## **Company Policy and Strategy**

## Prof. Susanna Di Martino

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course intends to achieve the following joint objectives:

* Understand the concept of strategy and the role that strategy plays in governing a company in general (whether manufacturing companies or service);
* Learn the most important theories and methodologies for analysing and diagnosing strategy, at the business and company level;
* Interpret and analyse the competitive context in which a company operates and the existing dynamics, as well as the behaviour of competing companies;
* Develop innovative strategies and/or reactions to current competitive dynamics;
* Develop the ability to identify key resources and skills for strategic innovation;
* Identify the fundamental elements of the strategy of interest for various stakeholders;
* Measure the results of a company's strategy and evaluate the effects that strategic choices have on the company's economic status.

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

* Interpret a business strategy;
* Measure a company's competitive position;
* Analyse a competitive context and predict its evolution;
* Formulate a business strategy and predict the results;
* Identify the key elements for sharing and communicating a strategy by involving the relevant stakeholders.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course is divided into three parts.

Part one: *Strategy and the competitive context*

1. The concept of strategy and its role in company governance;
2. The success of a strategy.
3. The analysis of the industry.
4. Competitor analysis and strategic groupings

Part two: *Business strategies*

1. Company resources and skills
2. Building a competitive advantage
3. The creation of value and the mapping of company activities
4. The construction of the Business Model
5. Innovative strategies
6. Evaluating the results of an implemented strategy

Part Three: *Competing in different contexts and the strategies for growth*

1. Competitive dynamics and the change of the reference context
2. Competing in different sectors and contexts
3. Competing in global sectors
4. Growth strategies
5. Communication of the strategy: how to involve the relevant stakeholders in a strategic project

The syllabus containing the course's analytical programme will be communicated on Blackboard.

***READING LIST***

The reference material (for both students attending and not attending lectures) is:

* R.M. Grant-J. Jordan, *Fondamenti di Strategia* Il Mulino, Bologna, 2013;
* Slides, supplementary readings and cases made available on Blackboard.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The nature and characteristics of the course subject require alternating theoretical lectures and case analyses to concretise the teaching. Therefore, the course includes active teaching with case analyses, simulations and group work.

Active participation in the discussion of cases and in group work enables students to develop the necessary skills to tackle the practical part of the exam, which involves case analyses and commentary on current events.

Students attending lectures must study the following for the exam: the indicated textbook; the contents of the work carried out in class (the in-depth study of case studies, examples and discussions proposed by the lecturer); as well as the work indications and individual study that will also be proposed with the aid of the course pack available on the *Blackboard platform.*

Students not attending lectures will still have to study examples and practical cases as part of their individual preparation.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The exam can be performed in a single solution (general test) or through two partial tests (so-called interim tests), to be carried out exclusively on the dates indicated in the academic calendar.

The tests (partial or general) are written in nature, and comprise open-ended questions on theoretical and practical topics (comment on real events) and the analysis of mini-business case studies. The mark is expressed out of thirty.

A minimum mark of 18/30 is required to pass the partial tests; the final mark is based on the arithmetic average of the marks from the two partial tests.

A student who passes the first test will be able to take the second test on only one of the three dates available during the exam session at the end of the course. A student who does not take or fails to pass one of the two partial tests, or does not accept the mark obtained, will have to take the complete exam.

An oral supplementary exam is not foreseen.

Should the lecturer have any specific needs or doubts regarding the correct execution of the written tests, they have the right to verify the student's preparation through oral questions. This possibility is communicated to students in conjunction with the presentation of the written exam results. Any student who refuses to take the oral exam relinquishes the mark they obtained in the written exam.

The assessment criteria on which marks are based are: knowledge of course content; ability to apply and critically elaborate what has been learned; ability to link the theoretical contents presented with practical applications; and ability to formulate and communicate independent judgments.

To pass, students need only demonstrate superficial knowledge of course contents, a simple presentation style, and confidence in applying the theoretical concepts and specific techniques and methodologies of the subject. To achieve the top mark (and a distinction), students must demonstrate broad, complete and in-depth knowledge, ability to properly use the most appropriate tools, and a capacity for making interdisciplinary links using masterful presentation skills.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

The course takes for granted a basic knowledge of Business Economics and of Company Quantitative Determinations and Methodology, especially regarding the meaning of the various budget items.

Class attendance is strongly recommended. Use of the *Blackboard* IT platform is envisaged for activities such as distribution of materials, delivery of any documents, and communication of marks.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG, or on the Faculty notice board