

**UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS - VARNA**  
**FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT**  
**DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**

---

---

Adopted by the FC (record №12/29.04.2024)

Adopted by the DC (record №10/16.04.2024)

**ACCEPTED BY:**

**Dean:**

(Assos. Prof. Dobrin Dobrev, PhD)

## **SYLLABUS**

**SUBJECT: UNDERSTANDING STRATEGIES AND BUSINESS GROWTH**

**DEGREE PROGRAMME: Master of business administration; MASTER'S DEGREE**

**YEAR OF STUDY: 5; SEMESTER: 10**

**TOTAL STUDENT WORKLOAD: 240 hours; incl. curricular 60 hours**

**CREDITS: 8**

### DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENT WORKLOAD ACCORDING TO THE CURRICULUM

| <i>TYPE OF STUDY HOURS</i>  | <b>WORKLOAD,<br/>hours</b> | <b>TEACHING<br/>HOURS PER<br/>WEEK, hours</b> |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| <b>CURRICULAR:</b>          |                            |   |
| incl.                       |                            |   |
| • LECTURES                  | 30                         | 2   |
| • SEMINARS / LAB. EXERCISES | 30                         | 2   |
| <b>EXTRACURRICULAR</b>      | 180                        | -   |

Prepared by:

1. ....  
(Corresp.- member, Prof. Ivan Roussev, Dr. Sc.)

2. ....  
(Chief Assist. Prof. Boncho Mitev, PhD)

3. ....  
(Chief Assist. Prof. Katya Vladova, PhD)

Head of department  
of Management and Administration: .....  
(Assos. Prof. Desislava Serafimova, PhD)

## **I. ANNOTATION**

*The Understanding Strategies and Business Growth course aims to expand students' knowledge of the nature, drivers and tools, difficulties and limitations of growth. It will provide students with an understanding of strategies, strategic management process and the firm growth specifics and challenges, as well as with the options available to companies from the very beginning of their development.*

*The course contributes to expanding the knowledge and skills of students to analyze strategically the environment of the organizations, as well as their different type of strategies, especially growth strategies. Furthermore, various stage models of business development are examined in detail. In addition to traditional approaches to firm growth, some of the contemporary business concepts, such as dynamic capabilities and design- thinking, are linked to the growth management.*

*Students will get to know and analyze various examples and practical situations (case studies) of business growth – how growth is achieved and managed and how it affects the different stakeholders. Additionally, they should be able to analyze and evaluate critically real-life company situations and develop creative solutions, using a strategic management perspective. In this way, the following key competences are applied and developed: personal, social and learning to learn, citizenship and entrepreneurship.*

## **II. THEMATIC CONTENT**

| №  | TITLE OF UNIT AND SUBTOPICS                                       | NUMBER OF HOURS |          |      |
|--|---|-----------------|----------|------|
|  |   | L               | S        | L.E. |
| <b>Theme 1. WHAT IS STRATEGY AND STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT?</b> |   | <b>2</b>        | <b>2</b> |      |
| 1.1.   | Strategic thinking and strategic decisions                        |                 |          |      |
| 1.2.   | Strategy definition and levels of strategies                      |                 |          |      |
| 1.3.   | Strategic management process – framework and stages               |                 |          |      |
| <b>Theme 2. STRATEGIC ANALYSIS</b>                         |   | <b>4</b>        | <b>4</b> |      |
| 2.1.   | External environment analysis – methods and frameworks            |                 |          |      |
| 2.2.   | Competitive environment and industry analysis                     |                 |          |      |
| 2.3.   | Internal environment analysis – methods and frameworks            |                 |          |      |
| <b>Theme 3. STRATEGY FORMULATION</b>                       |   | <b>5</b>        | <b>5</b> |      |
| 3.1.   | Corporate strategies  |                 |          |      |
| 3.2.   | Market entry strategies   |                 |          |      |
| 3.3.   | Business strategies   |                 |          |      |
| 3.4.   | Functional strategies   |                 |          |      |
| <b>Theme 4. WHAT IS BUSINESS GROWTH?</b>                   |   | <b>3</b>        | <b>3</b> |      |
| 4.1.   | Growth definition – main terms and concepts                       |                 |          |      |
| 4.2.   | Theoretical approaches to business growth                         |                 |          |      |
| 4.3.   | Main indicators for measuring business growth                     |                 |          |      |
| <b>Theme 5. GROWTH TYPES AND THEIR SPECIFICS</b>           |   | <b>4</b>        | <b>4</b> |      |
| 5.1.   | Business growth models and stages of development of organizations |                 |          |      |
| 5.2.   | Growth types – specifics and elements of growth of organizations  |                 |          |      |

|  |   |           |           |  |
|--|---|-----------|-----------|--|
| 5.3.   | Growth tools and drivers                                      |           |           |  |
| <b>Theme 6. CONTEMPORARY BUSINESS APPROACHES TO THE GROWTH MANAGEMENT OF ORGANIZATIONS</b> |   | <b>4</b>  | <b>4</b>  |  |
| 6.1.   | Dynamic capabilities approach and business growth management  |           |           |  |
| 6.2.   | Design-thinking approach and business growth management       |           |           |  |
| <b>Theme 7. BUSINESS GROWTH IMPLEMENTATION</b>   |   | <b>6</b>  | <b>6</b>  |  |
| 7.1.   | Growth specifics of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) |           |           |  |
| 7.2.   | High-growth business organizations                            |           |           |  |
| 7.3.   | Specifics of the corporate growth process                     |           |           |  |
| 7.4.   | Business growth success stories and failures of organizations |           |           |  |
| <b>Theme 8. GROWING PAINS AND HOW TO COPE WITH THEM</b>                                    |   | <b>2</b>  | <b>2</b>  |  |
| 8.1.   | Barriers and limitations of the business growth               |           |           |  |
| 8.2.   | Challenges of the business growth process                     |           |           |  |
|  |   |           |           |  |
| <b>Total:</b>  |   | <b>30</b> | <b>30</b> |  |

### III. FORMS OF CONTROL

| №                                      | TYPE AND FORM OF CONTROL               | Number   | extracurricular, hours |
|--|--|----------|------------------------|
| <b>1.</b>                              | <b>Midterm control</b>                 |          |                        |
| 1.1.                                   | Case-study analysis                    | <b>5</b> | <b>75</b>              |
| 1.2.                                   | Written assignment on a specific topic | <b>1</b> | <b>25</b>              |
| 1.3.                                   | Critical analysis and presentation     | <b>1</b> | <b>20</b>              |
| <b>Total midterm control:</b>          |  | <b>7</b> | <b>120</b>             |
| <b>2.</b>                              | <b>Final term control</b>              |          |                        |
| 2.1.                                   | Examination (test)                     | <b>1</b> | <b>60</b>              |
| <b>Total final term control:</b>       |  | <b>1</b> | <b>60</b>              |
| <b>Total for all types of control:</b> |  | <b>8</b> | <b>180</b>             |

### IV. LITERATURE

#### **REQUIRED (BASIC) LITERATURE:**

1. Braennback, M, A.L. Carsrud, N. Kiviluoto. *Understanding the Myth of High-growth Firms. The Theory of the Greater Fool*. Springer, 2014
2. Coad, Alex. *The Growth of Firms. A Survey of Theories and Empirical Evidence*. Edward Elgar Publishing, 2009
3. Davidsson, P., J. Wiklund. *New Perspectives on Firm Growth*. Edward Elgar Publishing, 2013
4. Dess, G., McNamara, G., Eisner, A., Lee, S. *Strategic Management. Text and Cases. Tenth Edition*. New Youk: McGraw-Hill Education, 2021
5. Diderich, C. *Design Thinking for Strategy*. Innovating towards competitive advantage. Springer, 2020

6. Grundy, T. *Dynamic competitive strategy: turning strategy upside down*. Routledge, 2018
7. Hess, Edward D. *Smart growth: building an enduring business by managing the risks of growth*. Columbia University Press, New York, 2010
8. Shermann, A. J. *Fast-Track Business growth: Smart Strategies to grow without getting derailed*. Kiplinger Books, 2010
9. Rothaermel, F. *Strategic Management. Third Edition*. Mc Graw-Hill Education, 2017

**RECOMMENDED (ADDITIONAL) LITERATURE:**

1. Aliekperov, A. *Creating Business and Corporate Strategy. An Integrated Strategic System*. Routledge, 2021
2. Ferguson, W. J. *The Wisdom of Titans: Secrets of Success from Entrepreneurs who rose to the Top*. Brookline: Bibliomotion, 2013
3. Geyer, A. *The Growth Behaviour of Family Firms. Theoretical and Empirical Elaborations*. Springer Gabler, 2015
4. Godfrey, R. *Strategic Management. A Critical Introduction*. Routledge, 2016
5. Hess, Edward D. *Grow to Greatness. Smart growth for entrepreneurial building*. Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2012
6. Johnson, G., Scholes, K., Whittington, R. *Exploring Corporate Strategy. Eight Edition*. Prentice Hall, 2008
7. Lasserre, Ph. *Global Strategic Management. Fourth Edition*. Palgrave, 2018
8. Macekura, St. *Of Limits and Growth. The Rise of Global Sustainable Development in the 20th Century*. Oxford University Press, 2015
9. Penrose, E. *The Theory of the Growth of the Firm*. 4th ed., Oxford University Press, 2009
10. Schwass, J. *Wise Growth Strategies in Leading Family Businesses*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2005
11. Teece, D.J. *Dynamic Capabilities and Strategic Management*. Oxford University Press, 2009
12. Thomson, A., A. Strikland III. *Crafting and Executing Strategy: Concepts and Reading*. McGrey Hill, 2015
13. Tucker, R. *Driving Growth through Innovation*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2008