Business Strategy | GBUS 815
Fall 2020 COURSE OUTLINE
~Synchronous Format: Remote delivery at scheduled class times~

CLASS DETAILS

Class Location: Remote Delivery by Zoom
Class Dates/Times: 7:00 – 9:45 p.m., Thursdays: September 3 – December 3, 2020

INSTRUCTOR CONTACTS

Name: Bruce Anderson  
Office Hours: By appointment (remotely)
Mobile: +1 306-539-6311
Email: bruce.anderson@uregina.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION

GBUS / MBA 815 focuses on strategic decision-making within an organization in a global context. These management-level decisions require understanding, analyzing, formulating, implementing, and evaluating strategy. This course will provide tools to understand how businesses (and other organizations) address their competitive environment. Effective organizations understand and respond to their environment, leveraging unique competencies and capabilities to pursue opportunities. A tension exists between what is wanted, what is needed, and what can be done, and effective organizations will manage this strategic tension.

Prerequisite: Must complete any two courses from the Levene MBA with Specializations program.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES / OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course, the student will:

1. Understand the analysis, formulation, implementation, and evaluation of strategy;
2. Appreciate the impact of external environment and internal capacity on management decisions;
3. Understand how and why organizations position themselves in a global market;
4. Gain and apply the skills needed to develop a strategic direction and plan for an organization;
5. Integrate learning from previous classes and personal experience into a broader strategic perspective;
6. Relate classroom theory to practical, real-life examples of local and global organizations;
7. Generate options and solutions to organizational problems and understand the impact; and
8. Have fun while learning.
COURSE EXPECTATIONS

The course will use mini-lectures, class discussions, readings and cases, activities / exercises, and guest speakers. It will be delivered remotely, through Zoom technology. The primary focus will be on the business sector, but examples will also be drawn from the not-for-profit and public sectors. Every student is expected to be prepared for each class – having read all course materials and prepared the cases and / or assignments. Class PowerPoint slides contain extra content and are useful reviews of the class learnings. Students are expected to review all course notes in advance of class. Also, everyone is also expected to participate fully in class, thus contributing to your peers and your own learning. Please be familiar with this course outline and its requirements.

LEARNING APPROACH

This class is typically delivered in a case room format, but that is not possible in the current situation. Will we settle for a lower quality class? Nope! Fortunately, the remote learning delivery format will not greatly affect the rigour or the impact. Rather, it will be a useful approach with lots of advantages for students. It does require adaptation from both students and the Instructor. Here are two learning approaches we will use extensively:

Think, Pair, Share. The first part is individual reflection, the next pair involves sharing with a partner to ensure you have considered all points, and the key part is sharing with class. Learning does not come from the textbook and Instructor only; your peers have perspectives and experiences, and you are expected to share yours too.

Read, Reflect, Do. This will be demonstrated as various times during the course.

The class will be delivered remotely in a synchronous format (i.e., class offered during scheduled times).

BEING SUCCESSFUL IN THE COURSE

The Instructor’s course notes will be available on UR Courses in advance of each class, but don’t rely solely on the course notes. For example, the textbook is useful in laying out the theory and concepts while the course notes may include resource material from outside the textbook. Students need to understand the concepts and recognize how they are used.

Substantial pre-class work is needed to prepare for each class. The case analysis process offers insight into all cases. Past students have indicated that 1-2 hours of reading and preparation is needed for each classroom case while another hour is needed to review textbook and course note materials. You are expected to have read and prepared each case. By being prepared for the small-group and class discussion, you will build analytical and synthesis skills. Class discussion will bring out things students may have missed or not understood. Therefore, it is important to add your own notes to the course notes and review these after class to improve retention and understanding. Please plan your time accordingly.
COURSE MATERIALS


Required Readings: Cases and required readings will be posted in advance on UR Courses. Cases are assigned for most classes, including cases written by Hill / Levene faculty. With the partnership with the Ivey School of Business, these cases are used without cost by the Hill / Levene Schools of Business. Other cases will have copyright fees that will be charged to your student account by Financial Services during the semester. The extra cost is expected to be approximately $25-30.

Other resources and the course PowerPoint slides will be found on the course site.

COURSE ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

The following is the grading scheme:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DELIVERABLE</th>
<th>GRADING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two Case Briefs</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term Exam (case)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term Project (individually or pairs)</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam (case)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For a description of the grading system, consult the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research link here: https://www.uregina.ca/gradstudies/current-students/grad-calendar/grading-system.html#gradingsystem.

DESCRIPTION OF ASSESSMENT

The grading is further detailed as follows:

Case Brief:
Each student will submit two (2) individually written cases as noted in the Class Schedule. Case briefs will be submitted before 6:00 p.m. on the day the case is scheduled. It is recommended that you submit the case briefs earlier in the semester, but ensure that a few cases are discussed to be clear on expectations. If you receive a mark of less than 80% on your first case brief, you will have another opportunity (by advising the Instructor) to submit an additional case brief for a future scheduled case. The best two marks will be used in grading.

The following format will be followed:
• **Introduction** - Define issue(s) and problem. Also, provide a brief context to the situation (avoid repeating case information).

• **Analysis**: Add key points and your conclusion about the external environment. Also, add key points and your conclusion about the internal environment, and the organization’s capacity to take advantage of the environment.

• **Alternatives & Discussion**: Offer high-level, mutually exclusive (i.e., either / or) solutions to the problem. These will be of a “what to do”, not a “how to do it” nature.

• **Recommendation**: Choose one option, based on specific decision criteria.

• **Implementation and Action Plan**: Outline specific, measurable actions, by time frames.

• **Conclusion**: Briefly summarize what you said in the write-up.

No cover page is needed but make sure your name or student number is in the header or footer. Your write-up will be limited to two pages single-spaced, at least 11-point font with 2.5 cm. margins and using assigned headings. Up to two (2) pages of relevant appendices (e.g., decision criteria or table) may be attached. No citations are needed as you will be doing no outside research, as all needed information is in the case. Submit a Microsoft Word document (Windows-compatible) by e-mail or through UR Courses. **No PDF files allowed. No paper copies may be submitted**, as submissions are marked electronically so an editable file is needed.

**Term Project (Due Dec. 3):**
The two options are discussed more fully as follows:

i. **Case Writing:**
The term case project will consist of two parts. First, students will research and prepare a strategy case (in the style of in-class cases) on a current business / organization, ideally one operating in Saskatchewan. The following content is typically used for the first part.

  - Opening Paragraph
  - General Company Information
  - Specific Area of Interest
  - Specific Problem or Decision
  - Alternatives (optional)
  - Concluding Paragraph
  - Appendices

Note: These are not the required titles; you will use your own titles to fit your content.

The second part involves creatively solving the case, using the standard Case Format with a title page. Both parts are submitted as one document and length will be typically limited to 10-12 pages, excluding appendices.

ii. **Consulting Project:**
The consulting project involves identifying a business issue or organizational problem. You will use the case analysis process / format and the standard Case Format (see Case Brief section). Your report will also include a title page, one-page Executive Summary, a table of contents, and any relevant appendices. The report’s length will typically be 10-15 pages. Also, it will include a title page, table of contents, and appendices.
For both projects, your written analysis will be graded on the quality of the written content, structure and flow of the writing, originality and creativity in your analysis and options, application of course content and understanding of the organization, integration of relevant research, and the articulation of an appropriate solution consistent with the problem(s) expressed in the introduction. The entire paper must read well together, have a similar style, and be free of grammar and spelling errors.

a. **Topic email**
   You are encouraged to discuss your topic with me. Your selected topic and organization, the issue being addressed, and the group members (you or you and a partner) must be submitted in a brief e-mail before 6:00 p.m. Sept. 24. The proposal encourages you to get started earlier on the project, obtains useful feedback / guidance on your topic, and seeks consent to proceed.

b. **Report**
   Submit a Microsoft Word document (Windows-compatible) by e-mail or through UR Courses. **No PDF files and no paper copies may be submitted**, as submissions are marked electronically, and a Word file allows for detailed and conveniently located comments and useful feedback. The document will be at least 11-point font, single-spaced, and have 2.5 cm. margins. The two parts together will typically be about 7-10 pages in length, plus exhibits / appendices. Use a cover page and provide citations and references, in the APA style (See Library website for Style Guides).

c. **Presentation (on Dec. 3)**
   You will make a 3-5 minute, oral presentation (without PowerPoint, etc.) on your case, or your learning if you are concerned about confidentiality. Your presentation should encourage questions and discussion.

**Mid-Term Exam:**
This will be a case and will be discussed further in class.

**Final Exam:**
The final exam will be a comprehensive case. The case will be posted several days in advance of the exam, allowing you to read and understand the case. Additional external research and outside assistance is not expected and not permitted. The exam is open book; you will have access to all materials from all classes. Your exam will consist of a small set of questions provided with the case. You will submit an electronic file of your answers. The exam will be discussed in a future class.

**ACADEMIC REGULATIONS**

**Plagiarism and Misconduct**
Students are encouraged to learn from others and even to discuss course deliverables with your cohorts. However, all students are expected to rigorously adhere to principles of intellectual integrity. **Plagiarism is a form of intellectual dishonesty in which another person's work is presented as one’s own. You may use other people’s ideas but only with the appropriate citation. Plagiarism or cheating on examinations / assignments is a serious offence that may result in a zero grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or expulsion from the University.** For more information, please consult Graduate Calendar (https://www.uregina.ca/gradstudies/current-students/grad-calendar/policy-univ.html).
Late and Deferred Assignments
Please note that no late assignments will be accepted. Requests for deferral are at the discretion of the Instructor with a request made in advance. Extensions or requests for changes by students to final exams will require the student to complete a formal request for deferral to be signed and submitted for approval by the Instructor. Approval for deferral is granted, or denied, by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR), and is usually only approved if there are extenuating circumstances (e.g., illness, etc.). The decision is sent by mail to the student and it is the student’s responsibility to ensure the deferred requirements are met within the outlined time frame. It is also the student’s responsibility to follow-up with FGSR if they do not receive a response from FGSR on their submitted request. Requests for deferral received more than two (2) weeks after the final day of the examination period will be denied. The deferral form can be found on the FGSR website (https://www.uregina.ca/gradstudies/forms.html).

STUDENT RESOURCES

Accessibility Services
If there is any learner who, because of a disability or other consideration, may have a need for an accommodation(s), please contact the Centre for Student Accessibility before or at the start of the course (https://www.uregina.ca/student/accessibility/). The Centre will advise how you proceed and indicate the required communication with your instructor.

Counselling Services
If you are experiencing personal problems that may be affecting your studies, please consider accessing the U of R Counselling Services at https://www.uregina.ca/student/counselling/services/index.html.

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

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY

After 15 years in senior leadership roles in the gaming and health sectors, Bruce Anderson became an entrepreneur in 1997, launching several businesses. He continues to operate b-creative group, a management consulting and design firm providing the association and business sectors.

In 2007, Bruce pursued a life-long passion for learning and began teaching at the Hill / Levene Schools of Business, where he teaches strategy, consulting, and entrepreneurship classes. He has also served in several administrative roles, including five years as the Director of the Faculty’s Centre for Management Development – the business advisory services unit – and working for the President for three years as Associate Vice-President (Development). His research interests are in strategic thinking and Board development.

Bruce received his MBA from the University of Regina and an Honours Bachelor of Commerce (in Sports Administration) from Laurentian University. He has the designations of Certified Management Consultant (CMC), Certified Association Executive (CAE), and Institute of Chartered Directors, Director (ICD.D).
He is serves on the Board of Directors with CAA Saskatchewan and Habitat for Humanity Regina. He mentors several new entrepreneurs and serves on Economic Development Regina’s Council for Entrepreneurial Growth. Bruce is Past Chair of both the Regina and Sask. Chambers of Commerce, Past Chair of the Sask. Science Centre, Past Director of Certified Management Consultants of Canada, and a past Director of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce.

Bruce and his spouse Lucie have two adult children, plus three grandchildren.

For a full CV, visit https://www.uregina.ca/business/faculty-staff/faculty/anderson_bruce.html

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

*Note: The following schedule is subject to change. Specific details found on UR Courses site.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>READING</th>
<th>DELIVERABLES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 3</td>
<td>Introduction and Course Overview</td>
<td>Intro and Ch.1</td>
<td>Prepare Carmichael case</td>
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<td>General Manager &amp; Strategic Management</td>
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<td>Sept. 10</td>
<td>Strategic Management and Diamond E Model</td>
<td>Ch. 2 &amp; 3</td>
<td>Prepare West Paw case</td>
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<td>Sept. 24</td>
<td>Strategy – Environment Linkage</td>
<td>Ch. 4 &amp; 5</td>
<td>Prepare Mountjoy case</td>
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<td>Submit Case topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 1</td>
<td>Strategy – Resources &amp; Capabilities Linkage</td>
<td>Ch. 6</td>
<td>Prepare Dot case</td>
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<td>Oct. 8</td>
<td>Mid-term Exam</td>
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<td>Oct. 15</td>
<td>Strategy – Management Preferences Linkage</td>
<td>Ch. 7 and pg. 191-194</td>
<td>Prepare Meuble case</td>
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<td>Oct. 22</td>
<td>Strategy and Organization</td>
<td>Ch. 8 &amp; 9</td>
<td>Prepare Hillberg case</td>
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<td>Oct. 29</td>
<td>Globalization and International Strategy</td>
<td>Prepare Shimla case</td>
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<td>Nov. 5</td>
<td>Managing Strategic Choice and Implementation</td>
<td>Ch. 10 &amp; 11</td>
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<td>Prepare Vuitton case</td>
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<td>Nov. 12</td>
<td>No Class – Reading Week</td>
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<td>Nov. 19</td>
<td>Corporate Level Strategy: Creating Value Through Acquisition and Diversification</td>
<td>Prepare CAA case</td>
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<td>Nov. 26</td>
<td>Strategic Alliances and Partnerships</td>
<td>Prepare TC E case</td>
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<td>Dec. 3</td>
<td>Big Data and Analytics</td>
<td>No case</td>
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<td>Guest Speaker: Greg Hutch, IT Consultant, Former Director at ISM</td>
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<td>Presentations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Wrap-up and Evaluation</td>
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<td>Dec. 17</td>
<td>Final Exam (case) – 7:00 – 9:45 p.m.</td>
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