

BUSI 411 Strategic Management
Fall 2018, Mod 1



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Sections: 001-002-003-004
Office Hours: Mondays 4:00pm- 5:00pm (or by appointment)

Welcome to the Strategic Management class! The objective of this course is to introduce you to the role of the “strategic manager,” someone who is concerned with the problems of and/or responsible for the overall and long-term performance of the organization. The course is an integrative course emphasizing a “general management” as opposed to a functional viewpoint (accounting, finance, marketing, etc.). Every firm must define the scope of its business operations and, within the chosen scope, how the firm will compete against rivals. Decisions about the scope of business (i.e. in what markets or industries a firm wants to compete) constitute the firm’s corporate strategy. Decisions about how to compete (e.g. cost leadership or differentiation) within the chosen market(s) reflect the firm’s business-level strategy. This course focuses on how a firm can both formulate and implement effective business-level strategies to achieve competitive advantage and earn above average profits. A follow-up class (BUSI 412) will focus on corporate-level strategies.

Course Objectives

The primary objectives of this course are:

- Provide you with an overview of key strategic management conceptual frameworks and enhance your ability to apply these strategic tools to real strategic decisions facing managers.
- Provide you with the critical thinking skills necessary to function as a strategic manager and/or to perform the tasks comprising the strategic management process.
- Prepare you for management careers by providing in-class opportunities for you to enhance your ability to communicate orally and in written formats, as well as to lead and to work with others in realistic teamwork settings.

Required Readings

- The customized text for this class, which can be purchased from the University bookstore or online, includes all the required readings and cases.

Suggested Readings

- For a more comprehensive coverage of strategic management theoretical concepts, refer to: “Strategic Management: Concepts” by Frank Rothaermel, 4th edition, McGraw Hill

- For a more comprehensive coverage of strategic management applications and frameworks, refer to: “The Strategist’s Toolkit” by Jared Harris and Michael Lenox, 1st edition, Darden Business Publishing.

Grading

Individual Components (65% of final grade)

Class Contribution	25%
Homework Assignments (4 out of 6)	25%
Final Exam	10%
Guest Speaker Session	5%

Team Project (35% of final grade)

Strategic Analysis Report	20%
Strategic Analysis Presentation	15%

Course grades will be curved to fit the BSBA recommended mean GPA of 3.2-3.4 for core courses. Please note that your grade reflects your performance in the class, not merely your effort.

Each of these components is described in the following sections.

Class Contribution

Contribution to the class accounts for 25% of the course grade. Because this is not a traditional lecture-based course, rigorous discussions of current business events and reading assignments are major components of the class. I expect all students to be well prepared for each class, having read the required materials and analyzed any assigned articles or cases before class. Students who make consistent, meaningful contributions to class discussions will receive better class contribution grades. Your class participation grade is weighted heavily in favor of quality over quantity. The quality of comments is evaluated based on the clarity and coherence of students’ arguments, application of theoretical frameworks in each context, and the ability to support claims with evidence from the material. Simple repeating of case information, while counted toward the participation, will be given lower weigh relative to synthesis and analysis of those materials. Participation in in-class group activities also counts toward the contribution grade, whereas disruptive class activities including web surfing and distraction by cell phones will negatively impact your contribution grade. Please note that regular attendance is necessary but not sufficient for a good grade on this component.

Class contribution will be graded as follows:

Regular presence in class but no participation	65
Regular presence in class and minor participation	75
Regular presence in class and medium participation	85
Regular presence in class and regular participation	92
Regular presence in class and excellent participation	100

Homework Assignments

The individual assignments are designed to help you understand the core concepts of strategic management and be able to apply those frameworks to real world examples.

There are 6 individual assignments (25% of final grade). Only 4 out of the 6 individual assignments will count towards your grade. You can choose to submit only 4 assignments, or submit all 6 assignments so that the lowest grade is dropped. You should be prepared to discuss all cases in class, regardless of whether you chose to submit the related homework.

The assignments should be submitted via the University of North Carolina Canvas system. The due dates are listed in the class schedule. There will be no credit for late or emailed submissions.

For the assignments, students must respond to the questions posted on the class Canvas website. There will be grade deductions for assignments longer than one page, or fonts smaller than 11 point.

For the assignments, while there may be multiple perspectives in analyzing a question, the full grade requires incorporation and application of strategy class frameworks. Use your class slides as the theoretical and conceptual guideline for answering assignment questions. Further, you should not repeat case material or exhibit verbatim unless it is in support and relevant for some point that you are trying to make. You can only introduce such material if it has been reinterpreted or employed in further analyses or computations. While it is tempting to try and figure out “what happened,” and the Internet makes this continually easier, this is a distraction from the development of your own strategic thinking and is strictly forbidden.

If you feel material has been improperly graded, you must turn in a typed summary of the questions in dispute and a justification of your answers. Your justification must include citations from the text or other reputable sources within 7 days after announcement of the grades. I will review your request, and provide a written response.

Final Exam

This final exam (10% of grade) is an in-class closed-book closed-notes exam. During the scheduled time for the final exam, students will be presented with 25 multiple choice questions. The questions will assess your knowledge of strategic management frameworks discussed in the class as well as your ability to apply them to real world examples. The exam questions do not require knowledge of specific statistics, events, or firm histories reported in the 6 case studies. However, you must be familiar with how the strategic management frameworks were applied to analyze the cases.

Guest Speaker Session

Attendance in the guest speaker session accounts for 5% of your grade. The exact date and time for this session will be announced during the first three weeks of class.

Because this session is not scheduled during the regular class time, it is possible that some students have other class or work commitments. In the event that you are not able to attend the guest speaker session, it is your responsibility to send me an email the day before the guest speaker session and inform me about your time conflict. In that case, the student must submit an alternative assignment to substitute for the 5% of the grade devoted to the guest speaker session. The alternative assignment includes interviewing a business owner, strategy consultant, or an employee or manager in charge of strategic management decisions, and submitting a three-page summary of your interview (double-spaced 11-point font). The deadline for this alternative assignment is 7 days after the guest speaker session. There will be no credit for late submissions.

Strategic Analysis Report

Teams of 4-5 students will be formed by the instructor with the objective of achieving diversity among team members. Each team will analyze one firm, present the analyses during the class, and submit a written summary report. The instructor will assign firms to your team.

The objective of the report (20% of grade) is to analyze the firm's competitive situation and to identify a set of strategic issues facing the firm. You will be expected to not only analyze the firm, but also to make recommendations for future action. The fundamental purpose of this assignment is to provide an opportunity to apply the theoretical frameworks discussed in class to a real firm. The report should include the following components:

- A brief introduction of the firm's business
- Identification of the firm's industry and its major competitors
- A five forces analysis of the industry to clearly identify the sources of industry profitability and the overall attractiveness of the industry
- Assessment of the firm's resources & capabilities (importance to firm and strengths & weaknesses relative to rivals).
- Assessment of firm's generic strategy or lack thereof
- Overall assessment of the firm's current performance and future trajectory, and whether the has a competitive advantage. (Note that some of these firms may be failing companies, therefore, you need to specifically answer the question of whether they possess competitive advantage.)
- Identification of 1-3 strategic challenges facing the firm and an explicit statement of the most significant strategic challenge facing the firm. These will form the basis for the recommendations that follow.
- Development of 1-3 recommendations to address the most significant strategic challenge, including the pros and cons of each and an explicit statement of your recommended solution.
- Development of an implementation plan for your team's recommendation. This should include an overview of how the firm implements the plan and how it will address the strategic challenge.

The page limit for this report is 10-15 of double-spaced pages using 11-point font.

The report will be graded for: depth and soundness of the analysis; conciseness and clarity; use of strategic management tools and techniques of analysis; creativity and originality.

You are encouraged to use raw data available in the University of North Carolina library resources, business press, and company websites. The objective of this team presentation is to help you develop necessary skills in strategic analysis of firms and industries. Therefore, while it is tempting to copy your entire industry analysis from available IBIS or similar industry reports, this is not acceptable practice for this project. Further, using slides or reports from prior submitted assignments, or Internet sources (such as SlideShare) are considered violations of honor code.

Strategic Analysis Presentations

Teams will have 12 minutes for their presentation, followed by 5 minutes of questions from the class. All team members need to participate in the presentation and answer questions. Presenters are required to use visual aids (i.e., Power Point or a similar package) for the in-class presentations.

The presentation (15% of grade) will be graded for: presentation style; time management; quality of question and answer session; creativity; coordination with other team members.

The presenting group's ability to respond to questions is an important part of the presentation. The rest of the class, therefore, must come prepared to question critically the presenting groups.

Peer Assessment

Good teamwork is essential if your team is to perform effectively. Since it is inevitable that sooner or later you will have to participate in a team project in your job, this is a great opportunity to practice your interpersonal skills. In order to ensure full participation of all team members in the process, students will have the opportunity to complete a peer assessment form at the end of the semester. At instructor's discretion, your peers' assessments of your contributions to the team project and presentation may influence your individual class participation grade through a 10 point reduction. In order to maintain your team member's privacy under such circumstances, I won't discuss components of your individual class participation grade with you.

University of North Carolina Honor Code

Academic integrity is at the heart of Carolina and we all are responsible for upholding the ideals of honor and integrity. The student-led Honor System is responsible for adjudicating any suspected violations of the Honor Code. All suspected instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the honor system.

If you have questions about your responsibility under the Honor Code, please bring them to me, or consult with the office of the Dean of Students or the information outlines in the Instrument of Student Judicial Governance. More information is available at: <https://studentconduct.unc.edu/>

The following are considered violations of the Honor Code:

- **Plagiarism** in the form of deliberate or reckless representation of another's words, thoughts, or ideas as one's own without attribution.
- **Falsification, fabrication, or misrepresentation** of data, other information, or citations.
- **Unauthorized assistance or collaboration** in connection with any assignments.
- **Cheating** on examinations or other academic assignments, whether graded or otherwise, including but not limited to the following:
 - Using unauthorized materials and methods (notes, books, electronic information, or other sources or methods such as online access to previously evaluated work by students from prior semesters or Internet sources).
 - Violating or subverting requirements governing administration of examinations or other electronic assignments;
 - Compromising the security of examinations or academic assignments;
 - Representing another's work as one's own; or
 - Engaging in other actions that compromise the integrity of the grading process

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

The University of North Carolina facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability, or pregnancy complications resulting in difficulties with accessing learning opportunities. All accommodations are coordinated through the Accessibility Resources and Service Office. In order to ascertain what accommodations may need to be provided, we ask that students with disabilities inform their instructor of their needs within two weeks of the start of the semester. Please visit <http://accessibility.unc.edu> , call 919-962-8300 or email accessibility@unc.edu

Attendance Policy

Regular class attendance is your obligation, and you are responsible for all the work, including tests and written work, of all class meetings. No right or privilege exists that permits you to be absent from any class meetings except for excused absences for authorized University activities or religious observances required by the your faith. If you miss three consecutive class meetings, the course instructor may report the facts to your academic dean. Further information on university-wide regulation of class attendance policy may be found at this location in the "Academic Procedures" section of the Undergraduate Bulletin at: <http://www.unc.edu/ugradbulletin/archive/>

Electronics Policy

No cell phone use is allowed in class. Turn them off before entering the classroom and put them out of sight. Laptops or other electronic devices may be only used for taking notes or reviewing class materials, when permitted by the instructor.

CLASS SCHEDULE:

During the semester, it may prove necessary to make adjustments to the schedule. You will be notified in advance of any changes.

Session	Topic	Readings / Materials	Assignments
Session 1 Aug 22	Course Introduction What is Strategy?		
Session 2 Aug 27	External Environment	Reading: Understanding Industry Structure	
Session 3 Aug 29	Case #1	Case: Cola Wars Continue, Coke and Pepsi in 2010	Individual Assignment 1 (see template) Due on 8/29 prior to class
Session 4 Sep 5	Case #2	Case: Tesla Motors	Individual Assignment 2 (see template) Due on 9/5 prior to class
Session 5 Sep 10	Competitive Advantage		Teams will be Announced
Session 6 Sep 12	Case #3	Case: Trader Joe's	Individual Assignment 3 (see template) Due on 9/12 prior to class
Session 7 Sep 17	Case #4	Case: Apple in 2015	Individual Assignment 4 (see template) Due on 9/17 prior to class
Session 8 Sep 19	Resources and Capabilities		

Session	Topic	Readings / Materials	Assignments
Sep 24	No Class		A guest speaker session will be announced to replace this class.
Session 9 Sep 26	Case #5	Case: Netflix in 2011	Individual Assignment 5 (see template) Due on 9/26 prior to class
Session 10 Oct 1	Case #6	Case: IBM's Decade of Transformation	Individual Assignment 6 (see template) Due on 10/1 prior to class
Session 11 Oct 3	Final Exam		
Oct 5 and Oct 9	Strategic Analyses Report Feedback		I will be available in my office from 9am-3pm to respond to your questions about the company report and presentations.
Session 12 Oct 8	Presentations I		
Session 13 Oct 10	Presentations II		Slides and Report Files (all teams) Due 10/10 at 4PM
Session 14 Date to TBA	Guest Speaker Session		