

Business 690

Seminar in Business Policy and Strategic Management

San Francisco State University

Course Overview and Syllabus

Instructor:	Michele Fritz
Class Meets:	Fridays from 10:10 AM - 12:55 PM in Business Building Room 218
Office Hours:	Fridays from 1:30 PM - 2:30 PM
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Course Objectives:

The purpose of this course is to integrate and apply your prior business course work. In this class, students will study and experience “big picture” situations related to management of the entire firm, instead of only a single functional area. Students will be introduced to the perspective and role of top management and the principles of strategy. Students will apply strategy frameworks and prior course work towards the analysis of complex, multi-faceted business problems depicted in case studies. While this course is not intended as preparation for a senior management position, students will learn to systematically analyze nebulous real-world problems and propose rational, well-defended courses of action.

Prerequisites:

This is a senior-level capstone course which requires an understanding of financial, marketing, and management concepts. A grade of C or better is required in the following prerequisite courses: BUS 360, BUS 682, BA 412, BICS 363, FIN 350, MKTG 431, and MGMT 405.

Text and Materials:

- Thompson, A. & Strickland, A.J., *Strategic Management: Concepts and Cases*, Irwin/McGraw-Hill, 11th ed., 1999.
- Test supplies: 2 Scantron Forms (# 882-ES), 2-4 large blue books, and several #2 pencils.
- A recent passport-sized photograph that accurately depicts your current appearance. It will not be returned. Please print your full name on the back of the photo.

Requirements:

This course requires that students perform in ways that are typical in industry. The course consists of independent work (text study, written homework, and exams), team contributions (presentations and peer evaluations), and active participation in [class] meetings. The course demands are intense.

- **Text:** Assigned readings in the text should be completed prior to class. You may want to prepare a short summary of the material to bring with you to class. Students in each session

will be selected to describe and/or elaborate on assigned material. Do not come to class unprepared.

- **Case Analyses:** When cases are assigned you are expected to prepare them for class discussion. Your analysis should include use of the strategic frameworks outlined in the text, quantitative analysis of financial data, application of appropriate functional area models, and qualitative analysis. Your recommendations must be based on this analysis.

There are three ways in which your case preparations will be used:

1. **Presentations:** Each team will be assigned two cases to analyze and present to the class. All members of the team are expected to participate in the 30 minute presentation. Use of overhead slides or other types of visual aids are required. A print out of your presentation must be submitted at the beginning of the class.
 2. **Discussion:** Much of the learning in this course will be from comparing your ideas, approaches, and opinions to those of your peers. Merely “reading the case” will be considered inadequate preparation, since the instructor and your classmates will require you to defend your recommendations. (Be forewarned that it is often easier to criticize than to suggest an alternate plan of action.) Students are expected to be able to discuss their own recommendations in class even if presentations are scheduled for part of the session.
 3. **Homework:** On several occasions, a short written assignment on the case will be collected at the beginning of the class. Late homework will not be accepted.
- **Examinations:** There will be a midterm and a comprehensive final examination which will cover the text, lecture/discussion, and cases. Make-up exams are not available. Students who miss the exams will be assigned a make-up paper.
 - **Attendance:** You are expected to be in class on time. Students who are perpetually tardy will be docked in their class participation grade. Students who miss more than 3 classes (20%) can expect a failing grade.

Grading Policy Summary:

Your success as a professional depends on your independent work, your ability to work with a team of peers, your capacity for communicating your ideas (both in written and verbal form), and the quality of your contributions to the group as a whole. Similarly, your evaluation in this course will be divided as follows:

<i>Item</i>	<i>Point Value</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
2 Exams	175 points	35%
2 Team Case Presentations & Peer Review	200 points	40%
Class Participation & Homework	<u>125 points</u>	<u>25%</u>
<i>Total</i>	500 points	100%

This is a seminar class which requires active participation and independent thinking to be of value to the students. In order for the class to arrive at a high quality solution, it will often be desirable to challenge and present opposing points of view. Nevertheless, students will be expected to conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to a professional place of work. Your demeanor in class should at all times be respectful, open-minded and professional.

At the end of the semester, each student will turn in a “peer evaluation” of his/her team members. These evaluations will be held in strict confidence, but will be used to assist the instructor in

determining each student's level of contribution to the preparation of the case presentations. At the end of the semester, you may request the aggregated, averaged feedback from your team. (No individual scores will be shared for any reason.) While you may feel uncomfortable with this process, it is widely practiced in industry, particularly among managers. This process will also allow you to practice your "managerial soft skills" in terms of fairly differentiating the strengths and weaknesses of others. Your complete honesty is expected.

Academic Integrity:

Students who submit the work of others as their own or cheat on exams will receive a failing grade in the course and will be reported to college authorities.

Syllabus:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Homework Assignment Due Today</i>	<i>Class Topic</i>
2/4		Course Introduction; The Strategic Management Process.
2/11	Turn in photos; Read Chapters 1 - 3.	Vision, Objectives, and Strategy; Introduction to Industry and Competitive Analysis.
2/18	Hand in Five Forces Model assignment; Read Chapter 4.	Review of Industry and Competitive Analysis; Evaluating Company Resources and Capabilities.
2/25	Read Chapter 5 and "Strategy and the New Economics of Information," <i>HBR</i> , 09/97.	Strategy and Competitive Advantage. <i>[Cases #1 & 2 Announced]</i>
3/3	Review the Guide to Case Analysis (pages 363-372); Prepare Case #1 for Discussion.	Case Workshop: Case #1 Discussion. <i>[Case #3 Announced]</i>
3/10	Read Chapter 6.	Matching Strategies to a Company's Situation.
3/17	No Homework; Prepare for Midterm Exam.	MIDTERM EXAM: Chapters 1-6, lectures and cases.
3/24	Read Chapters 7 - 8.	Strategy in Diversified Companies.
3/31	Prepare Case #2 for Discussion.	Case Workshop: Case #2 Discussion and Presentations (Teams 1-4). <i>[Case #4 Announced]</i>
4/7	Prepare Case #3 for Discussion; Hand in Top 3 Recommendations Memo (1 page maximum).	Case Workshop: Case #3 Discussion and Presentations (Teams 5-8). <i>[Case #5 Announced]</i>
4/14	Read Chapters 9 - 10.	Strategy Implementation: Structure, Systems and Rewards; McKinsey "7S" Model.
4/21		SPRING BREAK
4/28	Read Chapter 11.	Strategy Implementation: Culture and Leadership
5/5	Prepare Case #4 for Discussion. Hand in Top 3 Recommendations Memo (1 page maximum).	Case Workshop: Case #4 Discussion and Presentations (Teams 1-4).
5/12	Prepare Case #5 for Discussion.	Case Workshop: Case #5 Discussion and Presentations (Teams 5-8).
5/19	Turn in Peer Assessment Forms. Bring any questions you may have to class.	Wrap-Up; Exam Review.
TBD - 5/26?	Prepare for Final Exam.	FINAL EXAM: Chapters 1-11, lectures and cases.