

# LINCOLN UNIVERSITY COURSE SYLLABUS

## COURSE NUMBER: BA 380

### Course Title: Business Strategy & Decision-Making

(3 Units, 45 hours of lecture)

Course Start Date: August 23, 2012

Course End Date: December 6, 2012

#### Course Description:

Each student is expected to develop a better understanding of business strategy approaches, techniques, and to acquire knowledge and skills 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, oral presentations, decision-making processes, and computer applications. This is the capstone course, and not for beginners. (3 units) Prerequisites: all core MBA and at least two concentration courses.

\*\*\*Note: As a capstone course for the MBA program, you are expected to be able to integrate your previous coursework and studies into your coursework for this class. In addition, your presentation skills will be refined during this course to help prepare you for your transition from the academic world to the business world.

#### Learning Objectives:

1. Students will have gained an understanding of the guiding principles and concepts of strategic management.
2. Students will have learned how to effectively apply the principles of the strategic management process in international work settings.
3. Students will learn how to analyze strategic business scenarios and produce effective solutions using strategic management tools.
4. Students will understand the concepts of organizational judgment and how these concepts determine organizational decision-making
5. Students will identify their key leadership strengths and will have developed personal strategies for developing them.

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#### **Required Texts (There are two):**

David, F.

2013 Strategic Management: Concepts & Cases, 14<sup>th</sup> edition. Prentice Hall.  
Upper Saddle River, New Jersey. ISBN 10: 0-13-266423-2

Rath, T., Conchie, B.

2009 Strengths Based Leadership. Gallup Press. New York, NY. ISBN 10:  
1595620257

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arrangement

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**Introduction:**

**Welcome to Business Strategy & Decision-Making!**

In this syllabus, I will provide an overview of the course and the student expectations for this semester. It is important that you note the schedule of events, and assignments.

There are a few principles that we need to understand as we start this course. First, the nature of this course environment requires course participants to actively engage each other, and to encourage the learning process through our conversations and coursework. When everyone participates, the entire class or team has the opportunity to learn. In addition learning between the instructor and students flows two ways. I will learn from you just as you will learn from me.

As a capstone course for the MBA program, you are expected to be able to integrate your previous coursework and studies into your coursework for this class. In addition, your presentation skills will be refined during this course to help prepare you for your transition from the academic world to the business world.

My role, as your facilitator, is to guide you along the learning path and engage your ability to learn. Should there be any questions regarding this course material, attendance, and participation in this course, please contact me via Lincoln University e-mail.

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**Class Procedures:**

Each session you will be provided various items: instructions, assignments, topics, questions for discussion, my comments, or a description of the activities for the day.

Instructional methodology includes: Lecture, class discussions, group and team work, practical exercises, and multimedia resources in either a brick and mortar classroom or a virtual classroom.

You will be reading and working on various exercises and answering discussion questions as an individual, in a pair, and in groups.

As you review the next section, you will notice there is no midterm and final exam. I will assess your understanding of the course material through the rigorous exercises and assignments listed below that include a case study, which requires you to apply everything you will have learned in this course to a business case.

### **Assignments & Coursework:**

**Assurance Exercise Assignments:** These are due the next class session following the session they were assigned. For example, an assignment listed in the syllabus for 8/23 would be due 8/30. Late assignments will be accepted without a 5% late penalty if they are submitted within one week of the due date. If they are submitted after the one-week grace period, a 5% late penalty will be assessed for each week they are late.

**Strengths Based Leadership Exercise:** Students will need to complete the online survey using the access code in the back of Rath's Strengths-Based Leadership book, and bring the printout of their top five leadership strengths to class on November 8. Completion of this exercise is valued at 10 points.

**Key Terms & Concepts Quizzes:** Students should become familiar with the key terms and concepts listed for each chapter and be prepared to take a short ten minute quiz within the first 15 minutes of class on those days when a quiz is scheduled. Unless there is a medical or documented emergency reason for being late for the quiz, there will be no make-up quizzes.

**Individual Experiential Exercises:** These are due using the same requirement listed under Assurance Exercises above. (\*The syllabus may indicate the same exercise number for two different assignments. For instance, during the first week of class, there is a homework assignment of "1A" for the Experiential exercise and the Assurance exercise. These are two different assignments.)

**Team Debates:** Student teams will work together to research either the pros/cons of a topic, identify key arguments, and develop a strong position/argument to support their position. They will then participate as a team in an in-class debate with the opposing point of view student team that will be moderated by the instructor. Students not participating in the event will evaluate the positions/arguments of the participating teams.

**Case Study Analysis & Presentation:** Student teams will be assigned one of the 29 case studies in the textbook, and are required to prepare a written analysis and make a class presentation. The written portion of the assignment is due on the student's scheduled presentation day.

**Assignments must have:** The students first and last name at the top of the page. The title of the assignment must also be in the heading. Simply putting the date of the assignment is not correct and it will be downgraded 3% for not following instructions.

**Class Attendance Defined:**

(1) You are expected to contribute to the class discussions in meaningful ways. That means:

- contributing new and relevant information to the course discussion and from readings of the textbooks;
- commenting in a positive manner;
- building on the remarks of your fellow students;
- posing questions of your fellow students; and
- Sharing quotes, websites, and other supplementary information.

(2) Your grade will also be determined by:

- the quality of your responses;
- the timeliness of your response; and
- The ability of your comments to motivate others in a collaborative effort.

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**Learning Environment:**

The goal of the classroom environment is to be collaborative and communicative. To help facilitate collaborative communication, I would suggest that carefully consider your thought before speaking. There are times when an innocent comment can be misinterpreted. Most of the time, any miss-communication can be rectified through open communication. However, if you find the content of a message offensive, please notify me.

**Grading**

***Point/Grade Conversion***

100-95	A	76-74	C
94-90	A-	73-70	C-
89-87	B+	69-67	D+
86-84	B	66-64	D
83-80	B-	63-60	D-
79-77	C+	59 or <	F

**A = Superior performance for a graduate student.** A superior performance. Has shown exceptional insight into the application of course material to the assignment, and

presents an original analysis or argument. The student has identified and understood many aspects of an issue, and has effectively used primary reference sources for supporting their analysis, argument, or conceptual approach. Has included major theoretical approaches to reinforce their key points and central theme. Displays superior written and oral communication skills that includes being able to effectively communicate logically and clearly. The analysis, argument, or approach is persuasive. Makes serious attempts to integrate to integrate ideas, theories, concepts, models learned from this and other disciplines. Incorporates insight and thought into the next steps in the progression of ideas, theories, and concepts. For a grade of 100%, the standard is publication quality.

**A- = Excellent performance for a graduate student.** An excellent performance. The analysis and/or argument is interesting, clear, logical, and sound. However, it is not as original, or the analysis and argument is not as in-depth as an “A” paper. The analysis, argument, or approach is not as well researched and supported as in an “A” paper.

**B+ = Very good performance for a graduate student.** A very good performance. The analysis, approach, argument is reasonably clear. The ideas are not as clearly expressed as in the “A” or “A-“categories, but the analysis, approach, or argument contains some interesting points. There are some supporting references from primary sources; however, more supporting references would have strengthened the analysis, argument, or approach.

**B = Good performance for a graduate student.** A good performance that demonstrates a competent grasp of the course material. The analysis, approach, or argument is not as effectively structured as it should have been. There are a few interesting ideas or points within the paper. However, the analysis, approach, or argument would have been strengthened with more thought, insight, creativity, and organization. The applicable theories and concepts are briefly covered in the key points of the analysis, the approach, or the argument. However, serious improvement in these areas is required. Reliance more on secondary data sources than primary sources of data. The ideas are not as clearly expresses as in the “B+” category above.

**B- = Above Average performance for a graduate student.** An above average performance. Performance indicates a competent understanding, but not to the degree as indicated in the “B” grade category above. Argument, approach, or analysis primarily based on secondary reference sources. There are some problems with the organization and structure of the argument, analysis, or approach.

**C+ = A marginally above-average performance for a graduate student.** The structure and organization of the approach, analysis, or argument is often ineffective, unclear or unpersuasive. The central theme is either absent or unclear. Supporting references are based solely on secondary sources. Performance is not to the “B-“ grade level above.

**C = Average performance for a graduate student.** An average level of performance that indicates an acceptable comprehension of the basic concepts and theories being studied. The argument, approach, or analysis is sometimes incoherent with significant

organizational and structural problems. Communication is an acceptable level for a university student. Supporting references are limited and based solely on secondary sources.

**C- = Below-average performance for a graduate student.** A below-average performance based on deficient studying of the course material and secondary research sources. Significant grammar, style, and punctuation errors to the degree that communication is unclear. There is no identifiable approach, argument, or analysis.

**D+ = Poor performance for a graduate student.** A poor level of performance with very little evidence of organization and structure. Serious grammar, punctuation, and style errors. Very little evidence of an argument, analysis, or approach.

**D = Very poor performance for a graduate student.** A very poor level of performance. There is virtually no evidence of a thoughtful expression of analysis, argument, or approach. Incoherent and unclear communication, structure, and organization.

**D- = Very poor performance for a graduate student.** Performance is even less that indicated in the “D” grade level above.

**F = Failing performance for a graduate student.** Work is not acceptable and/or timely. Academic credit is not earned. Performance borders on plagiarism.

**Course Grade Weighting:**

<i>Category</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Point</i>
Discipline Specific Key Terms and Concepts In-class Matching-Quizzes (Chapters 3-11, 4 Matching questions, 9 x 1 pts. each)	9%	9
Learning Assurance Exercises (10 x 2.5 pts. Each)	25%	25
Team Debates (3 debates, each team will participate in only one)	10%	10
Completion of the Strengths-Based Individual Leadership Development Exercise	10%	10
Team Case Study Analysis & Presentation	18.5%	18.5
Individual Experiential Exercises (11 x 2.5 points each)	27.5%	27.5
	<b>100%</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Individual Performance = 71.5% &amp; Team Performance = 28.5%</b>		

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**Format for Submitting Assignments**

(1) Write your first and last name at the top of your paper along with the title of the assignment (papers will not be returned without credit if there is no name and/or assignment title).

(1) Use the APA/Chicago-Turabian guidelines for citing and documenting sources. If you need to refresh your knowledge of these guidelines, there are resources online and in the library. Lincoln's library staff is there to help you locate those resources.

### **Academic References**

In the United States, Wikipedia is not considered an academic reference in education by most elementary schools, high schools, and colleges. This does not mean you cannot site this as a source much like you would use a magazine or newspaper articles as a reference. You can use these non-academic reference sources to point you in the right direction when you need an academic reference to support your approach, argument, or analysis. One of the best resources you have as a student is the academic databases that are available to you through Lincoln's library.

### **Schedule & Assignments**

<i>Session</i>	<i>Course Outline</i>
August 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to course.</li> <li>• <b>Chapter 1:</b> The Nature of Strategic Management</li> <li>• <b>Homework:</b> Assurance of Learning Exercise 1A. You do not need to print and turn in the annual report. You should download a pdf version to use a resource for completing this assignment. Experiential Exercise 1A</li> </ul>
August 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Chapter 2:</b> The Business Vision &amp; Mission</li> <li>• <b>Homework:</b> Assurance Exercise 2A and Experiential Exercise 2C</li> </ul>
September 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Chapter 3:</b> The External Assessment</li> <li>• <b>Homework:</b> Assurance Exercise 3D and Experiential Exercise 3C</li> <li>• Key Definition &amp; Concepts Quiz</li> </ul>
September 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Chapter 4:</b> The Internal Assessment               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Homework:</b> Assurance Exercise 4B, How to Prepare &amp; Present Case Analysis, and Experiential Exercise 4B</li> <li>• Key Definition &amp; Concepts Quiz</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
September 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Chapter 5:</b> Strategies in Action</li> <li>• <b>Homework:</b> Assurance Exercise 5C and Experiential Exercise 5C</li> <li>• <b>How to Prepare &amp; Present a Case Analysis.</b></li> <li>• Key Definition &amp; Concepts Quiz</li> </ul>
September 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Chapter 6:</b> Strategy Analysis and Choice</li> <li>• <b>Homework:</b> Assurance Exercise 6D and Experiential Exercise 6B</li> <li>• Key Definition &amp; Concepts Quiz</li> <li>• Team Business Context Debate #1: Pros/Cons for establishing a</li> </ul>

	<p>business presence in Greece.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 34 Total Points Possible (44 if involved in debate)</li> </ul>
October 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Chapter 7:</b> Implementing Strategies M/O Issues</li> <li>• <b>Homework:</b> Assurance Exercise 7A and Experiential Exercise 7A</li> <li>• Key Definition &amp; Concepts Quiz</li> </ul>
October 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Chapter 8:</b> Implementing Strategies M/F/R&amp;D/MIS</li> <li>• Key Definition &amp; Concepts Quiz</li> <li>• Experiential Exercise 8C</li> </ul>
October 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Chapter 9:</b> Strategy Review, Evaluation &amp; Control</li> <li>• <b>Homework:</b> Assurance Exercise 9A and Experiential Exercise 9A</li> <li>• Key Definition &amp; Concepts Quiz</li> <li>• Team Business Context Debate #2: Pros/Cons for operating a global business within the global climate change environment.</li> </ul>
October 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Chapter 10: Business Ethics/Social Responsibility/Environmental Sustainability</b></li> <li>• <b>Homework:</b> Assurance Exercise 10A and Experiential Exercise 10B</li> <li>• Key Definition &amp; Concepts Quiz</li> <li>• Team Business Context Debate #3: Pros/Cons of the effect the U.S. Obamacare law will have on multinational businesses.</li> </ul>
November 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Chapter 11: Global/International Issues</b></li> <li>• <b>Homework:</b> Assurance Exercise 11A and Experiential Exercise 11A</li> <li>• Key Definition &amp; Concepts Quiz</li> </ul>
November 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strengths-Based Leadership Development Exercise</b></li> </ul>
November 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Team Case Study Presentations</b></li> </ul>
November 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Team Case Study Presentations</b></li> </ul>
December 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Team Case Study Presentations</b></li> </ul>