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## **BASM 502 Corporate Strategy**

### **Program: FT MBA Course Outline**

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#### **COURSE INFORMATION**

**Division: Strategy**

**Term/period: Period 4**

**Instructor: Perry Atwal**

**Email:** perry.atwal@sauder.ubc.ca

**Phone:** 604 822 8859

**Office hours:** By Appointment

**Section numbers: 001 and 002**

**Credit Value: 1.5 credits**

**Class meeting times:**

001 Tu/Thu 8-10am

002 Tu/Thu 10-12

**Course duration:** Mar 4 – Apr 4, 2019

**Classroom location: HA 132**

**Pre-requisites:** BASM 501

**Course Website:** Canvas

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#### **BRIEF COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The fundamental question of strategy is both simple and difficult: “How can a firm earn long-run profits?” Learning how to answer this question will be the primary aim of this course. Building on the basis of Business Strategy, BASM 502 (Corporate Strategy) deals with understanding the values of managing multiple lines of businesses under the ownership of one corporate umbrella (i.e. a diversified firm). The central question addressed in this course is how to compete in various market settings in order to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage, and hence superior profitability. The competitive strategies of a range of firms are examined through analysis of case studies and lectures.

Given a firm’s specific locations, products, financing, customers, and legal/regulatory constraints, what can it do to raise revenues? And, given a firm’s specific products, technology, organization, and processes, what can it do to cut costs? And finally, what can it do on either of these fronts that will not be eroded by the actions of its competitors, imitation, or new entry? These are all difficult questions, particularly when one asks them in the context of a specific company.

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#### **COURSE GOALS & LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

This course deals with the work of top management. We will analyze business situations from the perspective of the CEO with overall responsibility for the strategy of the firm. Making effective strategic decisions in a dynamic, uncertain, and complex environment is an ongoing, integrative, proactive, and reactive process. The emphasis in the course is on developing your abilities to think strategically in various business situations.

The objectives for this course are for students to:

- Critically analyze a firm’s corporate strategy

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- Anticipate the problems in managing a firm's diverse businesses
- Analyze business ethics and corporate governance as they apply to corporate strategy
- Generate a firm's corporate strategy
- Generate appropriate strategic responses to dynamic changes

### **COURSE MATERIALS & REQUIREMENTS**

All course materials will be made available on the Canvas Website.

Several cases will need to be downloaded (full instructions on how will be on Canvas shortly).

There is no mandatory textbook.

Recommended (not mandatory) textbook – Ghemawat “Strategy and the Business Landscape” – 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition

Further readings/videos will be available on Canvas

### **ASSESSMENT SUMMARY**

	<b>Individual</b>
Class Participation	10%
Final Exam	50%
	<b>Team</b>
Comprehensive Strategic Analysis	40%

#### **Class participation (10%)**

Class participation is vital to the learning experience. However, for this to be the case, participation must be constructive. Quality is much more important than quantity, and lively, but respectful, debate is welcome.

#### **Final Exam (50%)**

You will be provided with sample questions from old exams, and further details will be discussed closer to the time.

#### **Comprehensive Strategic Analysis (40%)**

You will be put into teams of 4 or 5 students to complete this part of the course. During this class, you will have the opportunity to learn a number of strategic concepts. This project will be an opportunity to apply your learnings to a real company and industry.

As a team, you will pick any company of your choice and perform a comprehensive strategic analysis of the firm, the competitors and the industry as a whole. The analysis will conclude with specific strategic recommendations for the company to follow. Each group will present their findings and recommendations during the final week of the course. Assessment of the project is broken down by:

Depth of Analysis (including use of appropriate tools)	50%
Quality of Recommendations	20%

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Style and Structure of Report	10%
Group Presentation	20%

Everyone in the group will receive the same mark, with adjustments being made via peer evaluations if necessary. Further details will be provided on the first day of class.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**

Week	CLASS TOPICS	CASE READINGS
Week 1	Corporate Scope – Global Strategies and Diversification	Reading – Corporate Strategy (in coursepack) The De Beers Group
Week 2	Vertical Scope and Industry Evolution	Disney Ecco
Week 3	Leading in a Digital World	Facebook Tencent
Week 4	Special Topics – Ethics, Failure and Change, Strategic Thinkers	Tata Group Elon Musk's Big Bets
Week 5	Strategic Analysis Presentations Course Review	
Exam Week	Final exam	

**KEY REGULATIONS**

**Attendance:** As per RHL Regulations on Professionalism, Attendance and Behaviour, students are expected to attend 100% of their scheduled classes. Students missing more than 20% of scheduled classes for reasons other than illness will be withdrawn from the course. Withdrawals, depending on timing, could result in a “W” or an “F” standing on a student’s transcript. Students must notify their instructors at the earliest opportunity if they are expected to miss a class due to illness. A medical note from a licensed, local doctor is required if more than 20% of scheduled classes for a course are missed due to illness. Students are required to notify the Student Experience Manager if they are absent from two or more classes due to illness.

**Tardiness:** As per RHL Regulations on Professionalism, Attendance and Behaviour, students are expected to arrive for classes and activities on time and fully prepared. Late arrivals may be refused entry at the discretion of the instructor or activity lead. Students arriving halfway through a scheduled class, or later, will be treated as absent for that class.

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**Electronic Devices:** As per RHL Regulations on Professionalism, Attendance and Behaviour, laptops and other electronic devices (cellphones, tablets, personal technology, etc.) are not permitted in class unless required by the instructor for specific in-class activities or exercises. Cellphones and other personal electronic devices must be turned off during class and placed away from the desktop. Students who fail to abide by the RHL “lids down” policy will be asked to leave the room for the remainder of the class. Research has shown that multi-tasking on laptops in class has negative implications for the learning environment, including reducing student academic performance and the performance of those sitting around them.

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### **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

All UBC students are expected to behave as honest and responsible members of an academic community. Failure to follow appropriate policies, principles, rules and guidelines with respect to academic honesty at UBC may result in disciplinary action.

It is the student’s responsibility to review and uphold applicable standards of academic honesty. Instances of academic misconduct, such as cheating, plagiarism, resubmitting the same assignment, impersonating a candidate, or falsifying documents, will be strongly dealt with according to UBC’s procedures for Academic Misconduct. In addition to UBC’s Academic Misconduct procedures, students are responsible for reviewing and abiding by RHL’s policy on Academic Integrity.

### **STANDARD REFERENCE STYLE**

The Robert H. Lee Graduate School uses American Psychological Association (APA) reference style as a standard. Please use this style to cite sources in your work unless directed to use a different style.

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### **LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

Late submissions will not be accepted and will receive a zero.

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