



浙江大學

ECON926

Strategic Relationship Management

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Instructor Contact Details

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Teaching Times, Modes and Locations

Course Duration: June 28 2026 - July 17 2026

Modes: Face-to-face

Location: Huajiachi Campus, Zhejiang University via face-to-face

Academic Level

Postgraduate

Credit Points

The course is worth 6 units of credit point.

Credit Hours

The number of credit hours of this course equals to the credits of a standard semester-long course.

Contact Hours

The course contains a total of 53 contact hours, which consists of orientation, lectures, seminars, quiz, discussion, research, case study, small tests, assignments, on-site field trip(s), in-class and after-class activities, revision, self-study, and final exam. Students will receive an official transcript which is issued by Zhejiang University when completing this course.

Enrolment Requirements

Eligibility requires enrollment in an overseas university as an undergraduate or postgraduate student, proficiency in English, and pre-approval from the student's home institution.

Course Description:

Organizational success depends on the effective management of strategic relationships both within the firm and across its value chain. This course provides an analytical framework for understanding how such relationships are structured and governed. It begins with an examination of internal agency issues and the mechanisms used to align incentives and decision-making within firms. The course then extends to external relationships, focusing on interactions with key input suppliers, bargaining dynamics, and decisions regarding firm boundaries such as outsourcing and vertical integration. Finally, it analyses how competitive and product-market strategies influence relationships among rival firms. The course equips students with economic and

strategic tools to evaluate and manage relationships as a source of competitive advantage.

Prerequisite:

N/A

Learning Resources

- Besanko, D., D. Dranove, M. Shanley and S. Schaefer, Economics of Strategy, 7th Edition, John Wiley & Sons, 2017.
- Brickley, J.A., C.W. Smith and J.L. Zimmerman, Managerial Economics and Organizational Architecture, 6th Edition, McGraw-Hill Education, 2016.
- Dixit, A.K. and B.J. Nalebuff, Thinking Strategically: The Competitive Edge in Business, Politics, and Everyday Life, 2nd Edition, W. W. Norton & Company, 2008.

Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify and map the key strategic relationships that underpin organizational performance, including relationships within the firm and those involving external economic agents such as suppliers, partners, and competitors.
- Evaluate and apply established theoretical frameworks and managerial approaches to diagnose challenges and govern complex strategic relationships in real-world organizational settings.
- Analyse organizational problems and formulate solutions by integrating relevant information on relational dynamics, and communicate well-reasoned strategic recommendations to address issues arising within and across firm boundaries.
- Demonstrate independent and professional competence in problem-solving and in clearly articulating the rationale, analytical process, and proposed implementation of solutions to relationship-based strategic challenges.

Course Delivery:

- Face-to-face Lecture mode includes lectures, seminars, quiz, discussion, research, case study, small tests, assignments, on-site field trip(s), in-class and after-class activities, revision, and final exam.

The following course will be taught in English. There will also be guest speakers and optional field trips available for students who would like to enhance their learning experience. All courses and other sessions will be run during weekdays.

Topics and Course Schedule:

WK	Topic	Activities
1	Introduction to the economics of strategy. Strategic decision-making under constraints. Value creation and competitive advantage.	Lecture; Tutorial
1	Analytical foundations using game theory. Strategic interactions among economic agents. Commitment, incentives, and strategic behaviour.	Lecture; Tutorial
1	Market structures and competitive environments. Strategic positioning across different market forms. Implications for firm conduct and performance.	Lecture; Tutorial
1	Pricing strategies in competitive markets. Strategic pricing, commitment, and rivalry. Value-for-money considerations in pricing decisions.	Lecture; Tutorial
1	Product differentiation and strategic choice. Quality, variety, and consumer responsiveness. Competition through non-price mechanisms.	Lecture; Tutorial
2	In-class test	Closed book
2	The firm as a governance structure. Agency problems and incentive conflicts. Contracts, monitoring, and control mechanisms.	Lecture; Tutorial
2	Organisational architecture and governance. Decision rights, coordination, and accountability. Designing structures for strategic alignment.	Lecture; Tutorial
2	Human capital and incentive design. Compensation systems and performance motivation. Risk-sharing and incentive intensity.	Lecture; Tutorial
2	Hiring and retaining talent. Selection, screening, and workforce strategy. Managing human capital risk.	Lecture; Tutorial
2	Individual and group performance evaluation. Measurement, incentives, and behavioural responses. Governance of performance management systems.	Lecture; Tutorial
3	Supplier relationships and delivery models. Bargaining power and relational governance. Managing risk and value-for-money in procurement.	Lecture; Tutorial
3	Vertical integration and firm boundaries. Make-or-buy decisions and transaction costs. Strategic control across the value chain.	Lecture; Tutorial
3	Revision	Tutorial
3	Final exam	Closed book

Assessments:

Class participation	15%
In-class Test	15%
Assignments	20%
Final exam	50%

Pass Requirement (Double Pass Rule)

To pass this course, students are required to achieve:

- an overall mark of 50% or above, and
- a pass mark (50% or above) in the Final Examination.

Students who achieve an overall mark of 50% or above but do not achieve a pass in the Final Examination will receive a fail grade for the course.

Grade Descriptors:

HD	High Distinction	85-100
D	Distinction	75-84
Cr	Credit	65-74
P	Pass	50-64
F	Fail	0-49

High Distinction 85-100

- Treatment of material evidences an advanced synthesis of ideas Demonstration of initiative, complex understanding, and analysis.
- Work is well-written and stylistically sophisticated, including appropriate referencing, clarity, and some creativity where appropriate.
- All criteria addressed to a high level.

Distinction 75-84

- Treatment of material evidences an advanced understanding of ideas
- Demonstration of initiative, complex understanding and analysis Work is well-written and stylistically strong.
- All criteria addressed strongly.

Credit 65-74

- Treatment of material displays a good understanding of ideas
- Work is well-written and stylistically sound, with a minimum of syntactical errors.
- All criteria addressed clearly.

Pass 50-64

- Treatment of material indicates a satisfactory understanding of ideas. Work is adequately written, with some syntactical errors.
- Most criteria addressed adequately.

Fail 0-49

- Treatment of ideas indicates an inadequate understanding of ideas. Written style inappropriate to task, major problems with expression.
- Most criteria not clearly or adequately addressed.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to uphold the university's academic honesty principles which are an integral part of the university's core values and principles. If a student fails to observe the acceptable standards of academic honesty, they could attract penalties and even disqualification from the course in more serious circumstances. Students are responsible for knowing and observing accepted principles of research, writing and any other task which they are required to complete.

Academic dishonesty or cheating includes acts of plagiarism, misrepresentation, fabrication, failure to reference materials used properly and forgery. These may include, but are not limited to: claiming the work of others as your own, deliberately applying false and inaccurate information, copying the work of others in part or whole, allowing others in the course to copy your work in part or whole, failing to appropriately acknowledge the work of other scholars/authors through acceptable referencing standards, purchasing papers or writing papers for other students and submitting the same paper twice for the same subject.

This Academic Integrity policy applies to all students of Zhejiang University in all programs of study, including non-graduating students. It is to reinforce the University's commitment to maintain integrity and honesty in all academic activities of the University community.

Policy

The foundation of good academic work is honesty. Maintaining academic integrity upholds the standards of the University. The responsibility for maintaining integrity in all the activities of the academic community lies with the students as well as the faculty and the University. Everyone in this community must work together to ensure that the values of truth, trust and justice are upheld.

Academic dishonesty affects the University's reputation and devalues the degrees offered. The University will impose serious penalties on students who are found to have violated this policy. The following penalties may be imposed:

- ✓ Expulsion
- ✓ Suspension
- ✓ Zero mark /fail grade
- ✓ Marking down
- ✓ Re-doing/re-submitting of assignments or reports, and
- ✓ Verbal or written warning.