

**Instructor:** Susana Velez-Castrillon, Ph.D.

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**Phone:** 678-839-4847

**Office Hours:** Tuesday and Thursday 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm  
3:30 pm to 5:30 p.m.

During office hours I am available in my office and also online using CouseDen's Blackboard tool.

Also available by appointment

**Class Schedule:** MGNT 4660-02 Tuesday and Thursday 2:00 pm to 3:15. Miller Hall 2202

MGNT 4660-03 Tuesday and Thursday 5:30 pm - 6:45 pm. Miller Hall 2202

**Prerequisites:** ECON3402, FINC3511, MGNT3600, MKTG3803

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course is about how an enterprise achieves and sustains a high level of success and the role the general manager plays in this process. How success has been or will be achieved is the enterprise's strategy. It requires both analysis and action. The cases and concepts of the course take the total enterprise as the unit of analysis and the general manager as the key actor.

Developing the general management perspective is at the core of what we do in this course. A general manager is responsible for a multi-functional group (business, division, profit center, etc.) and is accountable for the strategic performance of that unit. But what we will learn has utility not just to the person at the "top" of the enterprise. Increasingly general management responsibility is shared. All members of the management team and the organization need to appreciate how their actions contribute to the overall success of the enterprise.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES:** The primary objectives of the course are:

- To develop expertise in formulating (analysis) and implementing (action) strategy.
- To get a "big picture" perspective of how all the functions of the company – human resources, finance, accounting, marketing, operations – need to integrate in order to successfully implement the firm's strategy.
- To identify strategic issues, and propose and evaluate potential solutions.

These objectives support the following learning goals (LG) and learning outcomes (LO) of the Department of Management:

1. To develop your capacity to think strategically about a company, its business position, how it can gain sustainable competitive advantage and formulate plans to ensure organizational viability. (BBA 4, BBA 6)
2. To develop skills using strategic and functional level analytical tools in a variety of companies and industries to facilitate the development and implementation of effective business strategy. (BBA 2, BBA 4)
3. To integrate and synthesize knowledge gained in business core courses into a comprehensive approach to managing a multifunctional business organization. (BBA 4, BBA 6)

4. To organize and present strategic and operational information appropriate to professional standards and practices. (BBA 1, BBA 3)

## COURSE MATERIALS

**Required Textbook:** Mastering Strategic Management, v. 1.1. By: David Ketchen and Jeremy Short.

Link <http://students.flatworldknowledge.com/course/2546034>

Flatworld offers several alternatives for accessing its textbooks. I encourage you to explore all options before deciding which one works best for you. You may choose whatever option is best for you as long as you read the required material before class.

**If you are using Financial Aid to buy the book:** To use financial If you buy your textbook from the bookstore, you will receive a code than you need to redeem on Flatworld's website using the link above.

*The University of Minnesota Libraries Publishing offers a free versions of the previous edition (version 1.0) of this textbook. Although this is not the exact same version of the book, the concepts have not changed in version 1.1. Only some examples have been updated. As long as you read the content, I have no problem with your using this free version to learn the material covered in this class. Go to this link to find different versions that you can download, from simple pdfs, to mobi and epub files that you can read on your tablet, Android, or Apple devices.*

<http://open.lib.umn.edu/strategicmanagement/>

**Required Simulation:** All students need to purchase an individual subscription to the "Corporation" simulation (Cost: \$39.95)

*Step 1: Get a User ID:* The first step is to get your user ID. Students receive their unique User ID and Password by e-mail from Interpretive Simulations.

*Step 2: Log In:* Use the login box at [www.interpretive.com/students](http://www.interpretive.com/students) to log in with your user ID and password.

After logging in, you will automatically be redirected to your course's Interpretive web site.

The course web site is where you will access the simulation and view its schedule. You will also find resources, such as the simulation manual and any electronic documents that your professor might choose to provide, as well as access to support FAQs and other resources.

**Articles and Cases for in-class discussion:** Articles are available through the library on-line, or are posted on CourseDen as noted on the syllabus. Additional readings may be announced in class, posted on CourseDen, or distributed in class as the semester progresses.

**DETERMINANTS OF THE TERM GRADE**

Assignments	Points	Percentage
Two exams (30 points each)	60	25
Simulation (60 points)	82	34.17
Individual Quiz 3 points		
Practice round score 4 points		
Real round score 30 points:		
o Two rounds of 4 quarters. Each one is worth 15 points.		
Incident analyses 10 points		
Letter to shareholders 20 points		
Presentation 15 points		
Case studies (4 x 15 points/case)	60	25
Exercises , including plagiarism tutorial (varies)	23	9.58
RCOB field exam	15	6.25
<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>100%</b>

Grade Scale	
A	90.0 – 100%
B	80.0 – 89.9%
C	70.0 – 79.9%
D	60.0 – 69.9%
F	0 – 59.9%

**EXAMS:** Three exams will be given. The class notes provide a foundation, but *all discussions, cases, in-class exercises, and material used or presented in class or CourseDen may be included in the exam* – even if it is not discussed in class. A missed exam will count as zero. The first two exams are not cumulative. The final exam may cover all the material presented in the course. The lowest exam grade will be dropped. No one should enroll who cannot take the exams as scheduled.

Be on time to take tests. Being late is not a good reason to request a make-up exam. No one arriving 15 minutes after the start of an exam will be allowed to take it. Tests will be collected 80 minutes after the start of the class.

*If you are doing poorly on exams, please see the instructor as soon as possible;* waiting will not increase your chances of improving your grade.

Exams are the property of the instructor and the University of West Georgia and may not be taken or duplicated.

Exam weighting and number are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

**SIMULATION:** Unlike most education and training exercises, a simulation provides an opportunity for the continuous practice of managing an organization. You will have a unique opportunity to make decisions, see how the decisions work out, and then try again.

Your company is a multi-divisional firm that will be competing with other teams in the dynamic information systems industry. Each company in this simulation will be managed by a team of three to four people. Although the team organization is up to each group, the simulation is designed to allow each team member to be responsible for one Strategic Business Unit (SBU).

Your team will be making decisions for both the corporation and each of the business units. One method of organizing your group is to assign the responsibility of one SBU to each team member and have the entire team make decisions for the parent corporation. You can also choose to have all group members participate in the decisions at both the SBU and corporate level.

You will be making decisions regarding pricing, marketing, new product research, human resources, and capacity for each SBU.

Corporation-level decisions include acquiring debt (loans and bonds) and equity financing, paying dividends, buying and selling of business units, acquiring new ventures, determining types of needed market research, and responding to a management incident. Teams are expected to establish objectives, plan their strategy, and then make the required business decisions dictated by these plans.

After your team enters decisions in the simulation interface, the simulation will be advanced, according to the schedule your instructor has set. Updated reports then become available for each team concerning their firm's sales and profits. This is done for several iterations. Each period advance represents six months in time.

Use the folder "Things I need for the simulation" in CourseDen, to find the materials and links to the simulation assignments.

### 1. Forming the teams (speed dating)

- a. Create your Teamwork Profile and bring it to the speed dating. The form is available on CourseDen. If you don't bring this completed, you cannot participate in the speed dating.
- b. On the day of the speed dating try to find other students to form your teams. Although you are free to choose your group members, there are some conditions that every team must meet:
  - i) Team size should be 3-4 (ideally 4).
  - ii) Every team must have at least one international student.
  - iii) Every team must have at least one non-international student.
  - iv) Every team must have at least one finance and/or accounting major.
  - v) All team members cannot have the same major.

### 2. Signing the team contract

- a. Once you have chosen your team, create a "Group Expectations Document". A template is available on CourseDen.
- b. Choose a team leader and specify this in your contract. If you do not choose a team leader, one will be chosen randomly.
- c. All members of the team must sign this document.
- d. Give one copy of the document to your instructor and keep the original for your team.

### 3. Starting the simulation

- a. Read the student's manual and familiarize yourself with the simulation. The student manual is available in the [interpretive.com](http://interpretive.com) website
- b. Each student must individually answer the quiz inside the simulation by the date specified in this syllabus. In order to access the quiz, you must first sign up for the simulation. All students must score 70% or above.
- c. Your team cannot start the second simulation until all players have passed the quiz with a grade of 70% or above.
- d. There will be one practice round to help you to become familiar with the simulation.
- e. Once each round of the simulation starts, your team will be responsible for submitting a decision very week for 4 weeks on Sunday by 11 p.m. Every decision must be documented in the "Decision Log Book" which is available in the user's manual ([interpretive.com](http://interpretive.com)). Because you need to provide analysis for each decision a team cannot just get lucky and guess the right decision. On the other hand, if you are unsuccessful and your decision just does not work out as planned, you can show in your strategy journal that you actually gave some thought to the decision - it just did not work as expected.

Your grade on the simulation is calculated as follows:

- **Practice round score (4 points) and Two Real rounds score (15 points each, 30 points total):**  
Using a Balanced Scorecard approach, the performance grade is based on a combination of Return on Equity (ROE), Human Resources Performance, and Innovation

*Please note that we have three different rounds:*

- For the first round (practice), we will meet at a computer lab for one class period to become familiar with the simulation interface and the decisions you need to make. This is a completion grade. If you come to the lab and do the practice round conscientiously you will get the four points. This grade cannot be made up in any way – I won't be able to run the practice round more than once.
- The second round will have four decisions each one representing a quarter in one financial year.
  - Turn in the decision log (simulation student manual page 64. Also in CourseDen>Things I need for the simulation) every Tuesday after a decision is due.

After the first "year", the simulation will end. We will calculate the scores, debrief about what happened in this year, learn from our mistakes, and get a fresh start.
- The third round starts all teams at the same place. This is your opportunity to apply what you learned by running the company for one year.
  - Turn in the decision log (simulation student manual page 64. Also in CourseDen>Things I need for the simulation) every Tuesday after a decision is due.
- After 4 quarters (decisions), the simulation ends.

The total maximum points based on the weighted score is 9. The team with the highest weighted score at the end of each round of the simulation gets 9 points for that round. The other teams' scores will be calculated as a proportion of the winning team's score. There is no floor grade.

**Incident reports (10 points):** There are some incidents built into the simulations. Incidents happen every other week, and you need to read the industry newsletter to see when there is an incident that you need to address. You need to submit these brief reports as a team.

At the end of the simulation (8 decisions), you need to hand-in the following deliverables:

- **A letter to shareholders (20 points):** Use the guidelines provided in the "ANNUAL REPORT AND STOCKHOLDER'S MEETING" form (User's manual p.65)

In addition, this letter should address the following:

- (1) Explain your simulation company's financial performance over the entire period (8 decisions). Make references to the table that shows the financial results.
- (2) What strategy did your firm pursue? What about that strategy was effective and what was ineffective?
- (4) If you participated in the simulation again, what would you do differently and why?
- (5) How has the simulation helped you improve your understanding of and ability to interpret and analyze the strategy and performance of actual businesses? This will be a brief paragraph.
- (6) Exhibits:
  - a. A table of your simulation company's financial results. Prepare (i.e., type) this table yourself from data available within the "Corporation" system. Do NOT merely print the graphs or tables prepared for you by the simulation. This table *must* include:
    - items typically important in financial statements (e.g., revenues, total expenses, specific expenses relevant to your strategy, debt level, etc.)
    - year-to-year percentage changes in these items. Present this as an exhibit.
  - b. Graphics presenting the week-to-week changes in revenues, profits, innovation, and HR scores.

You can find examples of letters to shareholders from almost any public company. They are usually in the "investors" section of the company's website.

Format: Minimum length 5 pages (excluding exhibits); maximum length: 8 pages (excluding exhibits), 12-point Times New Roman, 1.5 spacing, 1-inch margins all around.

- **Presentation (15 points):** Prepare a 12-minute presentation of your letter to shareholders. In this presentation, pretend that you are addressing the shareholders during your annual meeting. Dress accordingly.  
Turn in the slides.

Further details about the simulation will be provided in class.

Your grade on the simulation is a combination of my assessment and a review by your peers of your participation, punctuality, contribution, and team work. The peer-review rubric is available in CourseDen.

**CASE STUDIES (15 points x 4 cases):** You will analyze four (4) case studies as homework. The case study readings and questionnaires are available in CourseDen. On the dates when case studies are due, we will have a brief in class-discussion. Any student may be called to lead the discussion, so everyone should be prepared.

**IN-CLASS EXERCISES (23 points):** There are several team or individual assignments to be completed during a class period. Some, but not all, of these exercises are listed in the class schedule. These in-class exercises total 20 points and number of points per exercise varies.

**RCOB ASSESSMENT EXERCISE - FIELD EXAM (15 points):** One class period during the first month of class will be devoted to the college field exam. This exam consists of multiple choice questions in each of the business subjects or functions (e.g., accounting, economics, management, etc.) Assessment exercises are conducted each semester in order to assess if the college is teaching the concepts that are considered fundamental to business education and if this teaching is effective in helping students master the concepts. Assessments are part of the MGMT 4660 course because all of the prerequisite courses leading up to MGMT 4660 will have covered those business fundamentals for the various business disciplines. Students will receive full credit for this assignment by completing it, provided that their effort demonstrates that they took the assignment seriously.

**EXTRA CREDIT:** BB&T Lecture on Free Enterprise: Attend the lecture and scan your ID at the end, for 8 points of extra credit. Tickets for the lecture are free, but you need to get them in advance from the Townsend Center.

From time to time new extra credit opportunities may arise. If an extra credit opportunity arises it will be made available to the entire class.

#### **DEADLINES, MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMS, AND LENGTH LIMITS**

Make-up exams, assignments, case studies, in-class exercises will be given only in the event of extraordinary circumstances and university-accepted documented situations:

Please let me know if under *rare and extreme circumstances* you will be late in submitting an assignment. A minor delay (less than a week) will result in a penalty of 10% of the grade. A major delay (over a week) will result in 0 points for the assignment.

A similar policy is in place for projects that exceed length limits. Minor excesses (10% or less) will normally result in penalties of 5% of the grade, and significant excesses (more than 10%) in a penalty of 10% of the grade.

1. You need to contact the instructor and provide all relevant documentation, 72 hours before the exam for pre-scheduled events (such as university-endorsed functions), and up to 72 hours after the exam for fortuitous events (such as illness).
2. Absences that meet the requirements specified above, will be permitted to make up in-class exercises by providing written essay answers (3 pages minimum, double spaced, 12 point New Times Roman font) related to topics assigned by the instructor. A maximum of one make-up assignment will be allowed for absences.
3. This policy is not a blanket policy where everyone gets a make-up assignment.
4. Scheduling of all make-up assignments and exams is at the discretion of the instructor.

### COMMUNICATION EXPECTATION FOR MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

The Management Department believes in work-life balance for both faculty and students. Faculty will typically respond to student emails within 24 hours. Students should not expect a response during non-business hours, which includes nights, weekends, holidays, and school breaks.

Based on these expectations, I am available during office hours Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm and from 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm or by appointment.

During office hours I am available in my office and also online using CourseDen's Blackboard tool.

The preferred method of communication is through CourseDen's e-mail tool. I will try to respond to your e-mail within 24 hours, but you should not expect a response during non-business hours.

### USE OF CourseDen (CD)

CourseDen is an absolutely necessary resource for this class. All information, instructions, and updates will be posted on CourseDen. Also, CourseDen is the preferred method of communication with your instructor and classmates. You must get in the habit of checking CourseDen frequently.

### TECHNOLOGY

The use of technology (i.e. laptops, tablets, smartphones, etc.) in the classroom will be permitted as long as these devices are used for classroom related activities and do not distract from the lecture or class discussion. If at any point the use of these devices becomes problematic to the class, all such devices will be banned for the remainder of the semester.

### THE HONOR CODE

At the University of West Georgia we believe that academic and personal integrity are based upon honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

*Students at West Georgia assume responsibility for upholding the honor code. West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not*

limited to, plagiarism\*, cheating\*, fabrication\*, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing.

Definitions:

- Cheating - “using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids”.
- Fabrication - “falsification or unauthorized invention of any information or citation”
- Plagiarism - “representing the words or ideas of another as one’s own. Direct quotations must be indicated and ideas of another must be appropriately acknowledged”

Further details regarding Student Conduct can be found in Appendix A of the UWG Connection and Student Handbook.

### WOLF PACT

By enrolling and continuing in this course you agree to the following.

Having read the Honor Code for the University of West Georgia, I understand and accept my responsibility to uphold the values and beliefs described therein and to conduct myself in a manner that will reflect the values of the Institution and the Richards College of Business so as to respect the rights of all UWG community members. As a UWG student, I will represent myself truthfully and complete all academic assignments honestly and within the parameters set by my instructor. I understand and accept that if I am found guilty of violations (through processes due me as a UWG student and outlined in the UWG Student Handbook), penalties will be imposed. I also recognize that my responsibility includes willingness to confront members of the UWG community if I feel there has been a violation of the Honor Code. Ultimately, I will conduct myself in a manner that promotes UWG as the best place to work, learn, and succeed for my generation, and those to come!

### ACADEMIC HONESTY GUIDELINES

- I will provide instructions for each assignment about whether an assignment must be submitted individually or in groups.
- In some instances, you may be able to work in groups but students must submit his or her own work, using his/her own wording and answers that can be based on the group’s discussion.
- The following instances are some non-exhaustive examples of academic dishonesty:
  - Using material submitted by other students – in the past or in the present, at UWG or at any other school.
  - Submitting material created by a classmate
  - Presenting anyone else’s work as yours (including but not limited to: work you find online, hiring someone to write any assignment for you, etc.)
  - Presenting a paper, homework, or any type of assignment consisting mostly of direct quotes – ***even if they are properly cited.*** You need to present original and creative work.
  - Helping other students to cheat, by showing them your answers, reports, calculations, processes, etc.

*Any violation of the honor code will result in a grade of F* and an official notification to UWG’s Academic Dishonesty Tracking System.

**CREDIT HOUR POLICY (3 credit hours):**

For approximately fifteen weeks, students in this class will generally spend 150 minutes with direct faculty instruction (either face-to-face or online) and work about 360 minutes outside of the classroom each week. This out-of-class work may include, but is not limited to, readings, simulations, assignments, projects, group work, research, and test preparation.

**OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION:**

Students, please carefully review the information available at this link:

[http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common\\_Language\\_for\\_Course\\_Syllabi.pdf](http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf)

It is your responsibility to read the information available in this website, as it contains important material pertaining to your rights and responsibilities in this class. Because these statements are updated as federal, state, university, and accreditation standards change, you should review the information at least once each semester.

***The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus.***

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	<u>Required</u> readings <i>All readings are available in CourseDen</i>	Assignments Due <i>CD indicates available in CourseDen</i>	Simulation <b>Decisions Due Weekly on Sunday at 11 pm.</b>
Jan 10 (Tu)	Course Introduction	Please read the syllabus		
Jan 11 (We)	<b>Open Drop ends at 4:00 pm Wednesday, January 11th.</b> <b>Full Term and Session I (non-eCore) classes dropped during Open Drop will receive a refund of paid funds.</b>			
Jan 11 (We)	<b>Withdrawal "W" period begins.</b> Students who withdraw from a full term - 16 week (non-eCore) class between 4:01 pm January 11th and midnight March 2nd will receive a grade of W. <b>Reminder: there is no refund associated with withdrawing from a course.</b>			
Jan 12 (Th)	In-class exercise: Alaska Gold Mine			
Jan 17 (Tu)	Speed dating		Teamwork Profile Available in CD. Please complete it before class	
Jan 19 (Th)	Corporation simulation Introduction	Meet in Computer Lab 2327	Plagiarism statement. E-mail pre- and post-test to <a href="mailto:svelez@westga.edu">svelez@westga.edu</a>	
Jan 24 (Tu)	Mastering Strategy: Art and Science	Chapter 1		
Jan 26 (Th)	Leading Strategically	Chapter 2	Case Study: The Mission vs. The Bottom Line (CD)	Practice Round Decision Due 01/28
Jan 31 (Tu)	Evaluating the External Environment	Chapter 3, pages 53 to 70	Group Expectations Document. Template available in CD. Submit in class	Simulation Quiz Due (simulation website)
Feb 1 (W) 6:00 pm	BB&T Lectures in Free Enterprise David Daniels from Chick Fil A will be speaking about Servant Leadership: Towels not Titles! Townsend Center for the Performing Arts Extra-credit opportunity for attending. Be sure to scan your UWG ID at the end of the lecture			

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b><u>Required</u> readings</b> <i>All readings are available in CourseDen</i>	<b>Assignments Due</b> <i>CD indicates available in CourseDen</i>	<b>Simulation</b> <b>Decisions Due Weekly on Sunday at 11 pm.</b>
Feb 2 (Th)	Evaluating the External Environment	Chapter 3, pages 53 to 70	.	Round 1/Decision 1 (R1/D1) (02/05)
Feb 7 (Tu)	Industry Analysis and Strategic Groups	Chapter 3, pages 71 to 85		Turn in decision log
Feb 9 (Th)	In-class exercise: Airline industry analysis	Reading: "E-commerce & airlines: What are the eerie similarities between the 'almost-zero' profit businesses?"		R1/D2 (02/12)
Feb 14 (Tu)	In-class exercise: Ratios Tell a Story			Turn in decision log
Feb 16 (Th)	Managing Firm Resources In class exercise: Value Chain	Chapter 4, pages 87-110 Readings: "Just in Time for the Holidays"		R1/D3 (02/19)
Feb 21 (Tu)	SWOT analysis of the assigned airline (Singapore or LAN Chile)	Chapter 4, pages 111- 112 Readings: "Singapore Airlines Balancing Act" and "When One Business Model		Turn in decision log
Feb 23 (Th)	Exam 1 Review Make-up lectures			R1/D4 (02/26).
Feb 28 (Tu)	Exam 1: Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4 (except SWOT analysis)			Turn in decision log
Mar 2 (Th)	<b><i>Last day to withdraw with a grade of W from Full Term- 15 week courses.</i></b> <i>Students withdrawing from full term courses after midnight will be awarded a grade of WF.</i> <i>Note: A WF grade is calculated as an F in the GPA.</i>			
Mar 2 (Th)	Review results of Simulation Round 1			
Mar 7 (Tu)	Selecting Business Level Strategies	Chapter 5, pages 115 – 129		
Mar 9 (Th)	Selecting Business Level Strategies	Chapter 5, pages 129 – 147	Case study: Preserve The Luxury Or Extend The Brand	Round 2/Decision 1 (R2/D1) (03/11)
Mar 14 (Tu)	Supporting Business-Level strategy	Chapter 6		Turn in decision log

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b><u>Required</u> readings</b> <i>All readings are available in CourseDen</i>	<b>Assignments Due</b> <i>CD indicates available in CourseDen</i>	<b>Simulation</b> <b>Decisions Due Weekly on Sunday at 11 pm.</b>
Mar 16 (Th)	Selecting Corporate-Level Strategies	Chapter 8		R2/D2 (03/18)
Mar 19 – 25	Spring Break – No classes			
Mar 28 (Tu)	Selecting Corporate-Level Strategies (continued)	Chapter 8	Case study: Sony's Turnaround	Turn in decision log
Mar 30 (Th)	Competing in International Markets	Chapter 7		R2/D3 (04/01)
Apr 4 (Tu)	RCOB Field Exam Duration: 70 minutes			Turn in decision log
Apr 6 (Th)	Executing Strategy Through Organizational Design	Chapter 9		R2/D4 (04/8)
Apr 11 (Tu)	Exam 2 – Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, 9			Turn in decision log
Apr 13 (Th)	Review Simulation Round 2 Results Leading an Ethical Organization	Chapter 10		
Apr 18 (Tu)	Video case study: Culture, Priorities, and Acquisitions			
Apr 20 (Th)	Make-up lectures			
Apr 25 (Tu)	Team Project Presentations		<u>All</u> Team Project Reports are due:  Presentation materials Letter to shareholders Peer evaluations	
Apr 27 (Th)	Team Project Presentations			
May 9 (Tu)	Final exam Section 02: 2:00-4:30 pm. Section 03: 5:00 – 7:00 pm			

The schedule is tentative and may change due to situational factors and at the discretion of your instructor

**APPENDIX A: CASE ANALYSIS GUIDELINES**

**1. Identify the strategic issues in this case**

A strategic issue is any issue that has the potential to fundamentally affect the company's competitive position, its strategy, its operations and its prospects. Typically, it is the issue addressing which resolves all other issues. More importantly, the number of strategic issues facing an organization is limited in number - at the most there are two or three such issues. Prioritize. Look not at the symptoms but the underlying cause.

To identify the strategic issues one needs to examine the firm's competitive positioning. The firm's competitive positioning is arrived at after an analysis of the firm's environment (industry analysis), the firm's resources and capabilities (internal analysis) and the firm's strategies and its outcome. The strategic issue is something that has the potential to affect the firm's competitive positioning and may be due to changes in the environment, internal resources and capabilities, questionable strategies and the like.

Third, to examine the competitive position you need to consider all relevant information in the case. Question any hidden assumptions. Make explicit all assumptions you make in order to arrive at your conclusions. Assess your logic and arguments for coherence and consistency.

**2. Identify alternative courses of action**

The relevant alternatives are those that most directly address the strategic issues that you have identified in the first step. The relevant alternatives should be based on the analysis that you have performed earlier. In other words they must be consistent with the industry analysis, the internal analysis and the firm's strategies that you have identified.

Second, examine whether these alternatives are really alternatives. In other words, can the firm simultaneously undertake one or two or all of the alternatives? Some decisions like a Make or Buy decision are truly mutually exclusive. On the other hand, in some other cases a firm may not be able to pursue all alternatives because the firm does not have the resources and capabilities.

**3. Evaluate the alternatives and recommend one course of action. Justify your decision.**

To recommend any one of the alternatives that you identified in the earlier step you need to evaluate all the alternatives. What are the pros and cons of each alternative? Why are some alternatives not feasible options for the firm? It is this analysis that enables you to identify and recommend the alternative that you think best addresses the strategic issue that you have identified. Present your recommendations with specific implementation details and support your decision by arguing its merits vis-à-vis the alternatives.

Evaluate your entire analysis in terms of its consistency, coherence, brevity and logic. Does it make any assumptions that you have not made explicit? Is the information used factually correct? Are the conclusions justifiable? Are they based on opinions, personal beliefs or logic and facts?