AGSM MBA Programs 2016

MBAX/GBAT9129
MANAGING ORGANISATIONAL RESOURCES

Session 2, 2016

COURSE OVERVIEW

AGSM @ UNSW Business School

Never Stand Still
COURSE OVERVIEW

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We welcome ideas to improve these course materials. Please email suggestions to coursematerials@agsm.edu.au.
## Managing Organisational Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week no</th>
<th>Week begins</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Assessment due (% weighting)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>23 May</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Participation is assessed throughout the session (20%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>30 May</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>6 June</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>13 June*</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>20 June</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>27 June</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Assignment 1 due on Tuesday 28 June by 9.30am Sydney time – Report (20%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>4 July</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>11 July</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>18 July</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>25 July</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>1 August</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Assignment 2 – Report (30%) – and Self-reflection Statement (5%) due on Tuesday 2 August by 9.30am Sydney time</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>8 August</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>15 August</td>
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<td>Independent reflective learning and review</td>
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Final Exam (Off campus: Thursday 18 August; On campus: Saturday 20 August) 25%

* 13 June is the Queen’s Birthday public holiday in NSW.
Course-level aims and learning goals

This course explores the use of major categories of resources in the value-creation process of organisations. Obviously, the goal of every organisation is to generate the maximum value for major stakeholders from the mobilisation of each major category of resource. However, being effective in this endeavour is problematic, as the importance (the value-creating potential) of particular resource categories varies with the form (size and structure), nature (non-profit or for-profit, product or service) and value creation model adopted by individual organisations.

Resource mobilisation is constrained (appropriately) by social and community values, related to the social and environmental sustainability of organisational activities. The values and codes that are seen, culturally, to be acceptable, or ethical conduct or behaviour, are often reinforced through regulatory frameworks and legal requirements.

Given these issues and other constraints, organisations access, acquire, develop, deploy and consume (mobilise) resources in the process of generating value in the near term, and developing and sustaining the capability to deliver value in the future. This process is informed by setting and regularly revising organisational strategy, and by utilising performance management systems for the ongoing monitoring (measurement and control) of its implementation.

In this course, we adopt a contemporary view of the resource categories of financial, physical, technological, organisational (structures, systems, processes), human (intellectual capital and knowledge-based), relational and reputational, and we do so within a framework that encompasses organisational purpose, governance, social responsibility and ethics. We examine the use of each major resource category within the value-creation process.

In general, the course takes strategy as given, and examines contemporary practices for monitoring resource development and use, including the effectiveness with which resources are transformed from one form to another. Frameworks for performance management and control are provided, and their use in managing resource mobilisation is critically explored. Additionally, the course aims to provide you with knowledge about some of the more cutting-edge performance measurements that reflect the investments made in both tangible and intangible assets.

Specifically, the course aims to enhance competencies in performance management in relation to managing both tangible and intangible resources.
In particular, the course enables you to develop knowledge and skills in:

- organisational governance, performance measurement and the management of risk to enhance value creation
- organisational capability analysis
- financial resource management and measurement
- management of major physical resources
- use of technology in resource management (incorporating efficient and effective process management)
- intangible resource development, management and measurement, including intellectual capital management
- people and knowledge management
- management of relationship resources – channel, networked and alliance – for customers and suppliers
- management of reputational resources through an understanding of corporate social responsibility and sustainability issues
- strategy realisation (through effectively measuring performance in a way that drives innovation and change).

If you lack confidence in financial management competencies, it may be useful, although not essential, to do *Accounting: A User Perspective* before doing this course.

**Course learning outcomes**

After you have completed this course you should be able to:

1. describe tangible and intangible resources and how their effective management influences business success
2. apply leading-edge measurement and evaluation methodologies and performance-measurement tools
3. critically evaluate the resource profile of a business and be able to make comprehensive recommendations
4. communicate ideas in a clear and effective manner
5. develop virtual collaborative leadership skills
6. identify and assess environmental and sustainability management and measurement, including illustrations of best practice
7. recognise that people and social issues underpin most of the intangible drivers of business
8. have a better appreciation of industry best-practice measurement methodologies.
Structure

Unit 1, *Organisational resources and value creation*, provides the frameworks for the exploration of the issues and variables that determine both the approach to and the effectiveness of the management of organisational resources. We will examine the concept of ‘enterprise governance’, the nature of the ‘contemporary’ organisation and approaches to value creation. We will review the definition and nature of major categories of resources and factors, and determine their respective importance to the creation of value.

Unit 2, *Resource and capability analysis*, covers resources and resource analysis techniques in detail, addressing both the private and public sectors and exploring major differences in resource categories and management between the two. We will explore how choices about resource combinations can affect the organisation’s capability to compete, and to sustain the delivery of stakeholder value over the long term. The analysis of resources, and the capabilities they confer, will be positioned in the context of the strategic performance management aspects of the enterprise governance framework.

Unit 3, *Financial resources Part 1: Managing financial performance and cost*. In this Unit, we will examine the processes for managing financial resource consumption, transformation and regeneration, in order to achieve profitability and an ‘adequate’ return on the total funds invested.

Unit 4, *Financial resources Part 2: Measurement and value generation*, addresses three major aspects of financial resource management: economic value as the primary measure, the choice of available financial or capital management alternatives, and economic profit measures as a guide for resource deployment decisions.

Unit 5, *Physical resources: Investment in strategic capability*, explores the strategic importance of physical resource management. We review and assess strategic and financial appraisal frameworks that may be used to select or acquire major physical resources to enhance the provision of products or services over the medium to long term. We also cover tracking, control and security of physical resources.

Unit 6, *Technology and process resources*, focuses attention on organisational process management and technology management. The management of these areas is highly interdependent with the management of other types of organisational resources.

Unit 7, *People resources*. In this Unit, we examine how the ability to unleash the potential of people to deploy their creativity, and to facilitate, capture and share their accumulated learning is essential to the development and maintenance of capabilities and core competencies.

Unit 8, *Knowledge resources*. In this Unit, we define knowledge management and identify the different types of knowledge. This is followed by the development of a knowledge management strategy. We then explore the role of technology for effective knowledge management systems. Following on from this, we examine contemporary knowledge management issues, challenges and opportunities.
Unit 9, Reputation: Managing customer relationships. Here, we commence examination of the management of relationship resources by focusing on customer relationships. The key relationship in for-profit organisations centres on customers. The quality, extent and longevity of these relationships constitute a key organisational resource that needs to be managed.

Unit 10, Reputation resources: Managing supplier relationships. In this Unit, we examine the basis for outsourcing decisions: capability and core competency analysis. We consider how best to manage the strategic supplier relationships that enable the organisation to complete and deliver its product/service outcomes (its supply chain) – in order to reduce costs and increase the capability and flexibility of non-core activities.

Unit 11, Reputation resources: Corporate social responsibility, addresses the management of reputational resources through an examination of corporate social responsibility, including triple bottom line (sustainability) reporting, and the nature and conduct of strategic risk management.

Unit 12, Design and implementation of performance measurement systems, covers the design of strategic control and performance management systems and examines contemporary frameworks which measure and evaluate both tangible and intangible resources (such as the Balanced Scorecard and Intangible Asset Monitors).
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 across the three MBAX streams of Change, Social Impact and Technology 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 of 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 teams.

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**Associated standards committees and accreditation agencies**

- **AACSB:** [http://www.aacsb.edu](http://www.aacsb.edu)  
  Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business

- **EQUIS:** [https://www.efmd.org/accreditation-main/equis](https://www.efmd.org/accreditation-main/equis)  
  European Quality Improvement System

- **UNPRME:** [http://www.unprme.org](http://www.unprme.org)  
  UN Principles of Responsible Management Education

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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 classroom 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.

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

There is no one book or journal article that will cover the scope of this course. Indeed, one of the distinctive features of this course is the way that it integrates a range of materials related to the management of organisational resources.

If you are interested in extending your knowledge on particular topics, listed below are a number of references that you may find helpful.

**Books**


**Journal articles**


**Other resources**

**BusinessThink** is UNSW’s free, online business publication. It is a platform for business research, analysis and opinion. If you would like to subscribe to BusinessThink, and receive the free monthly e-newsletter with the latest in research, opinion and business then go to [http://www.businessthink.unsw.edu.au](http://www.businessthink.unsw.edu.au).

**eLearning**

To access Moodle, go to: [https://moodle.telt.unsw.edu.au/login/index.php](https://moodle.telt.unsw.edu.au/login/index.php)

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: externalteltsupppport@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**  
  [http://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

• Good overview of the various types of KPIs used for high-level business monitoring. Good explanation of the importance of intangible assets versus the more traditionally tracked tangible assets.

• Students noted that leading a weekly class discussion ‘was awesome and influential; this is where my learning for this course has been most helpful. The sharing and collaborating with the others, listening to their experiences and applying the theory has been very advantageous to my learning.’

• The course material was noted as relevant to work roles, including comments such as ‘the material was very interesting for me. The resource profile assignment was certainly a learning experience’; ‘the course provides an opportunity to leverage on my own work experience’; ‘the content was challenging’.

• Students noted that it is useful to research beyond the course materials. For instance, ‘the assignment was a useful exercise and it was nice to be asked to research’.

• ‘The word limits on the assignments were too small, I really struggled to communicate my understanding of the subject matter with so few words to use.’

Students felt that the assessments should be due earlier in the session to allow feedback.

It should be noted that the above feedback is from Semester 1, 2015.

Coordinator’s response

• The word limits have been increased slightly.

• In relation to perceived issues with the exam in other years and its weighting, its weighting has been lowered to place less emphasis on this form of assessment. The reflective requirement and changes to weightings of some other assessments have taken up the balance of marks.

• The Unit debriefings will continue, as they have been identified as extremely helpful for the final exam.
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:

**Dr Natalie Buckmaster**

BBus (Accounting), MBus (Accounting) (Research), PhD, CPA, CMA, MAICD
Email: n.buckmaster@unsw.edu.au

Natalie was formerly a management consultant in the strategic consulting division of a global corporation. Her work included roles as a management consultant in the Strategy, Change Management and Performance Improvement divisions of a global American consulting firm. Natalie joined the UNSW Business School as a lecturer. She has previously lectured at the University of Sydney and the Australian National University.

Natalie teaches postgraduate students in the areas of management control systems, management accounting, strategic resource management and intellectual capital measurement and management.

Natalie’s PhD investigated performance measurement systems design, implementation and use – including benchmarking, and contemporary measurement tools and methodologies. Her publications in a number of internationally refereed journals are in the areas of performance measurement, program evaluation and management systems. Natalie has also received many awards for excellence in teaching including a national teaching award, several Vice-Chancellor’s Teaching Awards, and faculty awards, including best facilitator, technology enabled, at the AGSM.
Class facilitator

The role of your Class Facilitator is to support the learning process by encouraging interaction among participants, providing direction in understanding the course content, assessing participant progress through the course and providing feedback on work submitted. Class Facilitators comprise 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 face-to-face and distance classes.

Course author

Dr Natalie Buckmaster

Acknowledgement

We wish to acknowledge the valuable contribution of Associate Professor Jane Baxter, who acted as the academic reviewer in the development of this course.