

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**  
*Fișa de disciplină*

**1. Information on the programme**

1.1 University	National University of Political Studies and Public Administration Doctoral School
1.2 Language of instruction	English
1.3 Mode of study	Full Time Programme
1.4 Academic year	2025-2026

**2. Information on the subject**

2.1 Course title	<b>Strategic Management</b>						
2.1 Instructor	<b>Prof. univ. dr. Florina Magdalena Pînzaru</b>						
2.4 Year of study	<b>1</b>	2.5 Semester	<b>2</b>	2.6 Type of assessment*	<b>V</b>	2.7 Course curricular category**	<b>DD</b>

\*Type of assessment/ Method: E - exam / colloquium; V - verification.

\*\* Status: DF – fundamental discipline; DD – domain discipline; DS – specialized discipline; DC – complementary discipline.

Course curricular category: C – compulsory; E – elective; As – associated.

**3. Time estimation (hours per semester for teaching activities)**

3.1 Number of hours per week	2	3.2 course	1	3.3 seminar/lab	0
3.4 Number of hours in the curriculum	28	3.5 course	14	3.6 seminar/lab	0
Distribution of hours					
Understanding lecturer hand outs, written course study, reading recommended bibliography					26
Additional library documentation, field documentation, internet documentation					12
Specific activity for preparing labs and seminars, elaborating evaluation papers, essays, translations, etc.					180
Tutorials					0
Final exam preparation, preparing papers and tests					4
Other activities					
3.5 Number of individual study hours	222				
3.6 Number of hours per semester	28				
3.7 Number of ECTS points	10				

**4. Preconditions (if applicable)**

4.1 curriculum	None
4.2 competences	None

**5. Conditions (if applicable)**

5.1. course unfolding	Room with projector, board, internet access
5.2. seminar / lab unfolding	Room with projector, board, internet access

**6.1. Specific acquired competences**

<b>Professional competences</b>	<p>CP1. Advanced critical analysis of strategic management theories, paradigms, and models in the context of digital transformation, sustainability transitions, and geopolitical volatility.</p> <p>CP2. Design and evaluation of complex strategic architectures integrating artificial intelligence, data-driven systems, sustainability principles, and organizational resilience.</p> <p>CP3. Development of rigorous and original research designs in strategic management, ensuring theoretical relevance and methodological coherence aligned with international academic standards.</p> <p>CP4. Multilevel strategic diagnosis of internal and external organizational environments using advanced qualitative and quantitative research methods.</p> <p>CP5. Integration of ethical principles, social responsibility, ESG considerations, and governance frameworks into strategic decision-making processes.</p>
<b>Transversal competences</b>	<p>CT1. Application of academic integrity standards and responsible research practices in strategic management scholarship.</p> <p>CT2. Effective participation in and coordination of interdisciplinary research teams addressing complex strategic challenges.</p> <p>CT3. Demonstration of intellectual autonomy, critical reflection, and the ability to position one's research within global academic debates.</p> <p>CT4. Clear, rigorous, and persuasive communication of research findings to academic, professional, and executive audiences.</p>

## 6.2. Learning outcomes

<b>Knowledge</b>	<p>RI-C1. The student/graduate demonstrates in-depth and critical understanding of the theories and models of strategic management, in correlation with the economic, social, ecological, and geopolitical challenges of the contemporary environment marked by digital transformations.</p> <p>RI-C2. The student/graduate recognizes and explains the tools and methodologies of strategic analysis used in evaluating the internal and external environments of organizations.</p> <p>RI-C3. The student/graduate knows and differentiates the types of organizational strategies (growth, diversification, internationalization, sustainability) and the conditions for their application.</p> <p>RI-C4. The student/graduate understands the role of social responsibility, ethics, and sustainable development in the foundation and implementation of organizational strategies for digital transformation.</p>
<b>Skills</b>	<p>R4. The doctoral student applies advanced strategic diagnostic tools and research methodologies to complex organizational contexts.</p> <p>R5. The doctoral student designs theoretically grounded and methodologically robust research frameworks capable of generating publishable contributions in strategic management.</p> <p>R6. The doctoral student evaluates strategic scenarios and alternative courses of action under conditions of uncertainty, volatility, and systemic risk.</p>
<b>Responsibility and autonomy</b>	<p>R7. The doctoral student demonstrates intellectual autonomy and the capacity to formulate original theoretical and empirical contributions to the field of strategic management.</p> <p>R8. The doctoral student assumes ethical and social responsibility in research design, strategic analysis, and decision-making processes.</p> <p>R9. The doctoral student communicates complex strategic analyses and research results with academic rigor and professional relevance.</p>

## 7. Course objectives

7.1 General objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This doctoral course aims to critically examine contemporary paradigms in strategic management through the lenses of digital transformation, sustainability transitions, and geopolitical risk. It explores how artificial intelligence reshapes competitive advantage, decision-making architectures, organizational design, and industry structures. At the same time, it investigates how sustainability evolves from corporate social responsibility initiatives toward integrated value creation models embedded in corporate strategy.</li> <li>The course adopts an interdisciplinary and research-oriented approach, encouraging doctoral candidates to challenge dominant assumptions, develop conceptual contributions, and design rigorous empirical research agendas. Through case analyses, academic debates, and research proposal development, participants will explore how strategic management theory must evolve to remain relevant in the context of current challenges.</li> </ul>
7.2 Specific objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Critically examine and synthesize foundational and contemporary theories of strategic management;</li> <li>Develop advanced capabilities in strategic diagnosis, integrating multi-level analysis (firm, industry, ecosystem, institutional environment);</li> <li>Evaluate and reconceptualize strategic options by linking organizational resources, capabilities, and business models with emerging technological paradigms, sustainability imperatives, and shifting geopolitical dynamics;</li> <li>Design rigorous research frameworks in strategic management.</li> <li>Develop the ability to contribute to scholarly debate, through peer critique, conceptual argumentation, and the construction of publishable-quality research proposals in strategic management.</li> </ul>

## 8. Contents

**Teaching methods: lecture and debates for all topics and meetings.**

Topic	Content	Focus
1. Strategic thinking and long-term value creation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From operational thinking to systemic strategic vision</li> <li>Strategic foresight, scenario planning, weak signals</li> <li>Strategy under uncertainty</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>evolution of strategic paradigms</li> <li>complexity and uncertainty</li> <li>research positioning in turbulent environments</li> </ul>
2. Vision, mission and business model reconfiguration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizational purpose and stakeholder capitalism</li> <li>Vision and ESG-driven strategy</li> <li>Business models vs. strategy (conceptual distinctions)</li> <li>Business model innovation</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>business model research streams</li> <li>sustainability transitions</li> <li>platform logic and AI-enabled architectures</li> </ul>

3. <i>Strategic decision-making and AI</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Classical and behavioral strategy theories</li> <li>2. Data-driven and AI-enabled decision systems</li> <li>3. Governance and ethical implications of algorithmic strategy</li> <li>4. Strategic leadership in technological disruption</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AI and competitive advantage</li> <li>• strategic cognition</li> <li>• research gaps</li> </ul>
4. <i>Value creation and competitive advantage in the digital age</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Value proposition, delivery and capture</li> <li>2. Competitive vs. comparative advantage</li> <li>3. Digital ecosystems and network effects</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RBV vs. ecosystem theory</li> <li>• intangible and data-based resources</li> <li>• hypercompetition</li> </ul>
5. <i>Advanced strategic analysis (external &amp; internal environment)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. PESTEL and geopolitical risks</li> <li>2. Porter's five forces in digitalized markets</li> <li>3. Benchmarking and industry evolution</li> <li>4. VRIO, dynamic capabilities and resilience</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• multi-level strategic analysis</li> <li>• limits of traditional tools</li> <li>• sustainability and systemic risk integration</li> </ul>
6. <i>Strategy formulation and business model design</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Corporate and business-level strategies by industry type</li> <li>2. Strategy creation and selection under uncertainty</li> <li>3. Business model canvas as design tool</li> <li>4. Strategy in AI-based and circular economy models</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• scenario modelling</li> <li>• linking theory to strategic choice</li> <li>• sustainable and regenerative strategies</li> </ul>
7. <i>Strategy implementation, digital transformation and ESG integration</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strategy implementation and organizational alignment</li> <li>2. Digital transformation strategy and governance</li> <li>3. ESG integration into strategic systems</li> <li>4. Strategic resilience and long-term performance metrics</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strategy-as-practice</li> <li>• transformation leadership</li> <li>• performance beyond financial metrics</li> </ul>

## 9. Evaluation

Activity type	Evaluation criteria	Evaluation methods	Percent in the final grade %
Course	Team oral presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• teams of 3 students</li> <li>• topics assigned in meeting 1</li> <li>• maximum 2 teams per meeting</li> <li>• 25 min presentation + 10 min discussion</li> <li>• minimum 5 peer-reviewed academic sources</li> <li>• real organization / industry case required</li> <li>• integration of previous meeting concepts required</li> <li>• 2-4 research questions or propositions included</li> </ul>	50%
	Individual research position paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• individual work</li> <li>• 7-10 pages</li> <li>• minimum 15 peer-reviewed academic sources</li> <li>• must be directly connected to the student's doctoral dissertation topic</li> <li>• strategic reframing of the dissertation using strategic management theories</li> <li>• integration of at least one macro dimension (AI, sustainability, or geopolitical risk)</li> <li>• formulation of 3-5 research propositions or hypotheses</li> <li>• academic integrity and proper referencing mandatory</li> </ul>	50%

## 10. Minimum performance standard

1. Knowledge and explanation of fundamental concepts, theories, and functions of strategic management and their role in organizational development.
2. Critical analysis of organizational situations and competitive environment and formulation of pertinent conclusions regarding strategic options.

4. Active participation in courses, respecting documentation requirements and group activities.  
5. Preparation and presentation of projects, demonstrating theoretical integration and appropriate writing and presentation skills.

### 11. Conditions of participation

Minimum 50% attendance.  
Good level of English.

### 12. Requirements for passing

- Compliance with the participation requirements.
- Minimum average grade of 5 from the two evaluation components.
- Attendance and completion of both evaluation components.

### 13. References

- Atz, U., Van Holt, T., Liu, Z. Z., & Bruno, C. C. (2023). Does sustainability generate better financial performance? Review, meta-analysis, and propositions. *Journal of Sustainable Finance & Investment*, 13(1), 802-825.
- David, F. (2022). *Strategic management: a competitive advantage approach, concepts and cases*. Pearson.
- Dorfleitner, G., Kreuzer, C., & Sparrer, C. (2020). ESG controversies and controversial ESG: about silent saints and small sinners. *Journal of Asset Management*, 21(5), 393-412.
- Huang, S., Wang, B., Li, X., Zheng, P., Mourtzis, D., & Wang, L. (2022). Industry 5.0 and Society 5.0—Comparison, complementation and co-evolution. *Journal of Manufacturing Systems*, 64, 424-428.
- Iansiti, M., & Lakhani, K. R. (2020). *Competing in the age of AI: Strategy and leadership when algorithms and networks run the world*. Harvard Business Press.
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- Ivanov, D. (2023). The Industry 5.0 framework: Viability-based integration of the resilience, sustainability, and human-centricity perspectives. *International Journal of Production Research*, 61(5), 1683-1695.
- Lamarre, E., Smaje, K., & Zimmel, R. (2023). *Rewired: The McKinsey guide to outcompeting in the age of digital and AI*. Wiley.
- Mazzi, F., & Floridi, L. (2023). *Ethics of Artificial Intelligence for the Sustainable Development Goals*. Springer International Publishing AG.
- Pagano, M. S., Sinclair, G., & Yang, T. (2018). 18. Understanding ESG ratings and ESG indexes. *Research Handbook of finance and sustainability*, 339.
- Pinzaru, F. (2026). *Strategic management lecture notes and reading & watching packs (Google Classroom) – compulsory*.
- Porter, M. (2021). *Corporate Strategic Management. Successful Management Strategies and Tools: Industry Insights, Case Studies and Best Practices*, 11.
- Śledziowska, K., & Włoch, R. (2021). *The economics of digital transformation: The disruption of markets, production, consumption, and work*. Routledge.
- Van Wynsberghe, A. (2021). Sustainable AI: AI for sustainability and the sustainability of AI. *AI and Ethics*, 1(3), 213-218.
- Williams, A., Kennedy, S., Philipp, F., & Whiteman, G. (2017). Systems thinking: A review of sustainability management research. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 148, 866-881.

Date of completion

Signature of the course instructor

08.09.2025

Prof. univ. dr. habil. Florina Pinzaru