
 UNIVERSITÉ Concordia UNIVERSITY	JOHN MOLSON SCHOOL OF BUSINESS	
John Molson School of Business Concordia University		Winter 2019
Doctoral Seminar ADMI 852A		
Debating Strategic Management		
Professor Rick Molz Department of Management MB 13-127 514-848-2424, Ext 2933	Class Meetings Wednesday 14:45 to 17:30 Class meeting MB 11-316 Office Hours: Wednesday 13:00-14:00	
EMAIL: rick.molz@concordia.ca http://www.concordia.ca/jmsb/faculty/rick-molz.html		

SEMINAR DESCRIPTION

This course uses a dialectic approach to examine and contrast the debates within Strategic Management. Readings are included from both established and emerging debates, engaging in both retrospective and forward views of strategy. At the end of the course students will have achieved the following:

1. An appreciation of the evolution of strategy as a field in organization studies
2. An understanding of the range of debates within the strategy field
3. Skills of critical evaluation and understanding of divergent strategy perspectives
4. An ability to compare and contrast perspectives
5. Knowledge of research methodologies used within each strategy perspective
6. The ability to develop and write an essay on a topic within the strategy paradigm that conforms to the norms of the *Academy of Management Review*

STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS

Contribution to class discussion:

Constructive contribution to class discussion is an integral part of the course. Part of your contribution will be in the form of having challenging questions to pose for the

class discussion. Your contribution will be evaluated based on your preparation for class discussions and willingness to commit yourself in front of the class. All reasoned interpretations of the readings are valid. You need never agree with an author, others in the class or the instructor, but you must have solid reasoning supporting your interpretation and argument. Dissenting opinion is good, lack of opinion is not.

Attendance, timely arrival for class and significance of contribution are all important elements of your overall evaluation. The significance of contribution is evaluated for both quality and quantity.

Current research, integration, critique and commentary reports:

Each participant will contribute to facilitating two class sessions through the development of two current research and integration reports. Both an oral presentation and written report is required. The report and presentation should include:

1. An integration of all assigned articles, and how they relate (**not a summary**)
2. An identification of the value added for each article
3. A report on an article from a refereed academic journal published in 2017 or 2018 that complements the assigned readings
4. Integrative questions or provocative statements for class discussion

Each written report is to be five pages or less, one and half (1½) spaced. The report must be emailed to the instructor at least two days before the class session. Following the class, the report will be distributed to all members of the class. Sessions will be chosen in the first class meeting.

Weekly article synopsis:

Each participant will prepare a half page synopsis of each assigned article. The synopsis should identify (1) the key research question, (2) the analytical method used to address the question, (3) the key findings or conclusion of the article (4) your personal reaction to the article. These are graded only as pass/fail. Email a copy of each synopsis to the instructor no later than 12 hours before the class. Otherwise, no credit will be given.

Report on a completed strategy thesis:

Each participant will write a four page report on a strategy thesis completed at his or her home university. The report should include a *brief* summary of the principal ideas of the thesis, an appraisal of the thesis evidence and research methodology, an assessment of the face validity, rigor of the author's argument and the structure of the thesis. Also comment on what you liked or disliked about the thesis. Reports are due in class five.

Session paper:

Students will submit a paper on a subject of their choice, as approved by the instructor. The paper should include a statement of a research question, a literature review, an extension of the current literature in a way to add to the discourse, and

suggestions for empirical research. A one page proposal is due in class 8, including an abstract and annotated outline showing: 1) tentative research question, 2) five key articles to be included in the literature review, 3) a description of how you expect to add value, 4) ideas for an empirical study. On class 12 we will have an in class presentation of papers as a work in progress. Student presentations should review and summarize pertinent literature in relation to the paper's topic, outline its main arguments with support from the literature, and propose initial conclusions, and practical and managerial implications.

The paper is to be between 20 and 25 pages of text, one and half (1½) spaced, a minimum of 12 point font, plus full bibliographic references. Papers must be submitted in a PDF format by email to rick.molz@concordia.ca no later than 14:00 April 17, 2019.

Late papers are not accepted without a written medical excuse. The paper should be modeled after readings from the *Academy of Management Review*.

Interview strategy faculty in the four universities, and report:

It is important for students to become familiar with faculty at the four universities. Therefore, students will be divided into teams to interview strategy faculty at the four universities. Each team should interview one senior professor and one junior professor. The composition of these teams will depend upon the composition of the class: typically students will be asked to interview faculty from *outside* their home school. This report will be given on the last day of class, Class 13. The purpose of this assignment is to familiarize students with the range of expertise available in the four university program that will become useful in future course and committee selections.

GRADING

The final grade for the course will be determined as follows:

Contribution to class discussion	15%
Integration, critique and commentary reports	15%
Weekly article synopsis	7.5%
Strategy thesis report	7.5%
Session paper	50%
Report on Strategy Faculty	5%
	100%

CLASS FORMAT

This course uses a student centered learning approach. Each class session will include a mix of student presentations, structured discussion and mini lectures from the instructor. Student success is heavily dependent on each student actively participating and taking clear positions on the issues under discussion.

Each week the instructor will send an Email four or five days before class describing the class plan and sequence. The normal sequence will be:

1. Review of the semester plan and relation of the days topic to the flow of the course (2 minutes)
2. Review of the day's class plan and sequence (3 minutes)
3. Instructor comments
4. Round table with each participant identifying the single most interesting/important ideas for the day's readings (**MAXIMUM 2 MINUTES FOR EACH PARTICIPANT**)
5. Presentation of the integration report (maximum 15 minutes)
6. Open discussion of questions from the instructor and student integration report; instructor comments and mini lectures
7. Instructor end of class comments
8. Discussion about related topics (maximum 15 minutes)

The weekly Email will also have several thought questions for each of you to reflect upon. These may be useful for each of you in different ways. Some students prefer to prepare for the week *prior* to reviewing the instructor's questions; others prefer to view the questions *after* their preparation. ***The student preparing the integration report should NOT review the weekly Email until after the integration report is complete.***

There has been a tradition for the previous week's presenter of the integration report to provide light refreshments for the class. This is optional.

Please note:

Participants may use either English or French for the course.

Academic Integrity

The Code of Conduct (Academic) at Concordia University states that the "integrity of University academic life and of the degrees, diplomas and certificates the University confers is dependent upon the honesty and soundness of the instructor-student learning relationship and, in particular, that of the evaluation process. As such, all students are expected to be honest in all of their academic endeavours and relationships with the University." (Concordia University Graduate Calendar). You are responsible for familiarizing yourself and complying with professional standards for plagiarism.

Modifications to course outline

In the event that the University is unable to provide services or that courses are interrupted due to events beyond the reasonable control of the University, including classroom disruptions, the University reserves the right to modify any element contained in the course outline including but not limited to the grading scheme and the weight accorded to exams or assignments.

Course Schedule

1. January 9, 2019 Introduction

Introduction of the participants; presentation of the goals of the seminar, discussion of student responsibilities, selection of schedules for presentation reports and integration reports.

2. January 16, 2019 Debates in philosophy of science and strategy

- a. Kuhn, T.S., (1962). Chap. 1, Introduction: A role for history, Chap. 2, The route to normal science, Chap. 3, The nature of normal science. pp. 1-34. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press. (HC)
- b. Burrell, G. and Morgan, G. (1979). Part 1, In search of a framework, pp. 1-37. In *Sociological Paradigms and Organizational Analysis*. Exeter, NH, Heinemann. (HC)
- c. Sutton, R. I., & Staw, B. M. (1995). What theory is not. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 40, 371-384.
- d. Weick, K. (1996). Drop your tools: An allegory for organizational studies. *Administrative Science Quarterly*. 41 (2), pp. 301-313.
- e. March, J. (2007). The study of organizations and organizing since 1945. *Organization Studies*. 28 (1): pp 9-19.
- f. Miller, K. (2008). Simon and Polanyi on rationality and knowledge. *Organization Studies*. 29 (7): pp 933-955.

Suggested:

Puranam, P., Alexy, O., & Reitzig, M. (2013). What's "new" about new forms of organizing? *Academy of Management Review*, 39(2), 162-180.

Foss, N. J., & Hallberg, N. L. (2014). How symmetrical assumptions advance strategic management research. *Strategic Management Journal*, 35(6), 903-913.

3. January 23, 2019 What is strategy?

- a. Mintzberg, H., Ahlstrand, B. and Lampel, J. (1998). Chapter 1, And over here, ladies and gentlemen: the strategic management beast, pp 1-21. In *Strategy Safari*, New York: The Free Press. (HC)

- b. Hoskisson, R., Hitt, M, Wan, W. and Yiu, D. (1999). Theory and research in strategic management: Swings of a pendulum. *Journal of Management*. 25: pp 417- 456.
- c. Whittington, R., Jarzabkowski, P., Mayer, M., Mounoud, E. Hahapiet, J., and Rouleau, L. (2003) Taking strategy seriously. *Journal of Management Inquiry*. 12(4) pp. 396-409.
- d. Barnett, M. (2016). Strategist, organize thyself. *Strategic Organization*. 14(2) pp. 146-155.

Suggested:

Andrews, K. (1987). *The Concept of Corporate Strategy*. Homewood, Ill. Irwin. pp. 1-127. **Required for students who do not have a BComm or MBA**

Seidl, D. (2007). General strategy concepts and the ecology of strategy discourses: A systemic-discursive perspective. *Organization Studies*. 28 (2): pp 197-218.

4. January 30, 2019 Debating the economic foundations of strategy

- a. Coase, R. H. (1937) The nature of the firm. *Economica*, pp. 386-405.
- b. Schumacher, E.F. (1973). Chap. 4. Buddhist Economics, pp. 37-45, in *Small is Beautiful: Economics as if People Mattered*, New York, Harper and Row. (HC)
- c. Williamson, O. (1991). Strategizing, economizing and economic organization. *Strategic Management Journal*. 12 (Special issue) pp. 75-94.
- d. Ghoshal, S. and Moran, S. (1996). Bad for theory, bad for practice: A critique of transaction cost theory,” *Academy of Management Review*, 21 (1), pp. 13-48.
- e. Tsang, E. (2006). Behavioral assumptions and theory development: The case of transaction cost economics. *Strategic Management Journal*. 27 (11) pp. 999-1011.
- f. Ferraro, F., Pfeffer, J and Sutton, R. (2005). Economics language and assumptions: How theories can become self-fulfilling. *Academy of Management Review*. 30 (1) pp. 8-24.

Suggested:

Zingales, L. (2000). In search of new foundations. *Journal of Finance*, 55(4): 1623-1653.

5. February 6, 2019 Debating the non-economic perspectives of strategy

- a. Granovetter, M. (1985). Economic action and social structure: The problem of embeddedness. *American Journal of Sociology*, 91, pp 481-510.
- b. Jacobson, R. (1992). The 'Austrian' school of strategy. *Academy of Management Review*, 17, 4, pp. 782-807.
- c. Pedersen, J and Dobbin, F. (2006). In search of identity and legitimation. *American Behavioral Scientist*. 49(7). Pp. 897-907.
- d. Fenton, C. and Langley, A. (2011) Strategy as practice and the narrative turn. *Organization Studies*. 32 (9), pp. 1171.
- e. Hahn, T. et. al. (2014). Cognitive frames in corporate sustainability: managerial sensemaking with paradoxical and business case frames. *Academy of Management Review*, 34 (4). pp. 463-487.

Suggested:

Yu, Kyoung-Hee. (2013). Institutionalization in the context of institutional pluralism: Politics as a generative process. *Organization Studies*. 34 (1), pp. 105-131.

6. February 13, 2019 Debating institutional theory

- a. DiMaggio, P. and Powell, W. (1983) Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields. *American Sociological Review*, 48 (2), pp. 147-160.
- b. Oliver, C. (1991). Strategic responses to institutional processes. *Academy of Management Review*, 16(1), pp. 145-179.
- c. Sherer, P. and Lee, K. (2002) Institutional change in large law firms: A resource dependency and institutional perspective. *Academy of Management Journal*. 45 (1), pp. 102-120.
- d. Heugens, P. and Lander, M. (2009) Structure! Agency! (and other quarrels): A meta-analysis of institutional theories of organization. *Academy of Management Journal*, 52 (1). pp. 61-85.
- e. Besharov, M. L., & Smith, W.K. (2014). Multiple institutional logics in organizations: Explaining their varied nature and implications. *Academy of Management Review*, 39(3), 364-381.
- g. Pahnke, E, Katila, R. and Eisenhardt, K. (2015) Who takes you to the dance? How partners' institutional logics influence innovation in young firms. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 60 (4), pp. 596-633.

Suggested:

Shinkle, G. A., Kriauciunas, A. P., & Hundley, G. (2013). Why pure strategies may be wrong for transition economy firms. *Strategic Management Journal*, 34(10), 1244-1254.

7. February 20, 2019 Debating resource strategy

- a. Barney, B. (1991) Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage. *Journal of Management*. 17 (1) pp. 99- 120.
- b. Kraaijenbrink, J. (2010) The resource based view: A review and assessment of its critiques. *Journal of Management*. 36 (1) pp. 349-372.
- c. Schmidt, J. and Keil, T. (2013). What makes a resource valuable? Identifying the drivers of firm-idiosyncratic resource value. *Academy of Management Review*. 38. (2) pp. 206-228.
- d. Priem, R., Butler, J., & Li, S. (2013). Toward reimagining strategy research: Retrospection and prospection on the 2011 AMR decade award article. *Academy of Management Review*, 38(4), 471-489.
- e. Sakhartov, A. and Folta, T. (2014) Resource relatedness, redeployability, and firm value. *Strategic Management Journal*. 35 (12) pp. 1781.

Suggested:

Miller, D. and Shamsie, J. (1996) The resource view of the firm in two environments: The Hollywood film studios from 1936 to 1965, *Academy of Management Journal*. 39. (3) pp. 519-543.

Barney, J. B. (2001). Resource-based theories of competitive advantage: A ten-year retrospective on the resource-based view. *Journal of Management*, 27(6), 643-650.

Arend, R. and Levesque, M. (2010) Is the resource based view a practical organizational theory? *Organization Science*. 21 (4) pp. 913-930.

8. March 6, 2019 Debating competitive dynamics

- a. Teece, D.J., Pisano, G., & Shuen, A. (1997). Dynamic capabilities and strategic management. *Strategic Management Journal*, 18(7): pp. 509-533.
- b. Eisenhardt, K, and Martin, J. (2000). Dynamic capabilities: What are they? *Strategic Management Journal*, 21: pp. 1105-1121.
- c. Peteraf, M., Di Stefano, G., & Verona, G. (2013). The elephant in the room of dynamic capabilities: Bringing two diverging conversations together. *Strategic Management Journal*, 34(12), 1389-1410.

- d. Stadler, C., Helfat, C. E., & Verona, G. (2013). The impact of dynamic capabilities on resource access and development. *Organization Science*, 24(6), 1782-1804.
- e. Chen, Ming-Jer and Miller, D. (2015). Reconceptualizing competitive dynamics: A multidimensional framework. *Strategic Management Journal*, 36 (5), 758.

Suggested:

Barreto, I. (2010) Dynamic capabilities: A review of past research and an agenda for the future. *Journal of Management*. 36 (1), pp. 256-280.

9. March 13, 2019 Debating networks and competitive dynamics

- a. Gulati, R., Nohria, N. & Zaheer. A. (2000). Strategic networks. *Strategic Management Journal*, 21(3), 203.
- b. Provan, K, Fish, A, and Sydow, J. (2007). Interorganizational networks at the network level: A review of the empirical literature on whole networks. *Journal of Management*. 33(3), pp. 479-516.
- c. Zaheer, A., Gözübüyük, R., & Milanov, H. (2010). It's the connections: The network perspective in interorganizational research. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 24(1), 62-77.
- d. Parmigiani, A., and Rivera-Santos, M. (2011). Clearing a path through the forest: A meta-review of interorganizational relationships. *Journal of Management*. 37 (4), pp. 1108-1136.
- e. Skilton, P. and Bernardes, E. (2015). Competition network structure and product market entry. *Strategic Management Journal*, 36(11), pp. 1688.

Suggested:

Granovetter, M. (1983). The strength of weak ties: A network theory revisited. *Sociological Theory*, 1(1), 201-233.

10. March 20, 2019 Debating managerial motives in strategy

- a. Jensen, M. and Meckling, W. (1976). Theory of the firm: Managerial behavior, agency costs and ownership structure. *Journal of Financial Economics* 3(4) October, pp. 305-360. **Pages 305-313 and 351-357 required, remainder is suggested.**
- b. Agle, B., Mitchell, R. and Sonnenfeld, J. (1999) Who matters to CEOs? An investigation of stakeholder attributes and salience, corporate

- performance and CEO values. *Academy of Management Journal*. 42. (5) pp. 507-525.
- c. Lan, L. and Heracleous, L. (2010) Rethinking agency theory: The view from law, *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 35(2). Pp. 294-314.
 - d. Hambrick, D. C., & Quigley, T. J. (2014). Toward more accurate contextualization of the CEO effect on firm performance. *Strategic Management Journal*, 35(4), 473-491.
 - e. Hambrick, D.C., Humphrey, S. and Gupta, A. (2015). Structural interdependence within top management teams: A key moderator of upper echelons predictions. *Strategic Management Journal*, 36(3), pp. 449.

Suggested:

Ahearne, M., Lam, S. K., & Kraus, F. (2014). Performance impact of middle managers' adaptive strategy implementation: The role of social capital. *Strategic Management Journal*, 35(1), 68-87.

11. March 27, 2019 Debates over the firm's strategy and social issues

- a. Friedman, M. (1970). The social responsibility of business is to increase its profits. *The New York Times Magazine*, September 13, 1970
- b. Donaldson, T. & Preston, L. (1995). The stakeholder theory of the corporation: Concepts, evidence, and implications. *Academy of Management Review*, 20(1): pp. 65-91.
- c. Gladwin, T., Kennelly, J. and Krause, T. (1995). Shifting paradigms for sustainable development: Implications for management theory and research. *Academy of Management Review*, 20 (4): 874-907.
- d. Laplume, A. (2008). Stakeholder theory: Reviewing a theory that moves us. *Journal of Management*. 34 (6), pp. 1152-1189.
- e. Bundy, J., Shropshire, C., and Buchholtz, A. (2013) Strategic cognition and issue salience: Toward an explanation of firm responsiveness to stakeholder concerns. *Academy of Management Review*, 38 (3): 352-376.
- f. Hahn, T. et. al. (2015). Tensions in corporate sustainability: Towards an integrative framework. *Journal of Business Ethics*. March. pp. 295-316.

Suggested:

Campbell, J. (2007) Why would corporations behave in socially responsible ways? An institutional theory of corporate social responsibility. *Academy of Management Review*, 32 (3): 946-967.

Doh, J., Howton, S., Showton, S. and Siebel, D. (2010). Does the market respond to an endorsement of social responsibility? The role of institutions, information and legitimacy. *Journal of Management*. 36 (6), pp. 1461-1485.

12. April 3, 2019 Presentation of session papers.

13. April 10, 2019 Student presentations on strategy faculty and discussion of new frontiers in strategy research

14. April 17, 2019 Session papers due before 14:00.