



APPLIES TO ACADEMIC YEAR 2008/2009

GRA 6823 Strategy and Value Creation in Knowledge Intensive Service Firms

Program

Advanced Specialization Course (MSc), Master of Science in Business and Economics, Master of Science in Business and Economics (Strategy)

Responsible for the course

Bente Løwendahl

Department

Term

According to study plan

ECTS Credits

6

Language of instruction

English

Learning outcome

Generally there is an increased focus on knowledge as strategic resources and as potential sources of competitive advantage. This includes both the strategic role of knowledge and the management of knowledge, and one important and growing part of knowledge based value creation takes place in consulting firms. There are many types of consulting, including e.g. engineering design firms, management-consulting firms, IT consulting firms, communication consulting firms, etc. In too many cases, models of strategy and value creation are taken from industrial contexts and applied to such a knowledge intensive context. This course is designed on the premise that strategy and value creation in knowledge intensive firms follow different patterns. We discuss these differences and emphasize models and strategies more appropriate for the knowledge work in a post-industrial context.

Prerequisites

GRA 6824 Foundations of Strategy Analysis, GRA 6804 Strategic Organization or GRA 6820 Strategic Choice, or eq.

Compulsory literature

Books:

Løwendahl, Bente R.. 2005. Strategic management of professional service firms. 3rd ed. Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School Press
Newell, Sue, et al. 2002. Managing knowledge work. Basingstoke : Palgrave

Recommended literature

Books:

Alvesson, Mats. 2004. Knowledge work and knowledge-intensive firms. Oxford: Oxford University Press
Maister, David H.. 1993. Managing the professional service firm. New York: Free Press

Course outline

Topics covered will include, but are not limited to the following :

- What distinguishes knowledge intensive firms from other firms ?
- What distinguishes professional firms from other knowledge intensive firms ?
- What are the similarities and differences between different types of knowledge intensive firms ?
- What are the characteristics of consulting companies?
- How can you develop strategies for knowledge intensive firms ?
- What are the main managerial challenges involved when attempting to manage knowledge intensive firms ?
- What are the main ethical challenges of knowledge intensive firms?
- What is the nature of knowledge as a strategic resource ?
- Can knowledge be managed, and if so, how ?

Computer-based tools

None

Course structure

This is an advanced course where students are expected to contribute substantially in class through presentations, analysis and case discussions.

In this course class attendance is mandatory. Unexcused absence can result in a lower score. Specific Information regarding student evaluation will be provided in class.

Evaluation

Your course grade will be based on the following activities and weights:

40% class participation, including presentations individually and in teams. 60% research paper individually or in teams of maximum 3 students.

All parts of the evaluation need to be passed in order to get a grade in the course.

Evaluation code(s)

GRA 68233 accounts for 100 % of the final grade in the course GRA 6823.

Aids at the examination

Exam aids at written examinations are explained under exam information in our web-based Student handbook. Please note use of calculator and dictionary.

<http://www.bi.edu/studenthandbook/examaids>

Makeup exam

Re-takes are only possible at the next time a course will be held. When the course evaluation has a separate exam code for each part of the evaluation it is possible to retake parts of the evaluation. Otherwise, the whole course must be re-evaluated when a student wants to retake an exam. Retake examinations entail an extra examination fee.

Honor Code

Academic honesty and trust are important to all of us as individuals, and represent values that are encouraged and promoted by the honor code system. This is a most significant university tradition. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the ideals of the honor code system, to which the faculty are also deeply committed.

Any violation of the honor code will be dealt with in accordance with BI's procedures for cheating. These issues are a serious matter to everyone associated with the programs at BI and are at the heart of the honor code and academy integrity. If you have any questions about your responsibilities under the honor code, please ask.