

Econ 136: Business Strategy
Summer Session II 2015

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Office hours MW 11:30 - 12:30
Engineering 2 Room 427

I. Course Description

A. Lectures

I will lecture on Chapters 1--12 from the special edition, available at the Bay Tree Book Store, of *Crafting & Executing Strategy: The Quest for Competitive Advantage: Concepts and Cases*, 20th Edition by Arthur Thompson, Margaret Peteraf, John Gamble, and A. J. Strickland III to provide a theoretical background in the study of business strategy. Used copies of the 18th and 19th edition are also applicable. To supplement this theoretical material, you should regularly read periodicals such as Business Week, The Wall Street Journal and The Economist. You are encouraged to relate such material to the textbook and to bring up examples during lectures.

Optionally, *Competing for the Future* by Gary Hamel and C.K. Prahalad provides material for the lectures on strategy for the long run and *Your Strategy Needs a Strategy: How to choose and Execute the Right Approach* by Martin Reeves, Kurt Haanas, and Janmejaya Sinha discusses different business contexts and a variety of approaches that are useful.

B. Case Studies

Case studies will be used to emphasize the applied nature of the topic. These cases will enable us to explore why good strategic management yields good business performance, to present the basic concepts and tools of strategic analysis, and to drill you in the methods of crafting a well-conceived strategy and executing it competently.

We will cover cases in class, but you are encouraged to study the other cases, and to use them for the discussions

C. The Business Strategy Game

The Game is a computer simulation where you compete directly with others in the class. It is designed to complement the class by giving you hands-on experience in crafting and implementing business strategy. The game is a very exciting and challenging part of the course. You will work in teams and make frequent decisions that will determine the direction of your company. There is a separate posting on eCommons regarding the Game.

II. Grading

- A. **Evaluations** Students will be evaluated on the basis of written case studies, performance on the business strategy game, quizzes, oral case presentations and class participation. These components of the grade are weighted in the following manner and described below:

Business strategy game	20 points
Written case analysis	20 points
Participation in class discussions	10 points
Individual company assignment	10 points
Midterm Exam	15 points
Final Exam	25 points

Your letter grade will be assigned according to the following scale:

A	90-100 points
B	80-89 points
C	70-79 points
D	60-69 points
F	<60 points

- B. **Business strategy game** There are four components of this grade, each worth 25%: (1) performance on two quizzes, one on the players' manual (10%) and one on the mechanics of the game (15%), (2) a 3-year plan submitted after year 3 of the game, (3) the overall performance of your company and (4) the evaluation of your group members at the end of the game. The first decision will be submitted on July 29th. The 3-year strategic plan is due on August 12th.
- C. **Written case assignments** The written case assignments are to be prepared on an individual basis. It is expected that the content of your written case will reflect your thoughts and analysis rather than the work of others. The written case study is due on August 12th. Suggestions regarding the preparation of the case assignments are described on the class website in a document labeled "A Guide to Case Analysis."
- D. **Individual company analysis** Each student will submit a 4-6 page report evaluating the business strategy of a particular company. You may use one of the three cases selected. You should view this assignment as an opportunity to display your knowledge and understanding of all the concepts covered in the class. It is due on the last day of class, August 26th.

- E. **Tests** The Midterm Exam will be held in class on August 10th, and the Final Exam will be held on August 26th. The exams will be multiple choice combined with short essays. You are responsible for all the material in the assigned chapters, even if we do not cover the material in class.
- F. **Class participation:** Each student must contribute significantly to in-class analysis of the cases. You should make a conscientious effort to attend class discussions of cases and to be fully prepared to contribute to the case discussions. To earn an A in this class, participation typically requires contributing meaningfully on 8 to 10 cases, and standing out as a class leader in the discussions.
- G. **Late work** Written case assignments are due on the day indicated in the Course Outline and should be turned in at the beginning of the class period. Cases turned in after the scheduled class periods are eligible for no higher than a grade of C. No late papers will be accepted if submitted more than 2 class days past the scheduled due date (except by prearranged consent of the instructor.)

III. **Students with Disabilities**

If you qualify for classroom accommodations because of a disability, please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me as soon as possible, preferably within the first week of the Summer Session. Contact DRC by phone at 831-459-2089 or by email at drc@ucsc.edu for more information.

IV. **Sections and TA Office Hours**

01A Tuesday Physical Sciences 114 11:00AM - Noon Bryan Pratt

TA Office Hours:

Bryan brpratt@ucsc.edu Tuesday 12:15PM-1:15PM Eng 2-496

COURSE OUTLINE (Tentative)

DATE	TOPIC	READING	ASSIGNMENT
July 27	Resources / Competitive Position	Chapters 3 and 4	
	Description business strategy game	Players' manual online	Practice decision 1 due July 28th
	Case study	"Guide to Case Analysis"	
July 29	What is Strategy	Chapter 1	Practice decision 2 due August 3rd
	Case study & discussion	Lululemon	
August 3	Managerial Process	Chapter 2	
	Case study & discussion	Case 6:	
	Case study	Case 7:	
August 5	External Environment	Chapter 5	1st decision due August 5th
	Case study & discussion	Case 5:	
August 10	Generic Competitive Strategies	Chapter 6	2nd decision due August 10th
			Midterm
August 12	Tailoring strategy	Chapter 7	3rd decision due August 12th
	Case study & discussion	Case 12:	Written case analysis due
	Case study	Case 15:	
August 17	Foreign Markets	Chapter 8	3- Year Strategic plan August 16th
	Case study & discussion	Case 13:	4th decision due August 17th
	Case study	Case 14:	
August 19	Diversified Companies	Chapter 10	5th decision due on August 19th
	Case study & discussion	Case 19:	
	Case study	Case 18:	
August 24	Organizing for Good Execution	Chapter 11	6th decision due on August 24th
	Guest Speaker	Ben Gesing	
	Case study	Case 22:	
August 26	Managing Operations	Chapter 12	Individual Company Analysis
	Case study & discussion	Case 8:	
	Test on book	Final Exam	Final Exam