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## Organization Studies of Strategy

Course No : 02804120

Credit : 1

Prerequisite :

Program : Graduate

Instructor : Xiao Ting

Semester : 2015 Fall

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Instructor's resume/brief introduction(Within 500 words):

Dual bachelor degrees in Computer Science and Mathematics

Dual master degrees in Management and Economics with graduate minor in Statistics

Ph.D degree in Business Administration majoring in Strategy

Instructor's contact information :

Email: xiaoting224@gmail.com

TA's contact information::

To be noticed

Office hour:

To be noticed

### **Program Learning Goals and Objectives**

- 1 **Learning Goal 1** Graduates will be thoroughly familiar with the specialized knowledge and theories required for the completion of academic research.
  - 1.1 Objective 1 Graduates will have a deep understanding of basic knowledge and theories in their specialized area.
  - 1.2 Objective 2 Graduates will be familiar with the latest academic findings in their specialized area and will be knowledgeable about related areas.
  - 1.3 Objective 3 Graduates will be familiar with research methodologies in their specialized area, and will be able to apply them effectively.
- 2 **Learning Goal 2** Graduates will be creative scholars, who are able to write and publish high-quality graduation dissertation and research papers.
  - 2.1 Objective 1 Graduates will write and publish high-quality graduation dissertation and research papers
  - 2.2 Objective 2 Graduates will be critical thinkers and innovative problems solvers.
- 3 **Learning Goal 3** Graduates will have a broad vision of globalization and will be able to communicate and cooperate with international scholars
  - 3.1 Objective 1 Graduates will have excellent oral and written communication skills
  - 3.2 Objective 2 Graduates will be able to conduct efficient academic communication in at least one foreign language
- 4 **Learning Goal 4** Graduates will be aware of academic ethics and will have a sense of social

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responsibility.

- 4.1 Objective 1 Graduates will have a sense of social responsibility.
- 4.2 Objective 2 Graduates will be aware of potential ethical issues in their academic career.
- 4.3 Objective 3 Graduates will demonstrate concern for social issues.

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## **Course Overview and Objectives**

This is a graduate level seminar on selected topics in organizational studies of strategy. In each class, we will discuss and develop a particular perspective on these topics. The basic purpose of the course is to familiarize students with the basic assumptions, concepts, theories, empirical approaches and their limitations in contemporary research in these areas. Because these are evolving subject areas and undergoing continual change, the boundaries of the field are fuzzy, subjective and open to interpretation and reinterpretation. The idea of the course is to provide an exposure to the major 'lenses' underpinning these phenomena.

The emphasis in this course will be on empirical testing as well as theory building. We will examine some of the fundamental tests of theories. We will also try to push the boundaries of the familiar and new theoretical perspectives, and possibly identify opportunities for cross-fertilization. In each case, we will attempt to derive testable predictions. Finally, we will integrate the various perspectives and attempt to inform the current debates in the field.

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## **Approach**

The format of the course will be that of a research seminar meaning active, engaged reading of the week's materials followed by an intensive group discussion. The reading load is reasonable, but the expectation is that each student will come prepared to discuss each article. In addition, we may have some in class assignments.

When reading the assigned articles, you will find both good points and areas for improvement. While it is important to understand both the good and bad points of the research reported in each article, the following sets of questions should serve as a guide to

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your preparation of each reading:

- What questions are the authors trying to address? Are these important research questions?
  - Does the paper extend existing literature? In what way?
  - How is the research question approached? What is the design of the study? If empirical, is the methodology appropriate? Is the operationalization of key variables appropriate? Can you think of other ways to measure key variables?
  - What assumptions are made in the paper? Are these assumptions appropriate/ realistic?
  - What conclusions are made in the paper? Are these conclusions appropriate given the empirical evidence? Are the conclusions important?
  - Could this work be extended or refined? How?
  - How does this paper relate to the other papers in the session?
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### **Course Requirements/ Evaluation**

The course requirements reflect the primary ‘outcome objectives’ of this course, namely familiarization with good empirical research, ability to discriminate between good and bad research, and ability to design and conduct superior empirical research. To that end, grading will be based on two broad components:

1. *Research Project (50%)*: You will complete a term-paper or proposal for this course by the end of the term based on these selected topics and your interest. This is a broad theme that runs through the whole course. The idea is to identify and develop a theoretical perspective. Once such a perspective has been identified, you should critically appraise the related literature, identify the assumptions/pitfalls and further develop it.

This paper may or may not contain an actual empirical test, though in the absence of an empirical test, you may consider including testable propositions and a well thought-out research design. Alternatively, you could also craft a completely conceptual paper.

Even though the consolidated project is due at the end of the term, I expect that you will develop your ideas throughout the term. For this reason, you will get an opportunity to discuss your progress through the week in each class. Each student will be given up to 5 minutes (or one slide for presentation) in each class session to update the instructor and the rest of the class regarding the progress made and any challenges encountered.

2. *Class Contribution / Presentations (50%)*: The discussions should deal with the following: question or topic, received theory and literature, methods of research, data sources, tests and treatments, alternative approaches, findings and conclusions, presentation style, problems and flaws, implications for theory and meaning to

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managers.

An active and well-informed discussion is critical to the success of such a course. Consequently, each student will be graded on the frequency and quality of their contribution to such discussions. Each student is responsible to read all the required readings for each session. The emphasis is on the depth of understanding that is embodied in the comments, questions and answers rather than only frequency.

You are expected to read and be able to discuss all the readings in all of the class sessions. However, one student may be responsible for identifying and summarizing the related literature beyond the assigned readings. In other words, while the whole class will read and discuss the assigned readings, one student will summarize the broader literature on the class topic.

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## **Class Schedule**

### **Class 1: The Concept of Strategy: Strategy Formation**

1. Rumelt, Schendel, & Teece (RST), *Fundamental Issues in Strategy*, 1994, Chapter 1. RST, 1991
2. Lovas, Bjorn, & Sumantra Ghoshal. 2000. Strategy as guided evolution. *Strategic Management Journal*, 21(9): 875-896.
3. Durand, Rodolphe. 2002. Competitive advantages exist: a critique of Powell. *Strategic Management Journal*, 23(9): 867-872.
4. Powell, Thomas C. 2002. The philosophy of strategy. *Strategic Management Journal*, 23(9): 873-880.
5. Hambrick, D. 2007. The Field of Management's Devotion to Theory: Too Much of a Good Thing? *Academy of Management Journal*, 50: 1346-1352.

### **Class 2: Industry, Rivalry and Competitive Dynamics**

1. Rumelt, R. 1991. How much does industry matter? *Strategic Management Journal*, 12, pp. 167-185.
2. McGahan, A.M. & Porter, M.E. 1997. How much does industry matter, really? *Strategic Management Journal*, 18: 15-30.
3. Breshnahan. 1987. Competition and Collusion in the American Automobile Industry. *Journal of Industry and Organization*.
4. Saloner. 1991. Modeling, Game Theory, and Strategic Management. *Strategic Management Journal*
5. Camerer. 1991. Does Strategy Research Need Game Theory? *Strategic Management Journal*

### **Class 3: Routines, Knowledge and Learning**

1. Cohen & Bacdayan. 1994. Organizational routines are stored as procedural memory: Evidence from a laboratory study. *Organization Science*, 5: 4

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2. Becker, Lazaric, Nelson & Winter. 2005. Applying organizational routines in understanding organizational change. *Industrial and Corporate Change*. 14: 775-791
  3. Grant. 1996. Toward a Knowledge-Based Theory of the Firm. *Strategic Management Journal*
  4. Cohen, Wesley M., & Daniel A. Levinthal. 1990. Absorptive capacity: A new perspective on learning and innovation. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 35(1): 128-152.
  5. Kogut, B. and U. Zander 1992 Knowledge of the Firm, Combinative Capabilities, and the Replication of Technology. *Organization Science*, 3: 383-397.

#### **Class 4: Innovation and Knowledge Recombination**

1. Henderson, Rebecca & Clark, Kim B. 1990. Architectural Innovation: The Reconfiguration of Existing Product Technologies and the Failure of Established Firms. *Administrative Science Quarterly*. 35(1): 9-30.
2. Fleming, L. 2001. Recombinant Uncertainty in Technological Search. *Management science*, 47: 117-132.
3. Fleming, L. and O. Sorenson 2004. Science as A Map in Technological Search. *Strategic Management Journal*, 25: 909-928.
4. Galunic, C. and S. Rodan 1998. Resource Recombinations in the Firm: Knowledge Structures and the Potential for Schumpeterian. *Strategic Management Journal*, 19: 1193.
5. Carnabuci, G. and E. Operti 2013. Where Do Firms' Recombinant Capabilities Come From? Intraorganizational Networks, Knowledge, and Firms' Ability to Innovate through Technological Recombination. *Strategic Management Journal*, 34: 1591-1613.

#### **Class 5: Corporate Governance**

1. Sanders, W.G., & Hambrick, D.C.. 2007. Swinging for the fences: The effects of CEO stock options on company risk-taking and performance. *Academy of Management Journal*, 50(5): 1055-1078.
  2. Hambrick, D.C. & Mason, P.. 1984. Upper echelons: The organization as a reflection of its top managers. *Academy of Management Review*, 9: 193-206.
  3. McDonald, M.L., Westphal, J.D., & Graebner, M.E.. 2008. What do they know? The effects of outside director acquisition experience on firm acquisition performance. *Strategic Management Journal*, 29(11): 1155-1177.
  4. Westphal, J.D. 1999. Collaboration in the boardroom: Behavioral and performance consequences of CEO-board social ties. *Academy of Management Journal*, 42(1): 7-24.
  5. Lester, R.H., Hillman, A., Zardkoohi, A., & Cannella, A.A. 2008. The role of human and social capital: Former government officials as corporate directors. *Academy of Management Journal*, 51(5): 999-1013.
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