

Course Overview

Course Name & Number:	MGMT 502 A Wi 21: Business Strategy
Quarter	Winter 2021
Prerequisites	None
Credits	4 credits
Delivery Format	Blended

Course Overview:

Hi, I am [David Sirmon](#), your professor for Competitive Strategy, and I am certainly looking forward to engaging with you this Quarter. I absolutely love this course and I hope you come to love it as well!

Firm strategy is all about choices regarding how to realize competitive advantage. Do you have a comprehensive model that enables you to assess the effectiveness of a firm's strategy? If not, this is the course for you. This course immerses us in firm strategy - a multi-faceted concept in which Top Management Teams (TMTs) shape the design and direction of the firm as well as coordinate its specialized functions to effectively compete in specific marketplaces. Indeed, evidence shows effective formulation and implementation of firm strategy differentiates thriving from failing firms. We will follow the Triangle Model to guide our critical exploration of these issues. Let's get started!

Course Learning Objectives:

This class is designed to develop you as a T-shaped strategist. That is one with greater depth in *analytical and diagnostic skills* based on the mastery of several frameworks and logics - a "strategic toolbox" so to speak - as well as breadth of *analogical thinking skills* enabling you to accurately (and differentially) apply lessons across a wide set of industry domains.

The efforts to improve these skills not only enable you to formulate effective and comprehensive strategies across industry domains, but also enables you to "sniff out bad strategy" and deliver more "compelling narratives" regarding your strategy. Thus, it is my belief, and numerous prior students would attest, development as a T-shaped strategist will propel your career, no matter of your current rank.

Overall, important skills learned in this course include:

1. Describe and apply analytical tools to assess sources of competitive advantage (5Forces, VRIO)
2. Analyze and critique business-level strategy (e.g., Cost, Differentiation, or Blue Ocean) based on the Triangle Model.
3. Apply deliberate and emergent processes to formulate business-level strategy.
4. Critique corporate-level strategy based on the Triangle Model, with an appreciation for the challenges that size and complexity present as well as key growth vehicles such as M&As
5. Apply Organizational Design logic to improve implementation of said strategy
6. Predict competitive reactions by rivals and how to reduce them
7. Through the mini-group assignments, develop mastery of a comprehensive approach to identifying, evaluating and solving acute strategic issues.

Faculty Info



David Sirmon

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Office Hours:

See Virtual Office Hours
below

TA/Grader: TBD

Faculty Bio:

David G. Sirmon is an associate professor and the Robert Herbold Professor in Entrepreneurship in the Foster School of Business at the University of Washington-Seattle. He previously held the Pamela M. and Barent W. Cater '77 Faculty Research Fellow in the Mays School of Business at Texas A&M University. He earned his Ph.D. (2004) from the W. P. Carey School of Business at Arizona State University.

Dr. Sirmon's research focuses on the intersection of entrepreneurship and strategy. His primary area of research examines the role managers play in orchestrating firm resources to achieve competitive advantage. Additional research interests include mergers and acquisitions as well as firm governance with a focus on family business and boards of directors. His research is published in the *Academy of*

Management Journal, Academy of Management Review, Strategic Management Journal, Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal, Journal of International Business, Journal of Management, Journal of Management Studies, Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice, Organizational Research Methods, among others. His work is highly impactful, being recognitions as Clarivate Analytics Highly Cited Researcher! in both 2014 and 2017. And in 2011, based on his research record, he was awarded the Strategic Management Society's prestigious Emerging Scholar Award for his early and ongoing contributions to the field of strategic management. Additionally, he serves on the editorial review boards of the *Academy of Management Journal, Academy of Management Review, Strategic Management Journal*, and *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal*.

Dr. Sirmon is an award winning instructor (Professor of the Year UW: Core Evening MBA 2013, 2016, 2017, 2018; 2019; Excellence in Graduate Teaching UW, 2017) while teaching numerous courses related to strategic management and entrepreneurship to all levels of university students and executives. Prior to his academic career, Dr. Sirmon was a commercial lender in the Northwest.

Communications Guidelines:

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions, comments or concerns you may have regarding your learning experience in this course. Email is the most efficient method of communication. From there, we can choose the best way to communicate.

Email and Internet:

UW Email and the Canvas Discussion Forums in this course are the official means of communication for this class. Students are expected to read and act upon email in a timely fashion. Students should check their email regularly along with the Announcements section of this course. All instructor correspondence will be sent to your @uw.edu email account.

Course Policies

Academic Integrity and Student Conduct

This program employs the principles and procedures espoused by the [University of Washington Community Standards and Student Conduct guidelines](#) to maintain academic integrity in the course. The Code establishes the expectation that students will practice high standards of professional honesty and integrity.

In particular, implementation of the Code at the Foster School of Business prohibits cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism—including improper citations of source material—as it pertains to academic work. Suspected violations will be

handled in compliance with the [University of Washington Student Conduct Code](#) as outlined in [Washington Administrative Code 478-121](#).

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Access and Accommodations

Your experience in this class is important. If you have already established accommodations with Disability Resources for Students (DRS), please communicate your approved accommodations to me at your earliest convenience so we can discuss your needs in this course.

If you have not yet established services through DRS, but have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations (conditions include but not limited to; mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts), you are welcome to contact DRS at 206-543-8924 or uwdrs@uw.edu or disability.uw.edu.

DRS offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and/or temporary health conditions. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, your instructor(s) and DRS. It is the policy and practice of the University of Washington to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law.

Website: <http://depts.washington.edu/uwdrs/>

Guide: [Getting Started / Accessing Resources](#)

Email: uwdrs@uw.edu

Phone: 206-543-8924

Fax: 206-616-8379

Religious Observance Accommodation

Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW's policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at [Religious Accommodations](#)

[Policy](#). Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the [Religious Accommodations Request form](#).