



Business Strategy and Innovation For a Competitive Advantage

Instructor: Dr Snezhana Hristova

Course number: DDBA 7210

Type of course: Elective

Semester: Spring 2017

Level of course: advanced

Credits: 10 ECTS

Learning hours: 250

Prerequisite: none

Schedule hours: May 2017

Room: tbc

Meeting hours: Tuesday 12:00-13:00 or by appointment

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Course description

This is an application-focused course detailing contemporary approaches to strategy analysis and formulation that help businesses sustain an innovative orientation and respond to external challenges. It aims to review and complement foundation on the creation and implementation of business strategies that maximize competitive advantage in the marketplace. The course regards strategy from its fundamental roots in the Greek "strategos" and emphasises the fundamental objective to build advantage or ensure survival. It shows that strategy is a highly iterative process of analysis, choice and action that impacts on the key result areas that are needed to achieve the organisation's objectives. The nexus between strategy and innovation is emphasised where strategy is the "how" and innovation supplies the "what".

Required texts

Afuah, A. (2011) Strategic innovation and new game strategies for competitive advantage. 2nd ed. Taylor&Francis.

Hitt, M.A, Ireland R.D. (2007) Strategic management: competitiveness and globalization. 7th ed. Thomson Learning.

Fred D.R and Forest R.D(2015) Strategic management-concepts and cases. 15th ed. Pearson.

Supplementary reading

Additional readings including articles, lecture notes, case discussions that are distributed or posted to Moodle. Please check Moodle regularly for any new information or materials relevant to upcoming sessions.

Learning outcomes

The key outcomes of the course are for students to:

- demonstrate the understanding of the nature of strategy and how it occurs in our businesses and organisations
- appreciate the challenge of developing competitive advantage for their organisation
- recognise the role of innovation and strategic insight in developing competitive advantage
- demonstrate the understanding how to practice strategic thinking in developing strategy
- learn and apply approaches to shaping strategy in complex and uncertain environments
- recognising that strategy is about change - and understanding the challenges of executing and managing strategic change in organisations
- learn how to present and “sell” innovative strategy in their organisations.

Course delivery

The course will be delivered through a mixture of scheduled learning activities, online interactions and supervised or independent research. Independent study may include associated readings, reflections, assessment and preparation for scheduled activities. The course requires two sessions of scheduled contact. Scheduled activities may include a combination of teacher directed learning, guest speakers, case studies, peer directed learning and online engagement. Students are expected to be independent learners, participate actively in the learning process, and show a reasonable level of interest and enthusiasm about the course. Consequently, **students are expected to read the assigned texts prior to scheduled learning activities.** All assignments including homework should be completed by agreed deadlines and failing to meet the deadline will result in a grade F (Failure) for those particular assignments.

Examination structure and assessment

There will be no exam in the standard sense. Students' performance will be assessed in accordance to the subject learning outcomes through a variety of practical business applications of writing, critical thinking, individual engagement in a combination of case analysis, research assignments, company reports and problem-based tasks to analyze, develop, and defend ideas for strategic and innovative business solutions for sustainability. Students are encouraged to use the EBSCO database when preparing their homework and projects.

The grading scale used to determine course grades will be:

Grading criteria

Grading points	%	Quality
A	96-100	4.00
A-	90-95	3.67
B+	87-89	3.33
B	83-86	3.00
B-	80-82	2.67
C+	77-79	2.33
C	73-76	2.00
C-	70-72	1.67
D+	67-69	1.33
D	63-66	1.00
D-	60-62	0.67
F	0-59	0.00

The weighting of the assessment components will be:

Activity	%
Essay and/or article discussions	15%
Case-analysis	25%
Research paper	60%

Notional learning time required:

Learning	Hours
Learning activities	22
Exam time	3
Assignment/project completion	100
Study time including exam & reading preparation	125
Total learning hours	250

Course outline

	Topics	Book, Chapter, page:
1.	Strategy inputs and strategic competitiveness: Techniques for analysing industries and competitors New Tools in Strategy: Blue Ocean Strategy, Business Model Canvas and Lean Launch Pad, The End of Competitive Advantage, Playing to Win	Ch.1,2,3,4 Fred et al.
2.	Creating and Appropriating Value Using New Game Strategies, Resources and Capabilities in the Face of New Games, First-mover Advantages/Disadvantages and Competitors' Handicaps, Implementing New Game Strategies	Ch.4,5,6,7 Afuah.
3.	Case studies in Strategizing:	tba
4.	Disruptive Technologies as New Games, Globalization and New Games, Coopetition and Game Theory Entering a New Business Using New Games	Ch. 8,9,11,12 Afuah.
5.	Case Studies in Innovation: How very different companies successfully innovate	tba
6.	Strategic leadership Strategic entrepreneurship	Hitt et al.

Common Professional Components (CPC)

1) Functional Areas:	
Marketing	
Business Finance	
Accounting	
Management (Organizational Behaviour – Human Resources	

Management + Operations Management)	
2) The Business Environment	
Legal Environment of Business	
Economics	
Business Ethics	
Global Dimension of Business	3
3) Technical Skills	
MIS/IT Computing	
Statistics/Quantitative Techniques	
4) Integrative Areas	
Business Politics/Strategies	15
Internship/Practical (Comprehensive or Integrating Experience.....)	3
TOTAL HOURS	20

Class attendance and participation

- Attend every class and arrive on time. Attendance is compulsory. UACS has additional attendance policies regarding eligibility for exams in the Student Handbook.
- Students are responsible for everything that is announced, presented, or discussed in class.
- Students must actively participate by contributing to classroom discussions and asking questions.
- Students must read the assigned texts before coming to class.
- Students must bring the appropriate materials (textbooks, paper, pens, etc) to every class.
- Announcements and materials for each class will be regularly posted on the Share Point portal and students are obliged to consider them before coming to class.

Classroom behavior

The classroom will be an academic and respectful environment. Disrespectful remarks or other inappropriate behavior will result in a daily mark of 'F' and/or removal from the classroom. The UACS policy concerning inappropriate behavior is in the Student Handbook. **The use of mobile phones is not allowed while class is in session.** The language of instruction is English, and all conversation and correspondence must be in English.

Academic honesty

Students must do their own work. Cheating or copying of any kind will not be tolerated on exams, papers, homework, or any other assignments.

Plagiarism

UACS does not tolerate plagiarism, which is the copying of another person's work without giving the author credit. Plagiarism of any kind will result in a grade of 'F' for the course. The UACS policy on plagiarism is in the Student Handbook.

Late work

Having work completed on schedule is an important part of being responsible. Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. **Late work will not be accepted for any reason.** Failure to submit the project or deliver the class presentation in due time will result in a mark of '0' (F).

(Jan. 2017)