

ADVANCED CASE SEMINAR IN STRATEGY 2019

Updated 2019-10-16

Schedule

*Given the large number of students this year, we will run **two or three (semi-) parallel case sessions** each week. One or two of the weekly sessions will be hosted by consulting companies and the sessions will be held at the companies' offices. One (or two) sessions are held at TUAS without a hosting company, but each student will get roughly equal number of consulting company sessions. The groups are formed by random and announced in the first lecture (11.9.). Groups are mixed after the first two sessions.*

Schedule as of 16.10.2019 (please double check the latest information on MyCourses just before the sessions)

Date	Host company	Schedule	Materials provided
11.9.	Aalto University	14:15-16:00 Introduction session TUAS room TU5 (mandatory for everyone)	--
13.9.	DEADLINE for individual case analysis, case#1 14:00 upload to MyCourses		11.9.
13.9.	14:45-16:30 Feedback session TUAS TU5		
18.9.	Accenture, Reddal	Session A: 15:00-17:00 Accenture (Aleksanterinkatu 46 A, 4th floor) Session B: 15:00-17:00 Reddal (Tammasaarencatu 1, Nina building, 3rd floor) Session C: 12:00-14:00 TUAS	11.9.
20.9.	DEADLINE for individual case analysis, case#2 14:00 upload to MyCourses		18.9.
20.9	14:45-16:30 Feedback session TUAS TU6		
25.9.	BearingPoint, Palmu	Session A: 12:00-14:00 TUAS Session B: 15:00-17:00 BearingPoint (Bulevardi 6 A12) Session C: 13:00-15:00 Palmu (Eteläesplanadi 8)	18.9.
27.9.	DEADLINE for individual case analysis group D, case#3 14:00 upload to MyCourses		25.9.
27.9	14:45-16:30 Feedback session TUAS TU6		
2.10.		Session D: 15:00-17:00 BCG (Kluuvikatu 3A) Session E: no session	25.9.
4.10.	DEADLINE for individual case analysis group E, case#3 14:00 upload to MyCourses		2.10.
4.10	14:45-16:30 Feedback session TUAS TU5		
9.10.	Aalto University	Session D: no session Session E: 14:00-16:00 TUAS	2.10.

11.10.	DEADLINE for individual case analysis, case#4 14:00 upload to MyCourses		9.10.
11.10	14:45-16:30 Feedback session TUAS TU6		
16.10.	McKinsey & Company, Bain	Session D: 15:00-18:00 Bain (Aleksanterinkatu 30-34, 4th floor) Session E: 15:00-17:00 McKinsey (Eteläesplanadi 18)	9.10.

Grading

Individual case analysis: 35%

Group solutions and presentations: 65%

Note: grade limits will be set only after the final case. Each case solution is graded on a scale from 0 to 3, and the overall score is ultimately converted to course grade. The conversion will not necessarily be linear.

Groups

Formed randomly at the beginning of the course (on 11.9.)

Changed once during the course (in the middle, for the third case).

Individual case analysis

Deliverable is three slides that answer the following questions:

1. What is the key challenge for the case company?
2. What alternatives does the case company have?
3. How can you estimate the revenue and profit potential of each of the alternatives? Formulate basic equations that consider factors that influence the revenues, costs, and profits. Typically, you should identify a few sub-factors for each element in the equation.

Note that you are not supposed to choose the “right” alternative in this preliminary analysis, but only to recognize options and how to compare them. The submissions are graded on a scale from 0 to 3. Each slide is evaluated separately and ultimate score is counted with weights 30-30-40.

This is truly an individual assignment. You can discuss with other students, but everyone must submit their own work. Identical or nearly identical submissions will be graded as zero.

Deadline for submitting the individual case analysis is always on the Friday before the session, at 14:00. The upload box can be found in MyCourses. Late submissions will be penalized.

Individual assignment evaluation

Assignments will be assessed on a scale of 0 to 3 on the following dimensions:

- **Slide 1: Recognition of key issue (30%)**
 - o 0: key issue not recognized
 - o 1: wrong or too generic key issue recognized. (Typically, “revenue too low” is a too generic key issue)
 - o 2: key issue identified quite well but some problems OR dynamics of the problem described extremely well, but missed the key issue
 - o 3: key issue recognized spot on (one sentence) and justified with a few elaborating sentences (which may be in boxes, some of which are “before” the key issue)
- **Slide 2: Recognition of options (30%)**
 - o 0: no options recognized
 - o 1: overly naive or too generic options recognized, or not matching the key issue
 - o 2: options listed but not elaborated, pros and cons not listed
 - o 3: at least three options recognized, described in 1-2 sentences, and at least 2 pros and 2 cons for each option listed
- **Slide 3: Quantification (40%)**
 - o 0: no quantification
 - o 1: partial quantification (e.g., only simple estimate of revenue per option)
 - o 2: relevant formulas described, but some problems
 - o 3: relevant formulas described for revenue and profit, with an issue tree that breaks down the challenge to at least 3 levels

Group case solving and presentations

Presentations are made in PowerPoint. Please bring a laptop to each session. Upload your team’s presentation to MyCourses before the seminar session.

Please note, that idea is that you first do individual work for 4-6 hours (read the case and make the preliminary analysis) and then continue with group work for 6-8 hours. In total, you should work 10-14 hours per case + the presentation session.

Key things to remember: What’s the **situation** now? What are **alternative actions**? What are the **quantitative implications** of each alternative (financial and otherwise)? What are the key assumptions and **risks** in your choice?

Also make sure that your presentation is extremely clear and easy to follow. Often it helps to summarize your recommendation in the start and then provide the supporting arguments. **Practice** your presentation beforehand **on video** and redo the presentation at least one or two times.

Team dynamics are also important. Be kind toward your team-mates, even when you disagree with them. Even though you will get stressed during the course, please remember that this should be a fun experience.

Please see additional advice from <http://www.ollisalo.net/koc/>

Additional recommended reading: <https://shop.almatalent.fi/elava-strategia.html>

Case presentations

Teams have 10 minutes (sharp) to present their case solutions after which there is Q&A (5 minutes) and feedback (10 minutes).

After all presentations jury will give general feedback.

Jury consists of course staff and company representatives.

Presentation evaluation (Updated 20.9.2019)

Presentations will be assessed on a scale of 0 to 3 on the following dimensions:

- ***Insight and depth of solution (30%)***
 - 0: Overly simplistic solution
 - 1: Solution mentions options straight from the case material without developing them further/generic discussion on a high level
 - 2: Some insightful options/analysis, but lacks specificity, logic, or coherence
 - 3: Insightful, specific solution and analysis that develops the options and thinking deeper than what's mentioned in the material
- ***Recognition of key issues in the case company situation (15%)***
 - 0: Key issue not discussed
 - 1: "Wrong" key issue discussed or overly generic key issue
 - 2: Close to the "right" key issue but some problems
 - 3: Key issue clearly identified
- ***Generation and comparison of alternatives (15%)***
 - 0: No alternatives recognized
 - 1: "Fake" alternatives or very narrow set of alternatives recognized
 - 2: Some good alternatives recognized and compared, but with some problems in logic or comparison not systematic
 - 3: Three to five high-quality alternatives recognized and compared systematically
- ***Quantification (15%)***
 - 0: No quantification
 - 1: Likert-scale quantification only (e.g., Harvey balls)
 - 2: partly conducted quantification (e.g., financials or operational), but some gaps (e.g., assumptions not explicit, some parts missing)
 - 3: Clearly reasoned quantification of most elements and assumptions named
- ***Quality of recommendations (10%)***
 - 0: No recommendation given
 - 1: Illogical or inconsistent recommendation
 - 2: Good recommendation with limited support or small inconsistencies
 - 3: Clear and well-justified recommendation given
- ***Presentation clarity (5%)***
 - 0: Complete disaster
 - 1: Rumbling presentation; problems with time management; key points not made clearly
 - 2: Some problems, but you get the general idea and most key points
 - 3: Clear summary in the beginning of the presentation; key point of each slide presented clearly; visualizations explained; analyses explained; recommendations communicated clearly; all slides presented

- **Slide design (5%)**
 - o 0: No slides
 - o 1: Basic black and white text; or way too busy slides
 - o 2: Nice looking slides but some problems
 - o 3: Well visualized slides that communicate key points effectively
- **Response to questions (5%)**
 - o 0: Questions not answered
 - o 1: Rumbling answers by multiple team members without clear point; hostile or aggressive answers
 - o 2: Understandable answer but some problems or limitations as well
 - o 3: Clear, concise and logical answers to the questions, supported by 30 second elaboration with the help of a relevant presentation or backup slide

Compensation for absences

As the solving work is to be done prior to the case presentation session, it is possible for students to be absent from a session. In case of an absence, the student must return a compensating assignment as follows:

- If the introductory session is missed, a two-page summarizing essay on the King of Cases (<http://www.ollisalo.net/koc/>), to be returned latest one hour before the first case session
- If a case presentation session is missed, a two-page essay on your group's case solving process (e.g. timeline of events, sharing of tasks, what exactly was done, what was difficult, what choices did you make, how things could have gone differently, what did you learn etc.); to be returned latest one hour before the presentation session that will be missed. The submission link for compensating assignments will be added to MyCourses under "assignments"