This seminar course explores the idea of competitive advantage and how it relates to the strategies and structures of companies and the competitive environments in which they operate. The course has two broad objectives. First, it aims to discuss in detail the two key aspects of corporate strategy: strategy formulation and strategy implementation (i.e., what to do and how to do it). Second, it hopes to outline important ways in which companies can learn over time, and shape, the ‘logics of competition’ that determine success in any given industry and inform strategy formulation and implementation. The critical idea it hopes to highlight here is that these logics may not be immediately apparent, and may have to be discovered in the course of a company’s operations and competitive interaction. Through these discussions, the course hopes to help students learn how to garner and apply findings from scholarly research in order to increase the chance of success.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Mode of Delivery</strong></th>
<th>On campus seminar course</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prerequisites</strong></td>
<td>This course is normally only available to students enrolled in the Graduate Certificate in Management, Master of Management, Master of Public Policy or Master of Business Administration degree programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Incompatible Courses</strong></td>
<td>MGMT7022 Strategic Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Convenor/Lecturer:</strong></td>
<td>Dr. Chirag Kasbekar, Lecturer, Research School of Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phone:</strong></td>
<td>6125 9191</td>
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<td><strong>Email:</strong></td>
<td><a href="mailto:chirag.kasbekar@anu.edu.au">chirag.kasbekar@anu.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office hours for student consultation:</strong></td>
<td>Wed 2:00pm-3:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student administrator/s</strong></td>
<td>RSM Student Office (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phone:</strong></td>
<td>6125 6737 or 6125 9839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Email:</strong></td>
<td><a href="mailto:Enquiries.rsm@anu.edu.au">Enquiries.rsm@anu.edu.au</a></td>
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## COURSE OVERVIEW

### Learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of the requirements for this course, students will be able to:

1. Analyse an organisation’s internal and external environments by applying appropriate theories, models, and/or frameworks;
2. Formulate appropriate strategies to gain a competitive advantage at both business and corporate levels;
3. Evaluate alternative strategies;
4. Communicate strategies or strategic alternatives both in writing and verbally to facilitate organisational decision-making and problem-solving

### Research-led teaching

Bridging the research-practice gap in strategic management is a key focus of this course. This gap will be addressed in three ways:

1. Course content based on rigorous scholarly research in fields closely allied to strategic management;
2. Discussion of ways to apply these research findings to actual practice, including using evidence-based management methods; and
3. Assessment tasks that require students to apply research findings to practical settings.
### Assessment summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Task</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Linked learning outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Group task</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Research report</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>1, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Final exam</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Assessment details

#### Group task (20%)

There will be 4 group work sessions through the course, each worth 5%. Group sessions will take place within class, as mentioned in the course schedule. Group tasks will include work on actual cases and on different aspects of the garnering and application of knowledge to the formulation of strategy. The deliverable to be assessed will be a one to two page report due the week after each group session.

The groups will be assigned and will be different for each of the 4 sessions. You should submit an application for Special Consideration if you miss a Group Task session.

#### Research report (30%)

This will be an individual task. The key focus of this task would be to review and apply research on a particular strategy to the problems faced by a particular company or group of companies, with a specific focus on evidence-based management techniques discussed through the course. The report will involve the following:

1. Choosing a strategy from the many strategies discussed through the course, either at the Business level or at the Corporate level;
2. Choosing a company or group of companies and a particular problem faced by them; and
3. Writing a report on the appropriateness of the chosen strategy to the situation faced by the company or group of companies chosen. This report will include the following:
   a. A report on the research findings on the strategy
   b. A report on the potential consequences of the application of the strategy to the companies or group of companies

#### Final exam (50%)

The final exam will be a closed book exam and comprise a combination of multiple choice and short essay questions (some of which may be based on a short case study). The duration of the exam will be 2 hours plus reading time. An introduction to the exam will be provided in one of the last few classes of the semester. The exam will be comprehensive and will cover all the topics covered in the course.
Prescribed Texts and Reference Materials

The course will combine the use of a textbook with readings from scholarly journals and other sources.

The textbook proposed for the course is: Strategic Management: An Integrated Approach, 11th Ed. (2014) by Charles W. L. Hill, Gareth R. Jones and Melissa A. Schilling. It is available for purchase at the Co-Op bookshop. A reasonably priced ebook is also available.

The readings assigned will sometimes complement or supplement and sometimes question and critically discuss the content of the textbook. We may or may not discuss each reading directly in class, but they are very important for a full understanding of each week’s discussions. Links to the readings will be put up on the Wattle site.

The list of readings for any week is subject to change, though adequate notice will be provided before any change.

Recommended book:


Feedback

Staff Feedback

This is a discussion-led course and students will receive feedback as part of the classroom dialogue. In addition, feedback will be provided on assessments as follows.

1. General feedback on the group tasks will be provided in class.
2. Written feedback will be provided on complete drafts of the Research Report, subject to those drafts being submitted by the feedback deadline. This feedback will be concise and will cover two or three major opportunities for improvement.
3. Oral feedback on the final version of the Research Report will be available by appointment.

Student Feedback

ANU is committed to the demonstration of educational excellence and regularly seeks feedback from students. One of the key formal ways students have to provide feedback is through Student Experience of Learning Support (SELS) surveys. The feedback given in these surveys is anonymous and provides the Colleges, University Education Committee and Academic Board with opportunities to recognise excellent teaching, and opportunities for improvement. For more information on student surveys at ANU and reports on the feedback provided on ANU courses, go to:

http://unistats.anu.edu.au/surveys/selt/students/ and
http://unistats.anu.edu.au/surveys/selt/results/learning/
COURSE SCHEDULE

I. How to gain and apply knowledge of what works

Week 1: 24 July
Introduction + How can you know what will work?
No reading needed

Week 2: 31 July
Applying research to practice: Evidence-based management
To be read:

II. Formulating strategies

Week 3: 7 Aug
External determinants of superior performance
To be read:
1. Textbook: Chapter 2

Week 4: 14 Aug
Internal determinants of superior performance
To be read:
1. Textbook: Chapter 3

ASSESSMENT MILESTONE: Group task 1

Week 5: 21 Aug
Functional-level strategies
To be read:
1. Textbook: Chapter 4

Week 6: 28 Aug
Business-level strategies
To be read:
Textbook: Chapter 5

ASSESSMENT MILESTONE: Group task 2
Week 7: 4 Sept
Industry evolution + Agglomeration
To be read:
1. Textbook: Chapter 6

_____ Mid-term break _____

Week 8: 25 Sept
Corporate level strategies - I
To be read:
Textbook: Chapter 9

ASSESSMENT MILESTONE: Group task 3

Week 9: 2 Oct
Corporate level strategies - II
To be read:
Textbook: Chapter 10

ASSESSMENT MILESTONE: Draft of research report due for feedback

III. Implementing strategies

Week 10: 9 Oct
Corporate performance, governance and ethics
To be read:
Textbook: Chapter 11

ASSESSMENT MILESTONE: Group task 4

Week 11: 16 Oct
Single industry companies
To be read:
Textbook: Chapter 12

Week 12: 23 Oct
Diversified companies
To be read:
Textbook: Chapter 13

ASSESSMENT MILESTONE: Research report due
Week 13: 30 Oct

Review
No reading needed

Exam period: (Details will be announced)
Final exam

POLICIES

ANU has educational policies, procedures and guidelines, which are designed to ensure that staff and students are aware of the University’s academic standards, and implement them. You can find the University’s education policies and an explanatory glossary at: http://policies.anu.edu.au/

Students are expected to have read the Code of Practice for Student Academic Integrity before the commencement of their course.

Key policies include:
- Student Assessment (Coursework)
- Student Surveys and Evaluations
- Assessment of Student Learning

Extensions and penalties

If an assignment is submitted after the deadline, it will not be marked unless an application for Special Consideration is approved. An application for Special Consideration must:

- where relevant include a medical report completed by a medical practitioner (an ordinary "medical certificate" is not sufficient);
- include a copy of as much of the assignment as has been completed by the due time and date; and
- be submitted as soon as practicable, preferably before or on the due date.

In general, a successful application for Special Consideration will result in the marking of the work completed at the due date with some upward adjustment of the mark, rather than an extension of time. However, in extenuating circumstances, supported by appropriate documentation, an extension may be granted.

Note that decisions about Special Consideration are not made by the teaching staff for this course.

Use of assignments as exemplars and grade moderation

An important resource for enhancing educational quality is a stock of student work which can be de-identified and used as exemplars for future students in ANU courses, and for grade moderation exercises for teaching staff. If you do not wish
your assignment to be used for such purposes please include a note to that effect on
the front page of the assignment.

Assessment requirements

The ANU is using Turnitin to enhance student citation and referencing techniques,
and to assess assignment submissions as a component of the University's approach
to managing Academic Integrity. For additional information regarding Turnitin please
visit the ANU Online website.

Students may choose not to submit assessment items through Turnitin. In this
instance you will be required to submit, alongside the assessment item itself, copies
of all references included in the assessment item.

Identify your Assignment with your Student Number only When submitting your
assignment please ensure that it contains your student number in the file name and
on the first page. Please do not put your name anywhere in your assignment.

Referencing requirements

The Individual Report must be referenced in compliance with the ANU Code of
Practice for Student Academic Integrity:


If you are already genuinely experienced and adept with a referencing style, by all
means use it. If not, use the referencing style of the Strategic Management Journal
(SMJ). Details are under the heading "Reference and citation style" here:

http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1002/(ISSN)1097-0266/homepage/ForAuthors.html

Have a look at an actual SMJ article to see how it all works, especially the in-text
citations. Typographic style, font size, line spacing is all left to your discretion.

Finalisation of marks and grades

After marking is concluded the lecturer will submit a report to the Committee of
Examiners for the course recommending final marks and letter grades for each
student. The Committee comprises, at a minimum, the Director of the Research
School of Management, the lecturer, and at least one second examiner. The
lecturer's recommendations are based on the points accumulated by each student
and judgments about individual student performance, guided by the ANU Policy on
Coursework Assessment:


The Director of the Research School of Management then forwards the marks and
grades to the Executive of the College of Business and Economics for final approval.

**Support for students**

The University offers a number of support services for students. Information on these is available online from [http://students.anu.edu.au/studentlife](http://students.anu.edu.au/studentlife)