



UNCG
Bryan School of
Business and Economics

MBA 620.41

Strategic Analysis and Formulation

Monday, 6:00-9:30PM
Bryan 111

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COURSE MATERIALS:

Text: Hitt, Ireland & Hoskisson (2005). Strategic Management: Competitiveness and Globalization 6th edition, Southwestern, ISBN# 0-324-27528-5

Additional Readings: As identified in weekly class meetings or by email. Additional readings will typically be posted into the “Course Documents” area of Blackboard and will occasionally be distributed in class.

COURSE GOAL

The purpose of the course is threefold:

- 1) To equip the student with a variety of models and tools that can be applied to determine and analyze firm strategy.
- 2) to provide the student an opportunity to critically apply these models and tools to analyze organizational positions, initiatives and to recommend future courses of action;
- 3) to provide the student the opportunity to practice defending their recommended courses of strategic action.

CLASS FORMAT:

Each physical class meeting will include: (1) lecture and discussion of the assigned chapters and readings; (2) a break; (3) presentation and discussion of two assigned case studies. Some classes will include an exercise or video presentation.

One class meeting will be conducted on-line. Narrated PowerPoint's will be posted in Blackboard.

EVALUATION

The class grade contains the following components:

(1) Group Case - Lead	30%
(2) Group Case – Appreciative Inquiry and Challenge	20%
(3) Individual Case Paper	25%
(4) Peer Review – Case	10%
(5) Class Participation	15%

Course grades will be assigned on a numeric scale from 0 to 100 for each element of the course. The weighted average of the numeric grades will be converted into final letter grades as follows:

A: 90 -100% B: 80 – 89% C: 70 – 79 D: 60 – 69 F: 0-59

EVALUATION COMPONENT DESCRIPTIONS:(1) Group Case - Lead.

Students have been pre-assigned to groups as indicated on page 6 of the syllabus. The group will be responsible for *applying models and tools* from this course to critically analyze:

- Industry conditions and an organization's current position in an industry
- Historical actions of the organization and the organization's competitors that have contributed to that position
- Strategic actions that would contribute to more effective, more vision and mission consistent, organizational outcomes in the future.

The group will lead the case discussion by presenting their analyses to the class. The targeted class presentation time is approximately 20 minutes. An additional twenty minutes will then be allotted for appreciative inquiry and challenges to the presentation by other students in the course.

The group will be evaluated on the quality of analyses underlying the presentation, all

aspects of delivery and responses to subsequent questioning.

The schedule for Group Case - Lead is provided on page 7 of the syllabus.

(2) Group Case – Appreciative Inquiry and Challenge.

The group for this case will be the same as your group for “Group Case – Lead”.

The group should prepare the case at a level consistent with presenting the case discussion. The task of the group is to react to the presentation made by probing and “grilling” the presenting group on their interpretation of the firm’s current position, the reasons for that position and the desirability of proposed future courses of action.

The group may think of themselves as a Board of Directors. Their purpose is to ask good and sometimes hard questions to clarify statements made by the presenting group (appreciative inquiry), challenge conclusions and guide the presenting group to a more considered final conclusion.

In playing this role the group should assume that like most Boards of Directors, their goal is to move the firm forward in a positive direction. But like most Boards, they are sensitive and defensive about critical analyses of prior decisions made on their watch. They are also simultaneously wary of presentations that lack substantive critiques.

Your group will be evaluated on the extent to which they ask good questions of the presenting group, the extent to which they effectively challenge the group’s conclusions and on evidence of case challenge preparation. The form of the evidence of case preparation may vary from group to group (e.g. handwritten notes, blackboard threaded discussions, etc). Any method the group chooses is acceptable if it is assessable. However, the group must choose one rather than many methods for purposes of instructor assessment. Methods for conveying case preparation will be discussed further on the first night of class.

The schedule for Group Case - Lead is provided on page 7 of the syllabus.

(3) Individual Case Paper.

The student will prepare a written case analysis of five pages or less, excluding title page and appendices, on either the *AT&T* case or the *Tredegear Industries* case.

The case paper should reflect a synthesized analysis of the firm’s past courses of action, current position and recommended future courses of action. You may include appendices, which are excluded from the 5 page limitation, that provide additional support or detail for the information provided in the body of your text. However, you should write the body of the paper with the assumption that the reader may not have time

to review some or all of your appendices.

While you are welcome to discuss the case with your peers you should not seek peer assistance in writing your paper nor should you ask or agree to read their paper.

Two copies of the case write-up should be provided in “hard copy” by 6:00pm EST on June 13, 2005.

The paper format should include:

Title page: Name of the case. A password that is recognizable to you for purposes of later assigning names to the papers.

Body of paper (5 pages or less):

- Font: Times New Roman
- Font size: 12 or greater
- Line spacing: 1.5 or greater
- Margins: Top, bottom, left and right margins of 1 inch or greater

Appendices (optional)

To facilitate blind review your name or any other indicators of who paper authorship should NOT be included in either the title page, the body of the paper, or in the appendices.

(4) Peer Review – Individual Case Paper.

On June 13, 2005 you will be provided a case analysis, prepared by a peer, for the same case you prepared. Your task is to read your peer’s case and then provide feedback, both complementary and critical, on the case analysis. The peer review will be graded “pass/fail” with a 100 assigned for a pass and a 50 assigned for a fail.

Mental models for determining the appropriate level of feedback include: 1) the best set of feedback you have ever received on an educational assignment or 2) the quality of feedback on an educational assignment that you always wished you had received.

The method for conveying the feedback will vary across students. Some will prefer to write in the paper margins, others will prefer to provide typed feedback, etc.

You may assign a grade to your peer if you wish but that is not required. The emphasis in this assignment is on qualitative feedback. You should identify yourself as a reviewer only by your password (e.g. this paper reviewed by Partyhardy). This will facilitate the instructor being able to assign credit for completing a quality review but will otherwise maintain confidentiality in peer review process.

The peer review should be returned to me in class on June 20th or to my mailbox by 4:45 pm Thursday June 24, 2005. My mailbox is located in Bryan 366.

Individual cases graded by the professor and peer reviews of the case will be returned to the student by mail in early July.

(5) Class Participation.

The evaluation of class participation will be comprised of several variables including but not limited to:

- Class attendance.
- Respect for peers.
- In-class attentiveness.
- In-class contributions to the lecture/discussion.
- Evidence, both verbal and non-verbal, of being current with course materials.
- Evidence that course concepts are being applied to the analysis of current events
- Asking *good* questions on case presentations
- Completing evaluations at each class.

Students begin the course with a course participation mark of 90 and adjustments are made upward for exceeding expectations, downward for falling below expectations and are unchanged for meeting expectations. Expectations are that the student attend class, is respectful of the peer learning environment and participates in in-class activities such as class exercises and evaluation sheets.

Other:

Blackboard and Electronic Communications: A number of course documents, including course lecture slides and readings, will be posted in Blackboard. Typically an electronic communication will be sent to the class indicating that a new posting has been made. Having access to and frequently checking Blackboard will be important to your success in this course.

Email Communications: For purposes of this course I will assume that you check your UNCG email daily. Thus I assume you will be aware of any communications or requests sent at least 24 hours prior to our class meetings. If you have any questions about UNCG email you can obtain assistance by calling 256-tech during normal business hours, by emailing Rob Owens at reowens@uncg.edu or by asking for assistance in the Bryan School computer labs.

Inclement Weather: The University of North Carolina at Greensboro will remain open during adverse weather conditions unless the Chancellor makes the administrative decision to make a schedule change. Students can obtain details on those decisions from the Adverse Weather Line at (336) 334-4400 or the web address:

<http://www.uncg.edu/iss/weather.htm>

Honor Code: All students, by the act of registering for this course, have agreed to abide by the UNCG Honor Code. If you are not familiar with the content of this agreement you can go to www.uncg.edu and search on the term honor code.

GROUP MEMBERSHIP

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5	Group 6
Allen Duncan McSwain Sintich	Ballini Fowlkes Pai Stafford	Barnett Garner Pierce Stanley	Calloway He Sarwari Stecker Williams, R	Cho Lee Schooley Steele Williams, D	Decamp McKinney Simos Wheet

Note: Occasionally group members will desire to be in a different group. This may be due to known schedule conflicts or for interpersonal reasons such as friendships and prior group project experiences.

Group members can “change” groups on the first evening of class if they can find a counterparty to agree to an exchange. For example, Ms. Sintich in group 1 could exchange with Ms. Wheet in group 6 if they mutually agree to the change.

A discussion board for each group will be established in Blackboard. Groups are not required to use the discussion board. It is simply one potential channel for communication and/or documenting case challenge preparation.

COURSE SCHEDULE

	<i>Key Chapters</i>	<i>First Case Lead</i>	<i>First Case Inquiry & Challenge</i>	<i>Second Case Lead</i>	<i>Second Case Inquiry & Challenge</i>
May 23	Chapters 1, 2 & 3 Chapter 11 pp.338-343	Class & Lowe Bloomington Hospital	Lowe & Class	Class & Lowe Nextel	Lowe & Class
May 30	Chapters 3, 4 & 5 Chapter 11 pp.344-351	Class & Lowe Southwest Airlines	Lowe & Class	Class & Lowe Gillette Company	Lowe & Class
June 6	Chapters 5 & 6 Chapter 11 pp. 352-357	Group 1 Paper Storms	Group 2	Group 3 UPS vs. FedEx	Group 4
<i>Posted</i> June 8	On-line Chapters 7,8 Chapter 11 pp. 358-362	AT&T		Tredegar Industries	
June 13	Chapters 7, 8 & 9	Group 5 Sesame Workshop	Group 6	Group 2 American International Group	Group 1
June 20	Selected topics Chapters 10,12,13 Misc. Readings	Group 4 MTV vs. Channel 5	Group 3	Group 6 ERG Group	Group 5