



# Lincoln University

– BA 380 –

## Business Strategy and Decision-Making

COURSE SYLLABUS

Fall, 2017

**Professor:** Prof. Sergey Aityan, PhD, DSc  
**Lectures:** Monday, 6:30 PM – 9:15 PM  
**Credits:** 3 units (45 lecture hours)  
**Office Hours:** Monday, 2:15 PM – 3:15 PM  
Tuesday, 11:15 AM – 12:15 PM  
Students are advised to schedule appointments by signing their names on the appointment list which is located on the information board next to the professor's office that will ensure exact appointment time without waiting.  
**e-mail:** [aityan@lincolnuca.edu](mailto:aityan@lincolnuca.edu)  
**☎:** (510) 628-8016

**Assistant to the** TBD

**Instructor:**

**Textbook:**

**1. Course lectures notes:**

Sergey Aityan: "Business Strategy and Decision-Making," the online course notes on <http://elearning.lincolnuca.edu>.

**2. Main textbook:**

Frank T. Rothaermel, "Strategic Management," 3rd Ed., McGraw Hill, 2016,  
ISBN: 978-1-259-42047-4

**Last Revision:** August 19, 2017

### CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Students are expected to develop a better understanding of business strategy approaches and techniques, and to acquire skills and knowledge relating to the decision-making process. Emphasis is on decision-making while still recognizing the importance of the specialized functions of an organization. Readings and case materials are reinforced with participation through written tests, papers, and oral presentations. This is the MBA program capstone course. (3 units)

Prerequisites: BA 301, BA 304, BA 307, BA 320, BA 340, and at least two concentration courses.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The course objectives are to introduce students to the basic aspects of modern business strategies, the appropriate analysis methodologies, risk assessment, business decisions, business decision-making process, methodologies, and its automation.

**PROCEDURES AND METHODOLOGY**

Lecture method is used in combination with supervised exercises and business case study. The emphasis will be on learning by doing. Every student must participate in an intensive classroom activity, must complete home tasks and course projects, and take quizzes and exams.

**COURSE PROJECT**

Every student must complete and submit a business plan

**REQUIREMENTS**

Continuous assessment is emphasized. Written or oral quizzes will be given every week. Reading, writing, home tasks, and “business case study” assignments will be made throughout the course. Students must complete all assignments and take all quizzes, mid-term exam and final exam on the **dates due**. Plagiarism will result in the grade “F” and a report to the administration.

**ATTENDANCE**

Students are expected to attend each class session. If you cannot attend a class due to a valid reason, please notify the instructor prior to the class.

**EXAMS**

Both, midterm and final exams are structured as written essay to answer the given questions. Each exam includes six questions. The essay must be written clearly and easy to read, structurally with clear logical presentation of the answers. Graphs, charts, tables, and other supporting illustrations are required if needed. Examples to illustrate the answers are required. Exams will cover all assigned chapters, any additional readings or supplementary materials covered in class. The final exam is comprehensive, i.e. includes the whole course. The exams are neither “open book” nor “open notes.”

**GRADING AND SCORING**

All activities will be graded according to the points as shown below.

Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F
Points	94-100	90-93	87-89	83-86	80-82	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	60-66	0-59

In exams, every answer is graded by points from 0 to 100 and the total points for an exam are calculated as the average of the points received for all answers in the exam.

The final grade for the course will be given as the total weighted score for all activities according to the percentage shown in the table below.

Activity	Time	Percent
Quizzes, home tasks, and classroom activities	Every week	20%
Course project		20%
Mid-term exam	In the middle of the course	30%
Final exam	Last week of the course	30%

If both grades for the midterm and final exams are “F” the term grade for the course is “F” regardless of the grades for the project and classroom activities.

### COURSE SCHEDULE

Lectures		Topic	Chapters	
#	Date		Lectures	Textbook
1	Aug. 21	(a) Introduction to the course (b) Economy and Business Strategy	Ch. 1	
2	Aug. 28	(a) Case Studies 1 - The Twenty Most Influential Businessmen of All Times (b) Strategic Planning (c) Review of Course Projects	Ch. 2 Ch. 3	Ch.1, 2
	Sep. 4	Labor Day		
3	Sep. 11	(a) Business Plan (b) Case Studies 2 - What makes good companies and how good companies may get into trouble (c) Review of Course Projects	Ch. 4 Ch. 5	
4	Sep. 18	(a) Competitive Strategy and Models for Industry Analysis (b) Review of Course Projects	Ch. 6	Ch.3
5	Sep. 25	(a) Business-Level Strategies (b) Corporate-Level Strategies (c) Review of Course Projects	Ch. 7 Ch. 8	Ch.4, 5 Ch.6
6	Oct. 2	(a) Vertical and Horizontal Integration (b) Acquisition and Restructuring Strategies (c) Review of Course Projects	Ch. 9 Ch. 10	Ch.7
7	Oct. 9	(a) Business Entities (b) Functional Strategy: Overview (c) Review of Course Projects	Ch. 11 Ch. 12	
8	Oct. 16	Midterm Exam	Ch. 1, 3, 4, 6 - 12 as in lectures	
9	Oct. 23	(a) Functional Strategy: Operational and International Business Modes (b) Case Study 3 – Boeing vs Airbus	Ch. 13 Ch. 14	Ch.8
10	Oct. 30	(a) Cooperative Strategy (b) Corporate Governance, Structure, and Controls (c) Review of Course Projects	Ch. 15 Ch. 16	Ch.9 Ch.10, 11
11	Nov. 6	(a) Strategic Leadership (b) Strategic Entrepreneurship	Ch. 17 Ch. 18	Ch.12 Ch.13
12	Nov. 13	(a) Case Studies 4 – Systemic Approach (b) Strategic Scenarios and Risk	Ch. 19 Ch. 20	
13	Nov. 20	(a) Business Ethics (b) Review of Course Projects	Ch. 21	
14	Nov. 27	Comprehensive Final Exam	Ch. 1, 3, 4, 6-13, 15-18, 20, 21 as in lectures	
15	Dec. 4	Course Project Defense		

**OTHER COMMENTS**

- Please participate. What you put into the class will determine what you get out of it – and what others get out of it.
- Please come on time. Late arrivals disturb everyone else.
- If you miss a class, you are responsible for getting notes/slide printouts on the material covered from a classmate or the instructor.
- To avoid distracting noise in class, cellular phones must be turned off or the ringing mode silenced.
- Questions and comments during the class are welcome. Do not hesitate to ask questions – do not leave anything unclear for you.

**MODIFICATION OF THE SYLLABUS**

The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus at any time during the semester. Announcements of any changes will be made in a classroom.

**APPENDIX. Program and Institutional Outcomes**

<b>Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs)</b>	
<i>MBA Graduates of Lincoln University should be able to:</i>	
<b>1b</b>	Recognize and be able to work with the components of reasoning and problem solving; understand concepts, assumptions, purpose, conclusions, implications, consequences, objections from alternative viewpoints, and frame of reference.
<b>2b</b>	Gather and assess relevant information, using abstract ideas to interpret it effectively; to develop well-reasoned conclusions and solutions, and test them against relevant criteria and standards
<b>3b</b>	Be exemplary business professionals and try to ensure that the products of their efforts will be used in socially responsible ways, will meet social needs, and will avoid harmful effects to health and welfare
<b>4b</b>	Lead by example in order to create highly collaborative organizational environment, and be able to develop and use strategies to encourage employees at all organizational levels to do the same.
<b>5b</b>	Set goals and have a vision of the future. The vision should be owned throughout the organization. As effective leaders, they should habitually pick priorities stemming from their basic values.
<b>6b</b>	Continually look for, develop, and offer new or improved services, and be able to use original approaches when dealing with problems in the workplace.
<b>7b</b>	Demonstrate fluency in the use of tools, technologies and methods in the field. They should know how to evaluate, clarify and frame complex questions or challenges using perspectives and scholarship from the business discipline.

<b>Program Level Outcomes (PLOs)</b>	
<i>Students graduating our MBA program will be able to:</i>	
<b>1</b>	Develop and exhibit applied and theoretical knowledge in the field of management and business administration
<b>2</b>	Use theoretical knowledge and advanced problem-solving skills to formulate solutions and identify risks in the following fields: international business, finance management, general business, human resources management, management information systems, marketing management
<b>3</b>	Communicate within a highly specialist environment that allows the presentation of critiques of complex strategic matters
<b>4</b>	Demonstrate autonomy, creativity, and responsibility for managing professional practices
<b>5</b>	Demonstrate leadership and set strategic objectives for team performance
<b>6</b>	Identify ethical issues/problems in business organizations and reach decisions within ethical framework