

22025-E Strategic Thinking (5ECTS)

Examiner: Eva-Lena Lundgren-Henriksson

The course is offered completely **online through Teams**.

Course Description

Strategic thinking in action involves the ability to identify relevant information, to formulate and develop rigorous reports, and to judge the outcome of the analysis. The analytical skills are essential when managing organizations in different situations and changing contexts. This course addresses strategic issues (such as competition, governance, internationalization, politics, culture, change) through cases and provides analytical tools as well as an in depth understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of different analytical methods in strategic management.

Learning Goal

You have the knowledge needed to investigate strategic issues in organizations. You have the skills required for strategic analysis. You have a comprehensive and critical overview of the theories of strategic management as well as some ideas how to apply these in your future work.

After completing the course, you will be able to

- master key concepts and principles in strategic analysis
- select appropriate tools for analysis and design set of rules for strategic decision making
- evaluate the quality of your analysis

International Learning Experience

The cases analyzed during the course explore organizations that operate in international environments.

Pre-requisites

Completed bachelor thesis in your major, and an intermediate course on strategy (e.g. 22021 Strategisk ledning or an equivalent course).

Total Student Workload

134 hours divided into

Scheduled (contact) hours: 20 h Non-scheduled work: 114 h

Literature and Course Material

Henry Mintzberg, Bruce Ahlstrand, Joseph Lampel: Strategy Safari. **Note! Unfortunately, there is no e-version of the course book. Please check the availability of the book asap. Since there is a limited amount of books available at the libraries in Helsinki and Vaasa, the participants are particularly encouraged in Helsinki to also check the public library and/or the library of University of Helsinki.**

Case documents and other material given by the instructors.

Instruction and schedule

The seminars of this course are taught by Eva-Lena Lundgren-Henriksson, Virpi Sorsa, and Thach Huynh Bao. Together with the course readings, the material covered in the seminars provides the foundation for other elements of the course, including the case exercises, the assignments and the discussions in class. During the case seminars, we discuss participants' experiences with the case analysis and group work assignments. The discussion will be based on two key elements: (1) setting

participants' experiences in relation to concepts and models introduced in the lectures and seminars and the course readings, and (2) learning from each other by comparing the interpretations and analysis conducted by different participants. This requires active participation from everyone.

Seminars (of which you can **only miss two** in order to pass the course):

1. Case: Honda. Theme: Competitive strategy vs. Finding grassroots (Virpi Sorsa)
2. Case: Go global or no? Theme: Internationalization and growth (Virpi Sorsa)
3. Case: Merge or not? Theme: Strategy formation as a process of negotiation (Eva-Lena Lundgren-Henriksson)
4. Case: Strategizing in a global pandemic. Theme: Strategy formation as a collective process of transformation (Guest Eleonor Hedström, Wärtsilä)
5. Case: Ethnography in Sir Tailor - a Men's Fashion House. Theme: Strategic change – a glimpse of strategy in practice (Thach Huynh)

Date and time Online via Teams	Lecture/seminar	Theme/Strategy schools	Instructor
3.9.2021, 8:30 – 10:00	Course introduction		Eva-Lena Lundgren-Henriksson, Thach Huynh Bao
7.9.2021, 14:15 – 15:45	Introduction to strategic thinking (lecture)	Strategy research – From strategic position to processes and practices	Eva-Lena Lundgren-Henriksson
10.9.2021, 8:30 – 10:00	Case Honda (seminar)	Competitive strategy vs. finding grassroots – positioning and learning schools	Virpi Sorsa
14.9.2021, 14:15 – 15:45	Case: Merge or not? A strategic role play (seminar)	Collective sensemaking and communication – The cognitive and the power schools	Eva-Lena Lundgren-Henriksson
17.9.2021, 8:30 – 10:00	Case: Go global or no? (seminar)	Internationalization and growth/visioning strategy – the entrepreneurial and environmental schools	Virpi Sorsa
21.9.2021, 14:15 – 15:45	Case: Power-to-X - Strategizing in a changing world (seminar)	Industry transformation and sustainability – the cultural and configuration schools	Eleonor Hedström, Wärtsilä
24.9.2021, 8:30 – 10:00	To be announced (guest lecture)	To be announced	Janne Tienari
28.9.2021, 14:15 – 15:45	Re-visiting the notion of strategic thinking (lecture)	Chapter 12 – “Hang On, Ladies And Gentlemen, You Have Yet To Meet The Whole Beast”	Thach Huynh Bao
1.10.2021, 8:30 – 10:00	Case: Sir tailor- a Men's Fashion House (seminar)	Strategic changes – a glimpse of real-life stories	Thach Huynh Bao & House's representative
5.10.2021, 14:15 – 15:45	Course summary		Eva-Lena Lundgren-Henriksson, Thach Huynh Bao

Course assignments and assessment

Obligatory class participation in *case seminars*: maximum of 2 case seminar absence is allowed to pass the course. Please send a message to the examiner if you are absent. The case seminars will **not** be recorded. The *lectures* are not obligatory and will partly be recorded (any interactive part of the lectures are not recorded), except for the guest lecture by Janne Tienari. It is however strongly recommended that the participants take part in the lectures in order to be able to ask questions and interact live.

In order to pass the course, the student has to hand in all parts of the examination (progress report, group assignments and exam) and to get at least 50 % of the total examination.

Oral and written assignments (50%): There is one progress report (35 %) and 3 group assignments (total 15 %) handed in during the course.

Course participants are expected to prepare for the seminars by reading and analysing the case assigned for the seminar.

Progress report: During the course the student writes a progress report (detailed instructions in Moodle). The deadline for the progress report is one week after the course's final lecture.

Group assignments: The students work in assigned groups with specific cases. The work is presented in a MS doc (detailed instructions in Moodle). This work is handed in to the teacher on assigned dates. All group members are equally responsible for the work and are assigned the same point.

Exam (50%): The final exam is done online in Moodle. The exam is an open book exam during the exam week of P1. The participants themselves chose when the exam is taken during the exam week, yet note that when the exam is started in Moodle you need to finish it within the set time limit. Please also note that when you have finalized one question/part of the exam you cannot go back in the system.

The participants can retake the exam one month later if one wishes to improve the exam result.

Recommended Time of Performance

This course is the first course in the strategy track that also consists of the following courses: 22031 Strategy work and 22026 Strategic foresight.

Other information

All course communication and information will be available in and uploaded to Moodle. Teams is used only for the lectures and seminars.