

Eastern Oregon University  
Course Syllabus



**Course Number:** BA 498

**Course Name:** Business Policy & Strategy

**Course Description:** The course helps students integrate, focus, and apply the business and economic knowledge and skills they have acquired through complex real-world business case studies.

**Credit Hours:** 4 hours

**Professor:** Wilson Zehr

**Office:** Zabel Hall, 221

**eMail:** [wzehr@eou.edu](mailto:wzehr@eou.edu)

**Office Hours:** Tue/Thu 2:00 – 4:00 (and by appointment)

**Classroom:** Online

**Class time:** Mon – Sun weeks 1-10

**Required Text and Readings:**

David; Fred R., Strategic Management: A Competitive Advantage Approach, Concepts, 15<sup>th</sup> edition, Prentice-Hall. **ISBN:** 9780133444896

*Regular reading of professional business journals or newspapers such as The Wall Street Journal, Business Week, The Economist, Fortune, Forbes, INC., is highly recommended. The EOU library has subscriptions to many of these publications, and additional business resources, that are available free of charge to EOU students.*

**Prerequisites:** BA 225, BA 312, BA 313, and BA 321. Students must have at least junior standing to register for this course.

**Learning Outcomes:** After completing this course, students should be able to demonstrate the following outcomes.

- (1) Students will demonstrate their ability to apply and implement business concepts and strategies based on the current state of business conditions
- (2) Students will be able to develop a mission statement
- (3) Students will be able to perform an external audit
- (4) Students will be able to conduct an internal assessment
- (5) Students will be able to formulate, implement, and evaluate strategies

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### **Course Overview:**

This is a capstone course so you already should have completed the core courses in Marketing, Finance, Accounting, and Human Resources – plus some fun electives. Graduation is so close you can already feel the cap on your head and see your relatives in the crowd. So, it is a reasonable question to ask -- what could possibly be left to learn?

Let's start by looking at a real-life example. In 1949, ten years after college, friends Bill Hewlett and Dave Packard started Hewlett-Packard (HP) in a tiny garage in Palo Alto, CA; the company was incorporated and pursued the emerging market for audio oscilloscopes. In 1946, just up the road in Portland, OR, two young engineers, Howard Vollum and Jack Murdock, started a test and measurement company of their own. Both enjoyed success in the test & measurement market; both diversified into printing equipment; and eventually into computers as each subsequent market emerged. By 1981 Tektronix was the largest private employer in Oregon with over 24,000 employees; yet, in 2007, just two decades later, the company, a weak and hollow shell of its former self, was acquired by Danaher Corporation for just \$2.8 billion. On the other hand, HP is still the largest technology company in the world with over \$100 billion in annual revenues and an iconic global brand name.

Similar products, similar markets, early success - yet one company is no more, and the other is a global leader. This outcome has everything to do with the strategic choices that these firms and their leaders made.

In this course we will study business policy and strategy. We will learn how to evaluate both our internal and external environment, the competitive forces that shape our markets, and understand the resources and capabilities that we have to work with - or need to acquire. We will also learn to stitch all these elements together into business and corporate level strategies that are designed to win. **The correct business strategy can quite literally make the difference between success and failure.**

**Means of Assessment:** All learning outcomes are assessed with discussion questions, exams, assignments, and a research project. **A schedule that includes all assignments and due dates can be found on Canvas – dates can change so please check often.**

### **Discussion Questions: 30% of Final Grade (30 points/discussion)**

There will be one set of discussion questions per week. These are listed in your weekly module on Canvas. The discussion questions are worth 30 points each. In order to get full credit you will have to respond to each discussion question (0-20 points) by Wednesday and then post a **meaningful** comment to a classmates post (0-10 points/each) before the end of the week.

You are encouraged to post on more than one classmates post, but at least one is required for this assignment. We are looking for comments that add in a significant way to the dialog rather than just a "high five" - though positive encouragement is always a good thing! We are really looking for classmate posts that expand the breadth or depth of the discussion. In order to

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maximize your score, consider bringing in additional elements from the assigned readings, your own personal experiences, or examples you have found outside the class or in other readings.

In order to earn full credit on discussion posts you must have a current profile photo posted on Canvas. This creates a richer learning environment for everyone. If you don't want to post an actual picture, which is preferred, then post an avatar (an image that will remind us of you).

Discussion weeks go from Monday to Sunday night at midnight. **Once we move on there is no one there to have a discussion with, so late work will not be graded - please plan accordingly.**

### **Chapter Quizzes: 30% of Final Grade**

There is an online quiz for every chapter that we cover in class. The quizzes are “generally” due the Sunday following the week the material is discussed in class. The dates are all published on Canvas – when in doubt, check Canvas. These are open book quizzes and there is no time limit for completion as long as the exam is submitted before the deadline. Each quiz will consist of 15 multiple choice or true/false questions covering material from class discussion, the textbook, assigned articles, discussion questions, videos, or guest lectures.

Each student is offered one “**Mulligan**” for the term. This Mulligan will allow you to retake one quiz for the course. This may be a quiz that was not completed by the deadline or an attempt to improve the score that was originally earned. There is only one per student, per term, and it can **only** be applied to the online quizzes, so use it wisely.

### **Consulting Project: 20% of Final Grade**

The capstone component of the course requires the successful completion of a real-world consulting engagement with a “community partner”. This partner can be a commercial enterprise, a government entity, or a non-profit organization, depending on the opportunities that are currently available.

During the first week of class your instructor will outline the opportunities available. You will also share your skills and experience in the weekly discussion post. Based on this information you will be assigned to a group and a project. Your instructor will do their best to match you with your preferred project and team members with complimentary skills; however, team and project assignments really depend on the number of students and project popularity – the final team/project assignments are determined by your instructor.

Detailed description of the projects will be posted on Canvas in the second week. Based on this information each team will prepare a Statement of Work (SoW) that must be approved by the client (samples on Canvas). Teams will do the research work required to meet the terms of the SoW before the end of the term.

The final work product will be a video presentation and a PowerPoint presentation with notes pages. The final presentation should be no less than 20 PowerPoint slides with detailed notes pages. The notes pages must contain enough detail for the reader to understand what the

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slides are talking about even with no presenter. This is a UWR course, so the contents of the notes pages must be equivalent to a 20 page (5,000 word) paper. Additional details about the project, topics, and deliverables will be posted on Canvas.

*Proper grammar, spelling, and sources are required – points will be deducted for work that contains grammar, spelling, or inaccurate/insufficient sources (there must be at least 20 high quality references cited in the project).*

In addition to successful delivery of the research project, your project will be graded primarily on factors such as familiarity with strategic management concepts, integration of the concepts to a real-world setting, logical consistency of analysis and presentation, rational support for recommendations, and clarity in presentation/writing.

*Projects must be submitted on Canvas before the posted date. **Late projects will not be accepted.***

**Business Article Analysis: 10% of Final Grade**

Over the course of the term you will be required to submit two business publication analysis papers. We are looking for current articles *no more than six months old* that describe issues faced by business organizations. Articles for this assignment can be found from a wide variety of reputable sources in traditional print media and on the Internet. The Wall Street Journal, Business Week, Fortune, Forbes, Inc. Magazine, and The Economist are all good sources. These publications, and others, can be found online without a subscription.

Briefly summarize the article (one paragraph) and then analyze the article (instructions below). The analysis should be no more than 2 pages, 1.5 spaced, single-sided, Calibri or Times font, with 12 point type. Please make sure to cite the source for your article (APA format) in enough detail so that the reader can locate the original.

*Proper grammar, spelling, and sources are required – points will be deducted for work that contains grammar, spelling, structural errors, old information (more than six months old), or articles from non-reputable sources (e.g. Wikipedia, blogs, op-ed pieces ...).*

The **first article** should focus on a political issue that applies to business. What is the driving force for change in the environment? Is it factual in nature or strictly ideological? What are the implications for business? What adjustments would you suggest businesses make to assure prosperity even if the business environment changes based on this issue?

The **second article** should focus on a specific business organization and some of the issues confronting it. Use a strategic model or concept from the text to illustrate (a) the issues that are currently facing the business, and (b) how the business should respond to gain/maintain sustainable competitive advantage. What we are looking for in this exercise is your ability to use the tools we are studying rather than just judging if you have the right/wrong answer.

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This is a research exercise and it should take significant effort to find and select the article that you use. It is important to identify the strategic implications or “business lessons” learned from the articles. Just as a quick example, if you read an article that states a company is laying-off 25% of its workforce, try to determine the strategic under-pinning of this strategic decision. Could it be that the firms’ primary products are in a declining stage of their product lifecycle? Is there overall industry consolidation based on changes in environmental factors? Has the company made a large structural change such as an acquisition or divestiture? Try to look beyond the “symptoms” and identify the underlying strategic motivation.

Late articles will **NOT** be accepted, so please plan accordingly.

### Major Fields Test: 10% of Final Grade

There will also be a **Major Fields Test** administered during week 9 of class. This is a required (university) exam worth 100 points. Additional detail will be given online prior to the test.

The letter grade equivalent for the total points is as follows:

Grade	Minimum Points
A	95
A-	90
B+	87
B	84
B-	80
C+	77
C	74
C-	70
D	60
F	<60

Assignment	Due Date	Max Score	Percentage of Total Grade	Learning Outcomes
Discussion Questions	weekly	300	30%	1 - 5
Chapter Quizzes	weekly	300	30%	2 - 5
Consulting Project	Mon finals week	250	20%	1
Article Analysis	Week 3, 6	100	10%	1, 5
Major Fields Test	week 9	100	10%	university
Course Total			100%	

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**General Education Category and Outcomes:** This is the capstone course for the Business Administration degree program.

**University Writing Requirement (UWR) Outcomes:** This course is designated to fulfill the upper-division University Writing Requirements (UWR) with the following outcomes:

- Students will produce at least 5,000 words (including drafts, in-class writing, informal papers, and polished papers); 2,000 words of this total should be in polished papers which students have revised after receiving feedback and criticism.
- Students will practice the forms of writing and reflect upon the nature of the writing used by graduates and professionals in the discipline the course represents.
- Students will write at least one paper integrating information from more than one source, employing the appropriate documentation style for the discipline represented by the course.
- Students will draft, revise, and edit their formal written work.
- Students will seek assistance from a Writing Tutor in the Writing Lab when needed and when referred by the instructor.
- Students must complete all UWR writing-intensive courses with a C- or better.

UWR writing-intensive courses must allocate at least 30% of the overall grade to formal writing assignments, with at least 25% of the overall grade based on evaluation of individually written papers that have been revised after feedback.

### EOU Writing Center

The Writing Center provides a place — physical or virtual — where every EOU writer can find an interested, responsive reader. Writing tutorials are free of charge for EOU's undergraduate and graduate students who are writing for any course at any level, or who are writing resumes, job letters, graduate applications, and more. Go to [eou.mywconline.com](http://eou.mywconline.com) to schedule an appointment in the Writing Center (Loso Hall 234). Students in online course can also visit the [eTutoring](#) page to submit papers to a writing tutor.

### Statement on Student Conduct:

Eastern Oregon University places a high value upon student safety and protecting the inclusive and inviting nature of the learning environment. The university does not permit behavior that is disrespectful, threatening, or disruptive; to faculty, other students, or the learning process. This policy applies both inside and outside the classroom. Please refer to the student Code of Conduct for more details: <https://www.eou.edu/student-affairs/code-of-conduct/>

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**Statement on Academic Misconduct:**

Eastern Oregon University also places a high value upon the integrity of its student scholars. Any student found guilty of an act of academic misconduct (including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, or theft of an examination or supplies) may be subject to having his or her grade reduced in the course in question, being placed on probation or suspended from the University, or being expelled from the University—or a combination of these. Please see Student Handbook at: <http://www.eou.edu/saffairs/handbook/honest.html>

**Accommodations/Students with Disabilities Policy:**

Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation for any type of disability, please make an appointment to see me during my office hours or contact the Disability Services Office in Loso Hall, Room 234. Phone: [541-962-3081](tel:541-962-3081)

**Syllabus Prepared By:** W. Zehr

**Date:** 6/18/2016 (updated 4/1/2018)