

COURSE: Strategic Management (BUS 401)
SEMESTER: Fall 2013

OFFICE: Daly 105
OFFICE HOURS: MW 12:30-2:20 & by appointment
OFFICE PHONE: X7285
EMAIL: tscout2

TEXTBOOK: Dess, Lumpkin, Eisner & McNamara, Strategic Management, 6e, 2012

ON RESERVE: All SCE's from last year are in the library in electronic form. I recommend that you look at Dong and Ziccardi. They received Honors.

MISSION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

To provide students with the essential knowledge, managerial proficiencies, and ethical awareness needed to pursue successful careers in business, as well as to build a foundation for lifelong learning. Our students learn:

1. communication and interpersonal skills
2. analytic, technological, and quantitative skills
3. critical thinking and decision-making skills
4. global and cultural awareness

PURPOSE OF THE COURSE: To provide students with a holistic view of organizational decision making, emphasizing strategy formulation and functional area interrelationships. Students are expected to use analytical concepts effectively to assess current organizational conditions and subsequently to apply critical thinking to formulate short and long term strategies, which can be logically defended.

OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE: Upon completion of the course, one should be able to:

1. define the relationship between a total organization and its environment,
2. develop a plan of coordination and control of total organizational activities in relationship to a defined strategy,
3. build that plan and strategy on a solid foundation of current relevant information,
4. present that plan orally in a professional manner, and
5. work as valuable member of a professional team.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE COURSE: In order to demonstrate that the course objectives have been met, each student will be expected to:

1. attend class and actively participate in class discussions, including insightful and constructive criticisms of his/her fellow students' ideas,
2. prepare written case analyses,
3. prepare a resume,
4. read the WSJ daily, and
5. prepare in a group an oral and written company analysis.

EXPLANATION OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Group company analysis - you will be a member of a group who will be “assigned” a company to analyze. Your group is to construct a strategic plan for the company. In simple terms, what should the company do now? Using analytical techniques discussed in class, you are to examine the company's current internal and external environment thoroughly and comprehensively. **This assessment is to serve as the basis for formulating short and long-term plans for the firm.** Your group will present this plan to the instructor as a written report and to the class orally.

Assume your group is making this presentation to the board of directors of the company and that the class is that board. When you make your presentation to the board, you are expected to act and dress in a professional manner (that's right, coats and ties for the guys; hose and heels for the girls). The board however may dress in business casual, which includes slacks, skirts, sport shirts with a collar, blouses and sweaters. T-shirts, jeans, shorts and sneakers are not acceptable. It is time to move from being a college student to being a professional.

Your appearance is your calling card; it speaks before you open your mouth.

Your fellow classmates, the board, will be evaluated on the insightfulness of their questions; your group must be able to defend its position, assumptions, etc. You will have an entire class period (75 minutes) for your presentation and you and the board are expected to use it. The written report and the oral presentation will receive a group grade.

You are expected to provide visual illustrations of your positions using financial, production, and marketing data. Today's business presentations provide these visual illustrations with computer graphics. Power Point is the most used business software presentation package. Knowing how to use it and how to use it well will aid you in your career. The objective is to convey information, not to have a lot of bells and whistles simply for the sake of having bells and whistles. You may already know how to manipulate the technology but to ensure that you use it and use it well to convey information, I STRONGLY ENCOURAGE you to meet with Ms. Nancy Cross, Instructional Technologist, at least twice prior to making your group presentation. Two meetings may not be enough time. You are encouraged to schedule more meetings. Email or phone (x7167) Ms. Cross to schedule an appointment; do not merely drop-in, especially the day before your presentation.

Group writing and teamwork are difficult skills to acquire and yet they are among the skills that businesses value most highly. I strongly encourage you to meet as a group with a member of the Writing Center a minimum of THREE times before the presentation. These meetings not only prod the procrastinators and offer a chance to proof read each other's copy; they also--more importantly--will give you the opportunity to act as informed readers for one another. What's missing that should be included? What's repeated or contradictory? Does it all lead to a central point that's clearly expressed? **Your report should read as a coherent whole not as a collection of separate documents.** Three meetings are actually scant time to accomplish the more substantial goals. You are encouraged to schedule more meetings.

For each of the companies on which we are doing an analysis, that company's web address is easily obtainable. USE IT! **Use of current data is expected.**

It is that current data/research part that usually is the most difficult. Why? You run a simple Google search. Get back nothing of value. Then tell me there is nothing out there. Not true. Therefore, you are REQUIRED, as a group, not individually, to meet with Ms. Amanda Kramer, one of the reference librarians, for a research session specific to your group and your company. After you have made a reasonable effort to research your company, both externally and internally, but still have some questions and/or data gaps, contact Ms. Kramer (x5721 or

akramer2). Your group as a group and Ms. Kramer will mutually agree to a meeting time, including evening and weekend times. Ms. Kramer requires at least 72 hours notice before scheduling and the sessions will be most valuable and productive if you email her your research questions prior to the meeting. Each session is expected to last at least one hour and Ms. Kramer will be taking attendance to be sure that all members of the group attend. You certainly may schedule more than one session. After or before the group session, you may schedule individual sessions. The initial group meeting must take place no later than **October 9**.

You are to form teams of three to four persons. You are to select your own teammates. Anyone who is not a member of a team by **August 31** (yes, I know it is a Saturday) will be assigned to one by random draw. Email me when you have a team.

Companies will be “assigned” after the teams have been formed. Email me your team’s company preference by **September 7** (yes, I know it is a Saturday). The group report must be done on one of the companies listed below:

CSX
Norfolk Southern
Union Pacific

All of the above are railroads in the Fortune 500 and are all publicly-held.

2. Class discussion - business is competitive both within and without. Do not be obnoxious (I know some of you can't help it) but you are expected to challenge your fellow students when they present their business plans. Challenge their assumptions, their financial calculations, make them prove everything, make them justify every number. When playing a board director, you will be evaluated for your overall discussion. One is not graded on class participation; **one is graded on class contribution**. It is not how much you say but what you say that counts.

3. Case analyses – after almost every chapter in the text we will spend the following class period, or two, discussing a case which is a short story about a real company that illustrates points made in the chapter. Each student, individually, is required to give to the instructor at the beginning of class a one to three-page analysis of the case. Discussion questions will be distributed to start, not stop, your thinking. Each group as a group will be “assigned” one of the cases on which to lead discussion. Individual written case analyses will be graded with a plus, check or minus.

4. WSJ – each student is **REQUIRED** to subscribe to the hard copy of the WSJ and then to actually read the Journal daily. Weekly quizzes will be given on the Journal’s content. Multiple-choice questions will cover articles that appeared on the **front pages only** of the First Section (A), Marketplace (B), Money & Investing (C) and Personal Journal (D). To subscribe go to: www.WSJ.com/studentoffer The cost is 15 weeks, the length of a semester, for \$15. I will be checking to be sure you actually did subscribe,

5. Resume assignment to be distributed.

DETERMINATION OF GRADE:

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| 1. Written report of group company analysis | 40% |
| 2. Oral presentation of group company analysis | 20% |
| 3. Class discussion, including written responses | 15% |

4. Quizzes on the WSJ	20%
5. Resumes	5%
TOTAL	100%

LATENESS:

Full credit for case analyses and the group company analysis will be given only for a report that is given to the instructor at the beginning of the class period on the date scheduled. The only exceptions to this policy are extended illness, which must be verified through the Health Services at the college or a death in the family, which must be verified through the Student Affairs Office. **ABSOLUTELY NO OTHER EXCUSE IS ACCEPTABLE ESPECIALLY ANY EXCUSE THAT INVOLVES A COMPUTER MALFUNCTION.**

HONOR CODE

The group company analysis is required to have the following pledge attached to it:

"We (since you'll be in a group) pledge our word of honor that we have abided by the Washington College Honor Code while completing this assignment."

All group members sign beneath it.

DOCUMENTATION

The standard rules of documentation apply to all work submitted. Do not take work off the Internet or from company documents and submit it as your own. Plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be treated lightly. You are to develop informed proposals based upon facts and "expert" opinion. Be sure to cite appropriately from where you get these facts and opinions. Use APA format. Wikipedia is NOT an acceptable source; do not use it.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

It is the responsibility of students at Washington College to attend promptly each class meeting scheduled in every course in which they are enrolled. Students on probation must attend all classes without exception. Students are expected to inform their instructors promptly as a matter of courtesy of the reasons for any absence. **Failure to attend class when you are scheduled for a case or company presentation will result in a grade of zero for that presentation. Excessive absences will result in the final course grade being lowered by one letter.**

LEARNING DIFFERENCES

Students who are in need of special accommodations because of a **documented** learning disability or physical disability must submit appropriate documentation to the Office of Academic Skills. Once approved, the accommodation plan will be developed. It is the student's responsibility to share the accommodation plan with the instructor of the course **PRIOR** to the due date for assignments.

CELL PHONES AND LAP TOPS

If your cell phone rings in class, don't answer it. Give it to me and I'll take the call. I'll let the caller know that you're busy right now and will call them back at your earliest convenience.

When I see your leg shake, I know you put the ringer on silent (good move) and the phone on vibrate (bad move). Barack Obama is not trying to contact you. You can be incommunicado for 75 minutes. Do not look at your text messages and definitely don't send someone a text message while class is in session. Wait until the end of the class.

No, you cannot bring your lap top to class to take notes. The temptation to surf the web and email is simply too great.

APPROPRIATE ATTIRE

If you slept in it last night, don't wear it to class. If you can't get up in time to get dressed properly for class, don't bother coming to class. Obviously you need your sleep and staying in bed is more comfortable than trying to stay awake in a classroom desk chair.

I assume you would like to be a success in business. You would be surprised at the small number of corporate officers in Fortune 500 companies who wear baseball caps (and especially backwards) at work. Take off your cap and/or your hoodie off your head. Run a comb through your hair. Take pride in your appearance. Respect yourself. If you don't, who will?

The "no caps in class" rule applies equally to men and women. I love gender equality. Don't you? So ladies if you're having a bad hair day, so sad, too bad.

Take a minute to look around the class. Whom would you hire or not hire to manage your business, invest your money, and/or work with you in a group? What do you think your classmates are thinking about you based on your appearance?

HOMER SIMPSON

One of the most insightful things Homer ever asked was: "Why do things that only happen to stupid people keep happening to me?" If you feel that way, then maybe you should look in the mirror, stop making excuses, and take control of your life.

LASTLY

Lack of planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on my part.