AGSM MBA Programs 2015

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY
Capstone Course
Semester 2, 2015

Course Overview

AGSM @ UNSW Business School
Important Notice

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COURSE OVERVIEW

We welcome ideas to improve these course materials. Please email suggestions to coursematerials@agsm.edu.au
### Course schedule

#### Semester 2, 2015

**Strategic Management of Business and Technology**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week no</th>
<th>Week begins</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Assessment** (weighting)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>27 July</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Non-assessable learning dialogues will be held throughout the semester.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 August</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>10 August</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>17 August</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Assignment 1 due on Wednesday 19 August – report (20%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>24 August</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Participation assessment point 1 (end of week) – a forum on ethical, social and environmental responsibility (5%).</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>31 August</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>7 September</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Assignment 2 due on Wednesday 9 September – report (20%)</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>14 September</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>21 September</td>
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**Mid-term recess: Saturday 26 September – Monday 5 October**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week no</th>
<th>Week begins</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Assessment** (weighting)</th>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>6 October*</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Participation assessment point 2 (end of week) – a forum on social and cultural awareness (5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>12 October</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>19 October</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Assignment 3 due on Wednesday 21 October – team assignment report (30%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>26 October</td>
<td></td>
<td>Independent reflective learning and review</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>2 November</td>
<td>Examination week</td>
<td>Assignment 4 due on Wednesday 4 November – individual reflective report: oral presentation (20%)</td>
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* Monday 5 October is a public holiday in NSW  
** All assignments are due by 9.30am Sydney time
Course information

Capstone course purpose

This course is one of two capstone courses in your degree program. As their names imply, Strategic Management of Business and Technology focuses on strategic management, while Management of Innovation and Technical Change focuses on innovation and managing change.

The main aim of the capstone courses is to enable graduates to synthesise all their learning across the program, and to achieve a common understanding of the degree qualification.

Regardless of the individual degree pathway you have chosen, the capstone courses will add significant value to your Master's degree by building on your knowledge and skills from a range of disciplines (financial, legal, technological, etc.) that may have been developed through your previous courses or prior study and professional experience.

As a graduate of this program, it is expected that you will be able to perform effectively at a high strategic level. Business and technology are integral to the program coursework, which seeks to address the significant influence on strategic management practices, across the spectrum of both commercial and non-commercial organisations, of the rapidly changing technological environment. The integration of business and technology in your graduate business education will be reinforced via the two capstone courses. It is therefore strongly recommended that they be the final courses in your studies in this program (and students must complete at least 48 units of credit – eight courses – before they will be permitted to enrol in a capstone course).

Course-level aims and learning outcomes

As a capstone course, Strategic Management of Business and Technology is designed to bring together the different threads of your technology and business studies. It is designed to help you to apply that knowledge in understanding how the managers of modern, technology-rich, sustainable organisations look to generate, communicate and fulfil a strategic vision and deliver outcomes that fulfil the purpose for which the organisations were created.

Whether you work in small business or major international organisations, in the public sector, private industry or not-for-profit sector, strategic management plays a central role in understanding and defining answers to four fundamental questions.

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want or need to go?
- How will we get there?
- How will we make sure we stay on track to get there?
The course is designed to help you to reflect on the role of strategic management and draw on concepts, issues and principles highlighted in your earlier courses in this degree program. As a result, you will understand how integrating and effectively managing the diverse range of technology and business management disciplines empowers you to be more effective in achieving your organisation’s strategic goals in a rapidly changing technological organisational environment.

In this course, current key strategic concepts and major theoretical frameworks for strategic thinking and strategic management are presented to help you understand how to answer the above four questions.

You are asked to apply these theories and approaches via analysis and strategic option development for your own organisation, by participating both individually and as a part of a team to generate strategic options via analysis in action learning case studies of organisations facing real strategic issues, and by sharing and drawing on the experiences of your work and class colleagues in online or face-to-face classes.

**Course learning outcomes**

When you have completed this course, you should be able to:

1. identify key concepts, models, frameworks and tools relevant to the strategic management of local and/or global business organisations
2. identify key current disciplinary or interdisciplinary knowledge regarding the value proposition of applying technology to local and/or global business situations
3. apply key strategic management concepts, models, frameworks and tools to assess and recommend improvement to the strategic and technology management practices of local and/or global organisations
4. identify, critically analyse and develop responses to strategic management challenges faced by an organisation using relevant theory
5. undertake primary and secondary research to gather information relevant to making strategic decisions
6. analyse forces in an organisation’s internal and external strategic environment and draw strategically significant conclusions based on these
7. develop and evaluate a range of appropriate strategic options based on an understanding of the organisation’s strategic position
8. develop a strategic plan and identify the key actions and processes to implement and manage an appropriate strategic option
9. outline techniques for identifying and acknowledging the key stakeholders to the organisation’s strategy and a means to communicate strategy effectively to these stakeholders
10. identify social and cultural aspects or dimensions and their influence on an organisation’s strategic situation, and the implications for strategic management practice
11. participate in and contribute effectively to a multi-functional team to deliver a shared outcome to a high standard
12. analyse and evaluate the team processes and your own contribution to the effective outcome of the team.

Structure

Unit 1: *Strategy in modern business* organisations, explores what strategic management is all about, how technology impacts on strategic thinking in organisations, and the major approaches to strategic management – proactive and reactive. You will learn to recognise what contribution strategic management offers modern organisations in a technology-driven environment and gain an appreciation of the key principles that underpin modern strategic management. You will also examine the theoretical and practical frameworks employed in considering, developing and managing strategy. You will learn to recognise the wicked nature of some strategic problems and the importance of corporate social responsibility and sustainability to modern strategic management.

Unit 2: *The strategic management process*. As reflected by its title, in this Unit we will closely examine the strategic management process. This means that we will look at the way in which strategic thinking is developed, and how ultimately this will be captured and translated into a plan. You will gain an understanding of the actions, processes and stages that are required to identify strategic options, develop a strategic vision, interpret the corporate mission, create objectives and strategies to turn the vision into action, and to implement and manage these effectively and sustainably.

Unit 3: *Getting an understanding of the future*: external analysis and scenario development, explores the way in which strategic managers must understand and analyse their organisation’s external environment – the context or situation that must be considered when developing strategy. Typically, strategic management involves three levels of analysis: the organisation’s macro-environment (the wider world that impacts on all organisations and industries); the sector, industry and market in which the organisation operates; and the organisation itself. This Unit will focus on the first two levels: analysing the macro-environment and the industries or sectors in which the organisation operates. It is from the forces in these external environments that the opportunities and threats to the organisation’s strategic vision and sustainability are to be found. Using techniques such as industry analysis, value chains, industry life-cycles and scenario development, you will learn to identify what significant external issues present positive Opportunities or negative Threats for the organisation, how to identify strategic risks and develop contingencies for these risks.

Unit 4: *Building competitive and strategic advantage*: understanding capabilities and strengths in a strategic sense, moves on from the external forces at work outside the organisation to help us understand the internal environment: the strengths, strategic capabilities, resources and assets available to create strategy. This Unit looks at the resources-based view of organisations, what strategic or competitive advantages are, why
organisations need to develop and sustain them, how to analyse the organisation in order to identify its positive strategic resources and capabilities (strengths) and its strategic deficiencies (weaknesses), and to understand how these strengths and weaknesses – that are grounded in an organisation’s resources, capabilities and competencies – offer the potential to develop competitive and strategic advantages that position the organisation to survive, and thrive.

Unit 5: Strategically agile organisations: building an adaptive culture and capability, creates an understanding of how modern organisations need to develop capacity and understanding of how to remain agile, what structural and strategic agility are, and how the organisation adapts in order to respond to changes in the environment quickly and appropriately. We now look further into how strategic managers evaluate, select and manage the strategic opportunities and issues using principles designed to develop sustainable organisations capable of surviving and thriving over the medium and long term. We then develop our skills and processes for how strategic managers scan and understand the environment – to identify what issues are emerging to which they need to respond. Using techniques like strategic gap analysis, strategic assumption definition and the principles of agile and great organisations, we will develop our understanding of the capabilities that agile strategic organisations possess and nurture.

Unit 6: Technology and strategy. Understanding the impact of technology as an enabler of strategic and competitive advantage is as vital to an effective strategic manager in the 21st Century as understanding finance, marketing, human resources and sustainability. Technology today is one of the key strategic enablers and force multipliers that enables new businesses to emerge, smaller competitors to overtake larger ones and domestically focused organisations to break out and compete on the global stage. In this Unit, we will consider the importance of technology in strategic thinking, and look at models of how technology is incorporated into strategic thinking and planning. We will reflect on the question of what the organisation’s core technologies are, try to gain an understanding of the impact of things like disruptive innovation, social media, technology adoption cycles and technology S-Curves, and how they can be applied to a strategic technological development.

Unit 7: Innovation and new product development. Almost every business writer, commentator, policy maker and reader of strategic management today recognises that innovation, creativity and the stream of new products that are frequently the outcome of innovation and creativity are amongst the most significant forms of strategic and competitive advantage. In this Unit, we will explore the processes and practices that strategic managers use to stimulate, manage and exploit innovation for strategic gain. We will also develop our understanding of effective processes and practices for introducing new products, practices such as design thinking and crowd sourcing, and we consider how strategic managers harness the output of an organisation’s sources of innovation. Being first to market with products and services that add value and provide strategic advantage makes the investments in R&D and innovation worthwhile – when managed effectively.
Unit 8: The strategic toolkit – a range of generic strategic options. While one of the key outputs that strategic managers look for from analysis is strategic options, many strategies have been tried, tested and used successfully before. Like the difference between an elite sportsperson and a weekend amateur or an eminent artist and a hobbyist, the tools are common, but it is the finesse and skill with which they are used that makes the difference. In this Unit, we examine a range of common strategy options such as Blue Ocean strategies, merger/acquisition, organic growth, integration, diversification, cost leadership, differentiation and the like, and consider their suitability and the conditions under which they work best.

Unit 9: Strategic management of intellectual capital and knowledge. Like innovation and technology, the forces of globalisation and the almost white-water-like turbulence of change in many organisations today, one of the clear strategic differentiators and competencies to emerge has been harnessing intellectual capital and knowledge. In this Unit, we will gain an understanding of just how intellectual capital offers strategic advantages, how it needs to be managed effectively, how it can be created and how it can be turned into the type of intellectual property that can be placed on the organisation’s balance sheet. We will also consider specific issues related to managing intellectual capital in a socially responsible and sustainable fashion so that the organisation thrives not just in the short term, but in the medium to long term as well.

Unit 10: Multi-country strategies: competing and operating across national boundaries, considers the unique opportunities and challenges that arise from an organisation looking to compete or operate in multiple countries. We examine how the lowering of barriers has triggered many organisations to pursue multi-country strategies and benefit from the attractiveness of new markets and manage the threat of new competitors. We will look to gain a clearer understanding of how globalisation and the reduction in trade barriers mean that sustainable organisations large and small are now competing on an international stage, bringing into play a different set of conditions, a different way of thinking and some different strategic practices and processes using state-of-the-art models and frameworks like ADDing Value and the CAGE analysis framework.

Unit 11: Implementation – the key to strategic success. Strategy most commonly fails not because of poor planning or lack of strategic thinking and creativity, but because of the failure to implement it properly. If, as Alexander Graham Bell opined, success is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration, then implementation is the essential 99%. Drawing heavily on concepts gained from many of your completed courses in this program, and particularly from Project Management and Leadership in a Complex Environment, in this Unit we discuss how to convert good ideas into actionable road maps, processes and practices to ensure that the strategies have the best chance of being successful.
Unit 12: *Recognising and engaging key strategic stakeholders*. Finally, we need to bring all the strategic thinking together into something that we can convey effectively to the organisation’s major strategic stakeholders in order to get them united to take the organisation forward. We need to understand who the critical stakeholders are, what impact their actions can have on the strategy and what they have at stake. Whether you call it a roadmap, a plan or a blueprint, we need to document and, importantly, communicate the strategy to these stakeholders in a way that generates alignment or compensates for their likely responses. In this Unit, we consider the issues involved in doing this effectively and efficiently. We will also consider the need for processes of strategic review. In conclusion, we step back and take an overview of the range of issues covered in the course, and pull together a clear understanding of the role and practice of the strategic management of business and technology.
Program quality assurance

A number of international standards are embedded in the program to ensure the courses you study are high quality. At present this includes specific design to meet AACSB accreditation standards (through measurement of students' program-level learning outcomes), and the United Nations Principles for Responsible Management Education (UNPRME). EQUIS accreditation is also held by UNSW Business School.

Program-level learning goals and outcomes assessed for AACSB accreditation

The Course Learning Outcomes are what you should be able to do by the end of this course if you participate fully in learning activities and successfully complete the assessment items.

The Course Learning Outcomes will also help you to achieve at least some of the overall Program Learning Goals that are set for all postgraduate coursework students in AGSM programs.

However, course-level learning outcomes are not sufficient to fully describe a student’s skills as they complete the qualification, and so we add an additional set of Program Learning Goals. These specify what we want you to have achieved by the time you successfully complete your degree. As an example, for the Teamwork learning goal we specify: ‘Our graduates will be effective team participants’.

You demonstrate that you have met these Program Learning Goals by achieving specific Program Learning Outcomes that are directly related to each goal. These indicate what you are able to do by the end of your degree. In the case of the Teamwork goal, the related outcome includes: ‘participate collaboratively and responsibly in teams’. Note that the ability to meet these program-level learning goals and outcomes will be measured in each capstone course for your degree program.

The Program Learning Goals (and related outcomes) used at the AGSM for the MBAX and MBT programs are as follows.

1. Knowledge:
   Our graduates will have current disciplinary or interdisciplinary knowledge applicable in local and global contexts.

   Learning outcome: Students should be able to identify and apply current knowledge disciplinary or interdisciplinary theory and professional practice to business in local and global environments.

2. Critical thinking and problem-solving:
   Our graduates will have critical thinking and problem-solving skills applicable to business and management practice or issues.

   Learning outcome: Students should be able to identify, research and analyse complex issues and problems in business and/or management, and propose appropriate and well-justified solutions.
3. Communication:
Our graduates will be effective communicators in professional contexts.
Learning outcome for 3a – Written Communication: Students should be able to produce written documents that communicate complex disciplinary ideas and information effectively for the intended audience and purpose.
Learning outcome for 3b – Oral Communication: Students should be able to produce oral presentations that communicate complex disciplinary ideas and information effectively for the intended audience and purpose.

4. Teamwork:
Our graduates will be effective team participants.
Learning outcome: Students should be able to participate collaboratively and responsibly in teams, and to reflect on their own teamwork, and on the team’s processes and ability to achieve outcomes.

5. Ethical, social and environmental responsibility:
Our graduates will be aware of ethical, social, cultural and environmental implications of business issues and practice.
Learning outcome for 5a – Ethical, social and environmental responsibility: Students should be able to identify and assess ethical, environmental and/or sustainability considerations in business decision-making and practice.
Learning outcome for 5b – Social and cultural awareness: Students should be able to consider social and cultural implications of business.

6. Leadership:
Our graduates will have an understanding of effective leadership.
Learning outcome: Students should be able to reflect upon their own personal leadership style and on the leadership needs of business and of team.

Associated governing bodies
AACSB: http://www.aacsb.edu
EQUIS: https://www.efmd.org/accreditation-main/equis
UNPRME: http://www.unprme.org
Resources

Learning resources

You have four major resources to help you learn:

1. The course materials, comprising the weekly study units with readings, references, insights and commentary. You will do much of your learning outside the classroom by working through the course materials, and by completing the exercises as they arise.

2. Your online or face-to-face classes with your facilitator. The facilitator’s job is to guide your learning by conducting class discussion, answering questions that might arise after you have done the week’s work, providing insights from his or her practical experience and understanding of theory, providing you with feedback on your assignments, and directing discussions and debates that will occur between you and your co-participants in the classroom.

3. Your co-participants. Your colleagues in the class are an invaluable potential source of learning for you. Their work and life, and their willingness to question and argue with the course materials, the facilitator and your views, represent a great learning opportunity. They bring much valuable insight to the learning experience.

4. In addition to course based resources, please also refer to the AGSM Learning Guide (available in Moodle), for tutorials and guides that will help you learn more about effective study practices and techniques. Specific to this course, the guide includes sections on working in teams, oral presentations and handling written assignments.

Course materials

The course materials comprise this Course Overview, the Assessment Details and 12 Units. Each Unit has a number of associated readings.

Readings

Specific readings are prescribed throughout the Units and are available via active hyperlinks or URLs. Please note that you may be required to enter your UNSW zID and zPass in order to access these hyperlinked readings.

If you experience any problems in accessing the readings, please try the following:

- Search directly for the article on the UNSW Library home page (https://library.unsw.edu.au/) by placing the name of the article in the Search box.
- Search directly for the book excerpt on the UNSW Library home page (https://library.unsw.edu.au/) by placing your course code into the Search box. When you do this all the course readings that are excerpts from books will appear
Recommended reading

   ISBN 9780073381541

   ISBN: 9780078029509

   ISBN 9781118362556; eBook ISBN 9780730305576

eLearning

To access Moodle, go to: https://www.business.unsw.edu.au/agsm/students/mbt-students/online-classes and select Login to Moodle.
Login with your student zID (username) and zPass (password).

Moodle eLearning support

Should you have any difficulties accessing your course online, please contact the eLearning support below:
For login issues:

UNSW IT Service Centre

Hours: Monday to Friday: 8am – 8pm
Saturday and Sunday: 11am – 2pm
Email: ITServiceCentre@unsw.edu.au
Phone: Internal: x51333
       External: 02 9385 1333
       International: +61 2 9385 1333
For help with technical issues and problems:

**External TELT Support**

Hours:  Monday to Friday: 7.30am – 9.30pm  
        Saturdays and Sundays: 8.30am – 4.30pm

Email:  externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au

Phone:  Internal: x53331  
        External: 02 9385 3331  
        International: +61 2 9385 3331

**Administrative and eLearning support**

**Student Experience**

If you have administrative queries, they should be addressed to Student Experience.

Student Experience  
AGSM MBA Programs  
UNSW Business School  
SYDNEY NSW 2052  
Phone: +61 2 9931 9400  
Email: studentexperience@agsm.edu.au

**Additional student resources and support**

The University and the UNSW Business School provide a wide range of support services for students, including:

- **Business School Education Development Unit (EDU)**  
  [https://www.business.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/learning-support](https://www.business.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/learning-support)  
  The EDU provides academic writing, study skills and maths support specifically for Business students. Services include workshops, online resources, and individual consultations.  
  EDU Office: Level 1, Room 1033, Quadrangle Building.  
  Phone: +61 2 9385 5584; Email: edu@unsw.edu.au

- **UNSW Learning Centre**  
  [www.lc.unsw.edu.au](http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au)  
  Provides academic skills support services, including workshops and resources, for all UNSW students. See website for details.

- **Library training and search support services**  
  [http://info.library.unsw.edu.au/web/services/services.html](http://info.library.unsw.edu.au/web/services/services.html)
• **UNSW Counselling and Psychological Services**  
  Provides support and services if you need help with your personal life, getting your academic life back on track or just want to know how to stay safe, including free, confidential counselling.  
  Office: Level 2, East Wing, Quadrangle Building;  
  Phone: +61 2 9385 5418.

• **Student Equity & Disabilities Unit**  
  [http://www.studentequity.unsw.edu.au](http://www.studentequity.unsw.edu.au)  
  Provides advice regarding equity and diversity issues, and support for students who have a disability or disadvantage that interferes with their learning.  
  Office: Ground Floor, John Goodsell Building;  
  Phone: +61 2 9385 4734; Email: seadu@unsw.edu.au
Continual course improvement

Our courses are revised each time they run, with updated course overviews and assessment tasks. All courses are reviewed and revised every three years and significant course updates are carried out in line with industry developments.

The AGSM surveys students via the UNSW CATEI system each time a course is offered. The data collected provides anonymous feedback from students on the quality of course content and materials, class facilitation, student support services and the program in general. This student feedback is taken into account in all course revisions.

Student evaluations from the last presentation of the course

Feedback to the course was overwhelmingly positive in the previous evaluations when the course was last run (Semester 2, 2014). There were no specific issues or suggestions for improvement raised by students.

Coordinator’s response

As there were no concerns or suggestions proposed by students in their feedback, the adjustments that have been made to the course, in particular around changing assessments, were made to enable better assessment of the program outcomes.

A range of additional materials on non-commercial examples of strategy have also been sourced and these will be provided to Class Facilitators to incorporate into their teaching strategies where appropriate.
Course staff

Course coordinator

Each course has a Course Coordinator who is responsible for the academic leadership and overall academic integrity of the course. The Course Coordinator selects content and sets assessment tasks, and takes responsibility for specific academic and administrative issues related to the course when it is being offered. Course Coordinators oversee Class Facilitators and ensure that the ongoing standard of facilitation in the course is consistent with the quality requirements of the program.

The Course Coordinator is:

Craig Tapper
BA MCom UNSW, MBA UTS
Email: craig.tapper@unsw.edu.au

Craig is the Executive Director of Tapper Consulting Pty Limited, and has consulted to major companies and government departments for more than 20 years. Prior to consulting, Craig spent more than 20 years in middle and senior management positions in major industrial, retail and public-sector organisations. This included appointments at senior level in Australia and the UK. He also has more than 15 years of experience on company boards.

Craig began his academic teaching career in 1991 and has been an adjunct faculty member of the UNSW Business School since 1996. In addition to working at the AGSM in Australia, Singapore and Hong Kong, he has lectured in strategy, business planning, marketing and management in a range of postgraduate programs in a number of schools and faculties at UNSW Australia, as well as at the Australian National University, the University of Sydney, and the University of Technology Sydney. Craig is a Visiting Professor on the International Management Program of IESEG, Lille, one of France’s leading business schools. He has also authored and facilitated at postgraduate level for the Financial Services Institute of Australasia and has delivered numerous executive and corporate education programs for major corporations and government departments in Australia, Hong Kong, Dubai (UAE), Singapore and Thailand.

Craig is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, an Associate of the Australian Marketing Institute, a Certified Practising Marketer and a Senior Fellow of the Financial Services Institute of Australasia.
**Class facilitator**

The role of your Class Facilitator is to support the learning process by encouraging interaction amongst participants, providing direction in understanding the course content, assessing participant progress through the course and providing feedback on work submitted. Class Facilitators comprise both academics and industry practitioners with relevant backgrounds.

You will be notified of your Class Facilitator’s name and contact details in your class confirmation email sent by AGSM Student Experience. Details will also be available in the gallery section of your online class for both face-to-face and distance classes.

**Course author**

The Course Coordinator, Craig Tapper, is the author of this course.

**Acknowledgements**

We wish to acknowledge the valuable contribution of Dr David Kennedy, Lecturer in the UNSW School of Organisation and Management, who acted as academic reviewer in the development of this course.