Administrative Strategy & Policy

Required Materials


Course Description

Unlike other business courses that concentrate narrowly on a particular function or piece of the business—accounting, finance, marketing, production, human resources, or information systems, strategic management is a big picture course. It cuts across the whole spectrum of business and management. The center of attention is the total enterprise—the industry and competitive environment in which it operates, its long-term direction and strategy, its resources and competitive capabilities, and its prospects for success.

Throughout the course, the spotlight will be trained on the foremost issue in running a business enterprise: “What must managers do, and do well, to make the company a winner in the game of business?” The answer that emerges, and which becomes the theme of the course, is that good strategy-making and good strategy-execution are the key ingredients of company success and the most reliable signs of good management. The mission of the course is to explore why good strategic management leads to good business performance, to present the basic concepts and tools of strategic analysis, and to drill you in the methods of crafting a well-conceived strategy and executing it competently.

You’ll be called on to probe, question, and evaluate all aspects of a company’s external and internal situation. You’ll grapple with sizing up a company’s standing in the marketplace and its ability to go head-to-head with rivals, learn to tell the difference between winning strategies and mediocre strategies, and become more skilled in spotting ways to improve a company’s strategy or its execution.
In the midst of all this, another purpose is accomplished: to help you synthesize what you have learned in prior business courses. Dealing with the grand sweep of how to manage all the pieces of a business makes strategic management an integrative, capstone course in which you reach back to use concepts and techniques covered in previous courses. For perhaps the first time you’ll see how the various pieces of the business puzzle fit together and why the different parts of a business need to be managed in strategic harmony for the organization to operate in winning fashion.

The Next Weeks Will Be Exciting, Fun, Challenging, and Filled with Learning Opportunities. No matter where your primary business interest lies, the content of this course has all the ingredients to be the best course you’ve taken—best in the sense of learning a lot about business, holding your interest from beginning to end, and enhancing your powers of business judgment. As you tackle the subject matter, ponder Ralph Waldo Emerson’s observation, “Commerce is a game of skill which many people play, but which few play well.” The overriding intent of the course is to help you become a savvier player and better prepare you for a successful business career. I sincerely hope this course will prove to be instrumental in making you “competitively superior,” and successful in your career and much wiser about the secrets of first-rate management.

Learning Objectives

A student who has completed this course will be able to:
1. Integrate previously studied material and apply strategic concepts to solve business problems at the general manager level.
2. Analyze a firm externally and internally to identify its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and propose actions based on that analysis.
3. Think strategically at functional, business, corporate, and international levels.
4. Present ideas effectively orally and in writing as an individual and as a team.

Major Course Requirements

The Business Strategy Game (BSG) Simulation
BSG Quiz One and BSG Peer Evaluations
First Written Case Assignment
Second Written Case Assignment
Completion of Case Exercises for assigned cases
Essay Exam on Chapters 1-5/assigned readings
Final Presentation on BSG Results
Connect Quizzes
Discussion Board Participation
Activities and Grading Plan

Your course grade will be based on the following components and percentage allocation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance on the BSG simulation exercise (Final game to date rank)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSG 3-Year Strategic Plan</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>BSG Peer Evaluation (Peer Ratings Only)</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSG Quiz One</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay Exam on Chapters 1-5 plus Assigned Readings</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Presentation on BSG Results</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Written Case Assignment</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Written Case Assignment</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Exercises and Assignments</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect Quizzes for Assigned Chapters</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board Participation</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
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The instructor reserves the right to modify/change course requirements as circumstances dictate. For example, the instructor may wish to change the number and frequency of exams or other assignments if unexpected changes in the class schedule occur. If such a modification is needed, you will be notified by e-mail or through the course Web site.

Participating in the Business Strategy Game (BSG) Simulation

Peer Evaluations – All students will be required to rate the performance of their The Business Strategy Game team members along with their own performance in The Business Strategy Game simulation. Students’ grades for their performance in the simulation may be lowered by as much as two letter grades if other team members universally rate a student’s knowledge of the mechanics of the simulation and contribution to team success as “poor.”

Terminating a member of your management team – Team members are subject to dismissal from the team if they are unwilling to master the material presented in The Business Strategy Game Players’ Guide or are unwilling to attend team meetings or otherwise participate in the simulation.
Examination Policy

The exams in this course will be essay exams that require you to integrate assigned readings with text coverage of strategic management concepts. Exams are to be completed on an individual basis. You are expected to take the examinations when scheduled. The exams are open book/notes. You will have two hours to complete the exam and the exam will be available on the assigned exam dates, usually a Sunday. Make-Up Exam Policy: Documented Work Conflict or Family Medical Emergencies are the only basis for requesting a Make-Up exam.

Completion of the Connect Quizzes / Discussion Group Assignments

The Connect package for the course includes Quizzes that will allow you to further assess your understanding of key chapter concepts and your ability to apply the tools of strategic analysis presented in all 10 chapters. One Quiz will be assigned for each chapter to be completed on an individual basis. Completion of these Quizzes will help prepare you for other materials and exercises in the course.

Preparation of Written Case Assignments

The written case assignments are to be prepared on an individual basis. It is expected that the content of your written case will reflect your thoughts and analysis rather than the work of others. All group work is “out of bounds.” The written portion of the case will be limited to a 3-page executive summary of recommendations to address the strategic issues in the case. The purpose of the written case assignments and all case analyses for the course is to help you become proficient in analysis-based decision making. Each assignment will require that you complete the Connect Case Exercise for the assigned case to arrive at the strategic issues confronting the company. The executive summary is your detailed, specific action plan to address such issues. Each recommendation should be supported by facts disclosed by your analysis of the case.

Suggestions regarding the preparation of written case assignments are discussed in “A Guide to Case Analysis” provided in your eBook and on Blackboard. The criteria for grading written case presentations may include:

1. Identification of key problems/strategic issues.
2. Evidence that the use of appropriate analytical tools and techniques presented in the chapters were used in identifying strategic issues.
3. Presenting realistic, workable, well-supported recommendations for action.
4. Use of good communication skills—failure to use good grammar, spelling, and other written communication skills will result in a full one-letter grade reduction.
5. Evidence of adequate preparation, pride of workmanship, and display of professional attitude and approach.
Written case assignments should be submitted no later than the due date for the assignment. Cases turned in after the scheduled due date are eligible for a grade no higher than a C (and that only if the paper is otherwise an A or B+ paper). **No late papers will be accepted if submitted more than 48 hours past the scheduled due date** (except by prearranged consent of the instructor).

All written cases are to be typed (double-spaced) and should incorporate correct form, spelling, grammar, sentence structure, and communication skills.

Papers which, in the opinion of the instructor, employ disproportionately poor grammar and poor quality written communication skills will be assigned a grade that is a full one-letter lower than would otherwise be assigned.

**Preferred Method of Scholarly Citation.** APA (American Psychological Association) format is the preferred method of scholarly citation in this course.

**Grade Appeals**

As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures.

These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at [http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html](http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html).

**Copyright / Plagiarism**

The handouts used in this course are copyrighted. By "handouts," I mean all materials generated for this class, which include but are not limited to self-assessments, exams, lab problems, course content materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets. Because these materials are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy them, unless I expressly grant permission. As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, and writings, etc., that belong to another. In accordance with this definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you have the permission of that person. Plagiarism is one of the worst academic sins, for the plagiarist destroys the trust among colleagues without which ideas and research cannot be safely communicated. If you have any questions regarding plagiarism, please consult the university rules at the above website.
Academic Integrity with Course Products and Evaluations

The guiding principle of academic integrity is that a student's submitted work must be his/her own. Since the course objectives focus on the processes of developing course related materials, as well as the materials themselves, it is expected that all course products will consist of work done specifically for this course. Products completed for previous or concurrent course credit cannot be used for assignments for this course. If you wish to continue a theme or content area used in another course, inform the instructor and supply any requested existing materials at the start of this course. Any intended projects relating to other courses should be approved at the start by all instructors and should reflect unique elements and sufficient development effort for all courses involved.

Shared work is intended to allow students to learn from each other in projects. Any problems in working together should be brought to the attention of the instructor immediately so that solutions may be enacted to ensure that all members benefit from the experience.

Related Issues

Online courses require time management and planning on your part. You cannot afford to get behind since many topics and assignments are based on the skills and products of previous assignments; there is no meaningful way to “cram.” Contact me if you are having any problems with assignments.

There is a reliance on technologies in this course that impacts the need to have assignments done on time. Having ample time to complete an assignment will be the responsibility of the student. It is also the student's responsibility to find solutions to technical problems with sufficient time to complete the required tasks. Do not wait until a due date is near to discover/report lack of access to software, inability to connect to a network, etc. While the instructor will help wherever possible, it is the students' responsibility to maintain his or her network. You are responsible for contacting me as soon as you detect a problem so that we can arrange a way for you to meet the course objectives.

Disabilities Accommodations

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 believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, rm. 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.
Syllabus Disclaimer

This syllabus has been created as a guide to the class and is as accurate as possible. However, all information is subject to change. Any changes will be posted on the Blackboard Learning System’s Announcements.

Technical Support and Requirements

Blackboard Learning System Help: http://iol.tamucc.edu
“Help” At the bottom of the Blackboard Course Management Control Panel in the course menu on the left hand column of the course interface. Phone: Help Desk (361) 825-2825

Island Online Student Resources Webpage:
https://distance-education.tamucc.edu/student_resources.html

Getting Technical Help
If you are having difficulties accessing course materials from your home computer, first let your instructor know, then contact the IOL Helpdesk at (361)825-2692 or submit a request via email to iol.support@tamucc.edu

Technology Requirements
To prepare your computer for using Blackboard 9.1, go to https://iol.tamucc.edu/techreq.php for computer requirements.
- To view .pdf files you will need the Adobe Reader. Download it at: http://get.adobe.com/reader/
- To view flash (.flv) files from sites such as You Tube, download the Flash player at http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/

Navigating Blackboard 9.1

Once you are in the course, read the “Announcements” on the home page. Check this each time you enter your course. You will see a Course Menu on the left of the page. The menu is a list of links that connect to materials and tools associated with the course. Blackboard has several features and tools for communicating content delivery that you should use almost daily. Links to information about how to use these tools include: Bb Help, which contains a complete guide to learning how to use the many tools and features in Blackboard, and Bb Video Tutorials, which links to a page with videos to show you how to do tasks such as submitting an assignment.

Library resources (including print, electronic, and human) can be accessed through the Mary and Jeff Bell Library website that supports electronic searches of articles, books, journals, course reserves, and databases. It includes information such as Ask a Librarian, research tools, remote
access information and tutorials, information about plagiarism and copyright, and interlibrary loan (http://rattler.tamucc.edu/distlearn/). The library is a member of TexShare which provides you with a card that allows you to checkout materials from libraries across Texas. Librarians’ contact information is also on the website and you are encouraged to contact librarians for assistance.

Statement of Academic Continuity

In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, and classes cannot be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course will continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

Online Course Guidelines

Students will practice respect and responsibility as a part of this learning community. Here are some things you can do to exhibit an attitude of respect and responsibility:

- Post assignments on time. Early is even better.
- Work extra hard to get to know other classmates.
- Reach out through email Blackboard Messages, Discussions, and Wikis to support each other. If you have good info/tips on what is working for you/resource ideas, please share with the group so we can help each other out.
- Respect other classmates by watching what you say.
- Add your opinions to/participate in the discussions.
- Check the assignments every week. Don’t wait until the last minute.
- Be helpful to other students
- Don’t get behind. If you get behind in an online course it is harder to get back on track than it is in a traditional course.
- Stay focused and stay connected.
- Keep up with your assignments and your grades. It is not the teacher's responsibility to tell you what you have or haven't turned in. Your grades will be available in Blackboard so all you have to do is regularly check to make sure you have grades posted for all work.
- In general terms, students are expected to "demonstrate a high level of maturity, self-direction and ability to manage their own affairs" and to "conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty." Instances of plagiarism will be handled in accordance with Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi General Academic Policies and Regulations as listed in the current catalog.
Delivery of Instructor Feedback

During the week, Instructor response to online requests usually occurs within a 24-hour period, but you can expect a response within 3 days.

Student login expectations
Students are required to login often – once every three days at a minimum. It is recommended that students check daily for announcements and updates.

Faculty availability to support students
I maintain a consistent web presence and am available to meet online in Blackboard, via Skype, WebEx and phone.