

BUSN 265

Fall 2016

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Business Problem Solving and Strategy

Course Description

A capstone course for the second year student, this study plan is fast-paced and dynamic. Students are challenged to use their learning to confront structured and unstructured problems with confidence and creativity. Experience in using multi-disciplinary skills is stressed. **GROUP WORK IS ESSENTIAL.** While problems are primarily business oriented, themes may also include the interaction between business and government or business and society.

Business Problem Solving and Strategy is a big picture course. It cuts across the whole spectrum of business and management. The center of attention is the total enterprise--the industry and competitive environment in which it operates, its long-term direction and strategy, its resources and competitive capabilities, and its prospects for success. Throughout the course, the spotlight will be trained on the foremost issue in running a business enterprise: "What must managers do, and do well, to make the company a winner in the game of business?" The answer that emerges, and which becomes the theme of the course, is that good strategy-making and good strategy-execution are the key ingredients of company success. The mission of the course is to explore why good strategic management leads to good business performance and to present the basic concepts and tools of strategic analysis.

Course Prerequisites

- BUSN 100 Introduction to Business
- ECON 120 Microeconomics OR ECON 125 Macroeconomics

This course, as described above, is conceptually similar to Strategic Management and Policy, a typical capstone course taught at 4-year institutions and MBA programs. However, at these institutions students have taken considerably more coursework, notably in the areas of Marketing and Management. Students who have taken BUSN 130 (Entrepreneurship I), BUSN 150 (The Selling Process), and/or BUSN 230 (Entrepreneurship II) will have been exposed to some aspects of the material covered in Marketing and Management courses. The textbook does not assume extensive coursework. In fact it is excellent in many ways because it is concise and comprehensive. Any student who plans to earn a higher degree in business will want to keep this text as a resource.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this class, the student will be able to:

1. Apply superior thinking and reasoning skills to business and life situations.
2. Understand and apply critical thinking concepts to problem solving.
3. Synthesize what you have learned in prior business courses to craft strategy.
4. To develop your capacity to think strategically about a company, its present business position, its long-term direction, its resources and competitive capabilities, the caliber of its strategy, and its opportunities for gaining sustainable competitive advantage.
5. 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 of a global market environment.

6. To give you hands-on experience in crafting business strategy, reasoning carefully about strategic options, using what-if analysis to evaluate action alternatives, and making sound strategic decisions
7. Systematically define problems and generate solutions, select the solution to utilize, implement the solution, and evaluate the outcome.
8. Understand and implement successful leadership skills to produce better outcomes.

Course Requirements

Effort and Attitude:

The entire class is based on the principles of a strong work ethic and a positive attitude.

Teaching Procedures

The instructor will use a combination of instructional materials, online discussions, case studies, and group work to cover the instructional objectives and topics. Discussion participation, quizzes from the text and case studies will focus on the key points covered each week.

Attendance Policy

See Student Grading and Criteria for Evaluating Student Performance below. According to college policy, the instructor will report any student who misses more than 7 consecutive online days to Enrollment Services as an Administrative Failure unless the student contacts the instructor before the absence and satisfactorily explains the reasons for the absences. An Administrative Failure is not the same as a Withdrawal.

Students must complete the following as minimal requirements:

1. Consistent online attendance and active, skilled participation.
2. Read and be prepared to discuss and apply knowledge of assigned chapters and handouts.
3. Complete all assignments. All assignments must be computer-generated and will not be accepted after the due date.

Student Evaluation and Grading *Late work will not be accepted*

1. 10 Discussion Boards worth 10 points each 100 points
IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT DISCUSSION BOARDS: Students will be put in groups of 3 or 4 to work on the discussion board questions. Groups will rotate throughout the semester so that you can familiarize yourself with other students so that you will have some basis upon which to make your choices for team members for the 3 group case studies at the end of the semester. **That said, even though you work in groups each member will individually write up and post each question.** It is OK for you to submit identical answers. The idea is that just the process of typing up an answer will help the material sink in.
 2. 11 Quizzes (you drop your lowest quiz score) worth 10 points each 100 points
 3. 3 Group Case Studies worth 100 points each 300 points
- More about these on Blackboard.**

Required Text

Strategic Management: A Competitive Advantage Approach, **16th** edition, Fred R. David & Forest R. David, Pearson, ISBN-13: 978-0-13-415397-1.

Note: we use **only** the text and Blackboard. You do not have to purchase any other materials or labs from the publisher or any other source.

Instructor Availability

On-line delivery does not mean 24-7 access. I will attempt to answer all emails within 24 hours received during the Monday through Sunday 9-5 work week. In other words, if you email me any time between 5pm Sunday and 9am Monday, I will attempt to answer you by 5 pm Monday, and will do so by 9am Tuesday. **Please reference in the subject line what class you are in.**

Accommodating Students with Disabilities

Southern Maine Community College is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution and employer. For more information, please call 207-741-5798.

If you have a disabling condition and wish to request accommodations in order to have reasonable access to the programs and services offered by SMCC, you must register with the Disability Services Coordinator, who can be reached at 207-741-5629 (TDD 207-741-5667). Further information about services for students with disabilities and the accommodation process is available upon request.

Tentative Schedule

Our *typical* week begins on Monday and ends on Sunday.

Deliverables are due by midnight on the date given.

Week

1	8/29-9/4	Instructional Materials:	Chapter 1	
		Deliverables:	Chapter 1 Quiz	Due Sunday 9/4, 11:59pm
2	9/5-9/11	Instructional Materials:	Chapter 2	
		Deliverables:	Chapter 2 Quiz	Due Thursday 9/8, 11:59pm
			Discussion 1	Due Sunday 9/11, 11:59pm
				Walt Disney Mini Case page 56
3	9/12-9/18	Instructional Materials:	Chapter 3	
		Deliverables:	Chapter 3 Quiz	Due Thursday 9/15, 11:59pm
			Discussion 2	Due Sunday 9/18, 11:59pm
				Questions 3-10, 3-14, 3/26 page 83-84
4	9/19-9/25	Instructional Materials:	Chapter 4	
		Deliverables:	Chapter 4 Quiz	Due Thursday 9/22, 11:59pm
			Discussion 3	Due Sunday 9/25, 11:59pm
				Buffalo Wild Wings Mini Case page
5	9/26-10/2	Instructional Materials:	This is an exceptionally heavy work week. Plan accordingly.	
		Deliverables:	Chapter 5	
			Chapter 5 Quiz	Due Thursday 9/29, 11:59pm
			Discussion 4	Due Sunday 10/2, 11:59pm
				Questions 5-3, 5-11, 5-12, 5-17, 5-30
				pages 158 & 159

6	10/3-10/9 Instructional Materials: Deliverables:	This week is no picnic either. Ditto. Chapter 6 Chapter 6 Quiz Discussion 5	Due Thursday 10/6, 11:59pm Due Sunday 10/9, 11:59pm Questions 6-4, 6-6, 6-11, 6-14, 6-15 pages 196 & 197
7	10/10-10/16 Instructional Materials: Deliverables:	Chapter 7 Chapter 7 Quiz Discussion 6	Due Thursday 10/13, 11:59pm Due Sunday 10/16, 11:59pm Hilton Mini Case page 240
8	10/17-10/23 Instructional Materials: Deliverables:	Chapter 8 Chapter 8 Quiz Discussion 7	Due Thursday 10/20, 11:59pm Due Sunday 10/23, 11:59pm Questions 8-2, 8-8, 8-14, 8-15, 8-18 pages 272 & 273
9	10/24-10/30 Instructional Materials: Deliverables:	Chapter 9 Chapter 9 Quiz Discussion 8	Due Thursday 10/27, 11:59pm Due Sunday 10/30, 11:59pm TJX Mini Case page 301
10	10/31-11/6 Instructional Materials: Deliverables:	Chapter 10 Chapter 10 Quiz Discussion 9	Due Thursday 11/3, 11:59pm Due Sunday 11/6, 11:59pm Questions 10-7, 10-9, 10-15, 10-16 page 323
11	11/7-11/13 Instructional Materials: Deliverables:	Chapter 11 Chapter 11 Quiz Discussion 10	Due Thursday 11/10, 11:59pm Due Sunday 11/13, 11:59pm Dominos Pizza Mini Case page 354
12	11/14-11/2	Deliverables:	Group Case Study 1
13	11/21-11/27	Thanksgiving Break Let's take the whole week—you've earned it.	
14	11/28-12/4	Deliverables:	Group Case Study 2
15	12/5-12/12	Deliverables:	Group Case Study 3