

USI Università della Svizzera italiana
Facoltà di scienze economiche
Corporate Strategy
Academic year 2024-25
Prof. Marco Minciullo
56 hours - 6 ECTS credits

Lectures:

Thursday 9.00-10.30am - Friday 9.00-10.30am

COURSE AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

The field of corporate strategy (CS) is becoming increasingly important in the business world. Globalization, deregulation, technological change, the evolution of the institutional contexts and the emergence of new markets and industries are reshaping the CS of the firms and motivating a change in the companies' boundaries. Drawing on these factors, the course focuses on the strategic management of multi-business firms, operating in multiple contexts.

The course answers the central questions confronting every strategist: How are multi-product, multi-location and multi-business firms managed? In which businesses should the firm compete? What are the most appropriate models for growth in different settings (i.e., mergers, acquisitions, alliances, and franchising)? What are firms' resources useful for corporate growth? How can they be developed and acquired? How social and environmental issues impact corporate strategy? How can sustainability improve firms' performance?

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. be knowledgeable about the concept of corporate advantage and its sources (Knowledge);
2. be knowledgeable about strategies to create value by configuring and coordinating multi-business activities in local and global contexts (Knowledge);
3. be knowledgeable about different strategies to manage growth of firms' scope that can integrate economic, environmental, and social sustainability issues (Knowledge);
4. be able to collect and use public financial and non-financial data to understand a company's CS (Intellectual Skills);
5. be able to understand existing corporate strategies and recognize its sources in real local and global scenarios (Practical Skills);
6. be able to make recommendations for configuration and coordination of multi-business activities (Practical Skills);
7. be able to make recommendations for feasible and reliable strategies to manage growth of firms' scope (Practical Skills);
8. develop the capability to work in a diverse team involved in complex corporate strategy projects (Transferable skills);
9. improve the capacity to present in public business cases and industry analyses (Transferable skills).

COURSE CONTENT

The course aims to introduce the student to core topics in corporate strategy, described as follows:

1. What is Corporate Strategy
 - a. The concept of synergies
 - b. Megatrends & Sustainability
2. The hourglass of corporate strategy
 - a. Governance
 - b. Corporate Resources
 - c. Corporate identity
 - d. Corporate orientation toward capital market
 - e. Corporate orientation toward stakeholders
 - f. Corporate integrated performance
 - g. The organizational design and central units
3. Business Portfolio analysis

- a. Core business and business portfolio
 - b. Business portfolio: horizontal scope
 - c. Business portfolio: vertical scope
 - d. Business portfolio: geographical scope
4. Modes for corporate growth
- a. Managing mergers and acquisitions
 - b. Managing alliances, partnerships and joint ventures
 - c. Managing internal development
 - d. Turnaround and divesture
 - e. Financial evaluation for corporate growth

LEARNING METHODS

The course uses a mixture of lectures, guest speakers' talks, theories or case studies discussions, in class presentations. Students are required to participate actively in class debates, to discuss business cases and to deliver presentations. Teaching methods will stimulate students' participation and active interactions between students, lecturers, and guest speakers.

READINGS

- Required readings

Pedrini, Minciullo, Molteni, *Corporate strategy: Multi-stakeholder and multi-business value creation*, McGraw-Hill, 2023.

Collection of materials (articles, case studies, slides) provided by the Professor.

- Recommended journals

Academy of Management Journal, California Management Review, Harvard Business Review, Sloan Management Review, Strategic management Journal.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

The student's final grade will be computed as follows:

- 60% Final written exam
- 30% Group project
- 10% Class participation