

IDS 495 - Competitive Strategy - Fall 2012 Syllabus

Professor: James B. Treleaven, PhD
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Class time: T/Th 3:30 - 4:45 Location: Douglas Hall 230

Required Texts

- 1) Strategic Management in Action, Coulter, 5th edition, Prentice Hall, 2010.
- 2) The Innovator's Dilemma, Clayton Christensen, Harvard Business Press, 1997 (available on line at <http://tinyurl.com/7s3bd5y>)
- 3) Harvard Business Cases (<http://hbsp.harvard.edu/product/cases>). Specific case assignments will be made later in the semester.
- 4) Additional Readings may be made available throughout the semester via Blackboard.

Course Objectives & Delivery Methods

This course focuses on competitive strategy. We will draw on traditional as well as very recent thinking on strategy, and we will examine it from the *enterprise* level, the *industry/company* level, as well as the *functional unit* level. Special emphasis will be placed on the role of information technology in the shaping and execution of strategy at all levels. In addition, we will give special attention to firm growth through innovation in the marketplace.

Class Participation

Throughout the course, students are expected to be prepared for class and actively participate in the discussion. Questions will be assigned for class preparation and student involvement in discussion of these questions will be assessed. There will also be individual and small group exercises in the class and impromptu presentations. Homework assignments will be collected at the discretion of the instructor. I hope you are in the habit (or will get in the habit this semester) of reading business periodicals such as *Business Week*, *Fortune*, or *Wall Street Journal*. You will find illustrations of many of the concepts we are studying discussed in current business publications. I encourage you to share those examples with the class.

Course Concept Presentation

Beginning with Chapter 3, pairs of students will be assigned to present specific course material to the class. Your presentation will include a recent article from a business periodical which illustrates the concepts in the course material. Your presentation materials should be posted on Blackboard (power point slides, article you discuss, and other material - be creative with this!). You should also prepare 3 test questions from your presentation, 2 multiple choice questions and 1 short answer.

The purpose of these presentations, as well as the following group presentations, is for you to apply theories and concepts discussed in class to a specific business context. You will be graded on your understanding of the course material as well as your ability to communicate the content effectively.

Group Work

Groups will be formed early in the semester. Group membership will be based partially on your major; each group should have as many business disciplines represented as possible.

You will make ad hoc group presentations during the semester. As well, you will have 2 assigned group presentations discussed further below.

Collaborative assignments are an important part of this class. As you know, a well-functioning group can be a great experience while a poorly functioning group can be an awful experience. I urge you to take the group work seriously and responsibly. You should take initiative in working on group assignments - don't always wait for someone else to tell you what to do - as well as carry out your assigned tasks responsibly, e.g., come to all meetings on time and prepared, complete your materials on time and in a quality manner.

You will conduct peer evaluations of yourself and your group members at the end of the semester. These evaluations will apply to all group work. I take these evaluations very seriously. Your peer ratings can affect your grade either positively or negatively.

Case Presentations

Each group will present a strategic analysis of an organization using a business case. Cases will be available from the Harvard Business web site. Specific assignments will be made later in the semester.

Group Project

Each group will choose a company to analyze from strategic perspectives covered during the semester. Your analysis should lead you to an assessment of the strategic position and performance of the company relative to competitors and to the economy in general, and a prognosis for the company and its industry. More information about the project will be handed out later in the course.

Grading

Class Participation 20%

Group Presentations 10%

Mid-Term Exam 20%

Final Exam 25%

Final Project & Presentation 25%

Course attendance is expected. Your grade will be reduced by one letter grade if you miss more than 20% of the classes. You will receive a failing grade if you miss 50% or more of the sessions.

Any case of plagiarism in this class will result in failure of this course.