

Business Strategy

BSMG6206

Course Outline (online)

Description: In an ever-changing environment, businesses need to have and maintain a strategy for sustainable, long-term performance. Through a combination of readings, case studies, and classroom discussion, participants will be introduced to current business strategy theory and techniques. These theories and techniques will be applied to develop analytical skills, which in turn will allow a better understanding of business strategy and will enable participants to analyze, develop, and implement strategic plans.

Course Goals: The overarching goal of the strategic analysis course is for students to understand how and when to employ key tools in critically analyzing a firm's business or corporate strategy and to be able to engage in productive communication with senior management in planning, developing and implementing future oriented management activities to achieve the firms' mission.

Course Objectives: At the completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Enumerate and understand the essence and definitions of strategy, the key attributes of strategic management, and competitive advantages
2. Perform an external environmental scan and know how trends and events in the general environment and forces in competitive environment are interrelated and affect performance
3. Execute an internal analysis using various frameworks to gain insights into how individual activities are interrelated as well as how they create, add value and maintain a sustainable advantage for the firm
4. Recognize the vital role of technology and understand the key role of social capital in leveraging knowledge and human capital
5. Develop unique strategies and understand how the successful attainment of generic strategies while considering the industry life cycle can improve a firm's relative power vis-à-vis the five forces that determine an industry's average profitability
6. Appreciate why firms engage in diversification efforts and how corporations use related and unrelated diversification to achieve synergistic benefits through various corporate level strategic methodologies
7. Understand the two opposing forces—cost reduction and adaptation to local markets—that firms face when entering international markets and explicate the advantages and disadvantages associated with each of the four basic strategies for achieving competitive advantage in global markets
8. Comprehend and clarify how the internet is disrupting industry structures and how internet technologies are affecting the five competitive forces as well as how and why firms are using e-business strategies to add value and achieve unique advantage and their competitive position
9. Understand the relationship between a firm's strategy and a firm's structure as well as their relative advantages and disadvantages of each type of organizational structure
10. Explain why there is no "one best way" to design strategic control systems and how the most effective systems are contingent on situational factors and the organization's specific strategic choices and the role governance plays in ensuring that the interests of managers align with those of shareholders
11. Describe the crucial role of emotional intelligence, ethics, and a leader's role in establishing successful leadership in creating and maintaining a learning organization.
12. Understand how corporations create an internal environment and culture that promotes entrepreneurial development in successfully pursuing and supporting new ventures in achieving an organization's mission

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Required Text:

TBD

Evaluation:

Forum Discussions- Cases x2 (Weeks 3,9)	30%
Course Participation "Weekly Dive" minimum x2 (Student Choice)	20%
Mid Term Exam (Week 7)	25%
Final Exam (Week 13)	25%

Notes on assignments (papers and reports):

- Must be academic in style and content
- Must have a clear focus
- Must present ideas in a logical and well thought-out flow
- Arguments, analysis and conclusions must be based on clearly identified research and sources
- Must cite all references from other sources
- Must be in paragraph format
- Must be double-spaced, and typewritten
- Must follow APA style

Grading:

A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work which is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F	below 50	Fail

Online Course Participation: this involves substantive contribution that demonstrates critical reflections, which are helpful in moving the discussion forward. Students are asked to demonstrate professionalism throughout the course. Please be prepared to discuss the week's readings, power point slides – found in Lessons, and/or other assignments as assigned, sharing insights while demonstrating respect for different points of view. Knowledge is created in the online learning environment through active engagement. In this course, you will help to draw out the implications of the assigned readings and cases, activities and assessments in various contexts.

Important: You will have a few ways to engage with the course content:

1. There will be 2 Cases (Weeks, 3,8) which you will engage/participate. Smaller Forum groups will be assigned Week 2 for these discussions. You will be graded (see Rubric below)
 - Refer to the Rubric below - **Forum Discussion - CASES x 2**
2. You will see each week in Lessons, there is an opportunity to participate in "Deeper Dives". While these are "optional" over the 12 weeks of the course, students are expected to participate in a **minimum of 2** "Deeper Dives" throughout the course. (This is part of your Course Participation grade - see Rubric below)

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Rubric - Forum Discussions - CASES x 2 (Weeks 3,9)

In this course, you will be required to participate in 3 Forum Discussions/Cases of which you will be graded. A set of instructions will be made available in OWL for the corresponding week and in the Discussion group.

	Exceeds Assessment Requirements	Meets Assessment Requirements	Approaching Assessment Requirements	Below Assessment Requirements	Does not meet Assessment Requirements
Initial forum submission	15 Forum post reflects thoughtful insight into the topic with supporting rationale for answers provided	13 Forum post reflects somewhat thoughtful insight into the topic of discussion with supporting rationale	10 Forum post reflects some insight into the topic of discussion with some supporting rationale	7 Forum post reflects minimal insight into the topic of discussion with minimal supporting rationale	0 Forum post lacks insight into the topic of discussion and lacks supporting rationale
Interaction	2.5 Responses demonstrate thorough analysis of colleagues' forum posts and actively stimulate discussion	2 Responses demonstrate somewhat thorough analysis of colleagues' forum posts and stimulate discussion	1.5 Responses demonstrate some analysis of colleagues' forum posts and stimulate some discussion	1 Responses demonstrate minimal analysis of colleagues' forum posts and attempts to stimulate discussion	0 Responses lack analysis of colleagues' forum posts and do not stimulate discussion
Professionalism	2.5 All postings are written in professional language. No spelling or grammar errors in any posts	2 Almost all postings are written in professional language. No spelling or grammar errors in some posts	1.5 Some postings are written in professional language. Spelling or grammar errors in some posts	1 Few postings are written in professional language. Spelling or grammar errors in a few posts.	0 All postings are written in unprofessional language. Spelling or grammar errors in all posts

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Course Participation/Engagement - Rubric

The following chart will act as a guide for assessing student participation in the course (Forum, Deeper Dive Discussions - Minimum x2 - Student's choice)

Grade	Criteria
10	The student participates frequently, providing relevant responses and over the length of the course actively replies to discussion questions, instructor comments, and other students in a positive manner that demonstrates critical thinking skills; the responses often offer new perspectives on course material and spark discussion.
8=9	The student participates consistently, providing relevant responses and over the length of the course actively offers new ideas and responds to the contributions of others.
6-7	The student provides some relevant contributions and occasionally offers new ideas.
4-5	The student's contributions are inconsistent in both quality and relevance. The student does not offer any new ideas, and responses to fellow students are few.
2-3	The student rarely participates, rarely provides responses, and rarely responds to the comments and contribution of others. The student is rarely involved in group or class discussions.
0-1	The student never participates, does not respond to the comments or contributions of others, and does not offer their opinion or ideas. The student only contributes when specifically asked by the instructor.

Exams:

The **Midterm Exam** will be available online. Once you start, you will have three hours to complete. (Covering content weeks 1-7)

The **Final Exam** will be available online. Once you start, you will have three hours to complete. (Covering content weeks 8-12)

Please note that students are required to complete **all components** of this course. There are no exceptions to this.

Policy on Cheating and Academic Misconduct:

Academic honesty is a cornerstone of conduct at Western University. We cannot have freedom of expression without integrity. Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences; please refer to the section on "Scholastic Offences" in the current University Academic Calendar, or on the web at <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca>. Such offences include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in this University or elsewhere (without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to

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whom the work is submitted). Students enrolled in non-degree courses are expected to abide by the University's code of conduct.

Code of Student Conduct:

The purpose of the Code of Student Conduct is to define the general standard of conduct expected of students registered at The University of Western Ontario, provide examples of behaviour that constitutes a breach of this standard of conduct, provide examples of sanctions that may be imposed, and set out the disciplinary procedures that the University will follow. For the complete Code of Student Conduct: <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/board/code.pdf>

Plagiarism:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Policy on Late Assignments:

No late assignments will be accepted. Extensions will be considered if the instructor is approached at least two days prior to the due date. Moreover, only extenuating circumstances will be considered.

Any assignment handed in late that has been approved will be subject to a penalty of two percent (2%) per day including weekends, up to a maximum of 7 days, after which assignments will not be accepted and a grade of zero will be assigned unless documentation for accommodation has been provided in advance.

When will I receive my grades?

Assignments will be marked, and the grades available, as soon as possible after they are due. Final grades will be available 2 weeks after the last scheduled day of the course. A grade report can be printed from myWCS.

How do I hand in assignments?

All assignments will be submitted electronically through OWL using the assignment tool. Failure to meet deadlines without the instructor's written permission will be subject to the late assignment policy. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all assignments forwarded to the instructor arrive before the due date. If you experience difficulty in submitting assignments through OWL, you are responsible for contacting the instructor and arranging an alternate method of delivery (e.g., e-mail attachment) for the assignment.

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Course Schedule:

WEEK	Topic	To Do
1	Course Introduction Chpt 1: Strategic Management: Creating Competitive Advantages	Read Chpt 1 Post Introduction in Forums - Week 1 Optional - engage in "deeper connection" in Forums **
2	Chpt 2: Analyzing the External Environment of the Firm	Read Chpt 2 Optional - engage in "deeper connection" in Forums **
3	Chpt 3: Assessing the Internal Environment of the Firm Forum Discussion - Case #1	Read Chpt 3 Post/Engage/Respond - Forum Discussion #1 **
4	Chpt 4: Recognizing a Firms Intellectual Assets: Moving Beyond a Firms Tangible Resources	Read Chpt 4 Wrap Up Forum Discussion #1
5	Chpt 5: Business-Level Strategy: Creating and Sustaining Competitive Advantages	Read Chpt 5 Optional - engage in "deeper connection" in Forums **
6	Chpt 6: Corporate-Level Strategy: Creating Value through Diversification	Read Chpt 6 Prepare for Midterm Week 7
7	Chpt 7: International Strategy: Creating Value in Global Markets Mid Term Exam Multiple Choice/True or False Open Book -Based upon Text/Instructor Lessons Covering Content Weeks 1-6	Read Chpt 7 You will log in to OWL, Test & Quizzes 3 hours to complete
8	Chpt 8: Entrepreneurial Strategy and Competitive Dynamics	Read Chpt 8 Optional - engage in "deeper connection" in Forums **
9	Chpt 9: Strategic Control and Corporate Governance Forum Discussion - Case #2	Read Chpt 9 Post/Engage/Respond - Forum Discussion #2**
10	Chpt 10: Creating Effective Organizational Designs	Read Chpt 10 Wrap Up Forum Discussion #2
11	Chpt 11: Strategic Leadership: Creating a Learning Organization and an Ethical Organization	Read Chpt 11 Optional - engage in "deeper connection" in Forums **
12	Chpt 12: Managing Innovation and Fostering Corporate Entrepreneurship	Read Chpt 12 Prepare for Final Exam - Week 13

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13	Final Exam Multiple Choice/True or False - Open Book Based upon Text/Instructor Lessons Covering Content Weeks 7-12 Course Wrap up	You will log in to OWL, Test & Quizzes 3 hours to complete Wrap -Up within Forums
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** It is expected that Student's will engage/participate in the 2 Assigned Forum CASE Discussions, you will be graded on your participation/engagement. (Weeks, 3, 8)

** The "Online Forum - Weekly Deeper Connection" while optional, you will engage in a minimum 2 Deeper Dive Discussions throughout the course (your choice). This is your Course Participation grade.