



Universiteit Antwerpen
| Faculteit Bedrijfswetenschappen
en Economie

Course Overview and Exam

2024-2025

Teacher: Prof. Johanna Vanderstraeten

Assistant: Nathalie Verboven

General

- The slides are most important
- Use the course (available on Blackboard) as a "reference guide" to review concepts, read additional examples, etc.
- The exam is a computer-based exam. This implies that we will only ask drawings that are also possible with the program used for this purpose. Of course, it is possible that, for example, the dimensions of a matrix need to be *described*

Structuur cursus

- Agreements
|
- Concept: What is strategy?
|
- Concept: Competitive advantage and value creation
|
- Technique: External analysis
|
- Technique: Internal analysis and core competencies

Slides: Read the introduction of the course.

Slides/lecture materials + H2 course, with particular emphasis on the differences between mission, vision, etc.

Slides/lecture materials + H3 course (not: Management Tools of Bain & Company, Appendix 3-1)

Slides/lecture materials + H4 course (not: 4.2.3; scenario planning; figure 4-4/4.6)

Slides/lecture materials + H5 course

Structuur cursus

- Strategic choice: Growth and portfolio strategy

Slides/lecture materials + H7 course (only full framework 7-1)

- Organization & follow-up: Sustainability

Slides/lecture materials (note: not included in the course!)

- Organization & follow-up: Culture

Slides/lecture materials + H8 course with extra emphasis on culture (national and organizational culture) and organizational structure – not to be familiar with: 8.2; 8.3; 8.4)

Cases

- The discussed cases are used for illustration / better understanding of the covered theoretical concepts. Use the cases as "examples"
- If examples are requested in the exam, it is allowed to use an example discussed during class. It is also permitted to provide your own (real-life or fictional) example
- Of course, there will be no detailed questions about the cases in the exam, such as exact figures, years, founding year of the company, etc.

Texts

- The discussed texts partly serve as illustration / to better understand the covered theoretical concepts
- The examples provided in the texts can be an inspiration for you when an example is requested
- Of course, all **concepts** covered in the texts and also discussed during class are to be known. For example: we have seen an extensive text about "strategy statement". You are expected to know this overarching concept and all the sub-concepts falling under a strategy statement
- Important: whether concepts were **theoretically taught**, or **discussed** during class is irrelevant to whether concepts are to be known. In other words: all concepts and theoretical models/tools are to be known, as long as they were covered during class



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Sample Exam Questions

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Exam

Goal

- Know the concepts
 - Be able to explain in your own words
 - Provide examples
 - No reproduction!
 - Can be questioned through "**concept questions**"
- Establish links between different parts of the course
 - Can be questioned through "**critical evaluation of a statement**"
- "**Reasoning questions**"
 - Larger parts of the theory
- Usually, 4 to 5 concept questions and 2 reasoning / critical evaluation questions (these reasoning questions may consist of different sub-questions)

Exam

Example of a **concept question**

- Explain
 - MABA matrix
- How to answer?
 - Explanation **in your own words, but make sure you explicitly and correctly use the concepts seen in class!**
 - If possible: provide an example, and certainly **provide an example when requested for**
- These are short questions that you should be able to answer in a brief text. Each concept is worth one point

Exam

Example “**critical evaluation of a statement**” (= one type of **reasoning question**):

"Before executives can chart a new strategy, they must reach a common understanding of the company's current position" (Chan Kim and Rene Mauborgne, Crafting and Executing Strategy 2007).

- You are given a quote with associated questions
- Possible questions related to this quote:
 - Discuss how strategy comes about in a business. Be critical
 - How, in your view, should the top managers determine their company's current position if they only consider the "structure-conduct-performance" paradigm? Briefly discuss two tools that can be used for this
 - Critically evaluate this approach

Exam

Possible "solution" to this reasoning question:

- Discuss how strategy comes about in a business. Be critical.
 - Strategy – 5P's
 - Outside-in vs Inside-out
- How, in your view, should the top managers determine their company's current position if they only consider the "structure-conduct-performance" paradigm?
Briefly discuss two tools that can be used for this
 - Explain "structure-conduct-performance"
 - Explain how an external analysis can be conducted; explain two tools (PESTEL, 5 Forces)
- Critically evaluate this approach
 - Discuss critically by emphasizing and briefly explaining the internal analysis

Exam

Example “**reasoning question without a quote**”:

- What is organizational culture?
- Do you think that the organizational culture in a large enterprise (for example, 1000 employees) differs from that of a small enterprise (e.g., 30 employees)? Why or why not?
- Possible answers:
 - Discuss the different organizational cultures seen in class. Be specific enough, explicitly use the concepts discussed in class
 - Critically discuss which type of culture is more achievable in a large versus a small enterprise. Explicitly refer to theory (avoid giving an ‘intuitive answer’)



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Good luck!

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