

Business Summer Programme Girton College, University of Cambridge



This Business Summer Programme allows ambitious students to take a business course comprising three modules covering different cutting edge topics in business. The three modules will be:

Business Leadership
Business Strategy
Responsible Investing

Contact Hours: 45 hours of contact time (three 15-hour modules)

Assessment: Combination of exam, written work and presentations

Business Leadership

This course is a comprehensive overview of organizational behaviour, and the management of this behaviour, in particular from the organizational leader perspective. We will focus on the individual in the workplace (at different levels of hierarchy), how work is structured and organized, and the management of work and change within organizations.

The fundamental focus of the Organizational Behavior course is preparation for a career in professional management practice. By the end of the course participants should be able to:

- Critically evaluate the behaviour of individuals within organizations
- Appreciate the application of theory to explaining and improving management practice
- Critically consider motivational drivers in organizations

Learning Objectives –

- Understand the social nature of organizations and its implications for management and leader
- Stimulate analytical consideration of organizations
- Facilitate understanding of organizations as constantly evolving entities

Session 1 - Introduction + Biases, Heuristics and Understanding the Self

To understand leadership, we need to clarify and explore individual level issues and differences. What sort of decision making biases and heuristics are we exposed to? We will also discuss personality differences and explore their impact on organizations.



Session 2 - Social Networks

In this session, we will explore the latest research and knowledge on social networks - the system of social ties that link us with other. Networks have been proven to lead to individual and organizational performance. In the meantime, we have many prejudices about what are networks and how we use and build them. We will go through the main mechanisms underlying the link between network and performance, and what can individuals and organizations concretely do to build and leverage networks.

Session 3 – Motivation

We will focus here on motivational drivers and the role of organizations. What motivates people? What impels people to act and perform in a work setting? Motivation is not an individual trait but an individual state that is affected by the dynamic between personal, social and organisational factors; this session will concentrate on understanding this dynamic. It will look at the different theories of motivation; it will then discuss the interaction incentive systems, work design and environment in influencing individual motivation. How managers can maximise employee motivation by providing appropriate work conditions goals and incentives will be examined.

Session 4 - Managing Teams

This lecture will examine the nature and dynamics of teams. Using theory and practical insight, the lecture will explore such concepts as team purpose, psychological safety, and performance.

Session 5 - Types of Leadership

Effective leadership is a key element in driving organisational success, but what does leadership mean, and how is 'effective leadership' manifested? This session will examine the theory and practice of leadership and will look specifically at the interaction between the characteristics of the leader, the characteristics of the followers and the organisational context. The difference between leadership and management, differences in leadership styles and the problems associated with leadership, such as narcissism, will also be examined.

Session 6 - Organizational Culture and Change

This session will focus on organizational culture as a lever, metaphor and toolkit for leaders and managers. In this session we will also briefly review key theories of change and analyse why change goals are difficult to achieve. We will zoom in on a specific type of organizational change which has received a lot of attention in the recent years: digital transformation.

Seminars for this course will explore in more details the topics seen in the lecture, and in smaller groups. It will encourage discussion and smaller group work.

Topics include –

- Application of the concepts of individual-level differences (personality, learning, perception, and communication)
- Exercises on job design, motivation, and organizational culture
- Discussion and exercises on leadership, power, and influence
- Small group exercises and discussion on the implications of new technologies (AI, robots, big data) and the future of management.



Teaching Methods –

The delivery modes include formal lectures, in-class exercises, use of visual aids, case presentations and in the seminars case discussion and presentations. Students are expected to have completed the readings and case studies prior to each lecture.

In case study analysis, the role of the faculty is to facilitate learning from your own analysis as well as that of your fellow students. Thus, it is essential that you prepare your analysis prior to the class. Case preparation comprises reading the case and noting your responses to the problems in the case study and responding to case questions. The in-class rules of engagement are to be prepared and willing to participate.

Assessment - Written report.

Business Strategy

Learning Objectives –

The fundamental focus of the course is on helping participants develop skills that will allow them to make robust strategic decisions in the face of uncertainty and complexity. By the end of the module, participants will be able to synthesize the set of concepts and frameworks you have gained to address challenging strategic management problems. In particular, you will be able to:

- Analyze industry structure and environmental trends to assess industry potential
- Evaluate firms' competitive positioning and assess firm-level resources and capabilities
- Formulate business-unit and corporate strategies to achieve competitive advantage in the face of uncertainty and complexity

Course Content –

- Nature and context of strategic management
- Theories, concepts and models of strategic analysis
- Applications to strategic management practice

Session 1 - Introduction and Industry Analysis

This lecture introduces the course and explores the definitions and basic concepts of strategy. We will also examine the analysis of competition in an industry, focusing on traditional and new industry analysis frameworks.

Session 2 - Types of Competitive Advantage

This lecture concentrates on the definition, positioning and implementation of generic strategies (cost leadership and differentiation) within the same industry.

Session 3 - Strategic Innovation: Blue Ocean Strategy

This lecture introduces the innovative concepts and frameworks of blue ocean strategy and the value canvas.



Session 4 - Corporate Strategy I: Growth

This lecture examines how companies choose growth strategies and create value across different businesses.

Session 5 - Corporate Strategy II: Acquisition of New Resources

This lecture examines the different ways to access new resources, focusing on the 'Build, Borrow, Buy' framework.

Session 6 – Strategic Turnaround: How do firms change their strategies successfully?

This session examines how firms struggle to escape from fallen peaks and the challenges of strategic change.

Teaching Methods –

The course will be taught through a mixture of case discussions, videos, and short lectures. Each session of the course will focus on a specific subset of corporate strategic decisions. The class will mix theoretical content and practical cases. Students will be invited to participate and share their thoughts on theoretical and practical considerations in relation with the content of the course. They should feel free to ask questions and discuss, especially if they want to clarify or challenge the content covered in the course. Students will be asked to present and challenge case analyses.

Assessment - Presentation 30%, Coursework 70%.

Responsible Investing

Learning Objectives –

By the end of the course, students should have a broad understanding of agency problems in firms, and corporate governance remedies devised to alleviate such problems. Students will learn about the objectives of corporations, and the difference between shareholder vs. stakeholder theories of corporate governance. In relation with corporate governance, students will learn the principles of responsible investing and its implications for investors and firms. Finally, the course will discuss the case of Norwegian Government Pension Fund Global, one of the world's largest funds promoting on responsible investing.

Course Content –

- Agency Problems & Corporate Governance
- Responsible Investing
- The Norway Model

Session 1 - Agency Problems & Corporate Governance

This session introduces the agency problems in firms and the corporate governance remedies. In particular, we will discuss about the root causes of agency problems, and the advantages and disadvantages of the governance mechanisms (e.g., executive compensation, boards of directors, mergers and acquisitions, shareholder activism, law and finance etc.) to address the



Girton College Cambridge
Summer Programmes

agency problems. We will also discuss the objective of firms and contrast the shareholder vs. stakeholder views on corporate governance.

Session 2 - Responsible Investing

The session explains the root causes for the increasing environmental, social and governance (ESG) and corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices and emphasis recently. We will then talk about the options that investors have while dealing with ESG issues. We will examine two studies as value-enhancing examples of engagements with firms on E&S issues. In the session, we will also discuss other recent related studies/findings on ESG including green bonds.

Session 3 - The Norway Model

Norway's Government Pension Fund Global (GPF) is one of the world's largest funds. It is highly rated for its low-cost, transparent, and socially responsible approach to asset management. Together we will review the distinctive features of the approach of this fund, paying particular attention to the fund's emphasis on Responsible Investing. This session will also discuss recent papers analyzing the Norwegian fund's investment/engagement decisions.

Teaching Methods - Combination of lectures, case study discussions and group work.

Assessment - An essay related to the topics discussed in class.