

MGT 527.03W
Strategic Management
Fall 2012 Tentative Syllabus

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***IMPORTANT*:** E-mail is the best method for of contact for me. I check e-mail regularly. **Each time you send an e-mail the subject line should read MGT 527 to ensure that I receive the message.** If you follow these directions exactly I will respond to emails within a 48 hour time period. If you do not follow these instructions exactly, I cannot assure you that I will respond as quickly because your e-mail will be lost in a sea of other e-mail messages.

Course Description: A study of administrative processes and policy determination at the general management level through the use of case analysis. This course is open to business majors only and should be taken during the semester of graduation.

Course Objectives:

1. Understand the nature of competition and industries at an advanced level
2. Understand the influence that external forces--social, political/legal, economic, and technological--play in business performance
3. Understand the sophisticated relationships among the functional areas of business administration, including marketing, human resources, production, finance, economics, and accounting
4. Understand the craft of strategy research, including extensive use of the internet as a research tool
5. Be able to systematically apply the strategic management model to the analysis of an ongoing enterprise, including industry, environmental, and firm assessments; firm, business, and functional strategic assessments; development and evaluation of strategic alternatives; and strategic implementation and control.
6. Apply the principles of various models of ethics to strategic decision situations

Course Text:

John Parnell. **Strategic Management: Theory and Practice**, 3rd Edition. Mason, OH: Cengage/AtomicDog, 2009. ISBN: 978-1-4266-2882-5. www.atomicdog.com
This text is available in online and printed versions.

Course Grading:

Ethics paper.....	10%
Participation/discussion/cases.....	30%
Mid-term exam/comprehensive exam.....	30%
<u>Major case analysis</u>	<u>30%</u>

Total

100%

Ethics Paper: Each student will prepare a relatively short paper (5 pages) on a topic relating to ethics. Examples of appropriate topics include personal ethics, organizational influences on ethics, profession-based ethics, legal influences (particularly recent legislation), and corporate governance. Students should attempt to develop a personal scenario that they are likely to confront in their chosen work life then prepare an approach to deal with the scenario. The Ethics Paper will be due **Monday, September 10th**.

A sample outline for this ethics paper might be similar to the one below. Students may select from one of two approaches for doing the ethics paper. The instructor would prefer that students attempt to provide a personal example of an ethical situation that they have faced or are likely to face in their chosen work. If this approach is selected, the following outline would seem appropriate.

1. Introduction
2. The situation
3. What happened (or anticipated outcomes if using a “likely” situation)
4. What you should have done (or should do)
5. Which of the theories apply in this situation (or do you use) to guide the decision making? See the text Chapter 5, beginning at page 99 and forward.
6. Summary or conclusions

The alternative approach is to do a more traditional term paper. This should be on a relatively focused topic relating to business ethics, personal or organizational. Several appropriate topics are included above.

Cases/Participation/Discussions/Etc:

This portion of the grade will include some general class discussion and any specific homework assignments that may be assigned during the term. We will do several cases/assignments. The participation portion of the grade will encompass your level of involvement and participation in the discussions/cases.

Mid-Term Exam / Comprehensive Exam: A take-home mid-term exam will be given during the term. It will likely be a case study, but may include discussion questions of the text materials and/or other class discussions. The company for the case study will be provided in advance of the exam due date. The mid-term exam will also serve as the MBA, MSMgt, and MSMkt program comprehensive written exam. In this regard the exam is a very important exercise. The grading process will include two considerations: the exam score that will be included in determining the student's grade in the course and a pass/fail consideration for the comprehensive exam. In other words, the student grade (score) on the exam will determine whether or not the student passes the comprehensive. If the student does not pass the exam in a satisfactory manner for a passing grade for the comprehensive, the student will be allowed one retake of the exam which may include another set of questions or another case in order to obtain a passing grade on the comprehensive. The score on the retake will not be used for course grading; the original score on the Mid-Term will be used for the course grading. The exam will be provided on Monday, October 17th. The due date for the Mid-term Exam /Comprehensive Exam is set for

Monday, October 15th . Questions from the text (Business Strategy Process Steps) will serve as the primary scoring rubric for the exam. The items will be approximately equally weighted.

Case Project: The final draft of the current case will be due on November 19th. Each student will participate on a team that will be developing a case, analyzing the situation, and making recommendations about a company.

Each team will prepare and present a current case selected from a list of approved firms. Companies usually come from primarily from one industry. After the industry has been selected, a list of firms will be provided for student team selections. Industries and firms that have been used in recent semesters will not be included for consideration. Firms other than those listed may be included if a student team expresses a strong interest in the firm, the firm fits the requirements of the course including being in a related industry, and the company has not been used in recent semesters. A student team that wants to request a firm for consideration for their case study will need to allow a few days for the instructor to determine the feasibility of the selection. The current case will include a written portion including a description of the current situation facing the organization from a broad overall viewpoint, an analysis of their strategic situation, and recommendations for action.

Case Project Organizations: A list of firms will be provided after the industry is selected. If student teams wish to choose their own organizations, several criteria must be considered. Publicly traded firms will have more information available than private organizations. Choosing a firm or industry in which you have an interest will possibly keep your interest up (but you will likely not want to have anything to do with the company for a while after studying it like you will for this project). Students should try to find firms who focus on a relatively small number of operations or industries. Large conglomerate firms can be very complex to analyze, so firms focusing on a smaller or more focused product line may be easier.

Firms that are not likely to be allowed include firms that have been done in recent semesters, firms that do not have much “history,” firms that have merged or spun off, etc. At a minimum you will want to be able to obtain information about the following:

1. The firm (history, mission, past and present strategy(ies))
2. Its external environment (general and industry)
3. Its internal competencies (functional as well as management and control)
4. Financial reports for several years

In other words, you must be able to suggest threats and opportunities in the external environment and strengths and weaknesses among internal factors. You will want to have enough information to make reasonable recommendation for company strategy and implementation. **All organizations used for case studies must be approved by the instructor.**

Students may find material in Hoovers online or in the library or in a variety magazines or journals. You may also find the Wall Street Journal to provide some really fast ways to get information about your firm.

Case Analysis: The work of the teams in this class will focus on the preparation and written presentation of a case. A case is basically a story about a company or situation. Cases are

designed to illustrate real-world applications of theory and concepts. The extent to which a particular case covers a wide range of strategic management concepts depends on the situation and the intent of the case authors. Hence, the scope of coverage and discussion will vary depending on the information available to the authors and the intent of the authors in writing their case. Most of the cases used in this class will include a broad range of issues and will have a general strategy focus rather than be oriented on implementation issues or single functions exclusively (for example, human resource management, structure, systems, marketing, finance, operations, and other related issues).

For the current case, teams will likely select an “ending time” for their case. With this being a Fall term, virtually all firms will have financial information for 2010 available. They are also likely to have at least partial year information for 2011. Some firms will have 2011 full-year financial information sometime during the term. Student teams may want to use a “cut-off” date for their case when significant events take place. For example, one semester I had two teams whose companies announced major mergers or reorganizations during the semester in which they were doing the case. Although these kinds of situations provide an interesting study, they may also distort the issues which the teams had begun developing. In this case, the team may want to have a cut-off date prior to this kind of event. Obviously the recent economic issues facing many industries and firms could present increased complexity for company studies.

During the last couple of weeks of the term, student teams' papers will be reviewed by class members during the Case Follow-up and Evaluation.

Grading Format for Case Project:

The grading format for the case projects will follow the Business Strategy Process Steps/questions in the text. Though the items will be relatively equally weighted in the grading process, some variation in the weighting may be considered for the more important items.

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Strategic management terms are presented for a reason. Learn what they mean and use them appropriately in communicating about companies.

Some key grade killers or enhancers:

Company	does not equal	Industry
Opportunities	does not equal	alternatives
Environmental factor	does not equal	company strategy to respond to the factor
Environmental factor	does not equal	industry response to the environmental factor

 John Parnell. **Strategic Management**, 3rd Ed. 2009.

Business Strategy Project Steps

Step	Topic/Question	Chapter-Page
1.	Introduction of the organization	1-10

2.	Identification of the industry and competitors	3-40
3.	Potential profitability of the industry	3-51
4.	Who has succeeded and failed in the industry and why? What are the critical success factors?	3-51
5.	What political/legal forces affect the industry?	4-67
6.	What economic forces affect the industry?	4-71
7.	What social forces affect the industry?	4-78
8.	What technical forces affect the industry?	4-82
9.	What is the current firm-level strategy?	6-132
10.	What is the current business-level strategy?	7-162
11.	What business-level strategies are presently being employed by competitors?	7-164
12.	What is the organization's marketing strategy?	8-179
13.	What is the organization's financial position and financial strategy?	8-182
14.	What are the organization's production and purchasing strategies?	8-186
15.	What are the current strategies in other functional areas such as HR and information systems?	8-189
16.	What strengths exist for the organization?	9-204
17.	What weaknesses exist for the organization?	9-204
18.	What opportunities exist for the organization?	9-205
19.	What threats exist for the organization?	9-205
20.	What strategic alternatives are available for the organization?	9-208
21.	What are the pros and cons of these alternatives?	9-208
22.	Which alternative(s) should be pursued and why?	9-208
23.	How should the alternative(s) be implemented?	11-255
24.	How should the alternative(s) be controlled?	12-278
25.	What crisis events should the firm anticipate? What are the future prospects for the company?	12-281

Format for Assignments:

Virtually all assignments must be turned in using the following format guidelines. An example of an assignment that may be turned in **not** using this format is the resume, your personal sales communication document in a job search.

1. Typed, double-spaced
2. Times New Roman, 12 font (only)
3. One-inch margins on all sides: top, bottom, right and left (These are not the default setting in WORD.)

4. Paper size should be standard, 8-1/2 by 11 inches
5. No headers or footers, except for a page number (if desired)
6. No title sheet (except for current case project), instead place your name on first line in left-hand corner with a title for the assignment centered on the next line.
7. No underlines or *italics* (use **bold** for these requirements or preferences)
8. References should be complete (in that they can be used to find the source) and consistent. APA Style is expected, the main focus should be to make a complete reference that will include author (if known), source (magazine, journal, website, etc.), date of publication (or retrieval), etc.

Disability Statement: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Halladay Student Services Building
Room 303 A/D
Telephone: (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
FAX: (903) 468-8148

Student Conduct Statement: “All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment.” Students enrolled in on-line courses have the same rights and responsibilities as students in live-taught courses.

Refer to Student’s Guide Book located at:

www.tamu-commerce.edu/studentlife/guidebook.htm

Comment on Academic Honesty

There seems to be a belief among many that anything found on the Internet is free to use as one wishes. The "cut and paste" option also makes it quite tempting. However, information on the web must be properly cited just as you would any "hard copy" periodicals or books. Keep the following in mind:

1. It is generally not advisable to quote anything verbatim in a paper unless there is an overriding reason to do so, such as the use of a particular phrase or sentence that illustrates a point well and should not be changed. When you do quote directly, you must place the statement in quotes in addition to a footnote at the end of the quote (or for longer quotes, offset the quoted section). Not placing the statement in quotes implies that the wording is your own.
2. Simply changing a few words in a sentence (for example, "large" to "big") may alleviate the need for quotes (depending on how much you change), but it is not the best way to go. If you are not going to provide a direct quote, then the material should be stated in your own terms. Changing a couple of words implies laziness.
3. Every idea you get from another source must be cited. Placing 100 citations in a paper does not imply that the work is not original, but that you did a proper job of giving credit where it was

due.

4. The real danger in a "cut and paste" approach to report writing is that you end up including a lot of information that is related to the topic about which you are writing, but does not really address what you are trying to say. Putting things in your own words allows you to focus your comments more effectively.

5. Material that would be considered to be common knowledge in the field (like the general strategic management model) would not likely require a citation.

6. Some papers may be graded using turnitin.com software.

Any deviation from the guidelines concerning quotes and citations constitutes **plagiarism**, as it suggests that you are trying to submit someone else's work and creativity as your own. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Plagiarism represents disregard for academic standards and is strictly against University policy. Plagiarized work will result in an **"F"** for the course and further administrative sanctions permitted under University policy. Guidelines for properly quoting someone else's writings and the proper citing of sources can be found in the APA Publication Manual. If you do not understand the term "plagiarism", or if you have difficulty summarizing or documenting sources,

Papers are automatically submitted to Turnitin.com when uploaded to the Dropbox.