University of St.Gallen

Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Spring Semester 2021

8,220: Alliance and Network Strategy

ECTS credits: 4

Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)
Decentral - Written examination (50%, 60 mins.)
Examination time: term time
Decentral - Presentation (in groups - all given the same grades) (50%)
Examination time: term time

Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer
8,220,1.00 Alliance and Network Strategy -- Englisch -- Kreutzer Markus

Course information

Course prerequisites

There is no formal course prerequisite.

Learning objectives

Students will be highly competent in the relevant perspectives (theories, frameworks, tools) for the phenomena covered (strategic alliances, networks and ecosystems) and will be able to directly transfer their knowledge from these tools/frameworks and case studies to practice.

Learning objectives:

1. You gain a deep insight into the challenges of cooperative relationships.

2. You understand the rationale for cooperative strategies and when they are most applicable.

3. You understand which different types of inter-organizational relationships exist and under which conditions to use them.

4. You are aware of challenges along the lifecycle of strategic alliances and know how to address them.

5. You know how to select alliance partners, set-up the alliance governance, manage the relationship, measure joint progress, and terminate the alliance.

6. You know what is special about alliance portfolios and alliance networks.

7. You understand the increasing importance of ecosystems, specific ecosystem challenges and how to address them.

Course content

This course introduces students to the issues and analytical arguments related to cooperative relationships (strategic alliances, joint ventures, multi-partner alliances, networks, and ecosystems). Cooperative relationships have emerged as inter-organizational designs that enable firms to cope with the increasing complexity of learning and of building new sources of competitive advantage in order to compete successfully in the global economy. The formation rate of inter-firm collaborations has increased dramatically in recent years. As a result of this proliferation, most companies are now placed within a framework of inter-organizational relationships that are crucial to their success and survival. In contrast to the increasing popularity of

alliances as a value-creating option, several studies find failure rates of alliances to lie above 50 percent. As a result, practitioners and researchers alike are intrigued by the phenomenon of inter-firm partnerships and search for ways to succeed in this challenging realm of competitive strategy. This course incorporates various theoretical perspectives and is designed to focus on the essential issues and problems of cooperative strategies experienced by managers. Questions include, for example:

- When to pursue a cooperative strategy?
- What is the right way to structure a collaborative venture?
- Which different types of inter-organizational relationships can be distinguished?
- When are alliances preferred to mergers & acquisitions or arm's length contracts?
- How to screen for collaborative partners?
- What are the benefits and risks of collaborating with (potential) competitors?
- What's special about alliance portfolios, alliance networks, multi-partner alliances, and ecosystems?

Course structure

The course is structured as follows: After an introduction on (the importance and different types of) strategic alliances, we will discuss the main stages in alliance evolution and compare different theoretical perspectives in alliance research. Five main stages are distinguished:

- Stage 1: Analyzing (purpose and value logic)
- Stage 2: Preparing (types of inter-organizational relationships and partner selection)
- Stage 3: Shaping (negotiation and design & governance)
- Stage 4: Conducting (managing the alliance, trust, control, and alliance capability)
- Stage 5: Closing (assessment and termination)

We initially discuss these phase-specific questions for strategic alliances between two partners before we move beyond dyadic alliances to discuss particular management challenges in alliance portfolios, alliance networks, multi partner alliances, and ecosystems.

Course literature

For this course compulsory literature is indicated with an asterisk (*) in the Syllabus and will be available for download at StudyNet. These readings, on average one case study and one article per session, have to be prepared for each class.

Additional course information

In the case of the President's Board having to implement new directions due to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic in SpS2021, the course information listed above will be changed as follows:

- The course is conducted exclusively online via the platform Zoom (or another platform as announced)

- The lecturer informs via e-mail on the changed implementation modalities of the course

There are no changes necessary to the examination information

Examination information

Examination sub part/s

1. Examination sub part (1/2)

Examination time and form
Decentral - Written examination (50%, 60 mins.)
Examination time: term time

Remark

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Examination-aid rule
Examinations with electronic aids - on campus or online

For examinations with electronic aids, students may be asked to install a predefined software on their own computer. The procurement and financing of the necessary technical aids, hardware and software as well as ensuring their functionality is the responsibility of the students, unless they are explicitly provided by the University.

If the examination is conducted with the candidates' own laptop or computer, the private device must meet the following requirements:

- Operating system: Windows or macOS

- Software: Microsoft Excel (minimum: Office 2016 or Microsoft Office 365) and current internet browser;

- All necessary updates for the controlled functioning of the operating system and the required software must be installed;

- HSG login: The HSG account must be functional and the access data must be known;

- Network and power: The device must be WLAN capable and have a stable internet connection. For examinations written outside the University premises, a stable internet connection with a sufficiently high transmission rate as well as the availability of a power supply must be ensured at the user's own responsibility;

- Battery life: Operation must be guaranteed during the entire examination period. The device must have a battery life of at least 90 minutes. It is recommended to carry a working power supply;

- Video and audio capability: For examinations which are not held on University premises, the equipment must have a functioning webcam and a functioning, correctly adjusted microphone.

Participants are responsible for ensuring that their equipment is working properly and allows the partaking in the examination. Any deficiencies in the personal infrastructure are the responsibility of the students. Any deficiencies due to the students' own technology or a lack of an uninterrupted internet connection will not be recognized as procedural errors in the execution of the examination.

The examination is to be taken exclusively by the candidate and only with the help of the permitted aids. The use of additional software, in particular of another internet browser or communication software, is strictly forbidden during the entire examination. Any use of software other than the specified software requires the express prior written permission of the examination administration.

When using a LockDown browser, all applications (internet browser, Office, file explorer, etc.) are blocked and the documents on the computer are therefore not accessible. Any other aids and documents permitted in this leaflet must therefore be printed and/or physically available.

In the case of examinations with electronic aids on the premises of the University, the following shall apply in particular

- After the corresponding request of the examination administration, all connections of the device with networks or other devices (mobile network, WLAN, Bluetooth, etc.) must be disconnected.

For online examinations that do not take place on the University campus, the following applies in particular:

- The identity of the examinee will be verified via webcam before the examination begins. Photographs can be taken. The HSGcard or identity card must be kept ready for this purpose.

- Any unannounced unauthorized removal from the recording area of the webcam may be punished as a culpable violation of the examination conditions.

- Oral examinations may be recorded. The recording may be used for evaluation purposes and documents the examination in the event of appeal and/or disciplinary proceedings. The recordings shall be deleted after the appeal period or any proceedings have expired.

- The use of a headset is only permitted during an oral examination.

Supplementary aids

University of St.Gallen

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2. Examination sub part (2/2)

Examination time and form
Decentral - Presentation (in groups - all given the same grades) (50%)
Examination time: term time

Remark
Team presentation

Examination-aid rule
Practical examination
No examination-aid rule is necessary for such examination types. The rules and regulations of the University of St. Gallen apply in a subsidiary fashion.

Supplementary aids

Examination content
For the exam all readings (articles and case studies) as well as all discussion in the classroom (including guest lectures' talks) are relevant. Topics include questions on the rationale for strategic alliances, the stages of their management and the particular challenges faced within each of these stages as well as multi-partner, alliance portfolio, ecosystems, and network-related questions.

Examination relevant literature
For this course all compulsory readings (articles and cases) which are indicated with an asterisk (*) in the Syllabus will be available for download at StudyNet. Exam-relevant literature will be uploaded the latest by April 27, 2021.

Please note

Please note that only this fact sheet and the examination schedule published at the time of bidding are is binding and takes precedence over other information, such as information on StudyNet (Canvas), on lecturers' websites and information in lectures etc.

Any references and links to third-party content within the fact sheet are only of a supplementary, informative nature and lie outside the area of responsibility of the University of St.Gallen.

Documents and materials are only relevant for central examinations if they are available by the end of the lecture period (CW21) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 12 are relevant for testing.

Binding nature of the fact sheets:

- Course information as well as examination date (organised centrally/decentrally) and form of examination: from bidding start in CW 04 (Thursday, 28 January 2021);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 22 March 2021);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 22 March 2021);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: two weeks before the end of the registration period in CW 14 (Thursday, 8 April 2021).