PhD Seminar on Strategic Management (II): Empirical Research in Strategic Management

This version: (First official draft)

Course instructors
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Location
Online (Zoom)

Application and registration procedure

Goal and target audience
The purpose of this course is to give PhD students and doctoral candidates a grounding in theoretical and empirical research in strategic management research. During the week from July 17 – 21, 2023, particular attention will be devoted to empirical research. As this course builds on the content of the PhD Seminar on Strategic Management (I): “Theoretical Foundations of Strategy” which is held from July 3 - July 7, 2023, only students who attended this first course should take part in the second course “Empirical Research in Strategic Management”.

Application/Registration process
Please register for the course via self-registration in Moodle (https://www.moodle.tum.de/course/view.php?id=88699)

Course aims

What this course is
This course will build upon the earlier course of “Theoretical Foundations in Strategy.” In this class, we will go deeper into the theories we covered and give particular attention to empirical design issues and the development and testing of hypotheses. We will begin by examining the implications of firm heterogeneity for empirical research as well as the implications of “fit” (e.g., between organizations and their environments, between organizational forms and attributes of transactions, etc.) for empirical testing. We will also focus on firm survival and exit, and in later sessions cover modeling choices suitable for testing the theories we have covered in the first course. As part of our sessions, we will consider some award-winning strategy dissertations so you can identify what makes for a good dissertation. We will also have a workshop on developing your own research ideas based on what we are learning in the course.
What this course is not
This course is not intended for students other than PhD students, as it is not a course focusing on practical applications of strategy tools, consulting models, or case studies of successful companies.

Course objectives

Knowledge Objectives
- Each student should have an awareness of the key research challenges and opportunities presented by the fundamental issues in strategy.
- Each student should understand the core behavioral assumptions employed in strategy and management research and how they relate to research in the disciplines.
- Each student will develop awareness of classic theoretical works that can be used in strategy and management.

Skills Objectives
- Each student will develop the skills to evaluate the theoretical build-up of hypotheses in research in strategy and management.
- Each student will be able to compare and contrast each of the major theories used in strategic management.

Learning Objectives
- Understand how the unique attributes of strategic decisions and the unique focus of strategy research lead to specific research challenges in modeling and testing.
- Understand how to develop hypotheses and tests of them using the theories from organizational economics.
- Understand what makes a paper interesting theoretically and empirically.
- Understand the attributes of the best strategy dissertations.
- Understand how to use the theories and techniques of this course to devise empirical research.

Preliminary schedule

Empirical Research in Strategic Management (week of July 17, 2023; Zoom: https://cuboulder.zoom.us/j/5539784611)

6. Firm Heterogeneity and Fit (Monday, 15:00-18:30)
7. Survival and Exit (Tuesday, 15:00-18:00 and 18:30-21:30)
8. Transaction Cost Economics (Wednesday, 15:00-18:00 and 18:30-21:30)
9. Information Economics (Thursday, 15:00-18:30)
10. Implications of Strategic Decisions (Friday, 15:00-18:30)
Core readings

Session 8: Firm Heterogeneity and Fit


Session 9: Survival and Exit


Session 10: Empirical Research on Transaction Cost Economics


Session 11: Empirical Research on Information Economics


Session 12: Implications of Strategic Decisions


Course procedures
The course will be taught using a seminar or discussion style. On any given day, students will be “discussion leaders” for the material. Some sessions will feature book reviews or discussion of classic papers. Other readings will be recent papers that I would like you to critique in-depth and use in order to identify future research directions and empirical challenges. The course is intended to be cumulative, so as we go, think across the theories and perspectives underlying strategic management research. It would be helpful for the other students if you prepared a 2-3 page document that provides a developmental review of an assigned paper (or powerpoint summary), for future use and review.

Assessment
Your final course grade will be determined based on your attendance and active involvement in the course (pass/fail). When considering participation, I consider these questions: Is the student thoroughly prepared for all sessions? Does s/he participate actively and provide unique contributions that add value to discussions? Does the student integrate perspectives and add new insights, versus merely stating facts or repeating what authors have written?

Workload
4 ECTS (22.5 hours lectures, 120 hours total workload)