Course Outline

Course Code : DOS3704
Course Title : Operations Strategy
Class Date : From 10/8/2026 To 13/11/2026
Semester : Semester 1, Academic Year 2026/27
Faculty : Dr Goh Shao Hung
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Overview

How did Tesla or BYD grow to be among the world's largest vehicle manufacturers in just a decade? How did ZARA become one of the fastest growing and most profitable brands in fashion retailing? The answer is largely that Tesla, BYD and ZARA view their operational capabilities as an important and integral part of their competitive advantage. As do other successful companies, such as Procter & Gamble, Amazon, and Coca Cola, they invest strategically in physical plants and facilities, in process and information technology, in employee, supplier, and distributor relationships, and perhaps most importantly, in organisational practices and know-hows.

Today's successful organisations must delicately jungle between customers' requirements of the lowest cost, the best quality, prompt delivery and flexibility to ensure products and services of their choice. This course is structured to focus on how to achieve these multiple objectives with operations strategy. It builds up on Operations Management concepts and helps students understand how operations can create a significant competitive advantage, when matching demand with supply, through strategic choices regarding a firm's processes, technologies, capacity, location, flexibility, timing, resilience and innovation.

Course Objectives

After taking this course students will be able to analyse and improve a company's operations strategy. More specifically, students will be able to:

- List and explain the range of strategic choices to be made in operations strategy
- List and explain the various links between operations and other business functions
- Analyse and describe the internal and external factors that influence strategic operational investments
- Analyse and describe the connection between operations strategy and the firm's business strategy and competitive position
- List and describe basic principles that lead to an organisation's operational success
- Assess an existing operations strategy by identifying its key elements and by evaluating it qualitatively and financially
- Improve an operations strategy by analysing key drivers and decisions for each element and by developing recommendations and implementation plans

Assessment

Assessment Components	Weightage
End-of-Term Test (Individual)	35%
Group Assignments (Group*)	20%
Group Project (Group*)	25%
Peer Evaluation (Individual)	5%
Class Participation (Individual)	15%

* For group assessments, each group member will get the same score, unless there is a lack of individual contribution to the group effort.

Schedule and Outline

Lesson/ Week	Date	Session
1	10-Aug*	Introduction to Operations Strategy • Readings: Chapter 1, Swiss Watch Industry (Mini case)
2	17-Aug	Linking Operations Strategy to Value Creation • Readings: Chapter 2, PeaPod (Chapter 14)
3	24-Aug	Capabilities, Competition and Operations • Readings: Chapter 3 • HBS Case: American Connector Company (A)
4	31-Aug	Strategic Capacity Sizing and Investment • Readings: Chapter 4, Gujarat Apollo Industries Ltd (Mini case)
5	7-Sep	Dynamic Capacity Sizing: Timing and Expansion • Readings: Chapter 5, Harley Davidson (Chapter 12)
6	14-Sep	Asset and Network Flexibility and Consolidation • Readings: Chapter 6 • HBS Case: Eli Lilly & Co: The Flexible Factory Decision
7	28-Sep	Asset Location, Global Networks and Offshoring • Readings: Chapter 7, Case: Mexico or China? (Mini case)
8	5-Oct	Matching Supply and Demand • Readings: Chapters 8 and 9, Bose 301SE: Sourcing and Contracting (Mini case)
9	12-Oct	Risk Management and Operational Hedging • Readings: Chapter 10, Dell Computer (Mini case)
10	19-Oct	Technology and Innovation Management • Readings: Chapter 11 • HBS Case: Moderna
11	26-Oct	Course Summary and Review; End-of-Term Test
12	2-Nov	Project Presentations 1
13	9-Nov*	Project Presentations 2

* Public holidays. Make-up class arrangements (if required) to be announced.

General Guide & Reading

Primary reference:

- Jan A. Van Mieghem and Gad Allon, Operations Strategy, Principles and Practice, 2nd Edition, Dynamic Ideas, 2015

Optional reading:

- Nigel Slack and Mike Lewis, Operations Strategy, 7th Edition, Pearson, 2024

Academic Honesty & Plagiarism

Academic integrity and honesty is essential for the pursuit and acquisition of knowledge. The University and School expect every student to uphold academic integrity & honesty at all times. Academic dishonesty is any misrepresentation with the intent to deceive, or failure to acknowledge the source, or falsification of information, or inaccuracy of statements, or cheating at examinations/tests, or inappropriate use of resources.

Plagiarism is 'the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own' (The New Oxford Dictionary of English). The University and School will not condone plagiarism. Students should adopt this rule - You have the obligation to make clear to the assessor which is your own work, and which is the work of others. Otherwise, your assessor is entitled to assume that everything being presented for assessment is being presented as entirely your own work. This is a minimum standard. In case of any doubts, you should consult your instructor.

Additional guidance is available at:

- Administrative Policies
- http://www.nus.edu.sg/registrar/administrative-policies-procedures/acceptance-record#NUSCodeofStudentConduct
- http://nus.edu.sg/osa/resources/code-of-student-conduct