

**STGY 5903B**  
**Strategic Concepts**  
**Fall 2024**

**Instructor:** Prof. Sujit Sur  
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**Office:** 5058 Nicol Building  
**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Class Meeting:** Wed, 11:35 – 14:25 (In Person).

**Course Calendar Description:**

In accordance with 2024-2025 course calendar (<https://calendar.carleton.ca/grad/courses/STGY/>): An overview of business models and key strategic concepts facing firms in a global environment. Core functional area concepts in accounting, marketing, operations, and HR are introduced and integrated through simulation. Skills in managing teams, meetings, business planning and presenting business plans.

**Course Description:**

This course provides students with the conceptual tools necessary to assess firms' business models and strategies. Specifically, the course focuses on the application of the following key strategic concepts and frameworks: business model, value chain, core competence, competitive advantage, internal/external analysis, organizational structure, etc.

Business managers need to make critical decisions that transcend functional areas. Through a series of case studies and an online business simulation, this course provides students with experiential learning opportunities to develop a holistic organizational perspective that integrates subsequent specialized functional area courses such as marketing, operations, human resource management, accounting and finance. Furthermore, as the first component of the *Integrative Foundation* in the MBA curriculum, this course introduces students to the connections between strategy, business ethics, and the global business environment.

**Course Learning Objectives:**

- An understanding of fundamental aspects of business models and strategies
- Application of conceptual frameworks to the analysis of practical business problems
- An understanding of the role of diverse functions such as finance, marketing, operations, and human resource management in determining firm performance
- Familiarity with the elements of business plan preparation
- Development of critical thinking skills
- Development of communication skills
- Experience in managing teams

**Course Prerequisites:**

None

**Required Materials:**Readings and Cases

A group of articles, including cases, has been compiled for the course and is available in the “ARES Reserves” on Brightspace. Instructions for accessing the material are available on Brightspace. It is important that students complete their reading assignment, including the cases, according to the course schedule at the of this document.

Business Simulation

A coursepack that contains an online simulation – *Conscious Capitalism (CC)* – has been created at the Harvard Business Publishing. Students must create an account using their Carleton email address at the publisher’s website to access the simulation. The link to the simulation and detailed instructions for registration are also available in ARES.

**Final Exam Date:**

Dec 02, 2024

**Drop Course Policy:**

The deadline for academic withdrawal is October 01, 2024.

**Grading Scheme:**

<b>Team based assessment</b>	
Business Plan for CC Simulation and Presentation	10%
Presentation to the Board	15%
CC Simulation Performance	5%
Team case reports and presentations	20%
<b>Individual based assessment</b>	
Individual report and Reflections	5%
Peer evaluation (team members & by instructor)	10%
CC simulation microsimulations & assessment of learning	10%
Final exam	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

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.

Business Plan and Presentation

This exercise requires students to think through and organize a comprehensive plan that integrates high-level strategic thinking and tactical and financial details. The executive team will present the business plan to venture capitalists (VCs) during the Venture Capital Fair (VC Fair) in Week 8. A meeting with the VCs demands the executives to articulate their strategy effectively and gives the firm an opportunity to receive additional funding to implement its strategy in the second half of the simulation. Detailed guidelines will be distributed in due time.

### Presentation to the Board

This team presentation, which will be given to the whole class during the last meeting of the course, provides a closure to the simulated competition. In this presentation, executives will review their original business plan and the firm's performance after the VC Fair, assess the company's prospect and strategy, and discuss the lessons they have learned from the simulation. Detailed guidelines will be distributed in due time.

### CC Simulation Performance

The Balanced Scorecard, a critical feature of the simulation, will be used to determine a firm's overall performance. Marketplace will generate a final score for each firm based on its financial performance, market performance, marketing effectiveness, manufacturing productivity, human resource management, investments in the firm's future, asset management, creation of wealth, and financial risk. The algorithm that generates the score takes into account a team's ranking in its respective game and how well the team performs in relation to those from past games.

### Individual Reports and Reflections

Each student is required to submit reports and reflections as assigned (see course schedule for details). This individual assignment facilitates theoretical and practical learning by encouraging students to apply relevant concepts taught in the class to real-world problems. It also helps students develop deeper insights into the course material and prepare them for in-class discussion. Therefore, the reports must be submitted before the class.

Additionally, each student is required to submit individual self-reflections integrating the assigned readings to their work experience and/or aspirations. The reflection exercise is to hone reflection as well as metacognition skills. The process is further explained in the "Guidelines to Reflection and Metacognition" resources posted on Brightspace.

### Final exam

A written exam that assesses your mastery of key concepts will take place during the final exam week. This will be a case-based exam. You will be given access to the final exam case two days before the scheduled date of the exam. You will have three hours to write your case analysis.

### Team Based Assessments

The executive teams will be formed via a sports-type draft on the first day. Each team will typically consist of four to five students. The teams will remain the same for case analysis (presentations and reports) as well as for the simulation and the following assessments. Procedural details will be explained in first class.

### Team case reports and presentations

The team case reports should be prepared as an executive summary. The page limit is two pages though as many appendices as required can be appended to the report. The "Case Analysis Worksheet" can be used to develop individual analyses before the team meeting, and then the team member's individual worksheet information can be integrated to develop the team's report and presentation for the cases. Teams must ensure that the concepts covered in the weekly readings as well as additional appropriate concepts are utilized on a cumulative basis. The grading rubrics for case reports and presentations are also available on Brightspace. The worksheet is available on Brightspace. "Guideline Questions for Case Studies" posted on Brightspace will provide additional assistance for completing these assignments.

### **Additional Information on the Conscious Capitalism Simulation:**

#### Role on the Executive Team

Successful firms effectively divide up the responsibility and share the workload. You will need to take on one or two of the following roles:

- VP Marketing
- VP Sales Management
- VP Human Resource
- VP Business Analytics
- VP Manufacturing
- VP Finance and Accounting

There needs to be one person to lead the team – the President of the company. This person also needs to take on one of the functional roles. One of our goals is to develop leadership skills of all students. For this reason, every member should serve for a period as the president in rotation. The president’s job is to manage the schedules and meetings, oversee the assignment of tasks, monitor overall performance (balanced scorecard) and help the team in every way possible to achieve strong business performance.

#### Executive Briefings

The Chairperson of the Board (instructor/teaching assistant) will meet periodically with each team (20-25 minutes). There will be one executive briefing for each of the six quarters in the simulation. During these executive briefings, the team will review its:

- performance during the prior quarter
- strategic analysis
- strategy for the upcoming quarter and going forward
- financial projections for the upcoming quarter.

Teams must be prepared to defend the analysis and the logic behind their decisions. The briefings are to be led by the President and submitting the presentation material before class is required.

#### Peer Evaluations

Three peer evaluations are to be completed throughout the simulation. The average grade of these peer evaluations will be the team-based grade, and the remainder of the peer evaluation grade will be based on the instructor’s assessment of participation in class and observation of the team dynamics. Participating in class discussion, especially case studies, is a critical component of this course. Diverse opinions, disagreements, and debates can enhance our perspectives. Critical analysis and constructive criticism are prerequisite to both learning and action. In this course, I view my role as more of a facilitator/coach of the class discussions/presentations than a lecturer. Likewise, the team-based assessments are designed for the students to learn from and with each other. I strive to create a “riskless” and collaborative learning environment in which students can freely test their ideas and improve their reflection, critical thinking, metacognition and communication skills, first in their team meetings and then in the class discussions. Every student is a co-creator of this classroom learning experience, and it is important not to take comments personally and keep an open mind. The participation mark will be determined by the quality and quantity of one’s in-class contributions in conjunction with the team dynamics.

#### Questions to the Business Coach

The HELP files in the software contain all of the directions you will need to participate in the business

simulation. Nonetheless, there is a tendency for students to ask the instructor/coach for help rather than look in the HELP files. With the number of students currently playing the game, it can become a very large burden. For this reason, the instructor/coach will charge \$10,000 to answer any question already addressed in software.

### Workload

The coursework part of the course requires a normal workload for any case-based course. Once the simulation begins, the work will vary according to the activities within the exercise. During the first three quarters of play, students report spending 2 to 3 hours of work per week. However, it can increase to 8 to 10 hours during the preparation of the Business Plan.

Following the venture capital fair, most students report spending 1.5 to 2 hours of work per week. This reduction of time is due to familiarity with the software, game procedures, and market, and having a plan of action that requires modification rather than creation.

### Time Management

Time management will be vital to your success in participating in the Venture Strategy simulation. There is more work than any one person can do. Also, it is not wise for everyone to participate in all aspects of the business. Too much time would be wasted. Therefore, it is necessary to divide up the work. There are suggestions on how to divide up the responsibility in the help files within the software. Feel free to depart from these guidelines based on individual preferences, experiences, or workloads that would allow a more equitable allocation of tasks. Also, do not hesitate to reallocate responsibility if conflicts arise or the workload is unevenly distributed.

The president should preside over each executive meeting, making sure that the discussion does not wander from the business at hand. Each team meeting should begin with an agenda and a timetable. Meetings should not last more than two hours. Long drawn-out meetings are not productive and raise frustration levels about not getting things done and usually are a symptom of poor preparation by individual. The meeting should conclude with a set of action items for each executive. The outcome of these actions should be reviewed at the start of the next meeting.

To facilitate executive meetings, each team member should prepare his/her work in advance. The executive should know the ins and outs, problems, and tradeoffs of his/her area of responsibility. When the executives meet, each executive should have a plan of action to recommend to the team. The executive should be prepared to thoroughly discuss the options open to the company and be flexible on the final decision of the executive team based on the cohesiveness of the overarching strategy.

### **Late Assignments:**

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. Requests for extension will be considered in cases of illness, family emergency, or other exceptional circumstances.

### **Preparation and Participation:**

Refer to the *Grading Scheme* section for more details.

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

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

### Recommended Calculator for Examinations:

If you are purchasing a calculator, we recommend any one of the following options: Texas Instruments BA II Plus (including Pro Model), Hewlett Packard HP 12C (including Platinum model), Staples Financial Calculator, Sharp EL-738C & Hewlett Packard HP 10bII

### Group Work:

The Sprott 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.

### 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](mailto: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 substantial 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 hard 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, CU ID, and the email must be written from your valid CARLETON address. Therefore, in order to respond to your inquiries, please send all email from your Carleton cmail account. If you do not have or have yet to activate this account, you can do so by visiting <https://carleton.ca/its/get-started/new-students-2/>

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Agenda/Readings	Pre-class Prep	Submission
Week 1, Sep 04	Introduction	<u>Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Katzenbach, J. &amp; Smith, D. 2005. The discipline of teams. <i>HBR article</i></li> <li>Case analysis coach tutorial</li> <li>FUSION module on reflection (on Brightspace)</li> </ul>	Job application form for simulation team formation	Individual reflection on leadership
		Form teams - Marketplace simulation (Conscious Capitalism) set up by teams		
	Environmental scanning & values	<u>Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spradlin, D. 2012. Are you solving the right problem. <i>HBR article</i></li> <li>Schoemaker, P., Krupp, S., &amp; Howland, S. 2013. Strategic leadership: The essential skills. <i>HBR article</i></li> <li>Christensen, C. 2010. How will you measure your life? <i>HBR article</i></li> </ul>		Individual case analysis worksheet on Equitas case
		<u>Case:</u> Equitas Microfinance: The fastest growing MFI on the planet		
Week 2, Sep 11	Business model	<u>Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Johnson, M., Christensen, C. M., &amp; Kagermann, H. 2008. Reinventing your business model. <i>HBR article</i></li> <li>Amit, R., &amp; Zott, C. 2012. Creating value through business model innovation. <i>MIT Sloan Management Review article</i></li> <li>Hamel, G. &amp; Prahalad, C. K. 2006. Strategic Intent. <i>HBR article</i></li> </ul>	Individual micro simulations and team Q1 decisions	Team case presentations/reports on MoviePass case
	Case study	<u>Case:</u> MoviePass: A Netflix for Moviegoers?		
Week 3, Sep 18	External environment	<u>Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Steenburgh, T. &amp; Avery, J. 2010. Marketing analysis toolkit: Situation analysis. <i>HBR article</i></li> <li>Porter, M., 2008. The five competitive forces that shape strategy. <i>HBR article</i></li> <li>D'Aeni, R.A. 2007. Mapping your competitive position. <i>HBR article</i></li> </ul>	Individual micro simulations and team Q2 decisions	Team presentation/report of Q2 performance and competition mapping
	Executive briefing	Key decisions and results of Q2 Plan for Q3 onwards		
Week 4, Sep 25	Internal environment	<u>Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Steenburgh, T. &amp; Avery, J. 2010. Marketing analysis toolkit: Situation analysis. <i>HBR article</i></li> <li>Collis, D., &amp; Montgomery, C. 2008. Competing on resources. <i>HBR article</i></li> <li>Barney, J. 1995. Looking inside for competitive advantage. <i>Academy of Management Executive</i>, 9(4): 49-61.</li> </ul>		Team case presentations/reports on Cola wars case
	Case study	<u>Case:</u> Cola wars continue: Coke and Pepsi in 2010		

Week 5, Oct 02	Competitive advantage	<u>Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ghemawat, P. &amp; Rivkin, J. 2006. Creating competitive advantage. <i>HBR article</i></li> <li>Porter, M. 1996. What is strategy? <i>HBR article</i></li> <li>Hamel, G. 2006. Why, what and how of management innovation. <i>HBR article</i></li> </ul>	Individual micro simulations and team Q3 decisions	Team presentation/report of Q3 performance and competition mapping
	Executive briefing	Key decisions and results of Q3 Plan for Q4-Q6	Peer evaluation #1	
Week 6, Oct 09	Unique value proposition	<u>Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eisenhardt, K., &amp; Sull, D. 2001. Strategy as simple rules. <i>HBR article</i></li> <li>Prahalad, C.K. &amp; Hamel, G. 1990. Core competence of the corporation. <i>HBR article</i></li> <li>Almquist, E., Cleghorn, J., &amp; Sherer, L. 2018. The B2B elements of value. <i>HBR article</i></li> </ul>		Team case presentations/reports on Trader Joe's case
	Executive briefing	<u>Case:</u> Trader Joe's		
Week 7, Oct 16	Business plan	<b>No Class</b>  <u>Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Magretta, J. 2002. Why business models matter. <i>HBR article</i></li> <li>Rich, S., &amp; Gumpert, D. 1985. How to write a winning business plan. <i>HBR article</i></li> <li>Kegan, R. &amp; Lahey, L. L. 2001. The real reason people won't change. <i>HBR article</i></li> <li>Levitt, T. 2004. Marketing Myopia. <i>HBR article</i></li> </ul>		Team analysis of Q1-Q3 performance (mapping competition dynamics)
Fall Break Week, Oct 21 – Oct 26				
Week 8, Oct 30	Venture capital fair	Business plan presentation to venture capitalists - Key strategic decisions and business plan (Q4-Q6)	Peer evaluation #2	Business plan presentation
Week 9, Nov 05	Competition dynamics	<u>Case:</u> The LEGO Group: Envisioning Risks in Asia (A)  <u>Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bingham, C., Eisenhardt, K., &amp; Furr, N. 2011. Which Strategy When? <i>MIT Sloan Management Review</i></li> <li>Collins, J. 2001. Level 5 leadership: The triumph of humility and fierce resolve. <i>HBR article</i></li> <li>Furr, N.R. &amp; Dyer, J. H. 2014. Leading your team into the unknown. <i>HBR article</i></li> </ul>	Individual micro simulations and team Q4 decisions	Team case presentations/reports on Lego case  In class - Team presentation/report of Q4 performance and competition mapping
	Executive briefing	Key decisions and results of Q4 Plan for Q5		

Week 10, Nov 12	Strategic decision making	<p><u>Case:</u> UBits: Feed Your Skills (A)</p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lovallo, D., &amp; Sibony, O. 2006. Distortions and deceptions in strategic decisions. <i>McKinsey Quarterly</i> (1): 18-29.</li> <li>• Rumelt, R. 2011. The perils of bad strategy. <i>McKinsey Quarterly</i> (June): 30-39.</li> <li>• Smith, K. 2012. 20 Questions Directors Should Ask About Strategy. Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada.</li> </ul>	Individual micro simulations and team Q5 decisions	<p>Team case presentations/ reports on UBits case</p> <p>In class - Individual assurance of learning assessment</p>
	Executive briefings	Key decisions and results of Q5 Plan for Q6		
Week 11, Nov 19	Evaluating performance	<p><u>Case:</u> Engie Fires CEO: Was Performance the Only Issue?</p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friedman, M. 1970. The social responsibility of business is to increase its profits, <i>New York Times Magazine</i></li> <li>• Strine Jr., L.E &amp; Zwillinger, J. 2020. What Milton Friedman missed about social inequality, <i>New York Times Magazine</i></li> <li>• Sorkin, A.R. 2020. A Free Market Manifesto That Changed the World, Reconsidered, <i>New York Times Magazine</i></li> </ul>	Individual micro simulations and team Q6 decisions	Team case presentations/ reports on Engie fires case
	Executive briefing	Key decisions and results of Q6 Issues related to Presentation to the Board		
Week 12, Nov 26	Reflection & Learning	<p>Presentation to the Board</p> <p>Reading: FUSION metacognition module (on Brightspace)</p>	Peer evaluation #3	Individual metacognitive reflection on leadership
Week 13, Dec 03	Final Exam	Individual case analysis (case will be provided 24 hours before)		Individual case report