

Western Kentucky University
Gordon Ford College of Business
MGT 498: Strategy & Policy
Summer 2019

Instructor: Dr. Feng Helen LIANG
Class: Section M70 Online

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Required Text:

Strategic Management: Concepts and Cases: Competitiveness and Globalization, (11th edition), by Michael A. Hitt, R. Duane Ireland, Robert E. Hoskisson. Cengage Learning. ISBN-10: 1285425170.

Course Description

This course serves as an introduction to the strategic management process of organizations. The strategic management process is defined as the full set of commitments, decisions, and actions required for a firm to achieve a competitive advantage and earn above-average returns.

In this course we will identify, describe, and illustrate the concepts and frameworks required to undertake a strategy analysis, analyze and appraise business, corporate, international, acquisition, restructuring, and cooperative strategies, as well as recognize the issues associated with implementing strategies including corporate governance. We will also briefly touch upon issues relevant to the modern organization such as sustainability, social, and ethical responsibility and diversity. Our viewpoint will be that of the general manager who has responsibility for the long-term viability of the firm.

This course is primarily aimed at providing you with the frameworks for understanding the different parts of the strategic management process. The frameworks are targeted at promoting a systematic and rational approach to understanding strategy. In the first few classes, we will use these frameworks to map the environment surrounding the firm, analyze the competitive situation facing the firm, and understand the sources of competitive advantage that lie within the firm. Thereafter, the focus will shift to models of business, corporate, and international strategy. Finally, we will cover the issues associated with implementing strategy such as corporate governance.

The second goal of this course is application-oriented, namely to effectively apply the conceptual frameworks to business situations, case studies, and writing up a major research paper. This course will improve your application skills by analyzing case studies from a wide variety of industries, engaging in class discussions, and performing individual company analyses. These exercises will give you hands-on experience using the tools and approaches discussed in class. For the class to work well, and for you to benefit from it, participation in discussions and preparation for each class is essential.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

After completing this course you should be able to:

1. Complete an external and internal analysis of a firm
2. Identify the strategic problems of a firm
3. Develop solutions to a firm's strategic issues

4. Integrate skills acquired in finance, accounting, marketing, and MIS courses to create a successful firm strategy
5. Improve oral and written presentation skills through the analysis and reporting of case situations

Grading: The grade will be based on a case project, exams, and class discussion. The case project will account for 15% of your final grade, three exams for 60%, assignments and class participation on the discussion board for 25%. No make-up exams will be given. Failure to complete case project or missing an exam will result in failure of the class.

Point-based letter grade:

- A - 90% and above
- B - 80%-89%
- C - 70%-79%
- D - 60%-69%
- F - Below 60%

Course Requirement

I. Chapter and case assignments (16%)

For each chapter there is usually an assignment related to a chapter exercise and/or to a case. The purpose of the assignments is to apply the concepts from each chapter to a specific industry or firm, and to integrate skills learned from other business courses to solve strategic issues.

These assignments require reading the chapter and case material, doing some outside research, and answering a set of questions listed in the exercise or provided by the instructor. The students should write a one to two-page answer and turn in as a word document attachment through Blackboard. The answer can be essay format or in bullet points. Detailed instruction is provided for each assignment. The due dates are listed in the syllabus for each assignment. The assignments are graded on a pass/fail basis. Late assignments will not receive credit.

II. Discussion forum posts (9%)

For each assignment there is a corresponding discussion forum. We use the forums to develop and reinforce the understanding of concepts, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. The students are required to write at least two posts for each forum: one post is a new thread/post of their own answer to the assignment; the other is a post responding to others' post by making a "meaningful" comment, or providing some information not in the assignment but related to work/personal experience with business implications for the industry or firm in the assignment. A "meaningful" comment means the comment should add to the existing post with the student's own opinion/answer/research, or give new info such as a link to a newspaper article or video related to the firm/industry in the assignment. A reply simply saying "good point" etc. doesn't count as a "meaningful" comment. Discussion forum posts are due on the day after the due date of the assignment, as indicated in the title of each forum on Blackboard. The discussion forum posts are graded on a pass/fail basis. Late posts will not receive credit.

III. Exams (60%)

There are three exams each covering three to four chapters of the class. These exams are open book with a time limit, usually two hours. The exams will be released on Blackboard at specified date/time and the students must complete it before the due date/time. The exams contain true/false and multiple choice questions. Review slides will be posted on Blackboard before the exam. Students should complete the exam alone, using available material in the textbook. Discussion with other students is prohibited before the due date. Due to the time limit of the exam, the students should study the textbook BEFORE the exam, and are recommended to prepare a note summarizing the textbook material. There will not be enough time to look up answers during the exam

without PRIOR studying.

IV. Case Project (15%)

The students are required to complete one case project. We use case analysis to practice problem solving skills related to a specific strategic topic covered in the corresponding chapter. Each student will turn in one paper and one powerpoint presentation for the case project. Only the presentation slides are required. No presentation is required. The grades of the project is based on the quality of paper and presentation slides. Please read “Case&PaperGuideline” for detailed requirement. The students will choose one of the cases from the assigned chapter cases to write the case project. The students should inform the instructor of the choice by filling up the online survey on Blackboard by May 21, Tue, and the due date of the case project is May 28, Tue. Please send the paper and presentation to the instructor by email and also post in the corresponding discussion forum. In addition, the students are required to make at least one comment on others’ report/presentation. The comment posts are due on May 30, Thu. There are four cases to choose from: Tesla, Tata Motors, Avon, and Redbox. These cases are taken from the textbook and also posted on BB.

IN ORDER TO ACCOMMODATE STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES PROTECTED BY THE ADA, IT IS REQUIRED THAT A COVERED STUDENT INFORM THE PROFESSOR OF THEIR STATUS WITHIN THE FIRST TWO CLASS MEETINGS.

Class Schedule

This course outline is subject to change by the instructor.

Module 1 Introduction and Course Overview, Chapter 1

Introduction and Organization of the class

Self introduction, due on discussion board May 15, Wed

Chapter 1 Strategic Management & Competitiveness

Exercise #2 (Page 29), due on May 14, Tue

Discussion Forum #1 posts due on May 15, Wed

Module 2 Chapter 2 and 3 the Nature of Strategic Management

Chapter 2 Analyzing the External Environment

Exercise #1 (Page 65), due on May 15, Wed

Discussion Forum #2 posts due on May 16, Thu

Chapter 3 Analyzing the Internal Environment

Exercise #2 Zara’s core competency (Page 95), due on May 17, Fri

Discussion Forum #3 posts due on May 18, Sat

Module 3 Chapter 4 and Case Analysis

Preparing an Effective Case Analysis, Case Demonstration: Case #19 Krispy Kreme Doughnuts

Chapter 4 Business-Level Strategy

Case #29 Tesla, due on May 20, Mon

Discussion Forum #4 posts due on May 21, Tue

Review for Exam 1 (Chapter 1-4)

May 21, Tue: Exam 1 released on Blackboard, due on May 23, Thu

May 21, Tue: Select your case project by answering the survey on BB

Module 4 Chapter 5 Competitive Rivalry & Dynamics

Exercise #2, Smartphone (Page 158), due on May 22, Wed

Discussion Forum #5 posts due on May 23, Thu

Module 5 Chapter 6&7

Chapter 6 Corporate Level Strategy

Chapter 7 Merger & Acquisition Strategy

Case #27 Tata Motors, due on May 24, Fri

Discussion Forum #6 due on May 25, Sat

Review for Exam 2 (Chapter 5, 6, 7)

May 25, Sat: Exam 2 released on Blackboard, due on May 28, Tue

Module 6 Chapter 8&9

Chapter 8 International Strategy

Case #3 Avon, due on May 27, Mon

Discussion Forum #7 due on May 28, Tue

Chapter 9 Cooperative Strategy

Case Redbox, due on May 29, Wed

Discussion Forum #8 posts due on May 30, Thu

Review & Exam 3 (Chapter 8-9)

Case Analysis paper and presentation due on Discussion board and by email on May 28 Tue

Class discussion Forum #9 posts due on discussion board on May 30, Thu

May 30 Thu: Exam 3 released on Blackboard, due on June 1, Sat

Your grade will be posted on Blackboard on June 1 Sat night. Please check your record.

Assignment Schedule
MGT498: Strategy and Policy
 Summer Online undergrad course Section M70
 Dr. Feng Helen Liang

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
MGT498 Strategy Schedule	May 13 Class begins! Read Ln1, Ln2, Ch1	14 Asi#1 due (Ch1Ex2) Read Ln3, Ch2	15 Asi#2 due (Ch2Ex1) Df#1 due Self- introduction due	16 Df#2 due Read Ln4, Ch3	17 Asi#3 due (Ch3Zara) Read Ln5, Case KKD, Hitt_case guide, HBSCase Method, watch video “Inside HBS”	18 Df#3 due
19 Yoga class!	20 Read Ln6, Ch4, Case Tesla Asi#4 due (Case Tesla)	21 Df#4 due Read Ln7Exam1Review Exam 1 released on BB Answer survey of case selection	22 Read Ln8, Ch5 Asi#5 due (Ch5Ex2)	23 Exam 1 due on BB by midnight Df#5 due Read Ln9, Ch6	24 Read Ln10, Ch7, Case Tata Asi#6 due (Case Tata)	25 Df#6 due Read Ln11Exam2 Review Exam 2 released on BB
26 Yoga class!	27 Read Ln12, Ch8, Case Avon Asi#7 due (Case Avon)	28 Exam 2 due on BB by midnight Df#7 due Case analysis due in BB Df#9 and by email	29 Read Ln13, Ch9, Case Redbox Asi#8 due (Case Redbox)	30 Df#8 due Df#9 due (comments) Read Ln14Exam3 Review Exam 3 released on BB	31 Exam 3	June 1 Exam 3 due on BB by midnight Grade posted on BB – please check your record

KEYS TO THE SCHEDULE:

“Ch” stands for Chapter - indicating that you need to read that chapter. *Since you can see the entire term, I advise you to read ahead based upon your own schedule.*

“Ln” stands for Lecture Note – indicating that you need to read the lecture note, usually corresponding to a chapter.

“Df” stands for Discussion Forum - indicating that you need to post and read the postings for that forum. Since our “classroom” experience is based upon the Df, participation is required and crucial for our learning experience. Please post as early as possible so that others will have enough time to respond to your post. *Remember, I will be a poster too.*

“Asi” – indicates assignments. These are either a chapter exercise or case assignment. You will write one to two page answers to the questions listed in the assignment, based on chapter and case material, supplementary material provided by me, your own outside research, or your own experience.