

BSM931 TOPICS IN ADVANCED STRATEGY

Academic Year 2013/14

Number of Aston Credits: 15

Number of ECTS Credits: 7.5

Staff Member Responsible for the Module:

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Pre-requisites for the module:

To study this module you must have completed BSM929.

Mode of Attendance:

On Campus

Module Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

This module is designed to enable students to analyse complex situations and, based on current theoretical and practical management literatures, make appropriate strategic recommendations that are sensitive to the international and complex nature of present-day strategic management. Therefore, throughout the module, the emphasis is on being analytical and critical rather than being descriptive and trying to 'pigeon-hole' problems into pre-defined boxes. Specifically, upon successful completion of this module, students should be able to:



Subject-specific knowledge

- critically evaluate the effects of internal and external resource environments on the strategies of organizations
- explain the existence, scope, organization, and governance of organizations, using appropriate analytical frameworks
- analyze the 'contested terrain' of the firm and to be able to apply different perspectives appropriate for analyzing the impacts of various stakeholders
- understand organizational culture and the complexities of managing strategic change
- appreciate the complexity, chaos, and non-linearity of the modern-day business environment and its implications for formulating and implementing strategy
- appreciate the properties of '21st century' knowledge-, innovation-, and serviceintensive firms and explain how these properties affect their strategizing

General skills

- reason critically, think analytically and design creatively
- question assumptions underlying theoretical models and apply them appropriately
- use qualitative and quantitative data in diagnosing, analyzing and solving management issues
- integrate theory and practice in real-world case studies
- communicate clearly and compellingly, both verbally and in writing
- function as a valuable team member that contributes to the fullest of her/his abilities









Module Content:

Week 1: A Review of Strategy Theory and Practice

Week 2: Existence, Scope and Governance of Firms

(Transaction Cost Economics)

Week 3: Resources, Capabilities and Management Processes of Firms

(Resource-based View)

Week 4: The Firm as Contested Terrain

([Neo]-institutional Perspectives of the Firm)

Week 5: Culture, Leadership and Strategic Change

Week 6: Strategy in a Non-linear World

(Chaos, Complexity and Evolutionary Economics)

Week 7: Knowledge, Innovation, and Information Goods

Week 8: Assessed Presentations

Week 9: Summary, Revision and Exam Briefing

Week 10: Examination

Corporate Connections:

This module uses recent and up-to-date case material that is topical in the European and International context, as well as extracts from current business news to explain and analyze the teaching themes. Lectures are always illustrated with topical anecdotes to ensure that complex strategy themes are brought to life through current business events. The module makes extensive use of the instructor's consulting, practitioner and executive education experience.









International Dimensions:

Both topics and cases are global in flavour, with most if not all topics explicitly exploring international and cross-cultural aspects. The module includes much international material, uses international case studies, and considers different cultural perspectives and approaches to strategy.

Contribution of Research:

The module, particularly the textbook, is heavily influenced by previous and recent research in Strategy.

Ethics, Responsibility & Sustainability:

The module centrally features issues of managerial ethics, corporate social responsibility and sustainability in discussions of rationality in managerial decision-making (week 4), and the management of various stakeholders and 'institutional logics' (week 5). Furthermore, different case studies throughout the module are expected to raise and highlight these issues in classroom discussion.

Method of Teaching:

The module is delivered through a combination of lectures, case studies, syndicate group work, and group presentations. Lectures will expose students to the pivotal theories and frameworks necessary for understanding and analyzing strategy. The case-study discussions will be about the application of these theories to real-world problems and the appreciation of the pragmatic issues of strategy in practice. Each week students are presented with issues, problems and cases to discuss in class and in syndicate groups with a view to attaining the learning outcomes. Case study is undertaken in small ('syndicate') and large group exercises each week using an adapted Mauffette-Leenders-Erskine approach. The cases and discussion are intended to develop students' ability to apply theory to practice through critical case analysis. The teaching materials and approach are appropriate to the learning objectives and their emphasis on strategy in theory and practice.









Method of Assessment and Feedback:

Assignment: Participation in class feedback (10%)

Coursework: Case study group presentation and group case report (30%)

Examination: 2 hour closed book exam (60%)

1. Assignment: Participation in class feedback (10%)

Students will be marked on the written feedback they provide to their peers and themselves (in self-assessment exercises) on in-class case-study reviews every week. Students will be provided with a template feedback sheet on which to mark themselves/ their peers against the module's marking criteria and to provide suggestions for improvement. This assignment allows students to demonstrate their skills in critical reflection and reasoning, their ability to question assumptions and, their willingness to promote each other's progress through peer support. Blackboard functionality, e.g. wiki, is used to support, develop this.

2. Coursework: A group presentation of a case study (15%) and a group case report of 1000-1500 words (15%)

This part of the assignment is designed to give students an opportunity to apply lecture materials to real-life case studies and present their analyses in class or in a written report. The focus is on the application and critical evaluation of analytical frameworks, not the reproduction of case study data. Thus, both coursework assignments assess students' ability to reason critically and think analytically, to question assumptions behind theoretical models and apply them appropriately, to use qualitative and/or quantitative data in substantiating their analyses, and to integrate theory and practice. The group presentation also verbal communication and presentation skills, while the report focuses on clear and compelling written arguments. Both also assess students' team-working ability. Subject-specific knowledge is assessed based on the demands of specific case studies.

Presentation guidelines

- 1. Presentations may use no more than 15 slides, including the title slide: concise presentation of the key issues, not 'busy' presentations are important for a high grade.
- 2. Presentations are expected to take no more than 20 minutes.









- 3. Syndicate groups must hand BOTH a CD with the presentation AND a hard copy, with the signed participation sheet attached, to the lecturer at the start of session 8 (i.e. 2pm) on Monday, 3rd Match 2014.
- 4. It is not necessary for all the members of the group to present the case, but all members must participate in the analysis and preparation of the presentation, as per the participation sheet below.
- 5. Assessed presentations are to be delivered in class during the session in week 8 Case report guidelines
- 1. The report is due together with the presentation in week 8.
- 2. The report, together with an accompanying group participation sheet, is to be submitted by 16:00 on the due date to the postgraduate exams office.
- 3. In a report, sub-headings and bullet points may be used (in moderation), theoretical concepts, etc. should be referenced according to Harvard convention.
- 4. The word-count (1,000-1,500 words) includes all parts of the main text (incl. footnotes and appendices), but NOT the title page and references. Reports outside the 1,000 to 1,500 word window will be penalized with a deduction of 5 points.

A detailed marking scheme will be released together with the assignment

Whole group participation

Students are required to acknowledge their contribution and sign the group participation sheet attached to this outline, which will be handed in with the slides from their presentation. Every student must acknowledge their contribution and sign this sheet. Any student who does not do so may be liable for a zero grade for the presentation. Students are referred to the ABS *Process for Resolving Disputes within Syndicate Groups*.

3. Final Exam: 2-hour, closed book (60%).

The examination questions are intended to assess students' ability to apply theory to practice through critical case analysis. In line with module-level learning outcomes, the focus is on the application and critical evaluation of analytical frameworks, not the reproduction of case study data. Specifically, the assignment tests students' ability to reason critically and think analytically under time pressure, to question assumptions behind theoretical models and apply them appropriately, to use qualitative and/or quantitative data in substantiating their analyses, and to integrate theory and practice. The exam will be based on a case study and subject-specific knowledge is assessed based on the demands of specific case studies.









Learning Hours:

Total	150
Coursework Assignment	30
Self-Study	30
Directed Learning	63
Contact Hours	24
Pre-reading	03

Pre-reading:

GLADWELL, Malcolm (2013) 'Caroline Sacks' (Chapter 3, pp. 63-96) in <u>David & Goliath:</u> <u>underdogs, misfits and the art of battling giants</u> London: Allen Lane (a Penguin imprint).

The following essential and recommended readings are subject to change. Students should not therefore purchase textbooks prior to commencing their course. If students wish to undertake background reading before starting the course, many of the chapters/readings are available in electronic form via on-line library catalogues and other resources.

Essential Reading:

Set texts:

FAULKNER, David O. and CAMPBELL, Andrew (eds.) (2003) *The Oxford Handbook of Strategy.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

JOHNSON, Gerry, WHITTINGTON, Richard, SCHOLES, Kevan, & REGNÉR, Patrick (2014). *Exploring Strategy: Text and Cases* (10th edition) Harlow: Pearson.

Week 1: Review of Strategy Theory & Practice

Essential:

PORTER, M. (1996). What is Strategy? *Harvard Business Review*, November - December 1996, pp 61-78

MINTZBERG, H. (1994). The Fall and Rise of Strategic Planning. *Harvard Business Review*, Jan-Feb 1994, pp. 107-114.









CUMMINGS, S. and DAELLENBACH, U. (2009). A Guide to the Future of Strategy? The History of Long Range Planning. *Long Range Planning*, 42 (2009) pp. 234-263.

Additional:

MOOKHERJEE, D. & WEST, T. (2013). So what do Strategy Practitioners Actually do?, **360° The Ashridge Journal**, Summer 2013 p.24

Case Study

GLADWELL, M. (2013). "Caroline Sacks" (Chapter 3) from GLADWELL, Malcolm, *David* and *Goliath; underdogs, misfits and the art of battling giants* pp.63-96, London: Allen Lane.

Week 2: The Existence, Scope and Governance of Firms

Set text (Essential)

SLATER, M. (2006) 'The Boundary of the Firm' (Chapter 3, pp. 53-79) *in* FAULKNER, D.O. & CAMPBELL, A. (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Strategy.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

General Literature

COASE, R.H. (1937). The Nature of the Firm. *Economica*, 4(16), pp. 386-405.

WILLIAMSON, O.E. (1981). The Economics of Organization: The Transaction Cost Approach. *The American Journal of Sociology*, 87(3), pp. 548-577.

Additional:

WILLIAMSON, O.E. (1991). Strategizing, Economizing, and Economic Organization. *Strategic Management Journal*, 12, (Special Issue: Fundamental Research Issues in Strategy and Economics), pp. 75-94.

WILLIAMSON, O.E. (1999). Strategy Research: Governance and Competence Perspective. *Strategic Management Journal*, 20 (12), pp. 1087-1108.

Case Study

'Crockery Wars' (TV Programme digitized and uploaded onto Blackboard via Kaltura.)

Week 3 The Resources, Capabilities and Management Processes of Firms









(Resource Based View of the Firm)

Set text (Essential)

SANCHEZ, R: 'Analyzing Internal and Competitor Competences, Resources, Capabilities, and Management Processes' (Chapter 12, pp. 350-377) *in* FAULKNER, D.O. & CAMPBELL, A. (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Strategy.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hamel, G. & Prahalad, C.K. (1990). The core competences of the corporation. *Harvard Business Review*, May-June 1990, pp. 79-91.

Additional

VOGEL, R. & GÜTTELL, W.H. (2013). The Dynamic Capability View in Strategic Management: A Bibliometric Review. *International Journal of Management Reviews.* 15, pp. 426-446.

BARNEY, J.B. & KETCHEN, D.J. (2011). The Future of Resource-Based Theory: Revitalization or Decline? (Special Editorial Issue) *Journal of Management* 37 (5) September, pp. 1299-1315.

Case Study

REGNÉR, P. & YILDIZ, H.M. 'H & M in fast fashion: continued success?' (pp. 574-582) *in* JOHNSON, G., WHITTINGTON, R., SCHOLES, K., & REGNÉR, P. (2014). *Exploring Strategy: Text and Cases* (10th edition) Harlow: Pearson.

Week 4: The Firm as Contested Terrain ([Neo] institutional Perspectives of the Firm)

Set Text (Essential)

LOVERIDGE, R. 'Institutional Approaches to Business Strategy (Chapter 5, pp. 104-137) in FAULKNER, D.O. & CAMPBELL, A. (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Strategy.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

General Literature

Essential:

GREENWOOD, R., OLIVER, C., SAHLIN, K. & SUDDABY, R. Introduction. (pp. 1-46) *in*: GREENWOOD, R., OLIVER, C., SAHLIN, K. & SUDDABY, R. (eds.) (2013) *in The Sage Handbook of Organizational Institutionalism*. London: Sage.









Additional:

MORGAN, G. & KRISTENSEN, P. H. (2006). The contested space of MNs: varieties of Institutionalism, varieties of capitalism. **Human Relations** 59 (11), pp. 1467-1490.

HARDY, C. and MAGUIRE, S. (2008). Institutional Entrepreneurship. (pp. 198-217) *in*: GREENWOOD, R., OLIVER, C., SAHLIN, K. & SUDDABY, R. (eds.) (2013) *in The Sage Handbook of Organizational Institutionalism*. London: Sage.

PACHE, A., & SANTOS, F. (2010). When Worlds Collide: The Internal Dynamics of Organizational Responses to Conflicting Institutional Demands, *Academy of Management Review*, 35(3): pp. 455-476.

Case Study

JOHANSEN, C.B. 'Integration of a Corporate Social Responsibility programme in Coloplast' (pp. 591-594) *in* JOHNSON, G., WHITTINGTON, R., SCHOLES, K., & REGNÉR, P. (2014). *Exploring Strategy: Text and Cases* (10th edition) Harlow: Pearson.

Week 5: Culture, Change and Leadership

Set text (Essential)

WHIPP, R. Managing Strategic Change (Chapter 25, pp. 729-758) *in* FAULKNER, D.O. & CAMPBELL, A. (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Strategy.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

General Literature

Essential:

JOHNSON, G. (1992). Managing Strategic Change – Strategy, Culture and Action. *Long Range Planning*, 25(1), pp. 28-36.

KOTTER, J.P. (1995). Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail. *Harvard Business Review*, March-April, pp. 59-67.

Additional:

SEAMAN, J.T. & SMITH, G.D. (2012). Your company's history as a leadership tool (The Big Idea). *Harvard Business Review* DEC, pp. 44-52.









CUMMINGS, S. & BRIDGMAN, T. (2011). The Relevant Past: Why the History of Management Should Be Critical for our Future **Academy of Management Education & Learning** 10 (1), pp. 77-93.

Case Study

BARSOUX, J. & NARASIMHAN, A. 'Restoring British Museum'. Case Centre Ref. No. IMD-3-2230, 30 pages.

Week 6: Strategy in A Non-Linear World

Set text (Essential)

BARRON, D. 'Evolutionary Theory' (Chapter 4, pp. 80-103) *in* FAULKNER, D.O. & CAMPBELL, A. (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Strategy.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

General Literature

Essential:

STACEY, D. (2011). The Complexity Sciences: the sciences of uncertainty (Chapter 10, pp. 234-287) in: STACEY, D. (2011). *Strategic Management and Organisational Dynamics* (6th edition). Harlow: FT Prentice Hall.

Additional:

BARNETT, W. P., & BURGELMAN, R. A. (1996). Evolutionary Perspectives on Strategy. *Strategic Management Journal*, 17, pp.5-19.

STACEY, D. (2011). Systematic Application of Complexity Sciences to Organisations: restating the dominant discourse (Chapter 11, pp. 212-231). in: STACEY, D. (2011). *Strategic Management and Organisational Dynamics*. (6th edition). Harlow: FT Prentice Hall.

WILTBANK, R., DEW, N., READ, S. & SARASVATHY, S.D. (2006) What to do next? The case for non-predictive strategy. **Strategic Management Journal** 27, pp.981-998.









Case:

BARTLETT, C. & HAN, A. Levendary café: the china challenge. Case Centre Ref. No. 4357, 13 pages.

Week 7: Knowledge, Innovation, and Information Goods

Set text (Essential)

SEGAL-HORN, S. (2003) 'Strategy in Service Organizations' (Chapter 16, pp. 472-506) *in* FAULKNER, D.O. & CAMPBELL, A. (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Strategy.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

General Literature

Essential:

Brown, S. 2005. The Tripping Point. *Marketing Research*, 17 (1), pp. 8-13.

Additional:

AL-AALI, A. & TEECE, D.J. (2013). Towards the (Strategic) Management of Intellectual Property: Retrospective and Prospective. *California Management Review*. 55(4) Summer, pp. 15-30.

MEIER, M. (2011). Knowledge Management in Strategic Alliances: A Review of Empirical Evidence. *International Journal of Management Reviews*. 13, pp. 1-23.

MICHEL, S., BROWN, S. W. & GALLAN, A.S. (2008). Service-Logic Innovations: How to innovate customers, not products. *California Management Review*, 50(3), pp. 49-65.

Case.

BARTLETT, C. McKinsey & Company: Managing Knowledge & Learning Case Centre Ref. No. 9-396-357, 20 pages.

Week 8 - Assessed Presentations

No reading









Week 9 - Revision

No reading

Week 10 - Exam

No reading

Indicative Bibliography:

BURNAPP, D. (2009) *Getting Ahead as an International Student (Open University Study Skills.* Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill.

Carroll, G. & D. Teece (eds) (1999), *Firms, Markets, and Hierarchies: The Transaction Cost Perspective.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Choo, C.W. & N. Bontis (eds) (2002), *The Strategic Management of Intellectual Capital and Organizational Knowledge*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

de Wit, B. & R. Meyer (2010), *Strategy: Process, Content, Context.* (4th edition) Thomson.

Foss, N. & C. Knudsen (eds) (1996), *Towards a Competence Theory of the Firm*. Routledge.

Foss, N. (ed) (1997), *Resources, Firms and Strategies: A Reader in the Resource-Based Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Liebowitz, S. (2002), *Rethinking the Networked Economy: The True Forces That Drive the Digital Marketplace*. Amacom Books.

MAISTER, D.H., GREEN, C.H. & GALFORD, R.M. (2000) *The Trusted Advisor.* New York: Free Press

MAUFFETTE-LEENDERS, L., ERSKINE, J. A. & LEENDERS, M. R. (2007) **Learning** with Cases, (4th edition) Richard Ivey School of Business, University of Western Ontario

Mintzberg, H & J. Lampel (2005), Strategy Bites Back. FT Prentice Hall.









Parker, D. & R. Stacey (1994), *Chaos, Management and Economics, the Implications of Non-linear Thinking*. IEA.

Shapiro, C. & H. Varian (1999), *Information Rules: A Strategic Guide to the Network Economy*. HBS Press.

STACEY, D. (2011). *Strategic Management and Organizational Dynamics* (6th edition). Harlow: FT Prentice Hall.

SWALES, J.M. & FEAK, C.B. (2009) *Academic Writing for Graduate Students*. (Michigan Series in English for Academic and Professional Purpose) (2nd edition) Ann Arbor (US): University of Michigan Press.





