Syllabus

OBJECTIVES

This seminar is intended for doctoral students in the field of strategy and related areas who are interested in improving their research and writing skills. It complements a number of theoretically oriented seminars currently offered in strategy (e.g., Taïeb Hafi's course on «Les politiques générales»; Rick Molz' course on "Debating Strategic Management"). The title of the course expresses its three main objectives and subcomponents summarized below:

1) **Reading**: At the end of the seminar, students should be able to competently evaluate research articles in strategic management that use a range of methodological approaches. To achieve this, the seminar will be structured to incorporate readings using different methodological approaches in different sessions (e.g., questionnaires, case studies, conceptual articles, etc.). Participants will also be required to give their names to the organizers of the

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1 Language: Students may speak, present, and hand in assignments in English or French as they prefer.
ASAC Conference, the annual AIMS conference or the BPS, OMT or other Division Programs of the Academy of Management in order to obtain some real experience in reviewing articles during the course of the seminar.

2) **Doing:** At the end of the seminar, participants should have a practical feel for the requirements of preparing and writing different types of intellectual products in strategic management through (a) the participation in mini-exercises to be presented to other members of the class and (b) through the preparation of an article (as single author or as co-author) based on previous work (e.g., a master’s thesis) or on ongoing and developing ideas relevant to their research interests (literature review, methods review, thesis article, etc.). This article should be submittable to a journal or to a conference (ASAC, Academy of Management, AIMS, SMS). Time will be allowed to discuss evolving articles.

3) **Publishing:** At the end of the seminar, students should have greater awareness of the requirements for publishing in various types of outlets in the strategic management and related fields. Most doctoral students plan to embark on an academic career after graduating. Students who have succeeded in publishing their work will have an advantage. A significant proportion of the seminar will therefore be devoted to examining the various journals in the field and discussing the publication process.

**Prerequisites:**

At least one general Ph.D. or M.Sc. seminar in strategy should in most cases be completed before taking this seminar. A previous methods course at master’s or doctoral level would be an asset.

**Pedagogical Methods:**

Various pedagogical methods will be used:

- Readings, presentations and critical discussions by students of research articles in strategic management using different methodologies.
- Practical exercises around reviewing, methodological approaches, etc.
- Workshops on ongoing projects (reviewing, writing papers).
- Short lectures (occasionally from invited faculty on certain specific methods).

**Required Texts**

There is one required text plus a small Codex that includes articles and book chapters not available in the major electronic databases in your library.

- Langley, A., Recueil de textes 80426 G.
All other articles in this course plan can be downloaded freely from electronic databases available in the libraries. Other readings may be assigned during the seminar. This is to allow flexibility in the choice of articles. An attempt will be made to select research articles that fit with the interests of the participants while illustrating the use of various methodologies. The following general references are also recommended.


**EVALUATION:**

1. **Reviews of readings, exercises, participation in discussion: 50%**

Each session will require preparatory work on the part of seminar participants including presentations, exercises and short papers (e.g., reviews of articles) to be handed in. Each student will be graded on their contribution to these activities. Based on their interests, each student will also be assigned sessions in which they will be lead presenters. This may involve doing some additional preparation (e.g., an exercise). Assignments should be sent to the faculty instructors by e-mail before 2:00 pm the day before class.

2. **Review for a real scientific conference or journal: 10%**

Students will be asked to submit their names to conference organizers and/or journals as potential reviewers. A real review must be carried out and handed in.

3. **Article preparation and submission: 40%**

At the beginning of the seminar, each student must propose some kind of publication project based on a prior or ongoing piece of work (to be discussed with instructors). The final paper must be submitted to a journal or a conference and handed in at the end of the seminar. Evaluation will be based on the extent to which the author has succeeded in producing a plausibly publishable contribution. Each paper will be assigned to another student for review. The final mark for the paper will be based on the other student's evaluation and on the professor's evaluation. The quality of the student's review will also be judged as part of this evaluation.
COURSE OUTLINE

N.B. The ordering and content of sessions may be adjusted slightly to accommodate speaker availabilities and the interests of participants.

Session 1:  Introduction (07-01-2011)

- Seminar objectives and logistics.
- Introductions, identification of participants' research interests.
- Overview of trends in research on strategy.
- Discussion of publication projects.
- Discussion of specific methodological concerns.

Readings


Session 2 :  Publication outlets for strategy research (14-01-2011)

Analysis of the characteristics of various journals and conference outlets open to writers on strategy issues (including empirical research, theory, cases, practical tools, etc.). Each participant will investigate two or more outlets and present their assessment to the rest of the class.

Readings


**Session 3: Evaluating empirical research articles (21-01-2011)**

- Evaluation criteria for empirical research
- The research process: traditional and less traditional views
- Discussion of basic notions of research validity and reliability.
- What journal editors expect from a reviewer.
- How to evaluate articles clearly but constructively.

*Article for review: to be determined*

**Other readings**


Session 4: Developing a publication project (28-01-2011)

Participants should bring to this seminar, the results of various exercises (to be indicated) proposed in Huff's book and be prepared to present and discuss them with other participants. This should allow everyone to better define their writing project for this seminar, the probable outlet and audiences to be targeted, and the exemplars that might provide the best role models. Everyone should bring to the seminar any prior work that forms the basis for their project. They should also prepare a preliminary title and abstract.

Readings

Huff, A.S., Chapters 1-6.


Session 5: Publishing literature reviews in strategy + A case of first publication (04-02-2011)

• Outlets for review articles
• Distinctions between meta-analyses, review and theory development articles
• How to develop compelling and useful literature reviews.
• Case history of review and revision process for a first publication (invited speaker).

Readings

Sample published literature reviews in strategy


On writing literature reviews


Session 6: Making a theoretical contribution in strategy (11-02-2011)

• What is theory?
• What are the characteristics of a good theory-based article?
• What are the characteristics of a good literature-based article?
• Reviews of conceptual articles in strategy.
• Discussion of publication projects.

Articles for review

Article of your choice

Other readings


Session 7: Mainstream strategy research: Surveys and archival data studies (18-02-2011)

- How to go about reading and evaluating quantitative articles in strategy
- Archival data vs. surveys as data sources
- Research questions appropriate for different quantitative methodologies.
- Measuring key strategy variables (e.g.: strategy, performance, social responsibility).
- Examples of survey and archival research
- Strengths and weaknesses of different methods
- Important issues in quantitative strategy research

Articles for review

To be determined after preliminary discussion with class participants. We will examine three articles (one survey based, one archival based, one mixed) on a common topic, e.g., environmental strategy, trust in alliances, top management teams, etc.

Other readings


Work individually on articles between sessions 7 and 8: At least the introduction, conclusion, outline and hopefully a first draft of the main sections. Individual meetings will be scheduled during the week of 28th February 2011 to discuss ongoing ideas.
Session 8: Paper workshop (11-03-2011)

Participants must submit first drafts of their articles three days before this session.

- Exchange of work in progress and group discussion
- Common problems/ issues
- Writing patterns: to plan or not to plan
- Criteria for reviewing quantitative studies

Huff, Chapters 7, 8, Appendices (Mary Jo Hatch + Jone Pierce)

Session 9: Publishing award-winning research / Publishing for practitioner audiences (18-03-2011)

- Why do some papers receive awards?
- Why do some papers receive more attention than others?
- Particularities of publishing for practitioners
- Similarities and differences between high impact academic and practitioner articles
- Invited speakers: Louis Hébert (author of award-winning articles in both academic and practitioner outlets) and Sylvie St-Onge, (Editor-in-Chief of Gestion – to be confirmed).

Articles for review


*Harvard Business Review Guidelines for Authors* (CODEX)


**Other readings** (pick one or find your own based on the award winners of JIBS, SMJ, AMJ, ASQ for the last 10 years – see examples)


**Session 10: Interpretive research in strategy (25/3/2011)**

- Interpretive research in strategy
- Rhetorical strategies for writing up interpretive research
- Getting qualitative research published in the “top tier” journals.
- Constructing your contribution in empirical research articles

*Article for review*


*Other readings*


Pratt, M. “For the lack of a boiler plate: Tips on writing up (and reviewing) qualitative research,” *Academy of Management Journal*, 52(5): 856-862.
Session 11: Writing case studies in strategy (01-04-2011)

- Styles of case study research in strategy
- Logics of contribution in strategy case studies
- Teaching cases vs. research cases
- Synergy in publication strategies for case studies
- Update on publication projects
- Invited speaker: David Oliver

*Teaching case / Research case pair for discussion*


*Other readings*

Editor’s forum on how to achieve quality in qualitative research published in *Academy of Management Journal* – go to [http://aom.pace.edu/amjnew/from.editors.html](http://aom.pace.edu/amjnew/from.editors.html) (February 2007 forum with short articles by Weick, Eisenhardt and Graebner, and Siggelkow).


Session 12: The ethics and pragmatics of publication (08-04-2011)

- Beyond the individual article: Writing books
- Developing a longer term research program
- Ethics of publication
- Reflecting on the role of publication
- Alternate career orientations
For review


Between sessions 12 and 13, work intensively on your articles. I will be available for individual meetings if needed.

Session 13 : Mini-conference : Presentation of submitted papers (29-04-2011)

The pre-final version of papers to be submitted must be handed in three days before this session (26-04-2011). This session will be devoted to oral presentation of the papers (10-15 minutes per paper). Each paper will be assigned to a "discussant" who will have previously read the paper. After the session, you will have until 6th May 2011 to submit the final version of your paper.

Reading

Huff, A., Writing for scholarly publication, Chapters 7-11.