

Name	FAMILY BUSINESS STRATEGY
Component modules	-
Scientific-disciplinary sector	ECON-06/A
Year of course and semester of provision	3 rd year – 2 nd semester
Teaching language	English
Didactic load in university formative credits	8 ECTS
Number of hours of total assisted teaching activities divided between DD and ID	56 hours, comprising 48 hours of instructor-led teaching and 8 hours of interactive teaching
Lecturer	Course coordinator: Prof. Antonello Garzoni - Prof. Antonello Garzoni, 4 ECTS - (Part I of the course) - Prof. Francesco Debellis, 4 ECTS - (Part II of the course)
Specific learning outcomes	The course provides students with the theoretical and managerial tools required to understand how family firms operate and to address the distinctive challenges faced by these organizations. Family firms are the most widespread form of business organization worldwide and play a central role in the economic and social development of countries. Family involvement in ownership and management significantly influences strategic objectives, governance structures, decision-making processes, and the resources on which firms build their competitive advantage. The course examines how factors such as ownership structures, generational succession, sibling relationships, interactions with non-family managers and employees, and family values and traditions shape the strategies of family firms. By the end of the course, students will be able to understand the main strategic and managerial challenges faced by family firms in international markets, identify their distinctive strengths and potential vulnerabilities, and assess how differences in family structures, relationships, and values influence their strategic choices.
Program	The course is divided into two parts. Part I. Distinctive Characteristics of Family Firms ● Socioemotional wealth, objectives, and key challenges of family firms ● Governance models and succession in family firms ● The role of traditions and values in family firm strategic decision-making Part II. Family Firms in the Global Context ● Leadership, business models, and internationalization strategies of family firms ● International market entry mode choices in family firms ● Partnerships and governance of global value chains in family firms
Types of didactic activities and relative methods of carrying them out	The course will be delivered through face-to-face lectures in accordance with the academic calendar. The teaching approach, centred on the discussion of real-world business cases, will enable students to acquire relevant methods and tools through active learning. Consistent with its applied orientation, the course will also include a guest lecture by a family business leader, providing students with direct exposure to the realities of family firms and fostering engagement with the business community.
Learning evaluation methods and criteria	The course adopts different assessment methods and criteria depending on whether students attend the course actively or choose not to attend. Only attending students will have the opportunity to discuss the selected business cases actively and collaboratively in class. Non-attending students, by contrast, will be

	expected to demonstrate their ability to apply the course content and strategic analysis frameworks independently to business examples of their own choice. <i>Attending Students</i> Group project and final oral examination. The group project consists of an analysis of a family-owned firm selected by the students, applying the concepts and analytical frameworks developed during the course. The oral examination consists of four open-ended questions covering the entire course syllabus. Each question carries equal weight in determining the final mark. Students must demonstrate analytical skills and independent judgement in applying and critically assessing the main frameworks related to the strategy and governance of family firms. <i>Non-Attending Students</i> Oral examination. The oral examination consists of four open-ended questions covering the entire course syllabus for non-attending students. Each question carries equal weight in determining the final mark. Students must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the main analytical frameworks examined during the course, with particular reference to the strategic and governance choices of family-owned firms. Students must also demonstrate analytical skills and independent judgement by applying the relevant frameworks and theoretical concepts to real-world business examples, thereby showing that they have acquired both a theoretical and an applied understanding of the course content.
Criteria for measuring learning and assigning the final grade	Assessment is based on a final grade expressed on a scale of 30. <i>Attending Students</i> The group project may contribute an additional 0 to 2 points, depending on the quality of both the content and the oral presentation. These points are added to the grade obtained in the final examination. Honours (Lode) may be awarded to attending students who demonstrate an excellent understanding of the theoretical concepts and a strong ability to apply them to specific and concrete business cases and situations. <i>Non-Attending Students</i> Honours (Lode) may be awarded to non-attending students who demonstrate an excellent understanding of the theoretical concepts and a strong ability to apply them to specific and concrete business cases and situations.
Prerequisites	There are no formal prerequisites. However, prior knowledge of Business Administration and Strategy is recommended.
Didactic material used and recommended didactic material	<i>Attending students:</i> ● Slides and academic papers provided by the Professors. ● De Massis, A., & Debellis, F. (2026) Family Business in the Globalized World. In Oxford Encyclopedia of Business and Management. Oxford University Press. <i>Non-Attending students:</i> ● De Massis A., Rondi, E. (2024) The Family Business Book. A roadmap for entrepreneurial families to prosper across generations. Pearson Financial Times Series. Harlow, United Kingdom.