

COURSE OUTLINE

Semester: Winter 2020

Class Time: March 12 (Thurs), 13 (Fri), 14 (Sat), 27 (Fri) & 28 (Sat)

Room: ED 514

Instructor: Leah Olson

Office: ED 524.5

Email: leah.olson@uregina.ca

Tel: 306 570 7138 (cell)

Office hours: Please contact me by email or in person to set up a meeting time

COURSE DESCRIPTION

GBUS / MBA 815 is intended to be delivered in the final stage of the MBA degree so that, acting as leaders, students are able to draw upon knowledge from various functional areas (e.g., marketing, operations, management, accounting, finance) to develop a more integrative and sophisticated assessment of an organization's internal and external environment and its impact on competitive advantage. Viewing the organization from a strategic level, students will face the challenge of applying tools and techniques required to make optimal decisions. Through the analysis and discussion of case studies, current affairs and academic literature, students will be exposed to the highly complex and ambiguous context of real business situations and expected to shift their focus of analysis from the functional to the strategic level.

Students will be exposed to not-for-profit, public sector and for-profit organizations and will develop an appreciation for the similarities and differences across sectors as it pertains to strategic decision making and implementation. The course also includes a business media element that attempts to raise awareness about the constantly changing business environment and the relevance of strategic management in the real world.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To introduce students to the concepts of strategic management and provide tools and techniques that allow students to competently analyze the competitive situations of organizations.
2. To apply analytical techniques from finance, accounting, organizational theory, organization behaviour, marketing, economics and related business disciplines.
3. To develop an ability to view the organization as a whole and understand the interdependence of organizational functions and the environment in strategic management.
4. To critically analyze the organizational world and the field of strategic management.
5. To develop / improve communication skills, both written and verbal, through cases analyses and presentations and case writing.
6. To encourage awareness of business media/press and strategic consideration of its impact on business.
7. Network, have fun and and develop positive relationships with others.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. In verbal and written formats, students will be able to identify, distinguish between and assess alignment of corporate, business, global and functional level strategies.
2. Given a written case study, individually and in teams, students will be able to present an internal and external analysis, identify key strategic issues and alternatives, generate solutions and describe an implementation plan, using assigned format guidelines.
3. In formative and summative course work, students will be able to negotiate team responsibilities and collaborate to present case analyses within defined time periods.
4. During classes, students will verbally contribute to discussions on course concepts in the larger group.

5. In interactions with team members and the instructor, students will communicate (verbal and written) in a professional manner.
6. In a take-home exam format, students will be able to list, describe and apply course concepts in response to case and essay-style questions and demonstrate critical thinking.
7. In lectures, seminars, case analyses and exam students will be able to identify and discuss (verbal and written) similarities and differences in the theory and application of strategy concepts across different sectors (e.g., health care versus manufacturing) and types of organizations (e.g., nonprofits versus for profits versus SMEs).

TEXT / MATERIALS

1. Dess, G., McNamara, G., and Eisner, A., (2018). Strategic Management. Creating Competitive Advantage. 5th Canadian Ed. McGraw-Hill Ryerson. **ISBN 1259275841**
2. Readings & Cases – provided by instructor, accessed through library resources, & posted on UR Courses.
 - a. *Student accounts will be charged for the cases purchased through Ivey and Harvard Publishing.*
3. Class slides will be posted in advance of class on UR Courses.

SPECIAL NEEDS

If there is any learner who, because of a disability, may have a need for accommodation(s), please discuss this with the instructor and / or contact the Coordinator of Special Needs Services at (306) 585-4631.

WRITING ASSISTANCE

The Student Success Centre (www.uregina.ca/ssc) offers both on-line resources and in-person tutoring on writing skills.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This course includes lectures, case discussions, videos and experiential exercises. As a result, regular attendance in class and active participation in classroom activities are required. **Students are expected to be comfortable with ALL material discussed in class** (not just textbook content). Lecture content will go beyond the coverage in the textbook. It is expected that students will read and prepare appropriately for every class. If a student is **unprepared for a class 1 mark will be taken off** her participation grade for the course (this will occur in every class that the student is not prepared). Please read each section of the course outline for expectations on all components of the course.

Throughout the course linking theory and practice discussions will occur. Students are expected to read local, national and / or international newspapers and discuss in class how the newsworthy event relates (or not) to content discussed in class. This will serve as an important aspect of participation grades.

In this course you will be encouraged and expected to **engage in critical thinking**. This will surface in class discussions and the assigned readings. You will be rewarded for demonstrating critical thinking in your informal and formal assessment exercises throughout the course. For this course, critical thinking is defined as an ongoing process of active and reflective learning. It involves surfacing underlying beliefs about concepts and experiences and questioning why we ‘see’ it in this way. It also involves exploring how other individuals, groups and disciplines might ‘see’ these concepts. Through this process you are expected to develop an appreciation for multiplicity, difference, ambiguity, contradiction and new ways of understanding and being.

Students will be required to work in groups for a formal case presentation. The whole team will be held responsible for the team’s success or failure. Group size will be a function of final course enrolment (likely 4- 5 people). Students must sign up for groups by the end of day 2 (March 13). **Teams must be diverse in terms of skill strengths, gender, domestic and international membership. To increase the team’s ability to succeed, it is important to have a ‘numbers’ person (e.g., accounting, finance, economics), ‘marketing’ person, AND management or general person.** The instructor will attempt to accommodate the students’ preferences; however,

she reserves the right to select or change team memberships before they are considered finalized on March 14.

Use of laptops, cell phones, recording devices in class.

- Laptops can be used UNTIL misuse is suspected in class. If it is suspected that any one individual is using a laptop to check email, search the web, etc. instead of taking notes, ALL laptop use could be banned from class.
- No cell phones in class – no ringing or playing with phones.
- Recording devices – no recording of class lectures. Slides will be available to students in advance of class – listen and engage with the material being presented and take notes based upon that. Exceptions to this will be considered if the student makes an appointment and meets with the instructor to discuss the reasons.

Academic Ethics. Students are reminded that they must adhere to the standards of ethics of the university (see Section on *Academic Conduct and Misconduct Regulations Governing Discipline for Academic and Non-academic Misconduct* in the Academic Calendar). Students must appropriately reference material and must submit their own work. If unethical behaviour is suspected, all individuals involved will receive zero on this component of the course.

GRADING

The following grading system will be used in assigning marks. For additional information, please refer to the Graduate Grading Descriptions at <http://www.uregina.ca/gradstudies/grad-calendar/grading-system.html#gradingsystem>.

A+	90% +
A	85 – 89%
A-	80 – 84%
B+	75 – 79%
B	70 – 74.99%
F	0-69 %

Grade Allocation

1. CEO Memo to Chair of the Board of Directors	15%
2. Individual Case Study – Assessing Corporate & Business Level Strategies	15%
3. Team Pitch (presentation & report)	35%
4. Final Exam (take home)	20%
5. Peer Evaluation (for the team case analysis)	5%
6. Participation	10%
Total	100%

COURSE COMPONENTS

CEO Memo to Chair of the Board of Directors 15%

Strategic plans often require making decisions based on limited information. Students are asked to play the role of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of either Maple Leaf Foods or eHealth Saskatchewan.

Each of these companies has experienced events in the past 12 months that have materially impacted their operations. When choosing which company you will be CEO of, please ensure you address your memo to the board chair. The objective is to provide information to the board chair of a significant change that will materially impact the organization’s strategic plan. As CEO, you are expected to have clarity of the issue and make a reasonable recommendation as to how to mitigate the material risks. Using material in chapters 1, 2, 3

and 4 of the textbook, you should demonstrate an understanding of the organization's key business and competitive advantages.

Your submission must be 300 words or less (single spaced and typed) – please use tables and graphs only as appropriate to the memo content. Your memo will be evaluated on the clarity you provide of the problem and recommended actions.

Your memo must be submitted **by 5pm March 6 to URCourses in pdf format**. The assignment will be marked and provided back to students March 12.

NOTE: This is an individual submission and no collaboration among students is permitted.

- The submission is due by **5pm March 6 (submitted to URCourses) in pdf format**.
- It is to be type-written Times Roman 12 font & single spaced.
- Submit with course name / number, instructor name and student ID only.
- All late submissions will be deducted 10% for every day late.

Assessing Corporate and Business Level Strategies (Individual Case Study) 15%

Individually students are required to assess the corporate and business level strategies of an organization that is discussed in class by a guest speaker on March 13.

Your submission must be 1.5 to 2 pages (single spaced and typed) in length. Please use tables and graphs to support your analysis or findings.

Your memo must be submitted **by 5pm March 15 to URCourses in pdf format**.

Your submission must cover the following:

1. What is the corporate level strategy of the organization? Suggested $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ page
2. What is the business level strategy of the organization (if there is more than one business unit, discuss at least one business unit)? Suggested $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ page
3. Offer a critical analysis of the strategies given the industry and other competitors that the organization might be competing with. $\frac{1}{2}$ page

NOTE: This is an individual submission and no collaboration among students is permitted.

- The submission is due by **5 pm March 15 (submitted to URCourses) in pdf format**.
- It is to be type-written Times Roman 12 font & single spaced.
- Submit with course name / number, instructor name and student ID only.
- All late submissions will be deducted 10% for every day late.

Team Pitch (Presentation & Report) 35%

In teams of 4 - 5, students will perform a strategic analysis and recommendations for an assigned case on March 27. You will be acting as a management consulting team to the business (Precision AI or another business case that will be provided by the professor on March 12).

Teams can choose to submit a 5 page written report in addition to their 15 minute pitch (if the team selects to present with no written report, all marks allocated to this component of the course will be based upon the presentation). The total maximum presentation time is 15 minutes in duration.

It is important that teams are diverse in regards to gender, nationality and expertise (e.g., comprised of members from all of the functional areas). **Teams *should* include a ‘numbers’ person, a marketing person and a management (or general) person.**

The in-class presentation will be followed by ~10 minutes of questions. It is expected that students dress and behave professionally for the in-class delivery. Every member of the team must play a significant role in the analysis, preparation and execution of the presentation in order to receive a grade. The presentation must demonstrate sound case analyses skills and creativity (in the presentation format and delivery as well as the strategic recommendations / implementation offered). It is expected that the presentation and case analysis be of high quality and appropriate for a professional audience (executives).

The in-class presentations will occur **March 27 and if a written report is done, it must be submitted to UR Courses in pdf format by 5pm that day.**

FINAL EXAM 20%

There will be a take-home final exam in this course. It will be comprehensive in nature and could include some combination of case analysis and theory / practice essay style questions. Additional details will be provided in class (formatting, structure). It is due **April 10 at 5 pm**. Submissions are to be posted to UR Courses as a pdf file.

PEER ASSESSMENT (on team case analysis video / report) 5%

All members of a team will be required to submit a team assessment that will include assessment of each team member’s performance in the team case analysis project. The format will be provided to students during the first day of class and is required to be submitted in a PDF format by **5 pm March 28**.

PARTICIPATION 10%

Participation will be graded on the value of the contribution to class, rather than solely on the number of times one participates. It is essential that students are present for all classes, however, it is not enough to simply come to class, students must be active participants in class. To receive enough points to get a passing participation grade a student must participate regularly in class discussion. To do this one must come to class having prepared for the topic under discussion. In addition, there will be times throughout the course that informal team presentations will occur and will form part of the participation grade.

An automatic grade reduction may be applied if you are not prepared to discuss the assigned topic for the day. Attendance and participation is the responsibility of the student, if you expect to miss class, etc. it is your job to inform the instructor. This will form 10% of the final grade.

You are expected to be present and engaged in class. High levels of participation would include active participation in class discussions, drawing others into the discussions, demonstration of critical thinking (e.g., constructively criticizing articles discussed in class), and bringing in outside materials from popular press / current events and personal experiences / observations.

The following guide will be used to assess participation:

Exceeds Expectations 8.5-10: Students in this category provide leadership in and out of the classroom and work toward enhancing the interpersonal dynamics of the class. Their level of engagement is high and consistent. Their contributions are thoughtful and relevant. Rather than dominating the setting, they act as facilitators, bringing others into the discussion.

Meets Expectations 7 – 8.4: Students show an active interest in class activities and participating in classroom discussions. They make insightful comments which help others to understand the course material. They are a positive group member.

Does Not Meet Expectations 5 – 6.9: Students in this category attend class regular basis but only occasionally contribute to classroom discussions. Students may require more work on facilitating discussions and/or knowledge of the course material.

Does Not Meet Expectations Less than 5: Students in this category do not positively contribute to the course discussions, miss classes without respect for their colleagues and may demonstrate a lack of understanding of key concepts.

SCHEDULE

The schedule of classes will be posted to URCourses. It should be noted that the schedule of classes may be altered slightly to accommodate current events or to incorporate any interesting material deemed relevant by the instructor that might come up at a later date.

Date	Topic	Reading	Activities & Deadlines
March 12 Morning	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of ‘strategy’ • Porter’s 5 Forces • SWOT • Strategic plan, operating plan, multi-year budget plan 	Chapters 1 and 2 of textbook	CEO memo – first assignment is due March 6 by 5pm. Late submissions will be penalized 10% per day. The assignment will be marked and provided to students on March 12.
Afternoon	Strategic Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VRIO analysis • Value proposition refinement Guest speaker: TBD		
March 13 Morning	Industry Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value proposition (customer, regulator) • Lifecycle considerations 	Chapters 3, 4, 5 & 6 of textbook	
Afternoon	Balanced Scorecard Guest speaker: Bryce Eger, President of Corteva Canada (joining via zoom)		Note that the individual second assignment (assessment of business strategy) is based on Bryce’s presentation
March 14 Morning	Resourcing Strategic Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crown Corporation • Private company • Publicly traded company • Not for profit • Start Up Guest speaker: Daniel McCann, founder of Precision AI	Chapter 12 of textbook	Note that the team pitch presentations will be based on the business challenge presented by Daniel McCann founder of Precision AI.

Afternoon	Resourcing Strategic Plan – HR plan, business plan for investors, & financial institutions Guest Speakers: TBD		Assessment Business Strategy – second assignment is due by 5pm March 15.
BREAK			
March 27 Morning	International Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing internationally • Environmental assessment • Financial and resourcing capacity 	Chapters 7, 8 and 9	Team pitch presentations
Afternoon	Data Strategy and Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privacy • Security • Ransomware • Cyber security 		Team pitch presentations
March 28 Morning	Governance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role/responsibilities of a board of directors • Tenets of a strong board • Risk mitigation (fraud) 	Charan, Carey, Useem “Boards That Lead” (2014) – chapters 7 & 8 Chapters 10, 11 and 12 of textbook	
Afternoon	Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting relative to strategic plan • Revising or changing strategic plan 		Peer assessment due by 5pm
TAKE HOME EXAM DUE by 5pm on Fri., April 10 (submit to UR Courses as pdf file)			