LEUPHANA
UNIVERSITÄT LÜNEBURG

ENTREPRENEURIAL STRATEGY

Syllabus

Instructor

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Location

Time

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The rise of the digital economy creates a new blueprint for competition. Instead of creating and sustaining firm-specific competitive advantages, the new competition puts ecosystems and networks at the center of entrepreneurial strategies. Several factors have contributed to this networked-based approach, such as the need for deepening specialization as firms struggle to deliver increasingly complex products and services, the emergence of the Internet of Things, and the growing ubiquity of inexpensive, fast, and digital networks. These drivers have created the conditions for the emergence of entirely new industries or transformed existing industries as they became visible in the field of enterprise software, online social networks, video games, and retailers. Think about Blackberry, which captured the lion's share of the smartphone market that it largely created for years. In February 2022, the firm announced it would cease operations and development of a new Blackberry smartphone.

COURSE STRUCTURE
I will use an in-class **teaching** format. In addition, we will have **student presentations** on key topics that will apply theoretical concept in a real life case setting. Finally, I invited entrepreneurs and managers sharing their own first-hand experience in managing digital transformation. **Active participation** during the lecture **is required.**

DIGITAL PLATFORM
Course content will be provided via Moodle and mystudy.

COURSE PREREQUISITES
Students are expected to have **successfully** passed the course "Organization, Strategy, and Innovation" from the previous semester.

EXAMINATION AND DELIVERIES
1. **Group presentation assignment, including peer evaluation, counts 30% of the final grade**
   In groups of approx. three students (depending on class-size), you are asked to find an interesting

company case, analyze the company situation, and present and defend your analysis to the class. Two groups will be assigned to each topic.

Deliverables and timing: ≈10 minutes presentation in class on the day the respective case is scheduled in the course calendar (see below); in addition, you share with all students a **10 Min. video-file**, e.g., audio PowerPoint, two days before your session is scheduled. Both have to be uploaded in mystudy. You also have to submit a **peer evaluation form** that explains your individual contribution to the group tasks and evaluate the contributions of your peers. You and the instructor will only see the peer evaluations.

2. **Free-of-choice essay:** This essay is a free of choice piece of work related to the literature and topics of this course, counts **35% of the final grade**.

3. **Test:** The test will cover all topics of the course in a 60 min. test, including the lectures, the background readings, and the guest lectures, counts **35% of the final grade**.

COURSE LANGUAGE

English

CREDIT POINTS

This module consists of 2 contact hours per lecture, including online lectures: 5 credit points.

Topics	Reading before coming to class	Time table
1. Managing Entrepreneurial Strategy	Read before: ▪ Hitt et al. (2011) ▪ George et al. (2021)	04.04.
2. Guest Speaker: Dr. Kourosh Bahrami, Corporate VP Adhesives, Henkel AG & Co. KGaA **Topic: "Digital Transformation at Henkel Adhesive Technologies"**	Read before: ▪ Ranger (2020)	11.04.
3. Managing Business Model Innovation	Read before: ▪ Amit & Zott (2021) ▪ Elder-Vass (2016)	18.04.
4. Managing Corporate Ventures	Read before ▪ Burgelman (1983) ▪ O'Connor et al. (2018), chap. 4	25.04.
5. Guest Speakers: Hannes Olbrich, (Venture Builder) & **Lennart Säger** (Venture Architect), **acitoflux GmbH** **Topic: "Beyond rocket science – Why companies should consider a space strategy"**	Read before: ▪ Will be announced	02.05.
6. Managing Entrepreneurial Ecosystems	Read before: ▪ Autio & Thomas (2014) ▪ Sussan & Acs (2017)	09.05.
7. Managing Platforms #1	Read before: ▪ McIntyre et al. (2021) ▪ Kornberger (2022)	16.05.
8. Managing Platforms #2	Read before: ▪ Thomas et al. (2014) ▪ Zuboff (2019)	23.05.
9. Guest Speaker: Dr. Eckart Reihlen, Senior Consultant, Drees & Sommer	Read before: ▪ Schöttle (2016)	30.05.

Topic: "Challenges and Opportunities of Battery Production in Germany"		
10. Managing Institutional Strategies	Read before ■ Oliver (1991) ■ Zuboff (2015)	06.06.
11. Managing Competitive Dynamics	Read before ■ Bodrožić & Adler (2022) ■ Chen & Miller (2015)	13.06.
12. Guest Speaker: Viviane Winter, Digital Strategist, Evonik Industries AG **Topic: "AI Strategy for Evonik"**	Read before ■ Berente et al. (2021)	20.06.
Test		27.06.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR YOUR ASSIGNMENTS

My educational approach to strategy is not to assign you a number of well-defined questions that you have to answer in presentation or your essay. This question-answer game rarely stimulates processes of discovery by students and therefore rarely penetrates beneath the surface of more challenging problems. Instead, it is your task **to identify and formulate a problem (or question), frame it with relevant theoretical concepts, use these concepts for interpreting and analyzing case material** and offer the reader a **well-grounded position/conclusion**.

Meeting schedule: Introducing research teams to their tasks / discussion of first ideas
Please have read the material before our meeting and come with a first proposal.

Zoom-Meeting beitreten
https://leuphana.zoom.us/j/96248024158?pwd=RTRxSEpBY1JHMkgxUVFhUnZaSWZlUT09

Meeting-ID: 962 4802 4158
Kenncode: Strategy

GROUP	TOPIC	DATE, TIME
Business Model	Managing Digital Business Model Innovations	April 4th, 9 am via Zoom
Venture	Managing Corporate Ventures	April 4th, 9 am via Zoom
Ecosystem	Managing Entrepreneurial Ecosystems	April 4th, 9 am via Zoom
Platform #1	Managing Platforms #1	May 2nd, 9 am via Zoom
Platform #2	Managing Platforms #2	May 2nd, 9 am via Zoom
Institution	Managing Institutional Strategies	May 23rd, 9 am via Zoom
Dynamics	Managing Competitive Dynamics	May 23rd, 9 am via Zoom

PRESENTATION ASSIGNMENT

We will use case studies to support the learning objectives in this course. The use of cases aims to put general concepts into a real-world context and help you understand practical problems. Read the background literature and the case, then think within your team about an interesting strategic issue you would like to investigate, then explore the academic background literature further and search for additional empirical evidence (about the case, about very different cases, etc.). Make sure you identify in your presentation:

1. a key **strategic issue**,

2. create a **theory relation** that helps to understand why and how this issue matters,

3. develop a **case relation** by analyzing, arguing, and suggesting with empirical evidence, and

4. draw a clearly articulated **conclusion**.

How is your presentation evaluated?

A good presentation shows that the group has addressed all five topics above. Furthermore, a good presentation shows original thinking and an engaging and professional presentation style. I will therefore use three broader categories for evaluating your essays:

Background research

- In how far did you effectively utilize the background material to build a convincing argument?
- How comprehensive was your additional research?
- Did you document the researched information in your presentation and give additional references at the end?

Content

- Is your choice of topic interesting, innovative, and novel?
- Did you address all four topics above (issue, theory relation, case relation, conclusion)
- In how far is your argument structurally coherent? (having a clear line of argument, not fragmented)?
- Is the content of your presentation significant? Does it demonstrate deep thinking, originality, consistency, relevance?
- In how far were you able to defend your position in class?

Presentation style

- Quality of slides
- Quality of the oral presentation (such as argumentation style, precision, ability to substantiate and discuss statements, claims, keeping the time, etc.)
- Quality of the shared video-file
- Innovativeness of presentation; engaging the audience

Peer evaluation
- Within team peer evaluation: To avoid any free-riding, you will be asked to evaluate each team member's contribution.
- Across team peer evaluation: at the end of the course, each student will submit from his or her point of view the best three presentations (yet, you are not allowed to nominate your own presentation).

How is your presentation delivered?

- You will first produce a **10 min. video-file**, audio PowerPoint that will be shared with all students two days before your scheduled session.

- In addition, all students in the group will participate during the **10 min. in-class presentation**.

ESSAY ASSIGNMENT

What is an essay?

Repetition of case facts is not enough to make an accomplished academic essay. An essay should have an argument (see the reading on the structure of arguments). It should deal with an issue that you believe is interesting and relevant for understanding the case or advancing a theoretical problem. It should try to

convey a well-substantiated point such as a "thesis" or a short set of closely related points -by reasoning and evidence, especially including appropriate examples and confirming citations from any particular text or sources your argument involves. Gathering such evidence usually involves some rereading of the case and background material with a question or provisional thesis in mind.

Your first effort should be to formulate and justify the question(s) you will seek to answer in your essay. Next, develop by thinking, reading, and drafting a provisional thesis. Don't become prematurely committed to this first answer. Pursue it, but test it – even to the point of consciously asking yourself what might be said against it – and be ready to revise or qualify it as your work progresses. (Sometimes a suggestive possible title one discovers early can serve in the same way.)

There are many ways in which any particular argument may be well presented, but an essay's line of argument – how it begins, develops, and ends – should be designed to present your point clearly and convincingly. (Keep in mind: The order in which you discovered the parts of your argument is seldom an effective order for presenting it to a reader.)

How is your essay evaluated?

A good essay demonstrates that the author has a profound knowledge about the relevant academic field the essay topic covers. A good essay shows original thinking and offers a clearly articulated, well-substantiated position of the author. I will therefore use three broader categories for evaluating your essays:

Background research

- In how far did you effectively utilize the background and case study material to build a convincing argument?
- How comprehensive was your additional research?
- Did you document the researched information in your essay?
- Did you cite works properly within the text?

Content

- In how far is your argument structurally coherent? (having a clear line of argument, not fragmented)
- Is the content of your essay significant? Does it demonstrate deep thinking, originality, consistency, relevance?

Orthography, style

- Spelling, punctuation, Grammar
- Writing complexity (varied sentences, appropriate level of diction, fluidity of prose)
- Argumentation style (ability to substantiate and discuss statements, claims, etc.)

Formal essay style and submission guidelines

- Frontpage should include a title, perhaps a subtitle that reflects your choice of focus, author's name, phone number, email address.
- Essays should be 1.5-spaced with an approximate length of **1,000 words**.
- If you take information from specific sources (books, articles, internet, etc.), make sure you have correct and complete references. **No plagiarism** or use of **artificial intelligence** (e.g., chatgpt) is allowed in your exams. Plagiarism is defined as borrowing (almost verbatim) sentences or considerable parts thereof from the work of others without adequate acknowledgment. Keep in mind that plagiarism and the use of artificial intelligence in essay writing is an academic crime and has severe consequences for students, ranging from failing the class to being expelled from the program!
- If you are unsure what plagiarism is, watch the following video and consult our style guide.

- Please prepare your essay topic for class discussion and **upload your essay on mystudy** (see the upload folders) no later than **Aug 15th**. Upload in the following format **Lastname_Essay Topic.doc**. Upload doc or docx files only, no pdfs.

AI POLICY

I expect you to use AI (e.g., ChatGPT) in this class as a **sounding board** of your ideas. Learning to use AI is an emerging skill, yet, there are the following rules to follow.
Beware of the limits of ChatGPT:
- Don't trust anything it says. If it gives you a number or fact, assume it is wrong unless you either know the answer or can check it with reliable sources. You will be responsible for any errors or omissions provided by the tool. It works best for topics you understand became knowledgeable. Hence, ChatGPT is no substitute of doing primary research. However, it can be used as a sounding board.
- AI is a tool, but one that you need to acknowledge using. Please include a **paragraph** at the end of any assignment that **explains what AI was used for** and what prompts you used to get results. Failure to do so is a violation of academic honesty and will be treated as cheating.
- Be thoughtful about when this tool is useful. Don't use it if it isn't appropriate for the case and certainly do not use the tool to replace primary research!
- Make sure that your **writing is** unique and **not based on ChatGPT** generated text!

READING ASSIGNMENTS

The following list contains the required readings, which are also subject of the final test. Complementary readings are indicated in the respective sessions' lecture slides.

1. **Managing Entrepreneurial Strategy**
   - Hitt, M. A., Ireland, R. D., Sirmon, D. G., & Trahms, C. A. (2011). Strategic entrepreneurship: creating value for individuals, organizations, and society. Academy of Management Perspectives, 25(2), 57-75.
   - George, G., Merrill, R. K., & Schillebeeckx, S. J. (2021). Digital sustainability and entrepreneurship: How digital innovations are helping tackle climate change and sustainable development. Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 45(5), 999-1027.

2. **Guest Speaker: Dr. Kourosh Bahrami - "Digital Transformation at Henkel Adhesive Technologies"**
   - Ranger, S. (2020) What is the IoT? Everything you need to know about the Internet of Things right now. Accessed February 26, 2023, https://www.zdnet.com/article/what-is-the-internet-ofthings-everything-you-need-to-know-about-the-iot-right-now/.

3. **Managing Business Model Innovation**
   - Amit, R., & Zott, C. (2021). Business model innovation strategy: Transformational concepts and tools for entrepreneurial leaders. John Wiley & Sons, chap. 4.
   - Elder-Vass, D. (2016). Profit and gift in the digital economy. Cambridge University Press, chap. 6-9.

4. **Managing Corporate Ventures**
   - Burgelman, R. A. (1983). A process model of internal corporate venturing in the diversified major firm. Administrative Science Quarterly, 223-244.
   - O'Connor, G. C., Corbett, A. C., & Peters, L. S. (2018). Beyond the Champion. Stanford University Press, chap. 4.

5. **Guest Speaker: Hannes Olbrich,** (Venture Builder) & **Lennart Säger** (Venture Architect): **"Beyond rocket science – Why companies should consider a space strategy"**
   - Reading will be announced

6. **Managing Entrepreneurial Ecosystems**
   - Autio, E., & Thomas, L. 2014. Innovation ecosystems. In The Oxford handbook of innovation management, 204-288. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press
   - Sussan, F., & Acs, Z. J. (2017). The digital entrepreneurial ecosystem. Small Business Economics, 49(1), 55-73.

7. **Managing Platforms #1**
   - McIntyre, D., Srinivasan, A., Afuah, A., Gawer, A., & Kretschmer, T. (2021). Multisided platforms as new organizational forms. Academy of Management Perspectives, 35(4), 566-583.
   - Kornberger (2022). Strategies for distributed and collective action: Connecting the dots. Oxford University Press: Oxford, chap. 8.

8. **Managing Platforms #2**
   - Thomas, L. D., Autio, E., & Gann, D. M. (2014). Architectural leverage: putting platforms in context. The Academy of Management Perspectives, 28(2), 198-219.
   - Zuboff, S. (2019). The age of surveillance capitalism: The fight for a human future at the new frontier of power. Profile Books, chap. 3.

9. **Guest Speaker: Dr. Eckart Reihlen" Challenges and Opportunities for Battery Production in Germany"**
   - Schöttle, M. (2016). Arguments for Battery Production in Germany. ATZelektronik worldwide, 11(5), 26-31.

10. **Managing Institutional Strategies**
    - Oliver, C. (1991). Strategic responses to institutional processes. Academy of Management Review, 16(1), 145-179.
    - Zuboff, S. (2015). Big other: surveillance capitalism and the prospects of an information civilization. Journal of Information Technology, 30(1), 75-89.

11. **Managing Competitive Dynamics**
    - Bodrožić, Z., & S. Adler, P. (2022). Alternative futures for the digital transformation: A macro-level Schumpeterian perspective. Organization Science, 33(1), 105-125.
    - Chen, M. J., & Miller, D. (2015). Reconceptualizing competitive dynamics: A multidimensional framework. Strategic Management Journal, 36(5), 758-775.

12. **Guest Speaker: Viviane Winter: "AI Strategy for Evonik"**
    - Berente, N., Gu, B., Recker, J., & Santhanam, R. (2021). Managing artificial intelligence. MIS Quarterly, 45(3), 1433-1450.