PROFESSOR INFORMATION

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Office Hours:  Tues. 1:00-2:00 p.m.  Email:  ddejong@fiu.edu

Please use Blackboard messages for any correspondence

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

MAN 4720 is a capstone undergraduate course designed to enable students to increase their understanding of the theory and practice of strategic management. As a capstone class, Strategic Management will rely on and integrate the many disciplines learned throughout students’ undergraduate education, including but not limited to management, marketing, finance, and accounting. Students will explore the systematic nature of strategic management and its objective to develop organizations that adapt and learn quickly in increasingly complex global environments, formulate strategy to increase organizational effectiveness and efficiency, and serve the interests of all stakeholders.

Strategy aims to accomplish firms’ goals of creating value and succeeding in often highly competitive marketplaces, inhabited by fierce competitors. This course introduces you to the complexities of strategy analysis, formulation, and implementation processes. We will discuss the basic concepts underlying these three interrelated processes, as well as cases and examples that describe how real organizations confronted successfully (or unsuccessfully) the issues covered in the text. We address the question: What makes a firm successful in terms of creating shareholder value over the long term? As such, the focus is on concepts and analytical techniques for creating sustainable advantage in difficult competitive environments. The perspective adopted is that of the top manager who has overall responsibility for the performance of the firm or of a business unit within the firm.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Analyze industry structure and environmental trends to assess industry potential;
2. Assess a firm’s resources for their potential to generate a competitive advantage;
3. Explain how firms can add value in a business and across diverse lines of business, domestically and internationally;
4. Explain how well-formulated strategies can be successfully implemented to generate a competitive advantage;
5. Analyze decisions under uncertainty;
6. Apply tools learned across the curriculum (especially quantitative and qualitative analysis);
7. Identify and assess the impact of opportunities and threats in a company’s environment, its industry, and its set of competitors;
8. Enhance their understanding of the theory and practice of strategy development and implementation; and
9. Apply critical thinking & systems thinking to understand factors contributing to business performance.
10. Identify the elements of and role executives play in the formulation and implementation of effective strategies.

MAJOR & CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES TARGETED

In addition to the MAN 4720 course learning objectives, this course will address all six College Curriculum Learning Objectives, including:

- Communications ability
- Use of Information Technology
- Globalization context for business
- Critical Thinking
- Analytics skills
- Ethical reasoning abilities

TEACHING METHODOLOGY

To capture the pragmatic yet complex nature of the general manager’s job, we will supplement case discussions with readings, lectures, conceptual analyses, and presentations of contemporary issues. A central goal is for you to develop your own personal synthesis and approach for identifying and solving key strategic problems facing a business. The class also should help you see relationships between the various functional area courses you have taken previously in the undergraduate program. The experiential learning tools include case studies, projects, lectures, interactions, and presentations.

For the class to work well, and for you to benefit from it, preparation for each class meeting is essential: All students are expected to arrive at class having prepped the assigned readings, and prepared to offer meaningful contributions to class discussion.

Since our class discussion forms the focus of the course, I expect you to attend all the class sessions, and draw on knowledge you have gained from your prior work and from other courses in the program. Remember, outstanding business leaders are innovators – they generate innovative yet feasible solutions to complex business problems.

The key to receiving a good grade in this course is to be self-motivated and to see this as a unique opportunity to learn for your future career. In addition, review and follow the course calendar, respond to emails within 48 hours, and submit/deliver assignments by the corresponding deadline.

ASSURANCE OF LEARNING

The College of Business cares about the quality of your education. For more information please visit the Assurance of Learning website to learn more on the College’s commitment to this initiative.
POLICIES

Please review FIU's Policies webpage. The policies webpage contains essential information regarding guidelines relevant to all courses at FIU.

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATION

If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of the course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way I teach may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, we can work with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities to help us determine appropriate accommodations. I will treat information you provide as private and confidential. For additional assistance please contact FIU’s Disability Resource Center.

COURSE PREREQUISITES

This course has at least one prerequisite. Review the Course Catalog webpage for prerequisites information.

TEXTBOOK

Strategic Management: Text & Cases, 7th Edition
Dess, Lumpkin, Eisner and McNamara.
ISBN: 9780077862527
You may purchase your textbook at the FIU Bookstore.

COURSE DETAILS

ASSURANCE OF LEARNING EXIT EXAM

Student learning is the central activity of higher education. Definition of learning expectations and assurance that graduates achieve learning expectations are key features of our academic programs within the FIU College of Business. The College, in accordance with standards established by The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), has established an Assurance of Learning (AoL) initiative that evaluates how well it accomplishes its educational objectives. Graduates of the Bachelor of Business Administration and the Bachelor of Accounting are expected to demonstrate certain general business skills, core competencies as well as knowledge and skills required for their program.
As part of the Assurance of Learning (AoL), the College has established an exit exam requirement for all students in MAN 4720. The purpose of the exit exam is to ensure that the College of Business demonstrates accountability (such as in accreditation) and to assist the College and its faculty to improve programs and courses. You will be given a mandatory exam which will be administered through Blackboard. This exam tests you on knowledge gained throughout your course of study. While you are not expected to study for it, you are expected to put a good faith effort into doing your best. And while this exam is mandatory, it will be worth five bonus points toward your total course grade.

**FIU LIBRARY SUPPORT**

You may search and use any sources of information (e.g., Google) for this course. However, be advised that most of the research tools needed to succeed at FIU are available via the university’s library in the following link: [https://library.fiu.edu/researchtools](https://library.fiu.edu/researchtools)

Don't struggle through your library research alone! Help is available. Call 305-919-5604 for more details.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

*Midterm & Final Exam*

The exams will include multiple-choice and possibly short essay questions.

*Case Study Assignment*

This is a team written assignment (2 pages, double-spaced) to be submitted via hard copy to professor at the time of the presentation. Students will need to read and follow the “How to Analyze Cases” which can be found in the content tab on Blackboard. There are few (if any) absolute "right" answers to case studies (although there are wrong answers!). If you are able to demonstrate knowledge of the required concepts, consider all of the facts in the case, account for your opinions, and justify your answer, you are probably moving toward an excellent analysis. Nonetheless, while half of the grade for this assignment is given based on content, the other half is based on your writing. In this regard, please read the Guidelines for Written Work section below.

*Business periodical presentation*

The objective of this assignment is to introduce students to issues covered in the business press that are related to the topics discussed in this course. This assignment is done in pairs, which will be sub-teams of your final project team. Each pair will find and review an article (related to the chapter topic of the day) appearing in business periodicals in the past 6 months. The original article should be emailed to the instructor for approval the day prior to the presentation in class. Each pair will discuss an article for 3 minutes. As for grading criteria, please refer to Appendix I. This section is subject to change depending on class size.

Suggested Business Press Titles

- *BusinessWeek*
- *The Wall Street Journal*
- *Forbes*
- *CEO Magazine*
- *Entrepreneur Magazine*

- *Financial Times*
- *The Wall Street Journal Asia*
- *Fortune*
- *The Economist*
- *Inc. Magazine*
Guidelines for Written Work
Written assignments will be graded on content and style. Factors that contribute to (or detract from) the quality of a report:

• Organization and clarity: Use appropriate headings and subheadings.
• Precision: Do not ramble just to fill paper.
• Logical consistency.
• Rigor and thoroughness: Consider all the facts of the case, before making a conclusion.
• Application of class concepts: Integrate your analyses or review with class material.
• Grammar and spelling.
• Cleanliness and formatting.

All written assignments must be typed with 1 inch margins (top, bottom, sides). No assignments will be accepted past the due date.

Guidelines for Preparing PPT Slides
PPT slides play a major role in the success of your presentation. While I often give students much leeway in preparing presentation slides, be sure to follow these best practices:

1. Keep it simple and clean, with plenty of “clean” space.
2. Limit bullet points and text - slides should NOT have all the information included. That is why the speaker is there.
3. Minimize the number of slides.
4. Don’t parrot PowerPoint - it makes for an excruciatingly boring audience experience. Keep in mind that 99% of the time, you should be looking at your audience, not the projection screen.
5. Limit animation.
6. If you are using a font size lower than 30, you’re doing it wrong!
7. Give the macro-organization of your presentation some serious thought. Use meaningful slide headings; make sure that the presentation flows.
8. Use no more than 3 colors on your slides.
9. TIME YOUR TALK – going over your time limit is a bad and unprofessional signal.
10. Practice, practice, practice!

Assignment to Teams
In order to assimilate real-world managerial work conditions, and to enhance your cooperative, organization, and communication skills, the instructor will randomly assign students to teams in the beginning of the course. It is expected that all team members participate equally in the group projects. The responsibility for ensuring equal participation lies with the group members. The instructor cannot arbitrate disputes on this issue; however, the instructor may seek a peer evaluation towards the end of the semester. If any individual receives a poor evaluation by the group members, then that student’s project grade will be appropriately adjusted.

Final Project
The final project will enhance your analytical, critical thinking, communication, decision-making and cooperative learning skills. There are two options for this project.

1. Your team will be required to analyze an industry of your choice and two of the firms—the top performer and the worst performer—within that industry. In doing so, you would formulate a
comprehensive report on the industry and two companies, and make recommendations to improve/sustain their performance in the future. Clearly, to do so you would have to dig deep and collect a lot of information and data on the industry and companies. Do not underestimate the value of knowing how to gather and analyze information on an industry. Industries/companies used in the cases discussed in class should be avoided for term project analysis.

2. Your team will choose one firm in the Miami area. Choosing a firm where one of the team members is employed is allowed. The team will visit the firm and interview at least two top managers and two middle managers. The team will then supplement these interviews with data and information collection, apply the concepts discussed in the class to analyze the interviews and their field observations, and provide recommendations for improvement. I expect the recommendations to be meaningful and insightful, focusing on the concepts we discuss in class and avenues for the firm to create or sustain competitive advantage. This may be done by, for instance, making significant cost-savings or enhancing created value. The larger the firm, the better; please make sure that the firm you are choosing comprises individuals that do executive work. For instance, studying a branch of Home Depot is not an appropriate target for your final project.

The final project is due no later than Apr. 19 before class. The final project is expected to be about 20 pages (double-spaced) in length (excluding title page, references and appendices).

- The first page is the title page. It contains the title, team members’ names and date.
- The second page is a 300-400 words executive summary of key points in the report.
- References will be listed at the end of the report. Using many sources of information is a good practice.
- Grading will consider factual correctness, effort, application of class material, comprehensiveness, and grammar and style.

Each team will submit a 2-page project progress report to the instructor on Feb. 9. The progress report must at least include the industry and firm(s) of choice, a brief business description, some initial observations related to the strategy of the firm(s), and your action plan and schedule for the project. Failure to submit an acceptable progress report will result in reduction of your final project grade.

GRADING

The course has been designed to help any student willing to put in work succeed. Late assignments will never be accepted, except for pre-arranged medical or documented family emergency, and University sanctioned reasons (sports, etc.). Since different individuals learn differently and have different strengths, the course provides you a variety of assessment measures to ensure a fairer representation of your ability, and to develop your skills in different areas. This course emphasizes group activities and active learning, as most managerial activities tend to be within such a context.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Requirements</th>
<th>Total Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; Participation</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business periodical presentation</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Case Presentation</td>
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<td>Group term project</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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<td>Introduction and syllabus</td>
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<td>Jan 19</td>
<td>The external environment of the firm</td>
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<td>Jan 26</td>
<td>The internal environment of the firm</td>
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<td>Feb 2</td>
<td>Recognizing a Firm’s Intellectual Assets</td>
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<td>Feb 9</td>
<td>Business-level strategy</td>
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<td>Feb 16</td>
<td>Corporate-level strategy</td>
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<td>Feb 23</td>
<td>International strategy</td>
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<td>Mar 1</td>
<td>Competitive dynamics and entrepreneurial strategy</td>
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<td>Mar 8</td>
<td>Midterm exam</td>
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<td>Mar 15</td>
<td>Strategic control and corporate governance</td>
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<td>Case: AIG</td>
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<td>Mar 22</td>
<td>Organizational structure</td>
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<td>Mar 29</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
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<td>Case: Yahoo! Johnson</td>
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<td>Apr 5</td>
<td>Innovation and Change</td>
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<td>Prepare for Final Presentation</td>
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Please note that the instructions, material, and schedule listed here is tentative. The instructor may make changes during the semester, based on the progress we make as a class.