A. Administrative Information

Contact Information

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Materials

There is no textbook for this course. The required readings for this course (listed under “Readings”) are contained in a course packet.

B. Course Overview

This course introduces the fundamental concepts, models, tools and frameworks used to formulate, assess and refine any firm’s business strategy. The goal is to enable you to think strategically: (a) to identify the central questions that a firm must answer (b) to apply the appropriate concepts, models and frameworks that address these questions (c) to assess the influence of the economic, social, political & technological forces buffeting the firm (d) to develop a roadmap on how the firm can build vital capabilities and finally (e) to formulate a strategy, given the firm’s external environment and its capabilities.
C. Course Requirements and Grading

Your grade in this course will be based on 5 components:

*Strategy Report (10%)*

The goal of this report is to describe the strategy and tactics for achieving a personal objective. The objective could be to start and run a for-profit business, launch a not-for-profit enterprise, popularize an idea or even mobilize a community.

- The report must be submitted *individually* and is due at the start of session 8
- The report cannot exceed 1 written page (1.5 spacing and 12 font) and 1 exhibit page
- Additional details are provided in a document posted on chalk

*Case Analysis (20%)*

We will discuss several cases over the course of this quarter. You are required to submit a write-up for 4 *case write-ups* (beginning week 2):

- Case write-ups are to be submitted in *groups*
- Your write-up should contain *no more* than 1 written page and 1 exhibit page
- I have posted a document titled “Case Questions” (on chalk) that lists some questions for each case. *Answer only the bold-faced typed questions*
- I have also posted a document titled “Guidelines for Case Writing” (on chalk).

*Quizzes (10%)*

A 10-15 minute quiz will be administered at the beginning of the 4th and 8th sessions. The quizzes will test you on your understanding of the assigned articles and cases.

*Company Report (20%)*

Your task is to analyze a firm (and the industries and markets in which the firm operates) of your choice. More specifically, your project should:

- *Describe and critique* the firm’s strategy
• Assess how the firm can develop and sustain a competitive advantage
• Evaluate the environment in which the firm operates
• Analyze the horizontal and vertical scope of any firm
• Assess the organization’s structure & culture and its decision-making capabilities
• Recommend an alternative strategy (or course of action)

Here are some important guidelines and deadlines:

• The project must be completed in groups
• Group presentations will take place in session 9
• You must notify me of the firm you propose to analyze by the end of session 4
• Additional information on the project is provided in a document titled “Guidelines for Project Presentation” that is posted on the chalk site.

Final Exam (40%)

The final exam will be a 2.5 hour in-class exam. I will provide you with further details on the structure and content of the exam in the weeks prior to the final exam.

Homework problems

I will post 4 problem sets on chalk. You are not required to submit answers to these questions. However, you should try to answer as many questions as you can on your own. I will discuss answers to these questions in the review sessions (held after sessions 3, 5, 7 and 9).

Lecture Notes

I will distribute course notes each week in class.

D. Honor Code

Students are expected to adhere to the Booth honor code and are required to sign the following honor code pledge on each case as well as the take-home exam.

“I pledge my honor that I have not violated the Booth honor code.”

Students should not consult with students who have taken this course in prior terms nor should they look at their notes, assignments or exams.
F. Class Schedule

Session 1: Strategy

- What is Strategy?
- The OES Framework
- Leadership and Strategy


Gucci Group N.V. (A)


Session 2: Competitive Advantage

- The Economics of Value Creation
- Resources & Capabilities


Ducati


**Session 3: Market & Industry Analysis**

- Market Segmentation
- Porter’s *Industry Analysis* Model

*Readings:* Porter, M., “Note On The Structural Analysis Of Industries” HBS Publishing
  

*Case:* The Fashion Channel

  

**Session 4: Industry Transformation**

- Industry Life Cycles
- The S Curve

  

*Case:* “GM: Live Green or Die,” *Businessweek*, May 26, 2008
  

  
  Moore, G., *Dealing With Darwin: How Great Companies Innovate at Every Phase of Their Evolution*, Portfolio Trade, 2008
Session 5: Corporate Strategy

- Models of Corporate Strategy
- Vertical Scope


Dean, J., “Is This The World’s Most Creative Manufacturer?” Inc., October 2013

-Out of India,” The Economist, March 3, 2011

Guest Speaker Jai Shekhawat, CEO, Field Glass, Inc.


Session 6: The Game

- Decision Analysis
- Game Theory


Case: Merck & Co: Evaluating a Drug Licensing Opportunity
CBS and Online Video


Session 7: Entry & Exit:

- First Mover Advantages and Disadvantages
- Exit


Case: Slanket: Responding to Snuggle’s Market Entry
Nantucket Nectars: The Exit

Session 8: Changing the Game

- An In-Class Game
- Principles for Changing the Game


Case: Birth of the Swatch

Further Reading


Session 9: Group Presentations

The presentation schedule will be posted on the chalk site.
Session 10: Governance

- The Strategy Review Process
- The Board’s Role in Strategy

      “Jon Corzine Comes Up Snake Eyes,” Bloomberg Businessweek, November 7, 2011

Session 11: Final Meeting

In-Class Final Exam (3 hours)