

## **BSM929 STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT**

### **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:**

None

### **Mode of Attendance:**

On-Campus

### **Module Objectives and Learning Outcomes:**

The purpose of this course is to help participants learn to think strategically. Content will focus on the theory, concepts and frameworks associated with competitive and corporate strategy and the strategy development process.

Specific objectives:

1. To master core conceptual frameworks related to the analysis and development of corporate and competitive strategy.
2. To develop skills in problem recognition and problem solving.
3. To develop the ability to think and act strategically.

### **Module Content:**

**Week 1:** Introduction: What is Strategy?



- Week 2:** Strategic Position (I) - Analysing the environment
- Week 3:** Strategic Position (II) - Analysing internal configurations of organizations
- Week 4:** Strategic Position (III) - Strategic Purpose & Sustainability
- Week 5:** Strategic Choices (I) - Business Strategy, Innovation & Entrepreneurship
- Week 6:** Strategic Choices (II) - Corporate Strategy
- Week 7:** Strategy in Action (I) - Strategy Processes
- Week 8:** Strategy in Action (II) - Strategic Initiatives & Strategy Actors
- Week 9:** Revision
- Week 10:** Examination

### **Corporate Connections:**

Case studies integrated into the course work build the base to apply theoretical concepts and frameworks to real organizational contexts and problems.

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. The cases and discussions are intended to develop students' ability to apply theory to practice through critical case analysis.

### **International Dimensions:**

The cases and examples discussed in class draw on a broad range of organizations from diverse industries and geographical backgrounds.

### **Contribution of Research:**

The readings for this course integrate research studies published in leading academic journals which complement the textbook readings.

Furthermore, the course content is influenced by the lecturer's research on strategy processes and the role of middle managers in strategy making.



## Ethics, Responsibility & Sustainability:

This module addresses aspects of organizational responsibility and sustainability by discussing the influence of globalization and sustainability on strategic management and consequences for the definition of organizational purpose and strategy formulation. The 'triple bottom line' concept, for example, will be used to discuss organizational responsibilities towards multiple stakeholders of a firm and implications for the generation of sustainable competitive advantage.

## Method of Teaching:

To achieve the defined module objectives and learning outcomes, we work toward building a conceptual foundation and a good working knowledge of the analytic frameworks of strategic management.

The course incorporates weekly lectures and tutorials. Lectures serve to provide an overview of the respective session topic and clarify student questions on the pre-assigned readings. Students will also discuss exemplar organizational cases which have been prepared in pre-assigned student groups prior to the lectures as a main component of directed learning activities. Concepts and frameworks from the assigned readings will be used as lenses to examine issues in the cases. Participants will be evaluated on the basis of their ability to apply course frameworks as the basis for developing responses to the questions posed in the cases. Tutorials serve to guide students through their case group work and provide intensive formative feedback throughout the term.

## Method of Assessment and Feedback:

Assessment for this course is divided into two main components:

1. group assignments in pre-assigned student groups (3 minicase-assignments to be handed in throughout the term) –  
**each assignment counts for 10% of final grade**
2. final exam - 2 hours, closed book - **70% of final grade**

## Learning Hours:

Pre-reading	30
Contact hours (2 hours lecture and 1 hour tutorial per week in weeks 2-8)	25
Pre-class preparation	25
Group work for case discussions	50
Private reading/exam preparation	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>

**The following 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.**

### **Pre-reading:**

Whittington and Scholes (9th Ed) (2011) Exploring Strategy – Text and Cases. Financial Times Prentice Hall: Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 15.

Porter, M. (1996). What is Strategy. Harvard Business Review, vol. 74, no.6, pp. 61-78.

### **Essential Reading:**

#### **Text book:**

Johnson, Whittington and Scholes (9th Ed) (2011) Exploring Strategy – Text and Cases. Financial Times Prentice Hall

Please note that NO OTHER versions of the text book are suitable for the study of this module as extensive use is made of the case material from the 9th edition. You are therefore required to obtain a copy of the 9th edition ONLY with TEXT AND CASES.

Additionally, selected journal articles will be assigned for each session.

### **Indicative Bibliography:**

M. Porter "Competitive Strategy"

M. Porter "Competitive Advantage"

H. Mintzberg, B. Ahlstrand & J.B. Lampel "Strategy Safari: The Complete Guide Through the Wilds of Strategic Management"

G. Hamel & C.K. Prahalad "Competing for the Future"

### **Recommended Journals:**

Strategic Management Journal  
Strategic Organization  
Long Range Planning  
Harvard Business Review