

### COURSE INFORMATION

Course title:	Business Strategy	Credits:	1.5
Course code:	BASM 501	Class location:	<a href="#">Zoom</a>
Session, term, period:	2021W2	Class times*:	8:00am - 2:30pm
Section(s):	821		

\*All times & dates listed on the syllabus are in Shanghai time unless otherwise specified

Course duration:	November 15, 20-21, 2021	Pre-requisites:	n/a
Division:	Strategy and Business Economics	Co-requisites:	n/a
Program:	IMBA		

### INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor:	Darren Dahl	Office location:	Zoom
Email:	<a href="mailto:darren.dahl@sauder.ubc.ca">darren.dahl@sauder.ubc.ca</a>	Office hours:	By appointment

Teaching assistant:	TBA
Email:	TBA

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

The emphasis of the course is a focus on learning how to apply strategic thinking skills to specific business situations. To be successful in this course, you must spend time actively thinking about the issues. There is no module to download, no formula to memorize, and no answer to find in the book. This course is about building your most fundamental skills in business, namely strategic thinking. The concepts, skills, and analytical tools that you will learn in this course rest on basic business principles and can be used to formulate strategy with any objective in mind.

### COURSE FORMAT

Because the aim of the course is to build your own critical and analytical thinking abilities, you will spend much of your time preparing for and engaging in class discussion. In advance of the course, I will provide you with the set of required readings for the course.

My commitment to students is that every assigned reading will be discussed explicitly in class. In return, I expect students to be prepared for our discussions.

Some of our discussions will be based on business cases. Cases tend not to have a single, tidy solution. However, there are always better and worse answers. Cases never contain all of the information you would like to have to make a decision — in this way, they are very much like real life. You may find it frustrating to be pushed to make a decision or take a stand when you are not sure whether it is the right one; this is the nature of real-world business decision-making. Cases often offer conflicting information. They will require you to make judgment calls. This kind of ambiguity is also a feature of real-world business decisions.

Strategy is a field that asks a big question and so necessarily draws on many of the other functional areas of business. This course aims to give you an overall vision of how the different areas fit together in contributing to the success of the firm.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The emphasis of the course is a focus on learning how to apply strategic thinking skills to specific business situations. This will involve three primary skills.

- *Diagnosis.* Can you identify the salient details of a situation and understand their strategic significance and implications? The goal is to pick out what really matters from among the facts and to use business frameworks to understand the significance of those details.
- *Creativity.* One theme of the course is that you can't outperform your competitors by simply doing the same things they are doing. Finding new approaches and new ways to do things is often the key to a successful, profitable strategy.
- *Judgment.* The frameworks and tools we utilize in this course need to be applied intelligently. This class teaches you to be a better—meaning a more systematic, logical, complete, critical—thinker about strategy.

### ASSESSMENTS

#### Summary

<u>Component</u>	<u>Weight</u>
Value Creation and Capture Assignment	20%
Contemporary Models Assignment	20%
Final Take-Home Case	40%
Participation	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>100%</u></b>

#### Details of Assessments

1. **Value Creation and Capture Assignment (20%)**  
In-class case memorandum (Performance Indicator Case) done in teams.
2. **Contemporary Models Assignment (20%)**  
In-class activity done in teams.
3. **Final Take-Home Case (40%) – due on Nov 27, 2021 before 11:00pm**  
Take-home case done individually. *Case will be released on Canvas on Nov 26 at 9:00am.*
4. **Participation (20%)**  
Class participation is central to this course. Full attendance is expected, but attendance does not equal participation. Students are expected to come to each session well prepared, and to engage with the instructor and their classmates in active and thoughtful discussion.

### LEARNING MATERIALS

The required readings are listed in the schedule below and are provided via the [Canvas course site](#). There is no required textbook. I will expect you to have read and to be prepared to discuss all of the material assigned for the day.

### PREPARATION

You are probably wondering why I've given you an HBR article from 1996 as the first reading in the program on strategy – good question! I'd like you to read Porter's classic article on strategy because it set the foundation that every one of today's popular approaches to strategy is built on. To ensure you have a strong foundation we will be taking a historic approach to how "strategy" in business has evolved over time.

The cases assigned are also historic and show range across industry vertical, type of organization, and business problem at hand. There is nothing specific to prepare for any of these cases/articles, but below I have given a few questions for the case studies that you should roll around in your head as you walk through them. Likewise, on the two articles – simply see what you agree/disagree with and ask yourself what makes sense to you today. Where do you see value in this thinking and approach?

If for some reason you are not prepared for class, I expect you to let me know before class. I know that you are juggling other commitments, and there are sometimes reasons that one cannot be fully prepared. However, if you haven't told me otherwise, then you have implicitly committed to be ready to contribute to the class if I should call on you.

### HOW TO STUDY FOR THIS COURSE

The aim of this course is to make you more rigorous, critical, precise, and thorough in your analysis of strategy issues—in short, the course goal is to change the way you think. The only way to do this is to practice. You should think of this course like sports or exercise or learning a musical instrument: you can't really learn anything, and you certainly can't get better at it, by just watching from the sidelines. Practically, here are the most important steps to doing this.

1. *Come to class prepared.* There is no substitute to this. If you haven't read and thought about the material, you won't get very much out of what is going on.
2. *Engage in class discussion.* Class time is not entertainment, and you shouldn't expect to just sit back and listen. Engaging means listening critically to what other people are saying, evaluating whether you think their arguments are right, and speaking up when you think you have something to contribute.
3. *Summarize and synthesize.* After each class session, write yourself a summary of what was covered in class: what did we talk about and what lessons were you supposed to take away. Forcing yourself to summarize and synthesize this way is how you internalize and obtain ownership of the material.
4. *Practice.* The only way to get good at thinking in a new way is to practice it. When you meet a strategy issue somewhere else (e.g. at work, in the news, talking with someone, in

another course, out shopping), use the tools and frameworks of the course to understand it.

**COURSE FEE:** A COURSE FEE WILL BE LEVIED TO COVER READING AND CASE MATERIALS. SAUDER WILL COVER THIS COURSE FEE.

#### COURSE-SPECIFIC POLICIES AND RESOURCES

*Missed or late assignments, and regrading of assessments*

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

#### *Academic Concessions*

If extenuating circumstances arise, please contact the RHL Graduate School program office as early as reasonably possible, and submit an [Academic Concession Request & Declaration Form](#) <https://webforms.sauder.ubc.ca/academic-concession-rhlee>. If an academic concession is granted during the course, the student will be provided options by RHL, or by the instructor in consultation with RHL, per [UBC's policy on Academic Concession](#).

#### POLICIES APPLICABLE TO COURSES IN THE ROBERT H. LEE GRADUATE SCHOOL

##### *Attendance*

Excepting extenuating circumstances, students are expected to attend 100% of their scheduled class hours. Absent students limit their own academic potential, and that of their classmates, and cause unnecessary disruption to the learning environment. Students missing more than 20% of the total scheduled class hours for a course (including classes held during the add/drop period) without having received an academic concession will be withdrawn from that course. Withdrawals, depending on timing, could result in a "W" or an "F" standing on the transcript.

##### *Punctuality*

Students are expected to arrive for classes and activities on time and fully prepared to engage. Late arrivals may be refused entry at the discretion of the instructor or activity lead. Students arriving later than halfway through a scheduled class will be treated as absent for that class.

##### *Electronic Devices*

During online lectures, students are not permitted to use any electronic devices other than the primary one used for attending the online lecture (e.g. laptop or desktop). Only Zoom should be open during the online lecture unless an instructor advises the use of another program/website for an in-class activity. Feedback from students indicates that personal devices are the number one distraction from effective learning and participation in the online learning environment.

##### *Citation Style*

Please use the American Psychological Association (APA) reference style to cite your sources.

Details of the above policies and other RHL Policies are available at:

<http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=12,199,506,1625>

#### UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND RESOURCES

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious observances.

UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. Details of the policies and how to access support are available on the UBC Senate website at <https://senate.ubc.ca/policies-resources-support-student-success>.

### *Respect for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion*

The UBC Sauder School of Business strives to promote an intellectual community that is enhanced by diversity along various dimensions including status as a First Nation, Metis, Inuit, or Indigenous person, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, political beliefs, social class, and/or disability. It is critical that students from diverse backgrounds and perspectives be valued in and well-served by their courses. Furthermore, the diversity that students bring to the classroom should be viewed as a resource, benefit, and source of strength for your learning experience. It is expected that all students and members of our community conduct themselves with empathy and respect for others.

### *Academic Integrity*

The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. This also means you should not cheat, copy, or mislead others about what is your work. Violations of academic integrity (i.e., misconduct) lead to the breakdown of the academic enterprise, and therefore serious consequences arise and harsh sanctions are imposed. For example, incidences of plagiarism or cheating may result in a mark of zero on the assignment or exam and more serious consequences may apply if the matter is referred to the President's Advisory Committee on Student Discipline. Careful records are kept in order to monitor and prevent recurrences.

### *Academic Freedom and Students Studying from Outside Canada*

During this pandemic, the shift to online learning has greatly altered teaching and studying at UBC, including changes to health and safety considerations. Keep in mind that some UBC courses might cover topics that are censored or considered illegal by non-Canadian governments. This may include, but is not limited to, human rights, representative government, defamation, obscenity, gender or sexuality, and historical or current geopolitical controversies. If you are a student living abroad, you will be subject to the laws of your local jurisdiction, and your local authorities might limit your access to course material or take punitive action against you. UBC is strongly committed to academic freedom, but has no control over foreign authorities (please visit <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,33,86,0> for an articulation of the values of the University conveyed in the Senate Statement on Academic Freedom). Thus, we recognize that students will have legitimate reason to exercise caution in studying certain subjects. If you have concerns regarding your personal situation, consider postponing taking a course with manifest risks, until you are back on campus or reach out to your academic advisor to find substitute courses. For further information and support, please visit: <http://academic.ubc.ca/support-resources/freedom-expression>

### **COPYRIGHT**

All materials of this course (course handouts, lecture slides, assessments, course readings, etc.) are the intellectual property of the instructor or licensed to be used in this course by the copyright owner. Redistribution of these materials by any means without permission of the copyright holder(s)

constitutes a breach of copyright and may lead to academic discipline and could be subject to legal action. Any lecture recordings are for the sole use of the instructor and students enrolled in the class. In no case may the lecture recording or part of the recording be used by students for any other purpose, either personal or commercial. Further, audio or video recording of classes are not permitted without the prior consent of the instructor. Students may not share class Zoom links or invite others who are not registered to view sessions.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

UBC's Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) people, who for millennia have passed on their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site.

#### ONLINE TEACHING TOOL & REQUIREMENTS

This course will be taught using Zoom for synchronous classes and office hours.

For this course, you are encouraged to use a Zoom account during synchronous classes and office hours.

To help replicate the classroom experience, make sessions more dynamic and hold each person accountable, both students and instructors are required to have their cameras on during Zoom sessions. Students who require an accommodation with regard to the "camera on" requirement must contact their instructors in advance of the first class to discuss options. As professional graduate students, students are expected to conduct themselves professionally by joining sessions on time, muting mics when not speaking, refraining from using any other technology when in-session, attending in business casual dress (at a minimum), and participating from a quiet environment. Content from synchronous sessions will be selectively recorded per instructor discretion and made available to students on Canvas for a maximum duration of the course length. This is done to allow students the opportunity to return to lecture content to solidify learnings.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

(Subject to change with class consultation)

DATE	CLASS TOPICS	ACTIVITIES / READINGS	WHAT'S DUE
Day 1 Nov 15	What is Strategy? The Strategic Environment Value Creation and Capture	<b>Required Readings</b> 1. "What is Strategy?" (Porter, 1996) 2. Case: Freshippo 3. Case: Performance Indicator	Value Creation and Capture team assignment due by 10:00pm on Nov 16
Day 2 Nov 20	Competitive Advantage Competition Shared Value	<b>Required Readings</b> 1. "Creating Shared Value" (Porter, 2011) 2. Case: Southwest Airlines 3. Case: Norlha	
Day 3 Nov 21	Contemporary Models	<b>No Required Readings</b> Blue Ocean Strategy Playing to Win Business Model Canvas	Contemporary Models team assignment due by 10:00pm on Nov 22
Nov 27, 2021		<u>Final Take-Home Case:</u> Will be released on Canvas Nov 26 at 9:00am	Final assignment due by 11:00pm on Nov 27

**Case Preparation Questions:**

Freshippo

1. Why has Freshippo been successful (thus far)?
2. How would you describe the competitive environment that Freshippo is in?

Performance Indicator

1. What are your thoughts on the failure (thus far) of Performance Indicator to realize any profit from their venture?
2. What would your advice be to Performance Indicator in moving forward?

Southwest Airlines

1. Why has Southwest Airlines been so successful?
2. What is your opinion of the brand "Shuttle by United"? Are they a threat to Southwest? Why or why not?

Norlha

1. What are your thoughts on Norlha's business model?
2. Should Norlha work with the Bureau of Commerce to expand to Choni County? Why or why not?