

**The University of Hong Kong
School of Business**

**BUSI 0009A/B/C Business Policy
Fall 2009 (Tentative) 1 semester**

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Prerequisites

The prerequisite for this course is BUSI1007 Principles of Management or equivalent.

Textbook

Thompson/Strickland/Gamble, Crafting and Executing Strategy, Text and Readings, 15th Edition.

Course Description

The Business Policy course will focus on formulating and implementing firm strategy. Successful business policies require a detailed understanding of the overall environment of which the firm is a part as well as the ability to create value in order to serve customers in the face of competition. Successful business policies also require resources and capabilities. The best analysis in the world will not lead to corporate success if it cannot be turned into actionable strategies that can be successfully implemented. Similarly, the best administrator in the world will not be able to help a firm with the wrong strategy achieve superior performance.

We approach strategy issues from the perspectives of Western firms as well as emerging market firms, both of which increasingly exposed to international competition. By using cases in a global context, and especially cases with a China focus, students are placed in simulated managerial roles where they can apply the concept of strategy in characteristic management situations in the region.

Course Objectives

- To provide a detailed understanding of the theories of strategic management, firms' external and internal environments, and firm strategy
- To provide an understanding of the nature of business competition
- To prepare students for career in the business field

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Explain the strategic management theories and concepts
2. Understand the impacts of the internal and external environments of a firm on firm performance
3. Apply analytical frameworks to define and analyze strategic problems; and to formulate and implement business strategies
4. Explain the complex business opportunities and problems in the region and in the world
5. Demonstrate effective communication skills

Alignment of Program and Course Learning Outcomes

| Program Learning Outcome | Course Learning Outcome |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. Acquisition and internalization of knowledge of major business disciplines | 1, 2, 3, 4 |
| 2. Application and integration of knowledge | 2, 3, 4 |
| 3. Inculcating professionalism and leadership | 4 |
| 4. Developing global outlook | 2, 3, 4 |
| 5. Mastering communication skills | 5 |

Teaching and Learning Activities

1. Lectures. Instructor will give lectures on major concepts and issues.
2. Case discussions. Students will be asked to actively participate in all class discussions and share recent company news with other students.
3. Homework. Students will be asked to write a report to assess the impacts of the five levels of performance drivers on a firm’s performance.
4. Consultation. Instructor maintains weekly consultation hours to address students’ questions. Students are also encouraged to discuss questions with the instructor by email.

Assessment

The assessment is based on a group project, a final exam, and class participation. The weights of the components in determining the final grade are:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Attendance and Participation | 15% |
| 2. Group Project 1 | 15% |
| 3. Group Project 2 | 30% |
| 4. Final Examination | 40% |

1. Attendance and Participation

Students are expected to actively participate in all class activities and discussions. Class attendance and participation are crucial to successful learning. Active class participation will not only facilitate the learning process but also make the class discussions lively and exciting.

2. Group Project 1

Each student group will be assigned a case for in-class discussion. The major role of the focal group is to *facilitate* class discussion on the case. For this purpose, the focal group will need to thoroughly familiarize themselves with the content of the case, collect information they

deem necessary for case analysis, and be ready to ask and/or answer critical questions. The group will also submit a written analysis on the case, with a focus on the topic of that particular course session. More detailed instructions will be given in class.

3. Group Project 2

The second group project allows students to undertake research and full analysis on a company's strategies. The project will be about assessing the impacts of a firm's environment, resources, strategy, organization, and process on its performance. Student groups are required to select a company on which they will perform the research, write a report for the company's management/board of directors or the general investing public, and present their case during the final two weeks of the course.

4. Final Exam

The final exam may cover all of the materials from the course, including readings, cases, lectures, classroom discussions, and any other materials used.

Relationship among Course Learning Outcomes, Teaching and Learning Activities and Assessments:

| Course Learning Outcome | Teaching and Learning Activity | Assessment |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| 1. | 1, 2, 3, 4 | 1, 2, 3, 4 |
| 2. | 1, 2, 3, 4 | 1, 2, 3, 4 |
| 3. | 1, 2, 3, 4 | 1, 2, 3, 4 |
| 4. | 1, 2, 3, 4 | 1, 2, 3, 4 |
| 5. | 1, 2, 3, 4 | 1, 2, 3, 4 |

Standards of Assessment

Exams and projects are graded using the following criteria:

| Grade | Performance |
|--------------|--|
| A+, A, A- | Provide accurate solutions to all problems, give detailed and insightful responses to essay questions |
| B+, B, B- | Provide accurate solutions to some problems, give detailed responses to some essay questions |
| C+, C, C- | Provide accurate solutions to a few problems, give limited responses to some essay questions |
| D+, D | Provide inaccurate solutions to a few problems, give unclear responses to most essay questions |
| F | Skip some problems or provide inaccurate solutions to most problems, give poor responses to most essay questions |

Academic and Class Conduct

- The University Regulations on academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. Please check the University Statement on plagiarism at <http://www.hku.hk/plagiarism/>.
- Students are required to attend all classes on time. If you have some reasons for not being able to attend a class, you should inform the instructor beforehand.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1. Introduction to Business Policy/Strategy

Text: Chapters 1 & 2

Supplementary Reading (1): What is strategy and how do you know if you have one?

Case: Robin Hood

Week 2. External Analysis

Text: Chapter 3

Supplementary Reading (6): A new tool for strategy analysis: The opportunity model

Case: China's Insurance Industry

Week 3. Competitive Strategy

Text: Chapter 5; Chapter 6, pp. 180-181

Supplementary Reading (9): Confronting low-end competition

Case: Samsung China: The Introduction of Color TV

Week 4. Internal Analysis and Competitive Advantage

Text: Chapter 4

Supplementary Reading (15): Beyond best practice

Case: Motorola in China

Week 5. Corporate Strategy

Text: Chapter 9

Supplementary Reading (13): Tarun Khanna and Krishna Palepu, Why focused strategy may be wrong for emerging markets. *Harvard Business Review*, July-August 1997.

Case: Microsoft's Diversification Strategy

Week 6. Supplementary and Responsive Strategies

Text: Chapters 6 & 8

Supplementary Reading (12): Outsourcing strategies: Opportunities and risks

Case: China Aviation (A & B)

Week 7. Internationalization Strategy

Text: Chapter 7, pp. 196-220

Supplementary Reading: Niraj Dawar and Tony Frost, Competing with giants. *Harvard Business Review*, March-April 1999.
Case: Neilson International

Week 8. Corporate Structure, Culture, and Strategy

Text: Chapters 11 & 13
Supplementary Reading (18): A leader's guide to creating an innovation culture
Case: Philips vs Matsushita

Week 9. Corporate Governance, Ethics, and Social Responsibility

Text: Chapter 10
Supplementary Reading (20): Competing responsibly
Case: Google in China

Week 10. Strategy in China and Other Emerging Markets

Text: Chapter 7, pp. 220-228
Supplementary Reading (10): Strategies for Asia's new competitive game
Case: GM Shanghai

Week 11. Group Presentation

Week 12. Group Presentation