



Lincoln University

BA 380 – Business Strategy and Decision Making

COURSE SYLLABUS Spring, 2016

Credit: 3 units (45 lecture hours)
Instructor: Dr. Alexander Anokhin
Office Hours: By arrangement
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Required textbook: Strategic Management: Concepts, F. Rothaermel, McGraw-Hill/Irwin; 2 edition, 2014. ISBN-10: 0077645065, ISBN-13: 978-0077645069

Previous edition is OK.

Revised: January 6, 2015

Catalog description

Students are expected to develop a better understanding of business strategy approaches and techniques, and to acquire skills and knowledge relating to the decision-making process. Emphasis is on decision-making while still recognizing the importance of the specialized functions of an organization. Readings and case materials are reinforced with participation through written tests, papers, and oral presentations. This is the MBA program capstone course. (3 units)

Prerequisites: BA 301, BA 304, BA 307, BA 320, BA 340, and at least two concentration courses

Course Objectives

This course is meant to integrate all previous knowledge gained in the MBA program and provide an opportunity for its practical application. We will attempt to examine business strategies in a complex environment of modern global marketplace, fiercely competitive and constantly evolving. We will develop a framework for strategic decision making, discuss tools and techniques used by successful companies, while

acquiring an in-depth understanding of the nature of decision making in the uncertain environment of the modern business world.

Upon completion of the course students will be able to:

- 1) Identify and select possible strategic responses to the changes in business environment
- 2) Understand major competitive business strategies
- 3) Perform internal and external analysis of the organization and identify required modifications to address business problems and opportunities
- 4) Discuss and compare rationales and limitations for various business models, corporate strategies, and stakeholder relationship approaches.

Procedures and methodology

Lecture method is combined with in-class discussions, case studies and assignments of various kinds. Participation in in-class activities is an essential part of the course and will be graded.

Class Rules

1. **Class attendance** is required. Attendance will be taken each class at a time chosen by the instructor.
2. Students are required to **arrive to class on time**. Showing up late disturbs the natural flow of the lecture and affects everyone's experience.
3. Note, that the only email that students are allowed to use is the one provided by the Lincoln University. Once you receive an invitation to the course website, make sure to **set up your profile** in such a way that it would be possible for the instructor to identify you - use your name (as it is in the Lincoln University records) as your primary ID and your Lincoln University email as your secondary ID as well as a profile photo.
4. Submissions of home assignments will be conducted via the course website only (Canvas Instructure). **Absolutely no hard copy or email submissions will be accepted!** The acceptable format for assignment submission is .txt, .doc, .docx, and .pdf.
5. All quizzes, exams, assignments and projects must be completed and handed in on time. **Late submissions will result in lower grade** (each day of delay costs 5% points). Since all assignments are available on the website and outlined in the present syllabus with due dates clearly visible, the fact that you haven't been in class when the assignment was given cannot be used as an excuse to submit it later.
6. All quizzes, exams, and class assignments **cannot** be made up.
7. **No cheating and no plagiarism, please!** Detected cheating/plagiarism will result in "F" for the assignment. (This rule is very strictly enforced, no exceptions!).
8. All grades will be made available to students through the **course website**. It is a responsibility of a student to make sure that all assignments are uploaded on Canvas.

Exams

The exams will consist of questions based on lectures, assigned chapters and supplementary reading.

Group Project

Every student must work on a research project for an in-class presentation as a part of a group. The broad topic of the group project is “Business strategy of a selected company”. Even though this work is done in groups each student is expected to have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the whole project. Specific format of a research project will be presented in class. Research projects must comply with the Lincoln University guidelines.

Assessment Criteria

All assignments, quizzes, projects and exams are evaluated using the indicated system:

94-100	A	73-76	C
90-93	A-	70-72	C-
87-89	B+	67-69	D+
83-86	B	60-66	D
80-82	B-	0-59	F
77-79	C+		

Tentative Weights

Participation (case studies, in-class discussions)	20%
Group Project Presentation	25%
Midterm 1	15%
Midterm 2	15%
Final Exam	25%

Course Outline

Topic	Text	Assignment Due
1. a) Introduction. What is strategy? b) Strategic Leadership	Ch. 1-2	
2. External Analysis: The Business Environment	Ch.3	
3. Internal Analysis: The Firm	Ch. 4	Case Study 1. Better World Books

Topic	Text	Assignment Due
4. Competitive Advantage and Firm Performance	Ch. 5	Case Study 2. The Movie Exhibition Industry
5. a) Midterm 1. Strategy Analysis b) Differentiation, Cost Leadership, and Integration	Ch. 3 - 5 (quiz) Ch. 6	
6. Innovation and Entrepreneurship	Ch. 7	Case Study 3. RIM
7. Vertical Integration and Diversification	Ch. 8	Case Study 4. Tesla Motors (A)
8. Mergers and Acquisitions, Strategic Alliances	Ch. 9	Case Study 5. Amazon.com
9. Global Strategy	Ch. 10	Case Study 6. Siemens Energy
10. Midterm 2. Strategy Formulation	Ch. 6 - 10	
11. Organizational Design	Ch. 11	Case Study 7. Genetech
12. Issues in Business Ethics	Ch. 12	Case Study 8. Bank of America
13. Course Project Presentations		
14. Course Project Presentations		
15. Final Exam	Ch. 1 - 12	