TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-CORPUS CHRISTI

MGMT 4388.R01: ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY AND STRATEGY

Spring 2020

Instructor: John E. Gamble, Ph.D.
Office: OCNR 330
Office Hours: Th 2:30-4:00 or by appointment
Class Meeting Time: Th 4:15-6:55
Telephone: Office: 361-825-6045
e-mail: john.gamble@tamucc.edu

THOMPSON JR GEN COMBO CONNECT AC CRAFTING & EXECUTING STRATEGY; BSG GLO-BUS AC 22nd ed.)
Websites Used: Blackboard https://bb9.tamucc.edu
Business Strategy Game https://www.bsg-online.com

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 more savvy 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.

**Course Objectives**

By the end of this course, the students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate the research capabilities and critical thinking necessary to gather and interpret key environmental data (BBA Goal 3, Objective 1; 2; 3).
2. Exhibit the analytical and ethical decision-making skills necessary for dealing with complex strategic planning (BBA Goal 3, Objective 1; Goal 4, Objective 1).
3. Analyze a firm’s mission, including broad statements about its purpose, philosophy, and goals (BBA Goal 2, Objective 1).
4. Assess a firm’s external environment, including the general, industry, and competitive environments (BBA Goal 2, Objective 1; 2; 3).
5. Analyze a firm’s options by matching its internal resources with external environmental factors; suggest alternative courses of action, and present well-supported recommendations for future action (BBA Goal 2, Objective 1; 2; 3).
6. Illustrate the communication and computer skills necessary to make effective individual and team oral and written presentations (BBA Goal 1, Objective 1; 2).

**Major Course Requirements**

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

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Performance on the BSG simulation exercise (including quiz 1, quiz 2, 3-year plan, comprehensive exam and the peer evaluations)</th>
<th>25%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual written case assignment</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group case presentation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Completion of Connect case exercises for assigned cases</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam on Chapters 1-5</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<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 website.

**Participating in The Business Strategy Game 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 course will include a multiple choice exam that assesses your knowledge, comprehension, and application of 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 75 minutes to complete the exam. All make-up exams are scheduled for the date of the final exam for the course.

**Completion of the Connect Case Exercises**

The Connect package for the course includes case exercises. All of the exercises call upon a student to develop thoughtful, analysis-based answers (as opposed to stating seat-of-the-pants opinions). Each exercise is different, depending both on the circumstances of the case and the content of the chapters to which it is closely linked. The multiple choice exercises are auto-graded and can typically be completed in 20-25 minutes, assuming a student has done a conscientious job of reading the case and absorbing the information.

**Preparation of Written Case Assignment**

The written case assignment is 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. The criteria for grading written case presentations 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.

The written case assignment should be submitted no later than the due date for the assignment (see the Schedule of Class Activities). 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.

**Required Participation in Class Discussions of Assigned Cases**

Due to the fact that participation in class discussion of cases counts as a factor in determining your overall grade in the course, each student MUST contribute significantly to in-class analysis and discussion of the cases. Each student is expected to be an active participant in case discussions and to offer meaningful analysis and convincing arguments for the position you stake out. Your grade on class participation is something to be earned by contributing your assessments and judgments to the discussion. Merely coming to class and listening to the discussion of assigned cases is not sufficient; attendance is not participation. You should, therefore, make a conscientious effort to be sufficiently prepared to make intelligent, timely comments regarding the managerial issues raised in the cases—this entails reading the assigned cases and preparing several pages of notes to the assignment questions for the case.

The bare minimum number of assigned cases on which you are expected to display your analytical skills by speaking out and making a meaningful contribution is 6 (multiple contributions to a single case are averaged into a single grade for participating on that case). A contribution is defined as making a relevant and clearly articulated statement, either in response to a question by the instructor or in response/rebuttal to comments made by another class member. Merely saying “yes” or “no” without any elaboration or without having the full attention of the class does not count as meaningful participation. On days when there are oral team presentations, class participation is judged on the caliber of the question(s) you pose to one or more of the presenting teams.

Satisfactory contributions on 6 assigned cases will be judged as a C– (70); and good-to-excellent contributions on 6 cases will be worth a B– (80). To earn an A on class discussion typically requires contributing meaningfully on 10 to 13 cases (out of the 15 total cases that are assigned) and standing out as a class leader in the discussions of assigned cases. Satisfactory contributions on only 2 assigned cases will be judged as a 30; satisfactory contributions on just 3 cases will be judged as a 40; satisfactory
contributions on 4 cases will be judged as a 50; and satisfactory contributions on 5 cases will be judged as a 60—so failure to have the minimum 6 case participations will negatively impact your grade in the course.

**Oral Team Presentation**

Oral presentations consist of a 20-minute presentation followed by a 10-minute question-answer session. The nature of the presentation is indicated on the schedule of class activities. **You and your team members should assume the role of consultants employed to present your analysis and recommendations to the assigned company’s senior management—you do NOT have the option of ignoring this assigned role.**

All team members are expected to make roughly equal contributions to the presentation, both the formal 20-minute presentation and the 10-minute Q&A portion.

All presentations should incorporate the use of attractive, effective PowerPoint slides.

**Your grade on the presentation will be based on six factors:**

1. The clarity and thoroughness with which your team identifies and articulates the problems facing the company and the issues which management needs to address—**12%**,  
2. The caliber (depth and breadth) of your team’s analysis of the company’s situation and demonstrated ability to use the concepts and tools of strategic analysis in a competent fashion—**30%**,  
3. The breadth, depth, and practicality of your team’s recommendations, degree of detail and specificity of recommended actions, caliber of supporting arguments—**20%**,  
4. The caliber of your PowerPoint slides—**15%**,  
5. The degree of preparation, professionalism, energy, enthusiasm, and skills demonstrated in delivering your part of the presentation—**15%**, and  
6. Your personal contributions to your team’s answers to the questions posed by the class—how well you defend and support your team’s analysis and recommendations during the Q&A period—**8%**. Every team member is expected to answer at least one question posed by the class (or else there is no individual contribution for the instructor to grade!!!!!!!).

**Appropriate dress for presenters is business casual.**

**Policies Regarding Class Attendance and Make-Up of Absences**

Attendance at all class sessions is expected, but attendance is required on those days an assigned case is discussed in class. **Absence from class on case discussion days requires make-up and should be discussed with your instructor, since class roll is taken on case discussion days.**

If you must miss class discussion of an assigned case, you are required to turn in answers to the assignment questions for the case. The make-up work for the missed case discussions is due no later than the following class period (except by prearranged consent of the instructor). Failure to satisfactorily complete and hand in the “make-up” work at the next class meeting will result in a 2-point penalty deduction from your overall course average for each case discussion absence without a satisfactorily-completed written make-up (thus if your final average is an 80 and you have three unmade-up absences from case discussions, your final average will be reduced to 74).

More than one absence on case discussion and oral team presentation days (even if made up by turning in written answers to the assignment questions) will be penalized at the discretion of the instructor.
**Time Requirements**

Anyway you look at it, the workload in this course is quite heavy for the 5-week period. The time requirements are demanding and the daily activities are fast-paced (with almost no let-up during the term):

- There are 10 chapters of text material (about 250 pages) to master and be examined on. You should plan on taking each of these tests to gauge your command of the material and prepare yourself for the exam on Chapters 1-5.
- Expect to spend 1½ to 2 hours per decision round participating in Business Strategy Game. A few more hours might be needed the first 2-3 decision rounds to grasp what the simulation is all about and how the software and website work; the 3-year strategic plan will probably entail 1-2 hours. You will probably spend 25-30 hours outside of class working with your co-managers on the Business Strategy Game exercise.
- Expect to spend 1 1/2 to 3 hours preparing a case for class discussion (you will need to complete the Connect case preparation exercise or prepare 2-3 pages of notes/answers to the study questions in front of you each day to sparkle and shine in the class discussions!). Trying to wing it by just quickly reading through an assigned case prior to class is ill-advised!
- Expect to spend 10 to 15 hours preparing your written case assignment.
- Expect to spend 10 to 15 hours preparing for the oral team presentation.

It all adds up to a bunch of hours (probably more than for most other courses) and will constitute a very strenuous workout. **You will have to dedicate a considerable amount of your time during the term to this course.**

But don’t let the hours/time requirements intimidate you. All of the assignments that comprise the course aim at (a) improving your grasp of important tools and concepts, (b) enhancing your ability to use and apply them correctly, and (c) sharpening your business decision-making judgment. The course has been deliberately designed to push you to do your best under pressure and to be very real-world in terms of what you learn and what you can take with you of practical value as you launch your business career. In a very real way, the entire course is your “final exam” for business school and for being cleared to become a “licensed practitioner of business.”

**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 Rule13.02.99.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.
Academic Integrity/Plagiarism

As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, 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.

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.

Dropping a Class

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by contacting your advisor and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class.

April 10, 2020 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

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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 Mr. Isaiah Vance.

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.

**Classroom/professional behavior**
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

**Statement of Academic Continuity**
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would 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.

**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.

*Required by SACS or HB2504*