

Business Strategy Game: Competing in Global Marketplace

UGRA_016231

Departments	Department of Strategy & General Management
Teaching Languages	English
ECTS	4
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Course Goals

This course has two main learning objectives, supported by numerous supplementary ones:

- To design and implement a business strategy to compete in a dynamic competitive environment
- To diagnose the reasons for good or bad performance and formulate strategies that lead to (sustainable) competitive advantage.

Supplementary learning objectives are:

- To develop a thorough understanding of the principal frameworks and concepts linked to strategy formulation (both at the business- and global-levels) and strategy implementation
- To understand how organizations can create a competitive advantage
- To critically analyze the details of your company's performance and assorted financial and operating statistics and interpret their contributions for the strategies developed by your company. As this course aims to provide students with the knowledge and skills they require to understand and apply them to real life cases, it is essential that preparation, attendance, and in-class contributions are prioritized
- To practice presentation (reflect what went wrong, elaborate on the mistakes) and teamworking skills
- To translate strategy into action

Furthermore, this course will focus on the development of the following skills:

- problem solving;
- effective teamwork;
- academic reasoning and working;
- oral presentation skills.

Prerequisites

Introduction to Business: Basic understanding of business concepts, organizational structures, and the role of businesses in society.

Fundamentals of Management: Overview of management principles, including

planning, organizing, leading, and controlling.

Introduction to Accounting: Basic concepts of financial accounting, including understanding financial statements (balance sheet, income statement, cash flow statement).

Fundamentals of Finance: Basic principles of finance, including time value of money, basic financial analysis, and budgeting.

Principles of Economics: Basic economic concepts, including supply and demand, market structures, and the role of government in the economy.

Basic Statistics and Data Analysis: Introduction to statistical methods and data analysis techniques relevant to business decision-making.

Effective Communication: Skills for effective written and oral communication in a business context.

Teamwork and Collaboration: Understanding the dynamics of working in teams and developing collaboration skills.

Teaching methodology

The Business Strategy Game (BSG) enables the student to experience first-hand how strategic management decisions impact on the running and performance of a particular firm and how the various elements taught in this course are interlinked. As a member of a team, you will be responsible for running a company within a global industry setting. The competition will last the entire course. There will be practice decision rounds and regular/scored decision rounds through the course. You will also complete 2 online quizzes (individually), prepare a 3-year strategic plan, do end-of-simulation company presentations and peer evaluations of all company co-managers. Foreground reading (player's guide) - will be made available in the beginning of the course. The simulation will be completed in teams. A random assignment will be made before the first lecture among students and first lecture is extremely important to explain the logistics of the course; and thus, the first lecture is mandatory.

Description

Course contribution to program

Welcome to The Business Strategy Game! You take over the management of a company that is in sound financial condition, is performing well, and its brand is well-regarded. Your company's board of directors has charged you with developing a winning competitive strategy, one that capitalizes on continuing consumer interest in athletic footwear, keeps the company in the ranks of the industry leaders, and increases the company's earnings year-after-year.

Strategic management is a field of study concerned with developing understanding of why some firms are more successful than others. To be successful, the firm's strategy must permeate all departments and functional areas. As such, this course integrates knowledge and skills gained from your prior studies (e.g., strategy, marketing, management, finance, accounting...). To advance students' comprehension of how a company could

potentially outperform its rivals, you and your co-managers will take over the operation of an athletic footwear company that is in a neck-and-neck race for global market leadership, competing against rival athletic footwear companies run by other class members.

In this course, our focus will be on business-level as well as corporate-level and global-level strategy. Rather than viewing the firm as simply operating in a single business in a single geographic region, we also analyze the strategic options available to multi-divisional, multi-national firms. In drawing on these tools, we explicitly apply a general management point of view - we will analyze strategies in light of the total enterprise.

Moreover, because of the limitations of static analysis in the real world, the course underlines the dynamic nature of effective strategy formulation and implementation. This shifts the emphasis from generic strategies of cost leadership and differentiation based on industry analysis (i.e. Porterian approaches) to strategies that managers should develop for resource and knowledge building, entrepreneurship, leadership, innovation, and learning.

A key focus in the course is on firm-specific unique resources and competences and their deployment for improving company performance. The purpose is not to inflict new theory or new buzzwords, but instead to make you use what you know to address business problems. Pedagogically, this course draws heavily on the simulation and experiential exercises to develop a deeper understanding of strategic management. It is recognized that a firm does not only have tangible assets, such as capital and technology, but also non-tangible assets such social and emotional capital. Students are prepared for a strategy career by discussing how both types of resources could be harnessed for competitive advantage. Because a strategy can only produce results if properly implemented, the course familiarizes students with issues of control and corporate-governance. A good understanding of these is essential to effectively align the interests of owners, managers and employees.

Bibliography

, Business Strategy Game (Website)

Activities

In-class discussions and debates

These sessions will focus on discussing strategic decisions made during the simulation game, analyzing the outcomes, and debating alternative strategies. This will enhance critical thinking and collaborative learning.

Role-play exercises and simulations

Regular workshops where students will make strategic decisions for their simulated company, review performance reports, and adjust strategies accordingly. These sessions provide hands-on experience in strategic management.

Teamwork

Students will evaluate their peers' performance as co-managers, providing constructive feedback. This promotes accountability and enhances teamwork skills.

Other

Students will maintain a journal throughout the course, reflecting on their performance, learning experiences, and strategic decisions. This will encourage self-assessment and deeper understanding of their managerial actions.

Quizzes/tests

Two online, open-book quizzes to assess students' understanding of the Player's Guide and the Help pages. These quizzes ensure that students grasp the foundational knowledge required for the simulation.

Group presentations

Students will work in teams to prepare and deliver presentations on their company's strategic vision, performance, and future plans. This will develop their presentation skills and ability to communicate complex business strategies effectively.

Content

#	Topic
1	Orientation and Introduction to the Business Strategy Game Description: Introduction to the course objectives, structure, and the Business Strategy Game simulation. Students will form teams, receive their company codes, and start initial strategic planning. This session includes an overview of strategic management concepts and the importance of integrating various business functions.
2	Debriefing Practice Round and Strategic Vision Development Description: Discussion of the results from the first practice decision round, with a focus on understanding the Footwear Industry Report and Competitive Intelligence Report. Each team will develop and present a strategic vision and mission statement for their company, setting the stage for their strategic plans.
3	Competitive Analysis and Initial Strategy Implementation Description: Teams will present analyses based on the second practice round data. The session will emphasize competitive analysis, including strategic group mapping and identifying key competitors. Students will then work on strategies for the first scored decision round.
4	Mission Statement and Performance Target Setting Description: Review of Year 11 decision round results and discussion on the importance of a clear mission statement. Teams will prepare and present their company mission statements and set performance targets for Year 12. This session includes strategic planning for the next decision round.
5	Advanced Strategic Group Mapping and Competitive Strategy Description: Analysis of Year 13 decision round results with a focus on creating and presenting alternative strategic group maps. Students will develop and discuss compound metrics for evaluating competitive positioning and refine their strategic approaches based on insights gained.
6	Financial Strategy and 3-Year Strategic Plan Description: Debriefing on Year 14 decision round results and evaluating the achievement of performance targets. Teams will provide

#	Topic
6	constructive feedback on each other's strategies. The session will include the development and presentation of a comprehensive 3-year strategic plan.
7	Review and Adjustment of Strategic Plans Description: Analysis of Year 16 decision round results with a focus on reviewing and adjusting strategic plans to align with company mission and vision statements. This session will also cover the requirements for the final company presentation, including preparation for a Q&A session.
8	End-of-Simulation Presentations and Course Wrap-Up Description: Final company presentations summarizing strategic decisions, performance outcomes, and lessons learned. This session includes Q&A sessions and a course wrap-up with a summary of key takeaways and reflections on the strategic management process. Students will submit their self-reflective journals and complete peer evaluations.

Assessment

Tool	Assessment tool	Category	Weight %
Teamwork with companies or other organizations	Overall company Game-To-Date (GTD) Score	Ordinary round	40.00%
Quizzes/tests	BSG Quiz 1 (5%), BSG Quiz 2 (10%)	Ordinary round	15.00%
Teamwork with companies or other organizations	Performance on the 3-year strategic plan	Ordinary round	10.00%
In-class analysis and discussion of issues	Company presentation	Ordinary round	30.00%
Peer evaluation	Self-evaluation (2%), Peer-evaluation (3%)	Ordinary round	5.00%

PROGRAMS

G114-Global Governance Exchange Program (Undergraduates: Law)
G114 Year 1 (Optative)

GEL23-Bachelor of Global Governance, Economics and Legal Order (Undergraduates: Law)
GEL23 Year 3 (Optative)