



STGY 5900D - Corporate and Business Strategy Winter 2019

Class Schedule:	Wednesdays 6:05 – 8:55pm
Professor:	Dr. Robert Helal
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Office Hours:	By appointment

Course 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.

Course Objectives

Strategic management's focus on corporate and business level strategic analysis, and strategy formulation and implementation is a critical managerial tool in any organizational setting. Strategic management emphasizes the determination and evaluation of environmental opportunities and threats in light of strengths and weaknesses in the organization's value chain in order to enhance its core competencies and craft a sustainable competitive advantage.

Students will apply their knowledge and strategic tools to business case analyses to formulate strategy. Furthermore, each student must select a firm and develop a comprehensive strategic analysis of the firm, in supporting of a strategic objective/issue faced by that organization. Students are expected to analyse, identify, and evaluate opportunities and threats in the firm's economic, technological, demographic/social cultural, and political-legal environments as well as industry(ies) in light of identified strengths and weaknesses in the organization's value chain, in order to craft a sustainable competitive advantage by recommending changes to that specific firm's strategy. Emphasis is on corporate and business level strategic analysis and strategy formulation.

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, key success factors, value chain analysis, core competencies and sustainable competitive advantage.
3. To apply strategic analysis to business case studies and current events, focusing on formulating strategic recommendations.
4. To integrate the functional knowledge acquired in past business courses by applying those functional skills to analyse a single firm (strategic objective) and recommend appropriate strategies.

Course Prerequisite

All other MBA core courses must be successfully completed. *The Sprott School of Business enforces all prerequisites.*

Required Text and Other Readings

Textbook(s):

Robert M. Grant, Contemporary Strategy Analysis, 9th Edition (text only, not cases)
Wiley, ISBN: 978-1-119-12083-4

Cases and Journal Articles:

Our case studies for this semester will be drawn from the HBR and Ivey collections. Cases may be procured directly from Ivey Publishing (<https://www.iveycases.com/>) or Harvard Business Publishing (<http://hbr.org/case-studies>).

Do not purchase cases in advance of them being confirmed either in the syllabus (below) and in class/on CULearn.

Drop Course Policy

The deadline for academic withdrawal is the last day of classes (each term).

Grading Scheme

Individual Submissions:

- Research Critique 20%
- Take home individual case exam – no group discussion permitted 30%
- Participation - Contribution to peer learning 10%

Group Submissions: Capstone project

- Project Progress Draft 5%
- Written report 25%
- Presentation 10%

TOTAL 100%

Requirements for each deliverable will be posted on CULearn and discussed in class.

While group discussion is encouraged for many aspects of this course, the take-home case exam is an individual deliverable which should **not** be the fruit of any group discussion.

Criteria for Evaluation and Grading

Submissions: For this seminar, all submissions are electronic, in PDF form, submitted on CULearn by stated deadlines.

Grading: Each component of a student's grade will be assigned a letter grade score. A student's final course grade will be a weighted average of each of these components.

Late Penalties: For any assignment and report, late penalties will be decided at the professor's discretion. For the take home exam, no late submission will be accepted without medical certification.

Semester Deliverables

Research Critique: Individual Annotated Bibliography

Each student will be required to submit an individual assignment during the semester. This assignment will focus on a preparing an annotated bibliography on a topic related to corporate and business strategy research. A list of topics general topics will be provided at the beginning of the semester which students can use to guide their paper topic selection. With professor approval, students will also have the option to choose a topic not provided, that is of personal interest and related to the course objectives. Details for the assignment will be posted on CULearn and discussed in class.

Individual Take Home Exam – Case Study

This semester will include an individual case study to be completed independently by each student, without group discussion. Students will be provided with the case name, source, and instructions, and provided one week to complete and submit the case study class the following week.

Exam date:

Instructions for the case will be provided after class on March 6, and due one week later, before the start of class (March 15).

Participation - Class Discussions and Contributions to Peer Learning

Students are encouraged to actively participate in all classes by being adequately prepared (i.e. having attentively read and reflected on the text chapters and any other assigned readings/cases). In a strategy seminar regular attendance, participation and contribution from all class members is expected and essential for effective discussion. It is student contribution to peer learning that constitutes a contribution, including encouraging colleagues, building on earlier comments without repeating, listening attentively to speakers and being respectful of differences of opinion.

While attendance is a pre-requisite to participation, it is the quality, not the quantity, of remarks that earns the grades. *Meaningful* contribution requires that you teach your peers something useful that might otherwise have gone unnoticed. A discrete use of electronic devices for note-taking is permitted, however no distractions will be tolerated.

In addition, students may be asked at time to form groups to discuss cases in class. Class discussions will include a combination of case study, current events, presentation of individual work and group project learnings. For example, a group may be asked to present a short summation of the case situation, provide the highlights of their analysis using a particular framework, debate from the perspective of various stakeholders, etc. Also, to provide an opportunity to more closely interact with other classmates, students may be assigned to case discussion groups which will vary from class to class.

Group Project: Capstone Project

Forming Groups:

Students will be required to form groups this semester for the capstone project. Depending on class size, groups will include 3 to 5 students. *Exceptions* may be permitted whereby for instance, a student without a group may be assigned to a group or a student may be asked to switch groups, all at the professor's discretion. These groups will collectively carryout group assignments with the major deliverable being the Capstone report.

Students are responsible for selecting their group partners and the group is expected to *self-govern* to ensure the quality of all deliverables, independently resolving any conflicts within the

group. It is strongly recommended that students seek diversified and complementary skill sets in their prospective group partners, ideally students from different academic concentrations with varied work experiences and backgrounds. Further information on effective group formation and processes will be discussed at the first class.

The group assignments provide students with opportunities to develop and enhance interpersonal, communication, leadership, follower-ship and other group skills. The resources at <http://sprott.carleton.co/wp-content/files/Group-Work-Resources.pdf> are recommended.

Students are particularly encouraged to maintain evidence of their contribution to the group performance, including estimated research time, working papers, etc. The keeping of a group log of meetings, commitments, decisions, etc. is also a valuable organizational tool. It is in each group member's best interest to ensure an equitable sharing of the research and work.

A peer evaluation for the final Capstone project report will be required from all students, and will be taken very seriously in assigning grades. For instance, up to 5% may be deducted from a student's final grade if he or she received a poor peer evaluation from the majority of members in the group.

Business Research Guidelines & Capstone Project:

The primary objective of the Capstone Project is to complete a thorough study on of a strategic problem faced by an organization and provide alternatives and recommendations drawing upon the breadth of studies in the program.

Organizational Field Study (Client Organization)

Student groups are expected to research an organization in the field. Strategic field projects can benefit firms by providing them with a comprehensive strategic analysis and alternatives as well as students by enabling them to gain hands on experience.

Student groups performing a field study may study an organization chosen by the professor or in some cases, may find their own firms. Students are responsible to ensure that the company will provide the information required to perform the research project. Because we work with concepts that analyze for profit firms, firms chosen for research projects ideally should be for profit firms. In the case of not-for-profit organizations and organizations chosen by teams, these projects must be reviewed for suitability with the professor. For all groups, the professor will be acting as an advisor and will provide at times research and analysis suggestions that are customized for the client organization.

Note, updates on project progress and early findings will be included in seminar sessions. It is recognized that some information will be confidential, and will not be required in these discussions.

Students conducting research on a firm in the field must ensure the following information is available or could be attained in order to successfully complete the research project:

1. **Company Information** — company description which includes its products/services, history, financial results, organization, key people, and its goals. Student groups must find a company that will provide at least 2 to 3 years of the most recent annual financial statements or information available. In the case of start-ups, financials to date with business plan projections will serve this purpose.
2. **External and Internal Assessment** — Ensure that there is an opportunity to attain information on the company's industry(ies) competitors, demand trends, segments, changing technology and customer needs. Data on most industries and general environmental factors (e.g., disruptive technologies and economic) is usually available via the library through such primary sources as Bloomberg. However, in order to assess the strengths and weaknesses of any firm, students must have information about its competitors. Therefore, I would encourage groups to also ensure that there are at least 1 to 3 competitors and/or metrics (from external sources) that could be used to compare a focal firm to in terms of such factors as financial performance (e.g., available financial statement data for competitors/comparable organizations and/or industry average(s) ideally for the most recent 3 years).
3. **Preliminary Strategic Assessment** — For firms located in the field, ensure that enough information is available to assess the following: 1) What business is it in? 2) What are its goals? 3) Is it successful and why (e.g., metrics such as financial statements for past 2 to 3 years are available to perform analysis)? 4) What is its current strategy [e.g., product/market scope, competitive differentiation, or business model (how it makes profit)]? 5) What is happening internally or externally that might affect its future success (e.g., again, data for external environment could potentially be found in primary sources from library)? 6) What are the key issues and options for this organization?
4. **Consider research sources including the firm itself before choosing a firm to ensure that the information required to perform the research report is available (in particular, financial statements/information for a focal firm for ideally the past 3 years).**

For those student groups working with a firm in the field, the group is encouraged to make the arrangement with the firm prior to the start of the course or at latest, by the fourth week of class. Students must attain at least the financial statements or information from the firm in the first few weeks of the class to ensure that studying that firm is a viable option for their research project.

Eligibility of Firms for Capstone Project

- Firms researched in other classes are eligible. However, students are reminded it is a violation of academic plagiarism policy to submit substantially the same analysis used for multiple courses.
- It is the group's responsibility to ensure that there is sufficient information to complete all the required analyses for the Capstone report. Particular attention should be given to ensuring the availability of competitor information and/or industry averages for various metrics (a sufficient number of publicly listed and comparable firms) to perform industry analyses. For instance, are there any comparable firms that publish their financial statements and/or industry averages to calculate key financial ratios (e.g., operating expense, gross margin, or advertising expense)?
- Selecting a firm of interest to the group is encouraged.
- The entire firm should be analyzed (e.g., multinational firms should be avoided).
- ***For field studies, students are required to contact the professor to discuss eligibility and requirements of field study in cases whereby students chose their own client firm.***
- ***Please note that the information above may be subject to revision and/or additional requirements may apply.***

Further Information for Client Organizational Studies

There are significant research resources available to students at Carleton. Students are encouraged to become familiar with the various databases available through the library as well as financial tools such as Bloomberg and Datastream (a tutorial will be offered during class). See this course's library page at <http://www.library.carleton.ca/research/course-guides/stgy-5900>.

Students are also expected to read recent business articles concerning the selected firm, its competitors and the industries within which it operates, as well as articles on the macro business environment (i.e. markets, technology, economic trends). All assignments, the presentation and final report MUST include supporting metrics and data.

Company/Firm Selection Policy:

When students choose a client organization to study, it is the students' responsibility to undertake the research necessary to determine if sufficient information is available. The selection of a business firm is an assurance by the students to the professor, that there is sufficient information available to complete the assignments and strategic analysis.

Authorization by the professor is to ensure that groups do not choose a clearly ineligible firm. Should it subsequently become apparent that there is insufficient information to adequately complete the assignment, it is the students' responsibility to change firms and obtain authorization of the new firm. The students may change the selection of the business firm at any time but must receive the necessary approval. The purpose of submitting the draft and in class updates is to obtain feedback on avenues for improvements to incorporate into the presentation and final report. Further details will be discussed in class.

Authorization by the professor is not a guarantee that there is sufficient information. Each student is responsible for selecting his/her partners and the business firm to be analyzed, having ensured the adequacy of information available to complete the required comprehensive strategic analysis.

Each group is required to hand in a list of group members, the name of the company chosen, and a list of potential data sources for the research project. A form will be provided on CULearn for the group, project and sources. Deadlines are highlighted on the syllabus.

Capstone Project Report:

Depending on the complexity of the firm chosen, the number of markets within it operates and the characteristics of its industry, the length of the final Capstone report (page number) may vary. Figures should be included within the body of the report and all notes/citations should be provided in footnotes. Including information that does not add significant value will be penalized (e.g., data dumping or vague statements that are not based on evidence). Hence, careful editing and pertinent, succinct analyses are strongly advised. Detailed information on the content and format of the report and presentation will be posted to cuLearn and will be discussed in class. It is strongly recommended that groups designate an editor for their Capstone report to validate the coherence of the document, ensure that all required elements have been included and that all citations are accurate and correctly included in the bibliography.

Scheduling of Capstone Presentations:

Presentation weeks are scheduled for March 27 and April 3. Depending on class size and the number of groups, adjustments will be made to the course calendar and presentation schedule as necessary. Further details on presentation dates and order will be discussed in class.

Policy for Group Presentations:

All group members must participate in the presentations. Any student unable to do so because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control must contact the professor via email prior to the start of the class for which the presentation is scheduled. The professor may allow an alternative individual assignment when the absence is supported by a medical certificate and or appropriate document(s) to support the reason for the inability to present. Any student missing the presentation would not obtain any grades for the group work. The other group members must make the entire presentation as scheduled.

Video Recording of Presentations:

As part of the Assurance of Learning process of AACSB accreditation, the School may periodically evaluate, among other things, presentation skills. Accordingly, student group presentations may be recorded to provide material for such assessment; however this has no impact at all on the course grade.

Missed Course Deliverables

Missed Assignments and Deferred Examination:

In cases where students are not able to meet a course requirement (i.e., contribute to a group project, submit an individual assignment, or write the midterm case) due to a certified illness, these situations will be addressed following university guidelines. In all such cases, students will be required to provide an official medical certificate/documentation at least two weeks before the end of the semester.

Deferred Final Examination:

Where applicable, students unable to write a final examination because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control must contact the instructor and the MBA office in writing to request a deferred exam. Permission may be granted when the absence is supported by a medical certificate and or appropriate document/s to support the reason for the deferral.

STGY5900D (WINTER 2019)
CORPORATE AND BUSINESS STRATEGY
CLASS SCHEDULE*

2018/2019 dates and deadlines: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/registration/dates-and-deadlines/>

Week	Date	Topics	Readings	Due This Week
1	Jan 9	Course Overview What is strategy?	<i>Chapters 1, 2</i> <i>Case: McDonald's Corporation</i> <i>McGraw Hill Publishing MH0037 (Harvard Business Publishing website)</i>	
2	Jan 16	External environment: Industry analysis; Porter's 5 Forces	<i>Chapters 2, 3, 4</i> <i>Case Study: tbc</i>	<i>Submit: Groups and Member Names</i>
3	Jan 23	Internal environment: Resource-based view; dynamic capabilities	<i>Chapters 4, 5</i> <i>Case Study: tbc</i>	<i>Submit: Group Study Company and Sources</i>
4	Jan 30	Business level strategies: Cost leadership & differentiation	<i>Chapters 7, 8</i> <i>Case Study: tbc</i>	
5	Feb 6	Business-level Strategies: Innovation & Technologies	<i>Chapter 9, 10</i> <i>Case Study: tbc</i>	<i>Submit: Individual Critique Assignment</i>
6	Feb 13	Corporate-level strategies: Diversification & integration	<i>Chapters 11, 13</i> <i>Case Study: tbc</i>	<i>In class review: Group Case Company Overview and Business Problem</i>
7	Feb 20	NO CLASS – study break/exam week		
8	Feb 27			
9	Mar 6	Corporate-level strategies: M&A, alliances & cooperation	<i>Chapter 15</i> <i>Case Study: tbc</i>	<i>Submit: Draft of SWOT analysis for Group Project</i> <i>In class review of Group case SWOT</i>
10	Mar 13	Library Tools Research Session, led by: tbc Insights into 10K reports; external environment, industry introduction	<i>MacOdrum Library's orientation room (Room 252)</i> <i>March 13th, 2019 from 6 – 9 pm</i>	<i>Submit: Take-home Individual Exam Case.</i> <i>(Exam will be posted after class on cuLearn on March 6)</i>
11	Mar 20	Global Strategy and Implementing Strategy Governance and Wrap-up	<i>Chapter 12, 14</i> <i>Case Study: tbc</i>	<i>In class review: Group Case draft alternatives/recommendation.</i>
12	Mar 27	Capstone presentations (Attendance Mandatory)		
13	Apr 3	Capstone presentations (Attendance Mandatory)		<i>Submit Final Capstone Report (Groups presented March 27th).</i> <i>Submit Final Capstone Report (Groups presenting April 3rd on the following week – April 10th).</i>

***Speakers, Schedule and Readings:**

This semester may include guest speakers, and additional readings on a particular topic may occasionally be assigned.

While every attempt will be made to keep to the schedule listed above, unforeseen circumstances and availability of guest speaker(s) may necessitate modifications throughout the semester (including assignments, readings and topics). I will keep you informed of changes via CuLearn.

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

Discrete use of mobile devices is permitted for note-taking in this class. Other uses are 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 Sprott 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 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: 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/>

Additional Guidance on Citations/Bibliography:

Footnotes: Every source for citations, statistics, tables, etc. should be sequentially referenced to a footnote at the bottom of the page. Full information should be provided to allow a reader to know exactly where you obtained the data, remembering that direct quotations require the specifics of page number. When a subsequent citation is made to the exact same one that proceeds you may identify it as *ibid* (for more details see http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org.proxy.library.carleton.ca/16/ch13/ch13_sec064.html).

Bibliography:

It is important that you follow a recognized style to present a comprehensive bibliography that ensures an integrated alphabetical order and recognizes multiple citations to same year documents from a common source.

Be consistent when ordering your citation sources so that like items are grouped together. For example, Natural Resources Canada may also be referred to as NRC (both of which are acceptable), however in ordering citations from multiple NRC documents select one format and list consecutively by date (from oldest to most recent).

Guidance provided by the Academy of Management in its Style Guide may be found at: <http://aom.org/uploadedFiles/Publications/AMR/AMRstyleguide.pdf> (disregard the *in-text*, *in-parenthesis* identification, as the required use of footnotes replaces this format).

Example of Declaration of Academic Integrity

STGY 5900 – Winter 2018: Declaration of Academic Integrity (Group)

___ Draft/ ___ Final Capstone Report on Company: _____

The University Senate defines plagiarism in the regulations on instructional offenses as: “to use and pass off as one’s own idea or product work of another without expressly giving credit to another.”

I/we declare that the work submitted herewith is my/our work. All sources have been referenced in the footnotes and listed in the bibliography. This work has not been shared with anyone outside this group. This work is the intellectual property of each of the group members and will be returned to any one of the group members to be shared with the other group members.

Student Number	Student Name	Signature of Student (Everyone must sign to receive a grade)

Date Submitted: _____

Instructional offence cases must be communicated to the Associate Dean, MBA programs, who then refers the allegation to the Associate Dean, Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs; individual solutions are not permitted.