Course: Business Policy I
Code: 10BBA80003

Type: Required  Year:  Semester: 1
ECTS Credits: 4
Language: Castellano:
Coordination:

Faculty:
Jordi Brunat Campamany
Xavier Gimbert Ràfols

Course Requirements:
To have satisfactorily completed the previous BBA programme courses.
(See section on Previous Knowledge)

Previous Knowledge:
To take on this subject with some guarantee of success, the student should have an idea both of the functional areas of the company and of its environment. They should therefore have studied the basic courses (not the advanced) on functional areas (finances, marketing, human resources, operations and so on).

Workload Distribution:
* For the two intensive theory weeks:
  Classroom based: 31 hours.
  - Divided into eight sessions; seven of four hours and one of three (introductory theoretical presentation/explanation of concepts, leading to a discussion on these subjects with the students using a variety of methods: case studies, role playing, application exercises, forums and so on).

Preparation Task:
- Reading of case studies and exercises (14 hours.)
- Discussion and execution of the case studies and exercises in groups (14 hours.)
- Reading the bibliography (10 hours.)
- Finding information in the library or virtually (3 hours.)
- Preparation of the various tests (4 hours.)
- Preparation of the final application exercise (5 hours.)
- Discussion and execution of the final application exercise in groups (5 hours.)
- Preparation of the partial non-cumulative exam (15 hours.)

* For the Business simulation
Classroom-based sessions;
  1 presentation session (3 hours)
  3 decision-based class sessions (3 x 3 hours)
  1 analysis session (3 hours)
  3 decision-based class sessions (3 x 3 hours)
  1 group presentation session (3 hours)
Non-classroom-based work sessions;
Previous preparation (5 hours)
Work before decision-making sessions (6 x 1 hour)
Post analysis reflection task (1 hour)
Preparation of final written presentation (5 hours)

Course contribution to the programme:

* During the intensive theory weeks:
  - First general view of what a company is.
  - First integration of both the various subjects on the business environment and those on the functional areas.
  - Understanding of the key corporate strategic concepts of the business.
  - Study of internal and business environment analysis tools.
  - Understanding of various competitive strategies.
  - Entry into and in-depth study of the world of strategic planning.
  - Increase in the ability to bring structure to a turbulent, changing environment.
  - Skills development in strategic decision-making.
  - Improvement in teamwork skills.

* In the simulation:
  1. Integrating the various areas of knowledge in the systematic overview of business management.
  2. Providing a practical, realistic vision of management tools and conceptual frameworks that came up in previous courses.
  3. Bringing in over time a longitudinal use of the concepts dealt with in the various subjects, bringing life experience to management.
  4. Motivating and galvanising the student to go into their possible career opportunities in more depth.

Learning objectives of the course:

* For the intensive theory weeks:
  - To obtain an overall comprehensive vision of the company.
  - To understand and assimilate key strategic concepts.
  - To get to know the various analysis tools of both the business environment and the company’s inner workings.
  - To assimilate the different strategies of a company at a corporate and a business level.
  - To be able to come up with alternative strategies.
  - To understand and put into practice the process of strategic planning.
  - To develop skills of making strategic decisions.
  - To improve teamwork ability.

* For the business simulation:
  1. To increase understanding of business problems
     A) in terms of functional areas and the business as a whole
     B) to show the relations that exist between the different parts of the company
     C) to show the effects of the business environment
     D) to apply known management techniques.
2. To increase the ability to make decisions
   A) identifying problems and setting objectives
   B) compiling and analysing information
   C) defining and comparing alternative courses of action
   D) deciding which action or actions to take
   E) monitoring results.

3. To develop teamwork skills, emphasising;
   A) the internal organisation
   B) group decision-making
   C) group behaviour and management style, and interpersonal relations.

**Skills developed:**

Acquisition, understanding and structuring of knowledge.
Ability to apply knowledge in order to obtain results.
Ability to communicate information and knowledge.
Systematic strategic thought.
Ability to understand the organisational process.
Ability to work in a team and collaborate.

**Contents and methodology:**

- Contents for the intensive theory weeks:

  - Strategic management: What strategic management of a company means, its characteristics and the problems of carrying it out. The differences between strategic and operational management. Types of strategy (planned vs. emergent). Connections between formulation and implementation.
  - Strategists and governing bodies: Different strategic roles, business bodies and their relationships.
  - Levels of strategic management: Understanding the characteristics, differences and interrelationships in the three strategic levels: corporate, business and functional.
  - Corporate strategy: understanding the principal strategic decisions at this level, as well as the various types of diversification.
  - Key strategic concepts: Understanding what is meant by the values, mission, vision, strategies, objectives and policies of a company, and the relationship between all the concepts.
  - The business macro-environment: Description of its size and characteristics, as well as its influence on the strategic thought process and strategic management in general, and including some methods for analysis.
  - Sector analysis at the macro-level: Understanding the general structure of a sector through its competitive strengths and the various factors interacting within them.
  - Sector analysis at the micro-level: Understanding the competitive situation of companies, being able to group the together according to the way they compete (strategic groups), conceiving the various consequences arising from the analysis.
  - Market analysis: Understanding its key aspects (segmentation, key factors and minimum success) and how it relates to sector analysis and the entire process of strategic management.
  - Sector value chain analysis: understanding the sequence of sectoral links that make up the all sectors, and knowing all the strategic consequences deriving from it.
  - Company value chain analysis: Determining the key activities of the company, what makes them key, and how to perceive the various strategic consequences arising from it.
  - Resource and skill analysis: understanding which of the company’s resources may be essential to the execution of its strategy. Understanding the strategy from the point of view of resources and skills.
- Internationalisation and globalisation of the markets: understanding the internationalisation process, the concept of globalisation and the various strategic consequences it has on company strategy.
- Interaction between the various concepts, analysis and strategic decisions through the ‘GIB’ and ‘Strategic Core’ models.

- Methodology for the intensive theory weeks:

  - Theory classes: introduction and discussion of concepts through theoretical presentations introducing/explaining concepts leading to discussion on these subjects with students.
  - Case study discussion: Applying the various concepts that have been introduced and discussed in the theory classes to a business or business sector. Presentation by a group of how they see the problem studied, and their decisions regarding it. Discussion of the subjects by the whole class. Final conclusions.
  - Group preparation: team preparation of various case studies for analysis, discussion and conclusion in class. Teamwork outside class hours (analysis, debate and group conclusion), preparatory reading and individual work.
  - Role Playing: Understanding the strategic viewpoint and organisational responsibility of various posts in the company. Preparing the situation and knowledge behind some of the company’s responsibilities. Interrelationship, debate and discussion with other responsibilities. Final consensus.
  - Business Forums: Getting a first hand look at how different CEOs and consultants understand strategy. Presentation by CEOs or consultants on applying the course contents to their specific cases. Followed by a debate involving all the students.
  - Exercises put into practice: applying all the knowledge acquired to a real business, at the end of the course. Finding the necessary information on a real company, in order to apply all the concepts acquired during the course to it. Presentation of the finished work in the last session of the course. Written report.

* For the simulation:

During the business simulation, the students have the opportunity to manage, at a senior level, a number of companies over a period representing a year and a half. The decision-making areas will include the main functions of the company (from Small and Medium-Sized Companies up to multinationals): finances and administration, marketing and sales, production and operations, alliances, negotiation, organisation, relationships with Governments and so on.

Students will compare and contrast the most analytical company vision, the most recent management theories, the best known management models and the most commonly used management concepts with the dog-eat-dog reality of the everyday administration of a large company. All this is set up to be able to keep to a strategic vision and direct the company towards its objectives, within an environment and market which will doubtless, just as in reality itself, make it a very difficult task.

In this highly realistic exercise, all the students, in their roles as senior management, will not only be gaining managerial experience and qualities, but will also realise and confirm the necessity and importance of real company management, and the decisive impact that rigorous implementation can have on it.

An addition to the simulation content is the opportunity for each team member to see his or her management skills, personal managerial, entrepreneurial and leadership qualities and those talents which are the tools of the business world, which, with careful cultivation, will become the much-needed complements to their professional qualities.

This is a dynamic course, combining the reality of case-study work with activities in real management, providing the necessary link to other BBA courses, and an integrated overview of strategic management.

Evaluation:

- In general for the course as a whole:
It is possible to pass the course before the final exam; to achieve this, each of the following three sections must be passed:

1. Grade for the intensive theory weeks:

Graded with reference to:
- Participation, contribution and attitude in class (individual grade)
- Written reports from case studies and exercises (group grade)
- Class discussion of case studies (individual and group grade)
- Tests done (individual grade)

2. Optional partial elimination exam

3. Intop Simulation

If these three sections are passed, the final grade for the course will be their average (intensive days grade + partial exam + simulation). The grade for the theory part is composed of 50% of the grade for the intensive weeks and the partial elimination exam grade. The theory grade represents 2/3 of the final grade (the remaining 1/3 is the Intop simulation).

If a student does not pass the intensive weeks or the partial exam, the student must take the final exam. In this case, the final grade for the course will be calculated on the basis of the Intop simulation grade (1/3) and the mark from the final exam in June (2/3), although both of these parts must be passed in order to pass the course.

- Specific grade for the simulation:

Correct application by the student team of the analysis techniques presented in the corporate portfolio session. (10%)

The student team achieves the set objectives; in economics and management. (20%)

The team does a convincing, well-structured and detailed presentation of the management task carried out. (20%)

The team presents an explanatory document about the management carried out, using the conceptual framework and management tools that have been presented. (20%)

1. The team makes decisions that are strategically coherent.
2. The long-term view is evident in the team’s decisions.
3. The team can identify the unaligned or contradictory decisions.
4. The team uses all the management areas, ensuring an integrated process in all its decision-making.

These four factors (10%)

1. The student team suggests a specific organisation on which to carry out the group management tasks.
2. The team monitors or checks the organisation suggested in order to work efficiently.
3. The team detects and manages any organisational dysfunctions arising within the group.

These three factors (10%)

1. The student finds his or her role within the group.
2. The student gives a place to the other participants, bearing in mind their integration.
3. The student proactively manages tense situations that may can arise rapidly and with major effects.

These three factors (10%)
Core bibliography:
The recommended book for the course is:

Complementary Bibliography or Reading Material:
Other recommended books are:

In both the theory and the simulation sections, a list is made up of complementary material to be prepared before, and used during, the various sessions.