Lincoln University

BA 390 – Business Strategy and Decision Making

COURSE SYLLABUS
Spring 2018

Credit: 3 units (45 hours of lectures) / 15 weeks
Level: M2 (Mastery 2)
Instructor: Dr. Alex Anokhin
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Office Hours: By appointment
Suggested textbook: Exploring Strategy: Text and Cases 11th Edition; Johnson,
                        Whittington, Regnér, Scholes, Angwin; Pearson, 2017.
                        ISBN13: 9781292145129; ISBN10: 1292145129.

Revised: January 5, 2017

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

Educational 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.

Course Learning Outcomes

	Course LO	Program LO	Institutional LO	Assessment
1	Employ analytical techniques and tools to create valid information in support of decision-making	PLO 1	ILO 1b, ILO 2b	Simulation management game, Case study, Classroom exercise
2	Formulate and implement strategic responses to change in external and internal environment	PLO 2	ILO 1b, ILO 2b, ILO 4b	Simulation management game, Case study, Classroom exercise
3	Evaluate and effectively communicate potential global business opportunities and risks	PLO 3	ILO 2b, ILO 7b	Simulation management game, Case study, Classroom exercise
4	Be able to identify tools and technique needed to obtain competencies, capabilities, and resources required for the implementation of business strategy	PLO 4	ILO 4b, ILO 5b, ILO 6b	Simulation management game, Case study, Classroom exercise
5	Define corporate development objectives that allow to achieve and sustain competitive advantage	PLO 5	ILO 4b, ILO 5b	Simulation management game, Case study, Classroom exercise
6	Manage corporate social responsibilities issues within a context of strategic development	PLO 6	ILO 3b	Simulation management game, Case study, Classroom exercise

Procedures and methodology
This is a direct classroom instruction course.
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. 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.
4. All quizzes, exams, and class assignments **cannot** be made up.
5. **No cheating and no plagiarism, please!** Detected cheating/plagiarism will result in "F" for the assignment. (This rule is very strictly enforced, no exceptions!).

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

Strategic Management Simulation Game

In addition to the case assignments, students will be organized into teams and participate in the operation of a company through an automated on-line simulation program. Student teams will be required to make repetitive decisions regarding key strategic elements of the company based on their interpretation of the firm's competitive environment, financial and operating ratios, the economic climate, and periodic problems that arise during the simulation.

Students will receive a detailed explanation of the operating characteristics of the simulation, the cost of and means of obtaining an access to participate in the simulation, and the nature of the operating reports the teams will receive and the nature of the decisions the teams will be required to make. Teams will be judged on their success or failure relative to competition.

The final team case report requires an oral presentation that will be scheduled during the course.

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, home work, in-class discussions)	15%
Simulation game	30%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	35%

Course Outline

Topic
1. a) Introduction. What is strategy?   b) Strategic Leadership
2. Macro Environmental Analysis
3. Industry and Sector Analysis
4. Resources and capabilities
5. Stakeholders and governance.
6. In-class assignment: LVMH in China
7. Business strategy and models
8. Corporate strategy and diversification
9. Mergers and Acquisitions, Strategic Alliances
10. Global Strategy
11. Organizational Design
12. Leadership and strategic change
13. Course Project Presentations
15. Final Exam

Appendix A. Program and Institutional Learning Outcomes

	Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs)
MBA Graduates of Lincoln University should be able to:	
1b	Recognize and be able to work with the components of reasoning and problem solving; understand concepts, assumptions, purpose, conclusions, implications, consequences, objections from alternative viewpoints, and frame of reference.
2b	Gather and assess relevant information, using abstract ideas to interpret it effectively; to develop well-reasoned conclusions and solutions, and test them against relevant criteria and standards
3b	Be exemplary business professionals and try to ensure that the products of their efforts will be used in socially responsible ways, will meet social needs, and will avoid harmful effects to health and welfare
4b	Lead by example in order to create highly collaborative organizational environment, and be able to develop and use strategies to encourage employees at all organizational levels to do the same.
5b	Set goals and have a vision of the future. The vision should be owned throughout the organization. As effective leaders, they should habitually pick priorities stemming from their basic values.
6b	Continually look for, develop, and offer new or improved services, and be able to use original approaches when dealing with problems in the workplace.
7b	Demonstrate fluency in the use of tools, technologies and methods in the field. They should know how to evaluate, clarify and frame complex questions or challenges using perspectives and scholarship from the business discipline.
	Program Level Outcomes (PLOs)
Students graduating our MBA program will be able to:	
1	Develop and exhibit applied and theoretical knowledge in the field of management and business administration
2	Use theoretical knowledge and advanced problem-solving skills to formulate solutions and identify risks in the following fields: international business, finance management, general business, human resources management, management information systems, marketing management
3	Communicate within a highly specialist environment that allows the presentation of critiques of complex strategic matters
4	Demonstrate autonomy, creativity, and responsibility for managing professional practices
5	Demonstrate leadership and set strategic objectives for team performance
6	Identify ethical issues/problems in business organizations and reach decisions within ethical framework

Appendix B. Classification of LU Curriculum courses.

Code	Classification	Description
Courses 300 level w/o graduate prerequisites	Mastery 1 (M1)	Mastery 1 courses introduce graduate level concepts and ideas in a specific field of study and provide an opportunity to initiate the development of graduate level competences.
Courses 300 level with graduate prerequisites	**Mastery 2 (M2)**	**Mastery 2 courses build upon students' execution of Mastery 1 learning outcomes and allow for further development of students' mastery of concepts, ideas, and competences in the specific field of study.**
Courses 398, 399	Mastery 2 / Assessment (M2A)	Mastery 2/Assessment courses are structured to provide opportunity to assess students' achievements of set program learning outcomes.
Courses 400 level	Mastery 2 / Research (M2R)	Mastery 2/Research courses employ individual research project to deepen students' understanding of the subject developed in lower level courses and to equip students with knowledge and skills required by MS and DBA degree programs.
Courses 500 level	Doctorate Assessment (DA)	Doctoral Assessment courses are doctorate level seminars and research activities fostering the highest level of professional expertise by providing continuous assessment and development of students' ideas and analytical skills in the context of the doctorate program.