BS0845: Strategic Management

MODULE AIMS

The goal of this course is to learn the fundamentals of how to manage organizations strategically. Strategic management of organizations is a complex undertaking that starts with the central question: why do some companies succeed while others fail? The course will provide you with the concepts, principles, frameworks and methodologies necessary to analyse and understand how to formulate and implement the appropriate policies and strategies for a firm. In order to do so, you will be taking a general management perspective in this course and thus will need to think of how each action, decision or event will affect the firm as a whole. By the end of this course, you should be able to actively and critically use course concepts to diagnose, manage, design, change and generally make sense of the various firms in which you will participate through the course of your lives.

The class sessions will be highly interactive and will include a combination of lectures, discussions of readings, case analyses, group presentations and in-class exercises. We will explore different aspects of strategic management in each class and examine how it can be used to anticipate, understand and resolve different problems that arise for managers. Class discussions will be used to link strategic management concepts with real world issues and problems. Case analysis and discussion are integral parts of the course and are designed to test and sharpen students’ ability to identify course concepts in actual business settings and apply these concepts in decision-making.

MODULE OBJECTIVES

Knowledge Objectives

• Understand the central concepts in strategic management
• Understand which frameworks and tools to utilise for internal or external analysis
• Understand the relationships and assumptions underlying the different strategic management concepts

Skill Objectives

• Apply concepts and frameworks to business cases and real-life firms
• Conduct an industry analysis
• Analyse a firm’s resources and capabilities
• Determine what business strategy might be appropriate for the firm, given its internal and external context
• Enhance skills in written and verbal communication, teamwork, analytical thinking, decision-making, project planning and general management
LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, students will be equipped with tools, frameworks and concepts required to analyse firms and their strategies. Students should be able to apply these course concepts to:

- Interpret, analyse and evaluate the external and internal environments of various types of firms
- Conduct a comprehensive analysis of the current strategic position of firms and diagnose the key strategic challenges they face
- Formulate and recommend appropriate future strategies for firms to overcome their challenges with specific attention to the implementation of such strategies

TEACHING METHODS & STRUCTURE

The module consists of 10 2-hour in-class sessions. The course will be taught primarily through discussions of cases and readings supplemented with lectures. In order to benefit from and contribute to class exercises, it is critical that you prepare for each session and read the case studies and other learning material assigned for the session in advance. Students will have to complete pre-class quizzes related to the case studies.

Active and thoughtful class participation will be critical to your learning and the learning of your classmates. Students may be “cold called” throughout any discussion. Students a may be expected to give presentations on a regular basis and are expected to participate in any in-class exercises during the course. Students are encouraged to ask questions and contribute to class discussions.

Students will also work in teams outside of class hours on the project and are expected to present the outcome of their project in the last 2 sessions of the module.

ASSESSMENTS

The course will be assessed by:

- Final Exam 70%
- Group Coursework 25%
- Participation 5%

READING LIST

- Textbook (selected chapters): “Contemporary Strategy Analysis” (8th edition, Wiley-Blackwell Publishing) by Robert Grant. Please, see the “Course Schedule” section for the indication of what chapters are required.
- Additional articles and readings
- Cases
- Lecture slides