansion and Integration
- Case: Black Canyon Coffee (9B17C045)

Reading: chapter 9

Week 11 Dec. 5

- Lecture 11: Corporate Level Strategy: Diversification
- Case: Swiss Army: Diversifying into the Fragrance Business (9B14A066)

Reading: chapter 10

Week 12 Dec. 12

- Lecture 12: Strategy and Organization
- Case: Organizational Design at IQMetrix: The Holocracy Decision (9B17C045)

Reading: Chapter 12

Assignments and Assessment

One of the main objectives of this course is the application to an existing company of principles learned in this and other courses. This project helps the student to integrate these ideas to see where they complement each other and where they lead in contrasting directions. To facilitate this exercise, students will be assigned to teams that will deal with a specific company. They will be expected to contact the company, gather the information necessary to analyse the firm's current strategy and make recommendations for the future. More detailed instructions for this assignment will be presented early in the course. The teams will deliver two oral progress reports during the term, which will be worth 10% and 15% of the final mark respectively. Each student will write a final report of 20-25 pages presenting the necessary analyses and conclusions. Naturally the team members will confer on these matters as their investigation progresses, but each student may arrive at his/her own conclusions. The final report will be worth 35% of the final mark. The remaining 40% of the final mark will be derived from a case examination that will be administered at the end of the course. The timing of these deliverables will be announced early in the term.

Assessment

First oral report	10%
Second oral report	15%
Final written report	35%
Case-based exam	40%

Course Sharing Websites

Student or professor 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).

Policy on Mobile Devices

The use of mobile devices IS NOT PERMITTED in this class. It is disruptive to the instructor and class members. If you carry such a device to class, please make sure it is turned off. If an emergency situation requires you to keep it turned on, please discuss this with your instructor prior to class.

Group Work

The Spratt School of Business encourages group assignments in the school for several reasons. They provide you with opportunities to develop and enhance interpersonal, communication, leadership, followership and other group skills. Group assignments are also good for learning integrative skills for putting together a complex task. Your instructor may assign one or more group tasks/assignments/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.

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 obligation

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: carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

Religious obligation

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: carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

Academic Accommodations for 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. 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 is 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: carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support

Accommodation for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must 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: students.carleton.ca/course-outline

Academic Integrity

Violations of academic integrity are a serious academic offence. 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 – 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/>.

Important dates and deadlines

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