

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

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

Classroom: Zabel Hall 108

Class time: Mon/Wed 6:00 pm - 7:50 pm

Required Text and Readings:

David; Fred R., *Strategic Management: A Competitive Advantage Approach, Concepts*, 15th 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. Most of these journals now have free content available on the web so you don't need to subscribe to gain access.

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 initial 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 hollowed out 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 quizzes, exams, a consulting engagement, along with class attendance and participation. **A schedule that includes all assignments and due dates can be found on Canvas – dates can change so please check often.**

- **Assurance of Learning Exercises (ALE): 20% of Final Grade**

At the end of Chapter 1 you will find the author's "Cohesion Case" which is based on PepsiCo, Inc. – 2014. This case is the basis for the assigned ALE exercises that follow each chapter. These exercises provide you with an opportunity to test your understanding of the concepts covered in each chapter as you analyze the Cohesion Case. They also allow you to build your expertise in preparation for the consulting project. Because you are working independently you will ignore any steps/instructions that call for class discussion and/or interaction. Submit your responses on Canvas by the end of the week (Sunday, midnight) in which the exercise is due.

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Assignments are only accepted on Canvas and must be submitted by the due date. Late ALE assignments will **NOT** be accepted, so please plan accordingly.

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, single 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.

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.

Articles must be submitted on Canvas and late articles will **NOT** be accepted, so please plan accordingly.

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Chapter Quizzes: 30% of Final Grade

There is an online exam for every chapter that we cover in class. The exams 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 exams and there is no time limit for completion as long as the exam is submitted before the deadline. Each exam 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 Engagement: 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 submit a questionnaire that details your skills and experience. 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.

Project clients will attend class to present the project(s) and answer specific questions during the second week of class. 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 presentation delivered both live and in electronic format to the client and to your instructor. The final presentation should be no less than 20 PowerPoint slides with notes pages. The notes pages must be detailed enough for the reader to understand what the 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.

This is a UWR course, so 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).

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In addition to successful delivery of the SoW, 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.***

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 assessment of your undergraduate course knowledge achievement that the university tracks over time. The score you receive on this test will NOT affect your grade in this class. Just completing the test will earn full credit.

Attendance and Participation: 10% of Final Grade

Working successfully in business requires collaboration, communication, and teamwork. This class will give you the opportunity to learn in a highly active and collaborative environment. 10% of your grade will be based on your regular attendance and positive participation in class.

This portion of your grade will not only be based on attendance, but it will also be based on your active and insightful participation on various discussion questions that will be debated and analyzed in class. In order to successfully participate in the class discussion you will be required to have read all the assigned material and thought through the issues prior to the class. The expectation is that you will be prepared to discuss the assigned topics in a spirited but respectful manner. The quantity of your participation is not as important as the quality of your participation. Your participation will be evaluated based on your ability to provide in-depth analysis on the discussion questions versus simply reciting theory and facts.

It may be necessary to miss a class due to illness, family emergency, or personal matters. Please send me an email in advance of these absences. If you are an athlete and you have games/events that conflict with class sessions provide a list of these events at the beginning of the term. Be sure to submit any assignments due on those days the class session before the one you will miss.

Your first assignment with respect to attendance and participation is to make sure that you have a current picture uploaded in Canvas and a complete LinkedIn profile. Show proof of LinkedIn profile by either connecting to your instructor or uploading a screen-shot on Canvas.

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A summary of the total points possible for this class by assignment is provided below. The final course grade assigned will be based on the percentage of total points earned by the student as outlined in the table below.

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
Assurance of Learning (ALE)	weekly	200	20%	5
Attendance & Participation	entire class	100	10%	1 - 5
Chapter Quizzes	weekly	300	30%	2 - 5
Consulting Engagement	Mon finals week	200	20%	1
Article Analysis	Week 3, 6	100	10%	1, 5
Major Fields Test	week 9	100	10%	university
Course Total		1,000	100%	

Brief Outline of Course:

On most days we will begin each class lecture/discussion. Please read the assigned chapter materials before coming to class so that you are prepared to discuss them! We will take one ten minute break during a class session unless the class votes to skip the break and end early.

In addition, there will sometimes be an in-class exercise which will require you to work with a team or a guest speaker who will share their marketing experience. We could have a number of guest speakers over the term; however, this depends on speaker availability and class schedules. Please let your Professor know if you have suggestions for guest speakers or know someone insightful who might be willing to share with the class.

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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 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 Academic Misconduct:

Eastern Oregon University 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: 1/1/2017 (updated 4/1/2018)