

**MIS 64185 Business Strategy, SEC. 001, CRN 16891, Fall 2013**

**Class:** Tuesday Thursday 2:25pm – 3:30pm, A325 BSA

**Professor:** Dr. Aviad Israeli

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**Office and office hours:** Monday Tuesday 11:00 am – noon, A422 BSA

**Required Texts and Materials:**

Thompson, Peteraf, Gamble, and Strickland, Crafting and Executing Strategy: The Quest for Competitive Advantage, 18th Edition. ISBN: 0078112729

Class notes, assignments, grades and other course related material will be accessible through the FlashLine – Backboard Learn course site.

**Course objectives:**

1. To develop your capacity to think strategically about a company, its present business position, its long-term direction, its resources and competitive capabilities, the caliber of its strategy, and its opportunities for gaining and sustaining competitive advantage.
2. To build your skills in conducting strategic analysis in a variety of industries and competitive situations and, especially, to provide you with a stronger understanding of the competitive challenges of a global market environment.
3. To integrate the knowledge gained in earlier core courses in the business school curriculum, show you how the various pieces of the business puzzle fit together, and demonstrate why the different parts of a business need to be managed in strategic harmony for the organization to operate in winning fashion.
4. To develop your powers of managerial judgment, help you learn how to assess business risk, and improve your ability to make sound business decisions and achieve effective outcomes.

**Registration:** Students have responsibility to ensure they are properly enrolled in classes. You are advised to review your official class schedule (using Student Tools on FlashLine) during the first two weeks of the semester to ensure you are properly enrolled in this class and section. Should you find an error in your class schedule, you have until September 8, 2013 to correct the error (Please check the registrar's website for details). Students attending the course who do not have the proper prerequisite risk being deregistered from the class. If registration errors are not corrected by this date and you continue to attend and participate in classes for which you are not officially enrolled, and you will not receive a grade at the conclusion of the semester for any class in which you are not properly registered.

**Drop date:** Course withdrawal deadline is Sunday, November 3, 2013. (Please check the registrar's website for details)

**Course expectations:**

Attendance at all class sessions is expected. Your participation in class discussions and your presentation of the assigned group case and the group case write-up will allow you to benefit from this course and will count in determining your participation grade in the course. Each student is expected to contribute to in-class analysis and discussion. Merely coming to class and listening to the discussion is not sufficient; attendance is not participation. Attendance is mandatory on the dates assigned for students' case presentations. If you must miss class discussion of an assigned case, you will need to provide advance notice.

Students will be assigned to groups and each group will be assigned two cases: one case for in-class group presentation and one case as a discussant group. You should read the “Guide to Case Analysis” posted in the “Student Edition” section of the text Web site ([www.mhhe.com/thompson](http://www.mhhe.com/thompson)). This is especially important for class members are not familiar with the case method and with how to prepare a case for class discussion and for written analysis. The guide provides explicit directions in the mechanics of coming to class adequately prepared for class discussion of an assigned case. The hints and pointers in the Guide to Case Analysis should help students understand the traditional analytical sequence of (1) identify, (2) evaluate, and (3) recommend.

The final exam will include topics discussed in class and during the case presentations as well as the readings from the textbook.

## Grading:

### Points are allocated as follows:

| Assignment                           | Points |
|--------------------------------------|--------|
| Class participation and contribution | 20     |
| Case write-up                        | 20     |
| Case presentation                    | 20     |
| Final exam                           | 40     |

### The grading scale is as follows:

| Total percentage earned | Grade |
|-------------------------|-------|
| ≥ 92.5 points           | A     |
| ≥89.5 points            | A-    |
| ≥87 points              | B+    |
| ≥82.5 points            | B     |
| ≥80 points              | B-    |
| ≥77.5 points            | C+    |
| ≥72 points              | C     |
| ≥68.5 points            | D+    |
| ≥ 62points              | D     |
| Below 62 points         | F     |

According to University Guidelines the grades are converted to your grade point average by the following rules: A = 4.0, A- = 3.7, B+ = 3.3, B = 3.0, B- = 2.7, C+ = 2.3, C = 2.0, C- = 1.7, D+ = 1.3, D = 1.0, F = 0.0

**Academic Honesty:** Cheating means to misrepresent the source, nature, or other conditions of your academic work (e.g., tests, papers, projects, assignments) so as to get undeserved credit. In addition, it is considered to cheating when one cooperates with someone else in any such misrepresentation. The use of the intellectual property of others without giving them appropriate credit is a serious academic offense. It is the University's policy that cheating or plagiarism result in receiving a failing grade for the work or course. Repeat offenses result in dismissal from the University.

**Students with Disabilities:** University policy 3342-3-01.3 requires that students with disabilities be provided reasonable accommodations to ensure their equal access to course content. If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, please contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to make arrangements for necessary adjustments for conducting the examinations. Please note, you must first verify your eligibility for these through Student Accessibility Services (contact 330-672-3391 or visit <http://www.registrars.kent.edu/disability>) for more information on registration procedures.

**Student Feedback:** Formal class evaluations will be distributed at the end of the term. However, if there are any problems or concerns during the semester, this feedback will be appreciated. Students can e-mail me at [aisraeli@kent.edu](mailto:aisraeli@kent.edu) and offer any suggestions, insights or other feedback throughout the semester.

**Course calendar:** Please note that this is a tentative course calendar. In case of significant changes, I will inform you by email.

| Meeting date on the week of: | Class topics:  | Read chapters (before class meeting).<br>Suggested complementary readings (in bold)  |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| August 26                    | Introduction   | 1  |
| September 2                  | What is strategy and why is it important<br>Charting a company's direction         | September 2 – Labor Day<br>2,3   |
| September 9                  | Evaluating a company's external environment  | 4<br><b>Porter M.E. (2008) "The Five Competitive Forces that Shape Strategy" <i>Harvard Business Review</i>, January 2008: 79-83.</b>  |
| September 16                 | Evaluating a company's resources capabilities and competitiveness                  | 5<br><b>Gautam R, Barney J.B. Muhanna W.A. (2004) "Capabilities, Business Processes, and Competitive Advantage: Choosing the Dependent Variable in Empirical Tests of the Resource-Based View", <i>Strategic Management Journal</i>, 25: 23–37</b> |
| September 23                 | The generic competitive strategies   | 6<br><b>Parnell J.A. (2006) "Generic Strategies after Two Decades: A Reconceptualization of Competitive Strategy" <i>Management Decisions</i>, 44(8): 1139-1154.</b>   |
| September 30                 | Strengthening a company's competitive position                                     | 7  |
| October 7                    | Strategies for competing in international markets                                  | 8  |
| October 14                   | Corporate strategy   | 9  |
| October 21                   | Ethics, corporate social responsibility, environmental sustainability and strategy | 10   |
| October 28                   | Building an organization capable of good strategy execution                        | 11   |

|             |  |   |
|-------------|--|---|
| November 4  | Managing internal operations, corporate culture and responsibility | 12, 13  |
| November 11 | Case presentation and discussion                                   | November 11 – Veterans’ Day                   |
| November 18 | Case presentation and discussion                                   |   |
| November 25 | Case presentation and discussion                                   | November 27 - December 1 – Thanksgiving Break |
| December 2  | Review – current issues in corporate strategy                      |   |
| Finals week |  |   |

PLEASE NOTE that the timing of the final exam is *not* under the control of your instructor, but has been posted long ahead of time on the University Registrar’s website. Its timing, as well as that of your other exams, can be verified by accessing the official Registrar’s website.

**Cases:**

Case 12 Google’s Strategy in 2010

Case 15 Skype versus AT&T and the Future of Telecommunications

Case 23 Starbucks’ Strategy and Internal Initiatives to Return to Profitable Growth

Case 25 Good Hotel: Doing Good, Doing Well?

Case 28 Countrywide Financial Corporation and the Subprime Mortgage Debacle