

*STRATEGY IN AN ENTREPRENEURIAL CONTEXT*

MGT 4880

PROFESSOR CONTACT INFORMATION

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COURSE MATERIALS

Text: Strategic Management and Competitive Advantage (3rd edition). Barney & Hesterly. Pearson Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ

Electronic Resources: You will also need to access the University's blackboard system to view your assignment grades, access course readings.

<https://online.uen.org/webct/urw/lc129121021.tp0/logout.dowebct?insId=129121021&insName=Utah%20State%20University&glcid=URN:X-WEBCT-VISTA-V1:0674951f-cd7f-e234-0092-a7623daa3f58>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course takes the perspective of the entrepreneurial executive to examine why firms differ in their performance. This is an integrative capstone course in which materials and techniques are drawn from many disciplines. You'll be asked to think as an entrepreneurial executive in this course. Specifically, we will examine the processes, methods and steps involved in strategically managing the growth and performance of established new ventures. In pursuit of this end, you will be presented with multiple opportunities to identify key business problems, propose solutions, and recommend actions. *The key to success in this course is the cumulative learning process that will require you to draw upon the full breadth of your educational and personal experience to develop a more sophisticated view of business and management as the course progresses.*

During the course of this semester we will study a number of businesses as part of our effort to complete these tasks. I believe that accepting this challenge can be a rewarding and exciting experience for each of us. I find the materials and issues that we will evaluate this semester fascinating as well as challenging.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course's overarching objective is to help you develop a critical business mind, which is vital not only to your understanding of the factors that affect organizational success or failure, but also to your management of such factors. In addition, at the end of the semester course participants should be able to answer the following questions.

1. How can new venture managers systematically analyze the external environment their firm faces to formulate strategy?
2. How can new venture managers systematically analyze the internal environment of their firm to formulate strategy?
3. How can new venture managers establish competitive advantage through the implementation of business level strategies in their initial markets?
4. How can new venture managers implement corporate level strategies in order to gain competitive advantage as their firms grow?

INSTRUCTIONAL PHILOSOPHY AND METHOD

My interest in the materials we will study is deep and genuine. I am convinced that understanding sound strategic management principles is critical to your personal and career success. Additionally, I find the strategy and entrepreneurship disciplines to be exciting and highly relevant given today's fast paced business environment. I am hopeful that your end-of-the-course assessment will be similar.

In my opinion, the objectives for this course cannot be accomplished without active discussions among all of us. Accordingly, a large part of our class time will be spent discussing chapter materials and business cases. The case-study method brings a "real world" approach to business education. Former Chairman of Citicorp and Presidential Medal of Freedom winner Walter Wriston said, "Good judgment comes from experience. Experience comes from bad judgment." As in the "real world," the case method replicates the trial-and-error experience of seasoned managers, thereby deepening judgment. Fortunately, it also does so in the low risk environment of the classroom where neither your career nor your savings are at stake.

Rather than simply lecture about the current state of "best practices," it is necessary to recognize that theories change over time while reasoning skills survive. The case discussion method helps students to refine their skills as insightful questioners, rather than just good answer-finders. After all, it's the journey more than the destination that matters. A business degree is about more than just acquiring a tool box of analytical skills or regularly showing up for class. It is also about developing the ability to contribute to group learning that expands the boundaries of every member's learning. Just as in management, there is no single formula that you can follow to generate a decision.

While our applications will emphasize the exercise of judgment, this course is not “theory free.” Students will learn to “see through” complex problems, providing insight into their fundamental causes. Most of these analytical approaches will come from the book chapters and course readings. Since these chapters and readings articulate much of the theoretical content of the course, they will be crucial to your comprehension of course concepts. It is extremely important that you read, study, and preferably discuss with each other, this material when assigned so that you will be able to apply it to our in-class discussions.

A key requirement of this course is that you both think and apply. You must synthesize material that you have learned in prior courses in your business education in conjunction with new concepts we will introduce. I will ask that you add a dose of common sense and filter these ideas through your own experiences and “world view.” We will reach consensus on some issues, yet many among you will have differing interpretations as we proceed through the course. This is the nature of business. You may find yourself occasionally frustrated by the ambiguity and the difficulty of assimilating conflicting points of view. Welcome to real life. The world will likely never again be a simpler place for any of us to comprehend than it is right now.

COURSE POLICIES

Student Conduct: There are expectations about the quality of work and the way you conduct yourself, particularly with respect to how you behave towards the professor and other students in this course. Students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic and professional conduct.

In order to create an environment of mutual respect that fosters active participation, all students are expected to exhibit and practice professional behaviors that exemplify the following both inside and outside class.

- **Respect** for faculty, student peers, guests, university property, and policies.
- **Responsibility & Accountability** for one’s choices and actions.
- **Professional & Courteous Communication** in all forms, at all times, whether verbal, non-verbal, or written.

Additionally all students are expected to avoid unprofessional behaviors that detract from an environment of mutual respect. Unprofessional behavior consists of, but is not limited to actions that may be perceived as sleeping in class, showing up late to class, reading materials other than those assigned for this class, leaving class early, chit-chatting in class, failing to turn cell phones off, passing notes, surfing the web, text messaging, eating in class, rudeness, sarcasm, etc. Such behaviors will negatively impact your overall grade. *Specifically, I reserve the right to reduce the final grade of any student who engages in behavior that interferes with the learning process for other students, inhibits my ability to teach most effectively, or diverts energy away from the objectives of this course.*

Academic Integrity: It is the responsibility of both students and instructors to help maintain scholastic integrity at the University by refusing to participate in or tolerate scholastic dishonesty. In the spirit of our University’s commitment to ethics and personal development we will adhere to

the USU Honor Pledge: "I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity." Upon accepting admission to Utah State University, a student immediately assumes a commitment to uphold the Honor Pledge, to accept responsibility for learning, and to follow the philosophy and rules of the Honor System. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the Utah State University community from the requirements or the processes of the Honor System. Cases of apparent scholastic dishonesty will result in a failing course grade.

The USU Honor Pledge does not prevent the discussion of ideas about lectures and readings with members of this course outside the classroom, as long as appropriate credit is given to the originator(s) of the ideas and the professor does not specifically prohibit it.

Make-up and Late Assignments: Make-up work and late assignments will not be accepted without a documented University approved excuse. NOTE: This policy will be strictly enforced so I strongly recommend that you provide yourself ample working time to assure that you meet each assignment's respective deadline. If you know you will not be able to attend class on a given day, you are welcome to turn in an assignment or take an exam early, with the exception of the team project presentations.

Syllabus Changes: You may expect that amendments to this syllabus will be made as the course progresses.

Grade Issues: I prefer to hear your concerns about grading during the semester – as early as possible. I will not entertain grade appeals after submitting final grades. You will have seven days from the time an assignment grade is posted on the course's blackboard website to appeal it. After seven days have passed, I will only consider grade appeals resulting from computational error.

Please do not wait until the end of the semester to see me regarding problems with the course material or your performance. It will be too late to address grade deficiencies at the end of the semester. There is nothing that either of us can do at the end of the semester.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Final grades are based on student performance in the grade components outlined below. The point values for each grade component are listed below. Full descriptions of the grade components are provided in the blackboard document entitled Grade Components.

Class Participation	60 points
Case Analyses (2*50 pts ea)	100 points
Team Project Presentation	50 points
HSB Assessment Completion	40 points
Exams (3*50 pts ea)	150 points
<i>Total</i>	<i>400 points</i>

The following percentages define the grade divisions:

> 93 =A	90 - 93 =A-	87 - 89 =B+	84 - 86 =B	80 - 83 =B-
77 - 79 =C+	74 - 76 =C	70 - 73 =C-	60 - 69 =D	< 60 =F

NOTE: Grade break points are fixed. I will not round your percentage up. For example a student that has a percentage of 89.999. . .at the end of the class will receive a B+ not an A-. However, I reserve the right to curve the class grades, if I deem it necessary. The exercise of this right will be limited to such cases that are consistent with the interests of students.

OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE CONCERNS

Messages for Me: I strongly prefer to be contacted by e-mail at christopher.reutzel@usu.edu. With close to 100 students, I will inevitably forget your concern if I do not have it in writing. As a result, if you have any messages or specific requests for me, please submit them by e-mail. Please ensure that your message includes your name, and a complete description of your concern.

Students with Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you are entitled to special accommodation due to a disability, please see me within the first week of class to inform me what accommodations need to be made.

University Statement on Harassment and Discrimination: Utah State University is committed to providing an educational and work climate that is conducive to the personal and professional development of each individual. To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, Utah State University encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality, diversity, pluralism and the uniqueness of the individual within our state, nation and world. Faculty, staff and students should be aware that any form of harassment and any form of illegal discrimination against any individual is inconsistent with the values and ideals of the university community.

TENTATIVE COURSE CALENDAR

DAY	DATE	TOPIC	MATERIAL
Tuesday	1/11/2011	<i>Introduction</i>	
Thursday	1/13/2011	<i>Pre-test</i>	
Tuesday	1/18/2011	<i>The Strategic Management Process</i>	B&H Chapter 1 pgs. 2-25
Thursday	1/20/2011	<i>External Environment Analysis</i>	B&H Chapter 2 pgs. 28-60
Tuesday	1/25/2011	<i>Case Analysis #1: Ice-Fili</i>	
Thursday	1/27/2011	<i>Internal Environment Analysis</i>	B&H Chapter 3 pgs. 64-96
Tuesday	2/1/2011	<i>Exam #1</i>	
Thursday	2/3/2011	Team Project Day	
Tuesday	2/8/2011	<i>Cost Leadership</i>	B&H Chapter 4 pgs. 102-127
Thursday	2/10/2011	<i>Strategy In Depth: Wal-Mart</i>	
Tuesday	2/15/2011	<i>Case Analysis #2: Wal-Mart: "Every Day Low Prices" In China</i>	
Thursday	2/17/2011	<i>Product Differentiation</i>	B&H Chapter 5 pgs. 130-158
Tuesday	2/22/2011	<u>No Class - Monday Schedule</u>	
Thursday	2/24/2011	<i>Vertical Integration</i>	B&H Chapter 6 pgs. 162-185
Tuesday	3/1/2011	<i>Exam #2</i>	
Thursday	3/3/2011	<i>Surveys</i>	
Tuesday	3/8/2011	<u>Spring Break</u>	
Thursday	3/10/2011		
Tuesday	3/15/2011	<i>Corporate Diversification</i>	B&H Chapter 7 pgs. 188-216
Thursday	3/17/2011	<i>Strategy In Depth: The Smartest Guys in the Room</i>	
Tuesday	3/22/2011	<i>Strategic Alliances</i>	B&H Chapter 9 pgs. 248-272
Thursday	3/24/2011	<i>Experiential Exercise: Poker</i>	
Tuesday	3/29/2011	<i>Mergers & Acquisitions</i>	B&H Chapter 10 pgs. 276-303
Thursday	3/31/2011	<i>Experiential Exercise: Acquisition</i>	
Tuesday	4/5/2011	<i>Exam #3</i>	
Thursday	4/7/2011	Team Project Day	
Tuesday	4/12/2011	<i>Presentations</i>	
Thursday	4/14/2011	<i>Presentations</i>	
Tuesday	4/19/2011	<i>Presentations</i>	
Thursday	4/21/2011	<i>Course Wrap-up</i>	
Tuesday	4/26/2011	ETS Exam	
Thursday	4/28/2011	ETS Exam	

* Barney & Hesterly, Strategic Management and Competitive Advantage