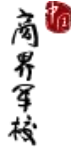




PHBS
北京大学汇丰商学院



MGT 511

Corporate Strategy

Module 3, 2024-2025

Course Information

Instructor: Cuifen Weng

Office: PHBS Building, Room 617

Phone: 86-755-2603-9259

Email: cuifen.weng@phbs.pku.edu.cn

Office Hour: Monday, Tuesday, & Thursday 14:00-15:00

Teaching Assistant:

Phone:

Email:

Classes:

Lectures: Monday & Thursday, 10:30-12:20

Venue: 311

Course Website:

Once class starts please enroll in our course page at <http://cms.phbs.pku.edu.cn/>.

Announcements, documents, etc. will be posted to this site and the class WeChat group. **It is your responsibility to make sure you keep up with all announcements and documents.**

Please also make sure that you are on Turnitin:

Class ID –; Enrolment Key –

-All assignments must be turned into Turnitin before the deadline. No late assignments will be accepted.

1. Course Description

1.1 Context

Course overview:

Corporate Strategy offers a strategic perspective to look at multi-business corporations and to examine how participation in several industries, value-chain activities, and/or regions can enhance, or undermine the competitive advantage of a company. As an elective course in management program, MGT511 is to complement courses of MGT510 Strategic Management and/or MGT518 Strategic Leadership. Therefore, students will learn perspectives and approaches distinct from but relevant to the above courses, enhancing students' abilities to understand, analyze, and solve problems faced in their future careers as middle and top managers.

This course aims to help you make good corporate strategy decisions and perform sound analysis of the corporate strategy decisions of others. The course is also designed to be integrative, drawing upon foundational material and tools developed in Strategic Management. Basic financial knowledge of valuation will also help you perform better analysis in this course.

To integrate material learned in this course and in other courses, we will use a series of Harvard cases.

Note that there may not be a “right” answer to each case in this course. There could be multiple “right” answers to the cases and questions. Much of my evaluation will be based on 1) what you do with the information, 2) whether the solution is logical and fits the given situation, and 3) how you would implement your strategy. This means that “wrong” answers will neglect key pieces of information, be lacking in logical construction, and/or be communicated poorly.

The course is divided into four parts. The first addresses the core concepts in corporate strategy: corporate advantage, synergy, and governance costs. The concepts and frameworks introduced in the first part lay the foundations for all the corporate strategy decisions we discuss in the rest of the class. The first part is thus essential for us to get the most out of the rest class. The second part deals with decisions about increasing the scope of the corporation. The third part focuses on decisions about reducing the scope of the corporation. Both parts are about portfolio composition. The final part focuses on decisions about portfolio organization, examining systems and structure of the multi-business corporation.

Prerequisites: MGT510 Strategic Management.

1.2 Textbooks and Reading Materials

The readings, coming from a number of different sources, are carefully chosen to reflect a variety of perspectives and to stimulate your thinking. This class is probably the best opportunity you have to learn about corporate strategy—a subject that will become increasingly important as your career develops. I hope you will seize this opportunity and avail yourself of all the course materials.

Recommended books:

Puranam, P. and Vanneste, B. 2016. *Corporate Strategy: Tools for Analysis and Decision-Making*, Cambridge University Press.

Collis, D. J. and Montgomery, C. A. 2011 (2nd International Ed.). *Corporate Strategy: A Resource-Based Approach*, McGraw-Hill.

Other readings:

Cases will be provided to you through CMS at least one week before the respective classes.

2. Learning Outcomes

2.1 Intended Learning Outcomes

Learning Goals	Objectives	Assessment (YES with details or NO)
1. Our graduates will be effective communicators.	1.1. Our students will produce quality business and research-oriented documents.	Yes. Case analysis and group project.
	1.2. Students are able to professionally present their ideas and also logically explain and defend their argument.	Yes. In-class group discussion, case analysis and group project.
2. Our graduates will be skilled in team work and leadership.	2.1. Students will be able to lead and participate in group for projects, discussion, and presentation.	Yes. In-class group discussion and group project.
	2.2. Students will be able to apply leadership theories and related skills.	Yes. In-class group discussion and group project.
3. Our graduates will be trained in ethics.	3.1. In a case setting, students will use appropriate techniques to analyze business problems and identify the ethical aspects, provide a solution and defend it.	Yes. In-class group discussion, case analysis and group project.
	3.2. Our students will practice ethics in the duration of the program.	Yes. In-class group discussion, case analysis and group project.
4. Our graduates will have a global perspective.	4.1. Students will have an international exposure.	Yes. In-class group discussion and case analysis.
5. Our graduates will be skilled in problem-solving and critical thinking.	5.1. Our students will have a good understanding of fundamental theories in their fields.	Yes. Lectures.
	5.2. Our students will be prepared to face problems in various business settings and find solutions.	Yes. In-class group discussion, case analysis and group project.
	5.3. Our students will demonstrate competency in critical thinking.	Yes. In-class group discussion, case analysis and group project.

2.2 Course specific objectives

1. Integrate knowledge and apply analytical techniques from various disciplines, including finance, accounting, management, marketing, and economics. The goal is to make a good decision on a concrete corporate strategy issue (e.g., should we pursue organic or in organic growth, should we acquire or ally with this firm, or should we keep or divest this business). The decision should be rigorous and clear. Students need to be able to offer a well-reasoned justification for their decisions.
2. Build communication skills throughout course assignments, class interactions, teamwork, and presentations. Be effective and efficient in how you communicate complex problems and solutions. This also includes building listening and reading skills to develop an understanding of the materials and thoughts that are presented.

3. Simulate, as much as possible, behavior consistent with business settings while learning frameworks and tools useful for management and consulting.

2.3 Assessment/Grading Details

Assessment	Type	Weight	Length	Due date
Class participation	Individual	10%		Every class
In-class case discussion	Group	30%		Each case-study class
Case analysis	Individual	40%	≤2000 words (excluding references, tables, and figures)	Before Class 13
Group project	Group	20%	Presentation: 20 minutes	Team formation by Class 4 Memo: Class 8 Presentation: Class 17

General Guidelines:

All written work needs to be turned in on Turnitin and should be submitted in word or pdf format. For the group project, only one submission to Turnitin is required, and names of all group members should be included in the submission. **Late work will not be accepted.**

Class Participation (10%):

Class attendance is required and will be checked every class. Please email me before the class for any foreseeable absence. Students with the University approved excuse (e.g., valid medical proof) will have his or her absence excused for that class. Besides, it is the responsibility of the absentees to catch up with the content of the missing class.

Missing any one or more classes without prior approval by the instructor will result in grade reduction. For example, if you miss two classes, you will lose the respective class participation mark for those two classes. Students who miss one-third of the class will automatically fail the class. In other words, if you miss six classes or above, your final grade will be F.

Note that attendance is a necessary but insufficient condition for participation in a timely manner; this means that simply attending the class is not the same as participating. Participation will be graded on the basis of the quantity and quality of an individual's contribution to classroom discussion throughout the course. I also reserve the right to make small upward adjustments to your final grade if you consistently demonstrate outstanding performance in class discussion.

I will also evaluate your professionalism in the class. You are encouraged to speak out your ideas and/or challenge my ideas or the ideas of your classmates, but you should maintain a respectful atmosphere for everyone to pursue their ideas. I also expect you to treat my class as you would a job, keeping in mind the expectations that stem from that.

In-class Case Discussion (30%):

Team skills are in high demand in the business world. Contribution to team success is a measure of your individual abilities and your relational skills. It will be important that you get to know your team well and that you are upfront with your team about your strengths and weaknesses.

We will have six case discussion classes. I will assign you into a group of 3-4 students at least one week before each case discussion class. TA will send you the information of your group

members through email/wechat one week before each case class. To ensure students to experience sufficient interactions with each other and to experience group dynamics, group members will be different across six case discussion classes.

Each group member has to read the case and think about case discussion questions INDEPENDENTLY before class. In class each group member will discuss your thoughts with your group members; and then groups will exchange and/or debate on ideas.

After the discussion, each group will present to the class your answers to the case question(s). I will grade your presentation (5% for each class). The grade is based on your group's correct understandings of the concepts and theories, the breadth and depth of your group's case analyses, your insights beyond the case discussion, and the effectiveness of group discussion in presentation. Every group member receives the same grade.

Case Analysis (40%):

In the case analysis task you have to read the case provided on CMS and prepare a written case analysis (maximum 2000 words) to answer the case question(s) provided. The case analysis should include the following components:

- **Introduction.** A brief explanation of the context. This is the starting point or opening scene of your analysis and should tell the readers of **what you are going to cover**.
- **Analysis.** You should clearly apply concepts, frameworks, and content from class to answer the case questions. The analysis should clearly fit to the case context.
- **Recommendation and Implementation.** After the analysis, you should provide one recommendation to the case company to solve the problem(s). You should explain **why** your recommendation is the best possible solution to the problem. You should also include an **action plan** to implement your recommendation. Discuss the factors that may cause the implementation to fail or succeed. Evaluate the potential costs, risks and benefits that the implementation may bring to the firm. **The rationale behind your recommendation and implementation should also be linked to class content and fit to the case context.**

Important: The case analysis is to be submitted via Turnitin before the beginning of Class 13. If you have technical problems submitting the report, please send your assignment to TA before the deadline. Late submission will not be accepted.

Group Project (20%):

For this project students need to form teams of 4 members. You should inform TA your group members by Class 4. If you fail to find a team by Class 4, TA will assign you to a group randomly. Teamwork will account for a significant portion of your grade. Team assignments are expected to be of higher quality than if you were working as an individual so you should work to use each member's individual resources. You can take this opportunity to learn from your teammates as they may have different skill sets than you and you can also take this opportunity to learn about how to better manage teams and the team process. There are resources/skills such as leadership, organization, researching, writing, speaking, writing, and time to mention a few. Use them to your advantage.

You will need to **find a real firm** to work with for your assignment. Below are the **criteria** for company selection:

- 1) The company should be an established firm that you know you can find information on.
- 2) The company should have more than one business or have single business but is considering entering into a new business.
- 3) The issue(s) that you will focus must be related to corporate strategy decision(s).

It is important that you are able to both understand and articulate the issue(s) that face the firm in their corporate strategy decisions to seek and sustain a corporate advantage. Your **group report** will

- 1) **Describe briefly the context of the firm.**
- 2) **Identify the issue(s) involved in corporate strategy decisions.**
- 3) **Analyze the issue(s) (by applying relevant class content).**
- 4) **Provide both short- and long-term recommendations for the firm, including**

implementation plans.

Throughout this report your team will be expected to utilize class content (this is your chance to show what you have learned).

You will need to provide me a 1-page memo with your company choice and their general context by Class 8.

The class will end with an oral presentation of the case you have built for your firm. Presentations are expected to last approximately 20 minutes with another 5 minutes allotted for questions and discussions. This is your chance to show that your recommendations are the best option for the firm and to convince your peers that what you recommend is feasible and will lead to the outcomes you set for the firm.

If you use a computer presentation, arrange your equipment needs and come to class early to set up. It is also highly recommended that you prepare backup material/equipment as I have seen many (including my own) presentations thwarted by equipment failures. **There will be a penalty for exceeding the time limit.**

2.4 Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

It is important for a student's effort and credit to be recognized through class assessment. Credits earned for a student work due to efforts done by others are clearly unfair. Deliberate dishonesty is considered academic misconducts, which include plagiarism; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; or altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying of data, research procedures, or data analysis.

All assessments are subject to academic misconduct check. Misconduct check may include reproducing the assessment, providing a copy to another member of faculty, and/or communicate a copy of this assignment to the PHBS Discipline Committee. A suspected plagiarized document/assignment submitted to a plagiarism checking service may be kept in its database for future reference purpose.

Where violation is suspected, penalties will be implemented. The penalties for academic misconduct may include: deduction of honour points, a mark of zero on the assessment, a fail grade for the whole course, and reference of the matter to the Peking University Registrar.

For more information of plagiarism, please refer to *PHBS Student Handbook*.

AI tools requirements: Using AI tools to complete assignments or assessments without the approval of the course instructor will be regarded as an act of academic dishonesty. Depending on the severity of the situation, penalties will be implemented in accordance with the provisions of the *PHBS Student Handbook*.

3. Topics, Teaching and Assessment Schedule

This is a general guide, as it may change over time. Notification will be given of any changes.

Class	Topic
Part I Foundations	
Class 1	Introductions, Corporate Advantage
Class 2	Synergies: benefits to collaboration
Class 3	Governance Costs: impediments to collaboration
Part II Decisions about Portfolio Composition: increasing the scope of the corporation	
Class 4	Diversification
Class 5	Ally or Acquire?
Class 6	Case 1
Class 7	Organic or Inorganic Growth?
Class 8	Case 2
Part III Decisions about Portfolio Composition: reducing the scope of the corporation	
Class 9	Divestiture: stay or exit
Class 10	Case 3
Class 11	Outsourcing: make or buy
Class 12	Case 4
Part IV Decisions about Portfolio Organization	
Class 13	Designing the Multi-business Corporation
Class 14	Case 5
Class 15	Designing the Corporate HQ
Class 16	Case 6
Class 17	Presentations 1
Class 18	Presentations 2