

BA 590
Strategic Business Concepts and Applications
Summer 2022

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Catalog Course Description

Concepts and business strategies focusing on viewing the organization as an integrated whole. Use of Integrated Management Exercises (IMEs) involving student teams working on a business simulation and cases aimed at challenges and opportunities facing a business.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this course are as follows:

1. To develop thought processes and analytical skills critical to strategic thinking.
2. To build your skills in conducting strategic analysis in a variety of industries and competitive situations and, especially, to provide you with a stronger understanding of the competitive challenges in a global market environment.
3. To integrate concepts and models learned in previous coursework with real world situations, assessing business risk, competitive advantage and strategic options.
4. To help you become much more proficient in using personal computers for business analyses.
5. To gain experience in working effectively in groups by harnessing the diverse skills, abilities, and perspectives of individual group members.
6. To raise your consciousness about the importance of ethical principles, personal and company values, and socially responsible management practices.
7. To view the total enterprise as operating in an increasingly global market environment.

Instruction Materials:

Strategy: Core Concepts and Analytical Approaches Please look on blackboard for information about the book – use the code for your team to purchase!

Grading Policies Point equivalent (1000 points)

Grading is complicated by the BSG website, which will co-mingle some grades in its reports. I will sort it all out for class grades purposes.

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|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. Team components | 70% (700 points) |
| <i>Composed of:</i> | |
| Game performance | 50% (500 points) |
| (End of chapter exercises, 3 year plan, simulation performance, quizzes on the game (2 done individually), and team company presentation) | |
| & | |
| Team cases (2) | 20% (200 points) |
|
2. Individual components |
30% (300 points) |
| <i>Composed of:</i> | |
| Chapter book quizzes (3) | 20% (200 points) |
| Individual Case analysis | 10% (100 points) |

Basis for Final Grades

90's = A, 80's = B, 70's = C, 60's = D, below 60 = F
or using point equivalency
> 895 = A, > 795 = B, > 695 = C, > 595 = D, or F

Students are expected to be familiar with the Western Kentucky policy on Academic Honesty. In this class academic dishonesty on an exam or a paper will result in an "F" for the course, and will be reported to the proper officials.

Class meetings/Material

THIS is an ONLINE class. This is not an on-demand course. The difference? You are going to have to be engaged with me, and your team...EVERY WEEK. We will learn a lot from each other and the class is usually fun. HOWEVER, MGT 590 is a challenge – do not underestimate that because the class is “Online”

- 1) *Mandatory Orientation meeting:* The first week of class I will offer multiple meetings on zoom, with the expectation that each student attend one (1). You can attend more if you like and ask more questions. The structure and assignments of this class are dramatically different than other classes – please let me help you understand the expectations.
- 2) *Weekly Zoom:* I am going to be openly available on zoom for this class 1-2 times a week to discuss material, strategy game results, business news, or whatever. Each student needs to find ways to participate in some of these (you may want to make sure you are there each week, or have a team member there each week). I am flexible in offerings and can move to a time/day that works for more people. You MUST let me know if you have a need for me to be available at a different time
- 3) *Team meetings:* I am open to meeting with your team at a schedule that works collectively. The need for this varies by team, but please do not hesitate to reach out and schedule something.

In summary – do not try to wander in the wilderness alone.

Reading Assignments/Schedule

Everything in this course is completely integrated. The cases, the material, the business simulation all build together to help develop your acumen as a strategic manager. A schedule of chapter discussions will be posted on blackboard and will coincide with discussions about the simulation and business news. I WILL NOT be teaching the book concepts word for word (slide for slide). I will provide the materials and broad guidance and expect you to do the deep dive into the material.

The deep dive is NECESSARY to participate effectively in the business simulation (As well as knock out those quizzes!)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Team Activities

A significant portion of this class will require teamwork. Your team will have to work together, utilizing the skills you have developed over the course of your MBA program.

The Business Strategy Game: is an online exercise where class members are divided into teams and assigned the task of running an athletic footwear company in head-to-head competition against companies managed by other class members. Company operations parallel those of actual athletic footwear companies. Just as in the real-world, companies compete in a global market arena, selling branded and private-label

athletic footwear in four geographic regions — Europe-Africa, North America, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America.

Company co-managers must make decisions relating to plant operations, distribution and warehouse operations, work force compensation, online sales at the company's web site, sales and marketing, and finance. The challenge is to craft and execute a competitive strategy that results in a respected brand image, keeps your company in contention for global market leadership, and produces good financial performance as measured by earnings per share, return on investment, stock price appreciation, company image and credit rating. This is a competitive simulation. Your team will be graded against other teams in the class. With the simulation are two quizzes, a three-year strategic plan and a presentation on your company.

All aspects of The Business Strategy Game parallel the functioning of the real-world athletic footwear market, thus allowing you and your co-managers to (1) think rationally and logically in deciding what to do and (2) get valuable practice in making a variety of different business decisions under circumstances that mirror real-world competitive conditions.

End of chapter exercises: Your team will need to complete End of Chapter (EOC) exercises for chapters 2, 3, 5, 7 and 9 on the BSG website.

Three year strategic plan: Your team will be asked to submit a three year plan using the BSG game system for your BSG shoe company. Your team score is tied to whether your company meets or beats its stated performance targets for EPS, ROE, credit rating, image rating, and stock price for each of the three years of the strategic plan. The scoring is based on the principle that a company's strategic plan was "good" if management met or beat the targeted levels of performance and if these targets contained some "stretch."

Team case analysis There will be two Team cases. Written papers, as well as class discussion are expected outcomes of this exercise.

Team presentation on simulation performance There is a discussion board that is open for teams to post about the game. At the end of the class each team needs to post a summary post that gives insight into the decisions your team made. More information will be shared as the class progresses, but your information should discuss your team's strategy, outline successes and failures and competitive moves that your team made.

Individual Activities

BSG in game quizzes There are two quizzes about the BSG simulation to assess your understanding. You will access these through the BSG site. These are to be done by each team member, and are scored separately.

End of chapter quizzes (3) I am combining chapters into textbook quizzes for the course. There will be 3 of them.

Quiz 1 covers chapters 1-5 with strong emphasis on chapters 3-5. It is 50 questions and you have 75 minutes to complete it.

Quiz 2 covers chapter 6-8 with incredibly strong emphasis on chapter 8. It has 40 questions and you have 60 minutes to complete it.

Quiz 3 covers chapter 9-12 with equal emphasis to each chapter. It has 50 questions and you have 75 minutes to complete it.

Participation: No. There is not a participation grade. There is a participation expectation. I expect you to engage with me, and I expect you to engage with the class.

Individual Case: At the end of the course there will be one last case assignment for you to do individually. Instructions will be provided.

SOME ADDITIONAL NOTES

Case Method: The case method allows you to acquire low-cost experience. It provides the benefit of *applying* concepts and theories--learning by doing—where experimental and risky solutions are encouraged and supported. It also provides you with practice in wrestling with important global management issues. The case method is intended to lead us to the right questions, to build discussion and debate, and to force us to reconcile differences in analysis with those of our peers. In preparing a case, *begin* by reading it through at least two times:

(1) Very briefly to get a “feel” of the situation (e.g., the company, its products and markets, its problems, and the people involved). This will allow you to see what’s important in analyzing the case and what is relatively less important.

(2) Carry out your analysis in response to assignment questions (if provided) for the case. Financial analysis and careful attention to the exhibits and tables are necessary for the development of recommendations that are sound. *Document your analysis to help you organize and integrate your thoughts. Be sure to write down supporting arguments for your recommendations and be prepared to provide an alternative argument for any solution.* These case preparation notes will provide you with a valuable aid for your in-class participation, and are to be turned in on the day of discussion.

For more help and insights [turn to this document](#)