Professor: Dr. Justin Webb

Course: MBAD 6194-U90  Time: TR 5:30PM – 9:15PM  Format: WEBEX

Office Hours: No dedicated hours, but I’m readily available to meet before and after class, and I can often meet otherwise with a day’s notice and a little flexibility.

Tel: (704) 687-6182  Email: Justin.w.webb@uncc.edu

Recommended Text: Hoskission, Hitt, Ireland & Harrison. Competing for Advantage (3rd Ed.). Cengage. The theory portion of the course will draw heavily from this text. I encourage you to read the text for additional details on the discussed concepts, deeper learning, and complementary examples of the concepts.

Required Cases: You will apply the theoretical concepts to various cases. A website link through which you can purchase the cases will be provided (should be less than $50). All students will be required to purchase the case coursepack.


Course Objectives:

“Strategic Management is the art of making decisions that create the future.”

MBAD 6194 is designed to help you acquire basic strategic management concepts as well as to expose you to state-of-the-art strategic management research. This course will help you broaden your perspective so that you consider business functions from the perspective of the overall organization. Emphasis is on an integrated approach. You will be required to analyze and integrate across functional areas of management (i.e., accounting, finance, marketing, MIS, international business, operations management, etc.) in order to analyze problems, develop plans and propose recommendations on a top management perspective.

Some fields present well-defined problems with “right” and “wrong” answers. This is not true of strategic management, particularly not in the global context. Strategic decision makers generally deal with complex situations characterized by considerable uncertainty. The “problem” or “opportunity” is rarely obvious. Many interrelated problems and opportunities are usually involved. This course will help you develop skills and knowledge for dealing with such situations and assist you in identifying and evaluating alternative courses of action in a global business environment.
In particular, this course will enable you to perform an integrative analysis of the administrative processes of the various functional areas of an enterprise. This includes the formulation and implementation of goals and objectives, as well as the selection of strategies under conditions of uncertainty as they relate to planning, organizing, directing, controlling, and evaluating policies and activities within each of the functional areas separately and jointly to achieve corporate objectives. Developing such a comprehensive business perspective is an integral part of the course.

This class is a seminar course. In general, a class will consist of three key components:
1. Review and discussion of the basic/theoretical issues related to the day’s topic.
2. An in-depth discussion of the case and/or readings.
3. Application of the key ideas to other companies/situations, often using recent examples.

III. Course Information Guidelines

1. Statement on Diversity. The Belk College of Business strives to create an inclusive academic climate in which the dignity of all individuals is respected and maintained. Therefore, we celebrate diversity that includes, but is not limited to ability/disability, age, culture, ethnicity, gender, language, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status.

2. Documented Disability. Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a documented disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs.

3. Severe Weather. Students will be responsible for any academic work which they miss due to absences caused by severe weather conditions. It is the individual student's responsibility to take the initiative to make up any missed class work.

4. Classroom expectations. This syllabus contains the policies and expectations I have established for this section of MBAD 6194. Please read the entire syllabus carefully before continuing in this course. These policies and expectations are intended to create a productive learning atmosphere for all students. Students who fail to abide by these policies and expectations, risk losing the opportunity to participate further in the course.

5. Orderly and productive classroom conduct. I will conduct this class in an atmosphere of mutual respect. I encourage your active participation in class discussions. Each of us may have strongly differing opinions on the various topics of class discussions. The orderly questioning of the ideas of others, including mine, is welcome. However, I will exercise my responsibility to manage the discussions so that ideas and argument can proceed in an orderly fashion.

6. Group Evaluation and Dismissal. Every group member will have to rank the participation of the other group members. Unless the participation deviates significantly between group members, every member in the group will receive the same grade. If group members unanimously agree on a lower grade for an individual, I will drop the grade by at least two letter grades. If the group unanimously agrees to “fire” an individual for lack of participation, the individual will receive an F with no opportunity to make up the work in an individual or
other group project. Teams are to submit a short statement describing work assignments and conditions of dismissal proposed for any non-cooperative team member.

7. **Academic integrity.** Cheating and disruptive behavior have significant consequences. All students are required to read and abide by the Code of Student Academic Integrity which governs student behavior relating to academic work. Violations of the Code of Student Academic Integrity, including plagiarism, will result in disciplinary action as provided in the Code. Definitions and examples of plagiarism are set forth in the Code. The Code is available from the Dean of Students Office or online at: http://www.legal.uncc.edu/policies/ps-105.html. All UNC Charlotte students are expected to be familiar with the Code and to conduct themselves in accord with these requirements. To clarify, any academic dishonesty can result in a grade of F for the course. Academic dishonesty also pertains to violating the “rules” of this syllabus. Anyone violating this policy will receive an F for the course.

8. **Materials.** All materials submitted as part of course requirements become the property of the instructor. Students desiring to retain copies of their work should make such copies before turning in their materials.

9. **Faculty absence or tardiness.** If I am late in arriving to class, you must wait a full 15 minutes after the start of class before you may leave without being counted absent.

### Class Contribution:

An important part of effective mastery of this subject is active involvement in class discussion of the assigned cases and readings. Additionally, your insight during class discussions aids others in the learning process. Demonstration of insight and understanding are strongly rewarded. Remember, you should always have sound reasoning behind your judgments and conclusions. Your grade in class participation will be based on the quantity and quality of your participation. Please note that contributions are not equivalent to only attending class. Class contributions can come in the form of questions, responses to my questions, informing case discussions, and delivering business-related news relevant to the class discussion.

### Attendance:

All students are encouraged to attend all classes, in order to be well prepared and to achieve high grades in class participation. Prompt arrival to each session will be appreciated. One missed classed is allowed.

### Group Formation and Assignments

**Group Formation**

Students are required to form groups of four to five people for the group projects. Periodic ad-hoc, in-class assignments may also require group activity and informal
presentations of group discussions. Every group member will have to rank the participation of the other group members. Unless the participation deviates significantly between group members, every member in the group will receive the same grade. If group members unanimously agree on a lower grade for an individual, I will drop the grade by at least two letter grades.

Group composition will remain stable during the entire semester. If the group unanimously agrees to “fire” an individual for lack of participation, the individual will receive an F with no opportunity to make up the work in an individual or other group project. Teams are to submit a short statement describing work assignments and conditions of dismissal proposed for any non-cooperative team member.

**Group Case Study Assignments:**

Approximately 6-8 case studies will be discussed. After a couple examples from me, each group will be responsible for providing a written analysis of 2 cases. Written case analyses should be no more than 7 pages (12 pt font, Times New Roman, 1” margins) and should cover internal and external environment analyses, analyses of the focal strategy/strategic action, summary of key issues, and primary/secondary recommendations for going forward. Specific guidelines for each of these sections will be provided as we discuss the corresponding theory and apply the theoretical concepts in example case analyses.

**Final Case Analysis**

One of the limitations of the case method of instruction is that the case writers already do much of the data collection that is an important part of strategic analysis. To help students have a more realistic experience about how strategic analyses are really done, your assignment is to perform a strategic audit of and essentially develop a course of action for a focal firm. This group project includes a 2 page, double spaced 12 Times New Roman font, written report and a PowerPoint presentation outlining the problem to the class and presenting your solution to the problem (30 minute presentation). As a group, you will: select an industry and one publicly-traded company within that industry, collect information and data on the chosen industry/firm (through methods such as use of the internet, business journals, and/or the library data base).

Your PowerPoint presentation (electronic copy and hard-copy need to be made available to the instructor prior the presentations) should include:

1) History of the company, its management team, mission/vision of the firm, and the company’s business model (very brief).
2) External environment analysis (general, industry, and competitor)
3) Internal environment analysis (strengths and weaknesses).
4) Business and corporate level strategies employed by the chosen firm.
5) International strategies used by the chosen firm (if applicable).
6) Cooperative strategies used (if applicable).
7) M&A strategies used (if applicable).
8) Identify important management issues that appear critically relevant within the industry or to the firm’s managers.
9) Conclude your analysis and recommendations for the firm’s best course of strategic action going forward.

You need to select a firm in the cloud software industry by week 2 (07/09/2020) of class. Do not select companies that you work for. Company choices will be allowed on a first come, first served basis.

**Grading of case discussion and the group assignment:** A simplified grading scheme will be used as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Quality of Work</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Not only complete comprehension, but also in some cases understanding beyond issues posed in case analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A–</td>
<td>Solid understanding of issues and did not miss any.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>Solid understanding of issues but missed a few minor issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Solid understanding of issues but missed a number of minor issues or at least one major issue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B–</td>
<td>Some understanding of issues but missed a number of minor issues and a few major issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor (C to F)</td>
<td>Little understanding of issues and missed a number of minor issues and a number of major issues.</td>
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**Grade Compositions:**

- Class Participation: 20%
- Group Case 1: 25%
- Group Case 2: 25%
- Final Case Analysis: 30%

Total: 100%

**Final Course Grades:**

Grades will be assigned for each of the performance criteria discussed above based upon the following straight scale. Final grades will be based upon the weighted average of all of the performance criteria, calculated at the end of the semester by multiplying the score
of each performance criterion by its assigned weight. Note that grades below C are not acceptable for graduate work

- 89.5% and above = A
- 79.5 – 89.4% = B
- 69.5 – 79.4% = C
- Below 69.5% = U

**Schedule**

Please note that this schedule may change due to adverse weather or other unanticipated events, and specific topic assignments may change due to class progress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>06/29</td>
<td>Chapter 1 - Course Introduction; Chapter 3 – External Environment; Chapter 4 – Internal Environment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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| 2     | 07/02  | Chapter 4 – Internal Environment, continued; Chapter 5 – Business-Level Strategy; Chapter 7 – Cooperative Strategy  
**Case: Whole Foods (please see pdf on Canvas)**  
**Questions:**  
Evaluate Whole Foods’ value chain.  
Does Whole Foods have a source of competitive advantage?  
What are the major strategic risks facing Whole Foods?  
What strategic options are available for Whole Foods going forward? |
| 3     | 07/07  | Chapter 7 – Cooperative Strategy, continued; Chapter 6 – Rivalry; Chapter 8 – Corporate-Level Strategy; Chapter 9 – M&A  
**Case: Wil-Mor Technologies: Is there is crisis?**  
**Question:**  
JV strategies – why are JVs formed and what are some of the prerequisites for a successful JV?  
Do Japanese Firms not care about profit? Do North American firms not care about quality and customer satisfaction?  
Do Japanese firms operate with different time horizons than North American firms?  
What are the implications of keiretsus for American firms?  
What are the implications of terminating a JV? |
| 4     | 07/09  | Chapter 9 – M&A; Chapter 10 – International Strategy  
**Case: TBD** |
| 5     | 07/14  | Chapter 11 - Corporate Governance  
**Case: TBD** |
| 6     | 07/16  | **Case: TBD**  
**Case: TBD** |
| 7     | 07/21  | **Case: TBD**  
**Case: TBD** |
<p>| 8     | 07/23  | <strong>Case: TBD</strong> |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case: TBD</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>07/28</th>
<th>Final Presentations</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>07/30</td>
<td>Final Presentations</td>
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