

Fall 2017 Course Syllabus

Course Number: BA-380

Course Title: Business Strategy and Decision Making

Credit: 3 Units (45 hours of lecture)

Days and Time: Tue 3:30pm to 6:15pm

Office hours: Tue 6:15pm to 7:00pm or By appointment

Instructor: Prof. Albert Loh

Course Materials

Textbooks: Essentials of Strategic Management, the Quest for Competitive Advantage; by Gamble, Thompson, and Peteraf, 5th Edition, published by McGraw-Hill, ISBN-13: 978-1259546983

Harvard Business Review's 10 Must Reads On Strategy, published by Harvard Business School Publishing Corporation (2011). ISBN-13: 978-1422157985

Supplemental materials (such as periodical, article, or case study) will be provided in class.

Course 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*

Learning Objectives

This course provides the tool-kits for managers involved in formulating strategies. We address the following questions: How is a competitive advantage built, what decisions could managers make to sustain a competitive advantage, how to minimize the risk of performance failures, who the decision-maker is to overcome indecisiveness, and the difference between SWOT and TOWS when formulating strategies in the face of environmental changes. In sum, strategic management is an integrative and interdisciplinary course that combines finance, marketing, organizational behavior, statistics, and business ethics into one capstone

Learning Outcomes and Assessment:

Learning outcomes	Assessment activities
An understanding of key concepts and principles of strategy formulation and competitive analysis.	Assessed by simulation management game, case study, classroom exercise, and mid-term and final examinations.
Use of tools and techniques for analyzing a company's strategic position.	Assessed by simulation management game, case study, classroom exercise, and mid-term and final examinations.
Be able to integrate ideas and concepts in other core courses into a holistic approach.	Assessed by simulation management game, case study, classroom exercise, and mid-term and final examinations.
Analyze and evaluate real life company situations and develop solutions for class presentation.	Conduct and present case study in a team setting.
Sharpen ability to think critically, logically and strategically.	Assessed by simulation management game, case study, classroom exercise, and mid-term and final examinations.

Instructional Methodology

The course will be conducted in the form of lectures and discussions on each topic shown in the class schedule below.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

While in class, students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. Professionalism includes regular attendance, participation in class discussions, civil conduct, and ethical behavior, etc. If a

student is observed coming to class late often, being disrespectful to peers, texting or using mobile devices, or carrying on personal conversations during lecture, the professionalism portion of the grade will be reduced based on a demerit system. The course begins with each student having the full 50 points. Tardiness without valid reasons greater than 1 time will result in 5 points deduction. Behavioral offenses such as texting, using of mobile devices, or engaging in disorderly conduct in spite of reminder or warning will result in 10 points deduction.

Higher education is about learning how to learn. So in acquiring new knowledge, always pay attention to the learning objectives of each chapter or topic. In addition, you will enhance your understanding by solving the chapter problems to be assigned in class. Of course, you are welcome to bring questions to class for discussion by reading ahead of each classroom lecture. Achievement is assured when done repetitively.

Your performance in this course will be evaluated under the following model:

Simulation Game: 100 points	A = 361 – 400
Case Study: 100 points	B = 301 - 360
Mid-term Exam: 100 points	C = 241 - 300
Final Exam: 100 points	D = 201 - 240
Total 400 points	F = < 200

The mid-term and final exams include multiple choice questions and problems that are similar to the term assignments. They are designed to test both theory and problem solving. There will be no "extra credit" work during or after the semester.

The key to success in this course is communication and interaction. Thus, we will have to work as a team. First, we will create a positive learning environment where everyone can participate without fear. Second, relevant reading and problem assignments will be presented and discussed in class. When in doubt, ask.

Scholastic Dishonesty

Scholastic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Students who violate rules of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including failure in the course and/or other actions from the University.

Tentative Class Schedule

Date	Topics
Aug 22	Course Introduction & Chapter 1: Strategy, Business Models, and Competitive Advantage
Aug 29	Team Formation & Simulation Game Overview
Sept 5	Chapter 2: Strategy Formulation, Execution and Governance
Sept 12	Chapter 3: Evaluation of External Environment
Sep 19	Chapter 4: Evaluation of Internal Environment
Sep 26	Chapter 5: Five Generic Competitive Strategies
Oct 3	Chapter 6: International Strategy
Oct 10	2-Hour Mid-term Exam (Closed Book)
Oct 17	Chapter 7: International Strategies
Oct 24	Chapter 8: Diversification & Multi-business Company
Oct 31	Chapter 9: Ethics & Social Responsibility
Nov 7	Team Presentation on Case Study
Nov 14	Team Presentation on Case Study & Simulation Game Review
Nov 28	Chapter 10: Superior Strategy Execution
Dec 5	2-Hour Final Exam (Closed Book)

Addendum: Supplemental Course Materials

The PowerPoint slides are designed to give students a head start in learning course materials in a concise and coherent fashion. They are not intended to substitute, but complement, the textbook and classroom

lectures. Don't just read; you need to absorb and understand the body of knowledge through a synthesis of critical thinking and problem solving skills. Thus attending classroom lectures and completing exercises and assignments are critical to your success.

Syllabus reviewed: Aug 1, 2017

Appendix. Program and Institutional Outcomes

Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs)	
<i>MBA Graduates of Lincoln University should be able to:</i>	
1b	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.
2b	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
3b	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
4b	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.
5b	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.
6b	Continually look for, develop, and offer new or improved services, and be able to use original approaches when dealing with problems in the workplace.
7b	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.

Program Level Outcomes (PLOs)	
<i>Students graduating our MBA program will be able to:</i>	
1	Develop and exhibit applied and theoretical knowledge in the field of management and business administration
2	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
3	Communicate within a highly specialist environment that allows the presentation of critiques of complex strategic matters
4	Demonstrate autonomy, creativity, and responsibility for managing professional practices
5	Demonstrate leadership and set strategic objectives for team performance
6	Identify ethical issues/problems in business organizations and reach decisions within ethical framework