College of Commerce  
Division of Economic and Financial Studies  
Business Department

BUS301:  
BUSINESS POLICY

UNIT OUTLINE  
First Semester, 2006

Lecturer: Deborah Howlett  
Unit Convenor: Leanne Carter

Mondays, 1-4pm,  
W6B 336

Prerequisites: Enrolment in BLntB or BeBus; 40cp

Students in this unit should read the Unit Outline carefully at the beginning of the Semester. It contains important information about the unit. If anything in it is unclear, please consult the Unit Convenor.
BUS301: BUSINESS POLICY
SEMESTER 1 2006

1. ABOUT THIS UNIT:
An Organisation’s performance is a function of its policies and strategies. Its policies guide the decision making processes and are based upon the organisation’s values and its view of ethical responses to internal and external opportunities and threats. Business Policy is the study of the functions and responsibilities of senior management, the crucial problems that effect success in the total enterprise and the decisions that determine the direction of the organization and shape its future. Business Policy decisions have to do with the choice of purposes, the moulding of organizational identity and character and the mobilization of resources. This unit will explore business policy by illustrating both process and issues by using contemporary application case study sessions. Case analysis requires students to practise important managerial skills- diagnosing, making decisions, observing, listening and persuading-while preparing for a case discussion. Cases require students to relate analysis and action, to develop realistic and concrete actions despite the complexity and partial knowledge characterizing the situation being studied.

2. TEACHING STAFF
Lecturer: Deborah Howlett
Email: dhowlett@efs.mq.edu.au
Consultation times will be advised in lectures.
Class: Mondays, 1-4pm, W6B 336

3. LEARNING OUTCOMES
The strategic management process is critical to organizational success. Strategic competitiveness is achieved when a firm develops and exploits a sustained competitive advantage. Attaining such an advantage results in the earning of above-average returns—that is, returns that exceed those an investor could expect from other investments with similar amounts of risk.

In recent years, with the greater levels of competition that have arisen globally, it has become increasingly important for businesses to develop their competitive advantage over their rivals. This realisation has resulted in companies turning even more to address the issues that will be crucial, if they are to develop a competitive advantage.

At the completion of this unit students will be able to:
- Interpret the strategic management process in a global economy
- Analyze a firm’s internal and external environment
- Evaluate the importance of strategic competitiveness
- Apply appropriate strategic models in strategic models in strategic analysis.
- Explain the resource, human and risk factors involved in strategic decision making
- Develop suitable organization strategies to address these issues.
- Identify the impact that globalisation has had on management practices.
• Assess methods of evaluating strategic performance
• Identify key merging strategic issues.

4. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ASSESSMENT AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

A sound background knowledge and understanding of strategic tools is therefore required if they are to be used successfully. This unit addresses some of the major issues involved in the development of a strategic plan for a business, as well as the tools, which can be used to address these issues. This unit is designed to logically progress through the processes of strategy analysis, strategy formulation, and strategy implementation. A strong emphasis is placed on the application of strategic tools and techniques for strategic analysis and decision-making.

Marks in the unit will be allocated on the following basis:

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<tr>
<td>Mid Semester test</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Group Report</td>
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<td>Group Presentation</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment 1
Mid Semester Test:
Due: To be conducted in class in Week 7
Value: 20%

Format will be discussed in class in the week prior to the tests being conducted. If a student cannot attend the in class test, the lecturer shall be notified prior to the lecture via email directly as to the reason(s) the test cannot be done and proof as to why the non attendance e.g. medical certificate etc

Assignment 2
Group Report
Due: Beginning of lecture Week 12
Value: 20%
Length: 2000 words
You are to form groups of no more than 7 students and notify the lecturer via email of group member names and student numbers (no later than week 6). Each group is required to prepare a business report on either I or II below.

Students will need to choose from either of the following:
1. Strategic Management in Virtual Organisations and Business Policy:
The virtual organization poses many issues for the future of the management of organizations. Your assignment here is to write a report on the virtual organization. In the first section you will discuss the general management issues that the virtual workplace presents for all organizations. In the second half you will consider how such developments will impact on the business policy and strategic management of the organization.

OR
2. Analysis of the Strategic Plan of an Organisation:
Identify an organization of your choice, develop contacts with the CEO or departmental managers for interviews and visits and discuss their Strategic Plans and Business Policy. Your write should not exceed more than 10 pages, if possible the strategic plan should be included in the appendices

All group work is peer moderated
In Week 13, the last class, each student will submit a peer evaluation assessment for each member in their group (including themselves). This will then allow a peer factor to be allocated to the Group’s raw score for each individual student, allowing a dispersion of marks within the same group. This peer factor is kept confidential

Please Note:
Your Report is to be answered in the following format and will be marked to the following criteria:
1. Written in business report format
2. Type in 12 size font, one and a half spaced
3. Analysis and interpretation of research material
4. Evidence of extensive research
5. Logical and sound business argument
6. Provide in text referencing and reference list in Harvard format. Using cited references (not textbook)
7. One assignment per group is to be handed in
8. Limited to 2000 words (plus or minus 10%).
9. Ensure proofreading, editing, correct spelling and punctuation is undertaken
10. Use only one side of A4 paper, number every page and staple in top left hand corner of paper. Please do not use individual page folders
11. On front page include all group member names and student numbers

Assignment 3:
Group Presentation
Value: 10%
Due: Allocated tutorials

In week 2, each group will be allocated a week where they will present the case study allocated, to the other members of the class. The following will be used as marking criteria:
- Originality of content and presentation
- Research evidence other than textbook
- Presentation style
- Hand in two page precise of presentation points at end of presentation
Students not presenting are supposed to read the week’s case study and be ready to discuss and question in class.

The assignment should succinctly convey all key points, analyses and conclusions and demonstration of your understanding of all the central theories and models. Key issues should be identified and include analysis that condenses, identifies relationships and prioritizes and conclude with recommendations that demonstrably result from the analysis you have conducted.

**Final Exam**

*Value: 50%*

The University examination period in First Half Year 2006 is from 14 June to 30 June.

**5. COURSE TEXT:**


**Additional References:**


6. **TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY**

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<td>Strategic Management &amp; Strategic</td>
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<td>Competitiveness</td>
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<td>capabilities and core competencies</td>
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7/ MID-TERM EXAM

MID SEMESTER BREAK

8 Cooperative strategy  Ch 9 Monsanto: Better living through genetic engineering? Case 9

9 Corporate governance  Ch 10 Gillette and the men’s wet shaving market Case 4

10 Organisational structure and controls  Ch 11 Cochlear: An Australian high technology leader Case 1

11 Corporate Social Responsibility  TBA

12 Strategic Leadership  Group Report Due  Ch 12 TBA

13 Review of the Unit, Peer Evaluation and Unit Evaluation

7. EXAMINATIONS

You are expected to present yourself for examination at the time and place designated in the University Examination Timetable. The timetable will be available in Draft form approximately eight weeks before the commencement of the examinations and in Final form approximately four weeks before the commencement of the examinations. [http://www.timetables.mq.edu.au/exam](http://www.timetables.mq.edu.au/exam)

The only exception to not sitting an examination at the designated time is because of documented illness or unavoidable disruption. In these circumstances you may wish to consider applying for Special Consideration. Information about unavoidable disruption and the special consideration process is available at [http://www.reg.mq.edu.au/Forms/APSCons.pdf](http://www.reg.mq.edu.au/Forms/APSCons.pdf)

If a Supplementary Examination is granted as a result of the Special Consideration process the examination will be scheduled after the conclusion of the official examination period.

You are advised that it is Macquarie University policy not to set early examinations for individuals or groups of students. All students are expected to ensure that they are available until the end of the teaching semester, that is the final day of the official examination period.

8. PLAGIARISM
The University defines plagiarism in its rules: "Plagiarism involves using the work of another person and presenting it as one's own." Plagiarism is a serious breach of the University's rules and carries significant penalties. You must read the University's practices and procedures on plagiarism. These can be found in the Handbook of Undergraduate Studies or on the web at: http://www.student.mq.edu.au/plagiarism/

The policies and procedures explain what plagiarism is, how to avoid it, the procedures that will be taken in cases of suspected plagiarism, and the penalties if you are found guilty. Penalties may include a deduction of marks, failure in the unit, and/or referral to the University Discipline Committee.

9. UNIVERSITY POLICY ON GRADING

Academic Senate has a set of guidelines on the distribution of grades across the range from fail to high distinction. Your final result will include one of these grades plus a standardised numerical grade (SNG). On occasion your raw mark for a unit (i.e., the total of your marks for each assessment item) may not be the same as the SNG which you receive. Under the Senate guidelines, results may be scaled to ensure that there is a degree of comparability across the university, so that units with the same past performances of their students should achieve similar results. It is important that you realise that the policy does not require that a minimum number of students are to be failed in any unit. In fact it does something like the opposite, in requiring examiners to explain their actions if more than 20% of students fail in a unit. The process of scaling does not change the order of marks among students. A student who receives a higher raw mark than another will also receive a higher final scaled mark.


10. SUPPORT SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

Macquarie University provides a range of Academic Student Support Services. Details of these services can be accessed at http://www.student.mq.edu.au.