

University of Nebraska - Lincoln
Department of Management
MNGT 475: Business Policies and Strategy

Section: 001

Classroom, Days, & Time: CBA 24, Tuesday and Thursday, 8:00 AM – 9:15 AM

Instructor: Skylar Rolf, PhD Candidate

Office: CBA 275

E-mail: srolf@huskers.unl.edu

Office Hours: Tuesdays 9:30 AM – 11:00 AM and by appointment

COLLEGE GOALS/ OBJECTIVES:

The mission of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln College of Business Administration is to educate and mold the next generation of ethical leaders for Nebraska and the world through exceptional education and high impact research. To achieve this goal, students take required and elective courses to build their skills in four areas:

1. Communication Skills in Writing and Presentations
2. Intellectual Depth and Breadth in the Major and across the Business Disciplines
3. Critical Thinking and Application of Knowledge in Solving Analytical and Quantitative Problems
4. Business Environment Knowledge and Skills Necessary to Understand Values, Ethics and Other Issues in a Global Context

Students taking **Management 475** will demonstrate increased proficiency in all four areas.

SPECIFIC COURSE LEARNING GOALS/ OBJECTIVES:

1. Develop an understanding of the complex and dynamic conditions, challenging questions, and conflicting responsibilities in strategic decision making
2. Identify and critically assess external and internal factors affecting a firm and its competitive advantage in the market
3. Introduce the diagnostic and analytical tools available to assess an organization's fit between its competitive opportunities and its value-creating resources, knowledge, and capabilities
4. Identify: a) strategies that organizations might use to respond to or change their competitive environments in order to achieve and sustain superior performance over time and b) the processes by which these strategies are formulated, implemented, and controlled
5. Develop an understanding of the leadership role of top management and the importance of interdependence among organizational functions in strategic action

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Business Policies and Strategy is a senior-level capstone course designed to build on and integrate the knowledge and skills acquired during the business school curriculum and to critically analyze strategic decisions made by organizational leaders. A primary goal of

this course is to connect theory with practice and to develop critical thinking, written communication and oral communication skills as they relate to the discipline of strategic management. This course requires students to formulate and apply business policies and strategies through the analysis of cases and business simulations using knowledge acquired in basic courses in accounting, economics, finance, human resources, information systems, marketing, and operations, and the business.

COURSE PREREQUISITES:

Senior standing and a 2.5 GPA; major in the College of Business Administration; ACCT 201 and 202, or 306; ECON 211 or 212; FINA 361; MNGT 301 or 360; ; MRKT 341; SCMS/MNGT 331 and 350; or equivalent. Graduating seniors have priority. Students who are not scheduled to graduate at the end of the current semester may be dropped from the class.

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

- (1) Strategic Management, 11th Edition. Hitt, Ireland, & Hoskisson, (2014).
ISBN-10: 1285425189 | ISBN-13: 9781285425184
- (2) The Business Strategy Game: Competing in a Global Marketplace. (Player's Guide), Thompson, A.A., Jr., Stappenbeck, G.J. & Reidenbach, M.A. (2014).
 - a. (Instructions how to access this content will be provided in-class)
- (3) There will be two case studies students are required to purchase. Instructions regarding how to do so will be provided in-class.

COURSE POLICIES:

Late Assignments: I cannot accept late assignments unless there is a *documented* authorized excuse. Furthermore, for the Individual Common Case Assignment, ABSOLUTELY NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Attendance: Attendance during each class period is required. However, I understand that sometimes circumstances arise that make attendance difficult or impossible. In order to receive an excused absence, you will need to email the instructor **at least one hour prior to the start of class to inform him that you will be missing class with an adequate description regarding why you will be absent.** The instructor reserves the right to use his judgment regarding whether the reason for the absence is considered excused. Among the reasons absences are considered excused by the instructor are the following:

1. Participation in an activity appearing on the university authorized activity list.
2. Death or major illness in a student's family.
3. Illness of a dependent family member.
4. Participation in legal proceedings or administrative procedures that require a student's presence.

5. Religious holy day.
6. Injury or Illness that is too severe or contagious for the student to attend class. Appropriate documentation must be provided by the conclusion of the next scheduled class.
7. Required participation in military duties.
8. Job or admission interviews which cannot be rescheduled.

Each individual starts the course with a perfect attendance score: 50 points out of a possible 50 points. However, for each *unexcused absence*, your attendance grade is reduced by 3 points. Furthermore, students with 5 or more unexcused absences will be subject to a lowering of their final letter grade by one letter (eg. A- to B-). Students who have 10 or more unexcused absences will receive a final letter grade of F. **Also, note that each unexcused absence severely damages your In-Class Involvement grade, and if you are not present when your name is called for the Hot Seat, you will receive a zero on that assignment.**

Academic Integrity: Per the UNL Student Code of Conduct: "The maintenance of academic honesty and integrity is a vital concern of the University community. Any student found guilty of academic dishonesty shall be subject to both academic and disciplinary sanctions."

a. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: Copying or attempting to copy from an academic test or examination of another student; using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids or other devices for an academic test, examination or exercise; engaging or attempting to engage the assistance of another individual in misrepresenting the academic performance of a student; communicating information in an unauthorized manner to another person for an academic test, examination or exercise; plagiarism; tampering with academic records and examinations; falsifying identity; aiding other students in academic dishonesty, and other behaviors in the student judicial code of conduct, Article III section B (stuafs.unl.edu/dos/code)

b. The penalties for academic dishonesty will be severe, and may range from receiving a failing grade on the test or assignment, failing the course in which academic dishonesty took place, or the possibility of expulsion from the university. Faculty will report all cases of academic dishonesty to the Dean of Students at UNL, who will place a report in the student's permanent file. A file of academic integrity violations will also be maintained by the College of Business.

c. If you copy, or substantially copy, work from anyone else on a paper, the work must be put in quotes and the source(s) cited. Otherwise, it is plagiarism. If plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty are found on a group work assignment, it is possible that every member of the group will be punished. It is to your advantage to check out anything that does not seem like the work of your group members or colleagues. Written assignments are subject to verification using Safe Assignment for plagiarism.

Americans with Disabilities Act: Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructor for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation within the first week of class. It is the policy of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration, 472-3787 voice or TTY.

Achievement Centered Education (ACE):

This course will satisfy Learning Outcome 10 in the Achievement Centered Education (ACE) university-wide education program. Details of the program can be found at <http://ace.unl.edu/>. ACE10 requires that students generate a creative or scholarly product that reflects broad business knowledge, appropriate technical proficiency, information collection, synthesis, interpretation, presentation, and reflection. ACE Outcome 10 will be assessed through your performance in a business simulation, in which you will integrate the knowledge from your previous courses with information specific to the content on this course to demonstrate your ability to make decisions about the performance of a company. You will receive feedback on your performance overall relative to your peers in the class.

Equitable Climate: It is important that a good climate for learning be provided by the instructor and students. Please join me to help avoid any form of harassment in the class. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln defines harassment as “a form of discrimination in which unwelcome, severe, or pervasive speech or actions are directed to individuals or groups of people on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, veteran or marital status, sexual orientation, or political views, either directly or indirectly.” If you feel any harassment has been directed towards you, please let me know as soon as possible either in person or anonymously with a note under my door at CBA 275. You may also contact Dr. Dennis Duchon, Management Department Chair, or Dean Plowman. Discrimination problems can also be reported to Counseling and Psychological Services, Student Judicial Affairs, or the Office of Affirmative Action and Diversity Programs.

COURSE GRADING CRITERIA:

Participation & Preparation

Attendance:	50 points
In-Class Involvement:	50 points
Company Analysis Assignment:	50 points
Hot Seat:	50 points

Case

Group Case Assignment:	50 points
Individual Common Assignment:	150 points

Exams

Exam 1	100 points
Exam 2	100 points
Major Field Test	20 points

BSG

Quiz 1	20 points
Quiz 2	35 points
Strategic Intent Assignment	50 points
Competitive Team Performance	125 points
BSG Analysis & Report	100 points
Team Presentation	<u>50 points</u>
Total:	1000 points

The grading scale for this class is as follows:

Point Range	Grade
970 - 1000+	A+
930 - 969	A
900 - 929	A-
870 - 899	B+
830 - 869	B
800 - 829	B-
770 - 799	C+
730 - 769	C
700 - 729	C-
670 - 699	D+
630 - 669	D
600 - 629	D-
599 or less	F

TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

Participation

Because this class is designed around BOTH class discussion and lecture, attendance and in-class participation are crucial to the success of the class. In other words, the learning that results from this class will depend at least as much on your contribution to the class discussion as mine.

Attendance: Attendance during each class period is required. However, I understand that sometimes circumstances arise that make attendance difficult or impossible. In order to receive an excused absence, you will need to email the instructor **at least one hour prior to the start of class to inform him that you will be missing class with an adequate description regarding why you will be absent.** The instructor reserves the right to use his judgment regarding whether the reason for the absence is considered excused. Among the reasons absences are considered excused by the instructor are the following:

1. Participation in an activity appearing on the university authorized activity list.
2. Death or major illness in a student's family.
3. Illness of a dependent family member.
4. Participation in legal proceedings or administrative procedures that require a student's presence.
5. Religious holy day.
6. Injury or Illness that is too severe or contagious for the student to attend class. Appropriate documentation must be provided by the conclusion of the next scheduled class.
7. Required participation in military duties.
8. Job or admission interviews which cannot be rescheduled.

Each individual starts the course with a perfect attendance score: 50 points out of a possible 50 points. However, for each *unexcused absence*, your attendance grade is reduced by 3 points. Furthermore, students with 5 or more unexcused absences will be subject to a lowering of their final letter grade by one letter (eg. A- to B-). Students who have 10 or more unexcused absences will receive a final letter grade of F. **Also, note that each unexcused absence severely damages your In-Class Involvement grade, and if you are not present when your name is called for the Hot Seat, you will receive a zero on that assignment.**

In-Class Involvement: Basically there are four levels of in-class involvement: level 1: physically or mentally not being present or negatively affecting the overall learning environment (talking during lectures, interrupting others during discussions, etc.); level 2: unprepared participation ("off the top of your head" type comments not based on the required material - i.e. "I liked this reading a lot"); level 3: prepared participation (demonstrated by a general preparedness and willingness to engage in discussion and activities); and level 4: exemplary participation (where significant value is added to the

learning process such as through evocative questions, well grounded solutions to applied questions, assisting classmates in learning material, thoughtful responses, or sharing of relevant experiences).

I expect students to put forth their very best effort in terms of in-class participation as well as in-group participation. This applies to both the quality and quantity of participation. Being outspoken and overbearing is not a desirable form of participation and neither is silence. Below are some additional guidelines that should be followed in class.

1. Be courteous. Come on time and do not leave early. Do not interrupt or engage in private conversations while others are speaking. It is also disrespectful to your classmates and your instructor to surf the web during class. Texting, surfing the internet for purposes other than what is being discussed, and similar disruptive behavior are not allowed and will negatively influence a student's participation grade.
2. Have an opinion and respect others' rights to hold opinions and beliefs that differ from your own. There are many different possible lenses for interpreting the material in this class.
3. Allow everyone the chance to talk. If you have much to say, try to hold back a bit. If you are hesitant to speak, look for opportunities to contribute to the discussion.

Your instructor will evaluate in-class involvement throughout the entire course. Please note that the grading of in-class involvement is subjective and your score will be determined using the criteria listed above.

Preparation

Knowledge is not something that can be simply given from one person to another. Therefore, simply showing up to class and passively listening is not sufficient to result in learning. Reading (not skimming!) the assigned materials prior to class is mandatory for all students. In order to get the most out of this course you should think about how the readings apply to you now and in the future. You are expected to complete the entire reading assignment whether or not you are able to attend a particular class period. Preparation will be assessed using the two assignments discussed below.

Company Analysis Assignment: The purpose of this assignment is to encourage student engagement with the course content prior to attending class while also promoting familiarization with a company that is relevant to the student. Prior to each lecture class period (marked with a * in the schedule), I will post a few questions that need to be answered by each student regarding the assigned reading. These questions will vary depending upon the reading content, but all questions will require the student to engage the reading material and, depending on the content, the student will need to apply their understanding of the material in a brief analysis of their chosen company (see Company Selection note below). Each student must submit his/her answers to the assigned

questions prior to the start of each lecture class period via a Google Form that is linked to in Blackboard. Please do not email your answers to your instructor.

This assignment helps students prepare for the upcoming class discussion as well as for the Hot Seat. Each assignment will be graded on a Completed/Not Completed basis. Students who complete the assignment by the deadline (with at least reasonable quality answers) will receive 5 points. Students who do not complete the assignment by the deadline (or whose answers are deficient in quality) will receive 0 points for the assignment. There are 12 *Company Analysis Assignments* throughout the semester. Each assignment is worth a maximum of 5 points, and I will drop the lowest two assignment scores for each student at the end of the semester.

Here are some general guidelines for the *Company Analysis Assignment*:

- Please keep your responses concise. Your ability to answer the question being asked without extraneous information demonstrates that you understand the concept I am asking you to apply.
- Be objective. You are analyzing the company, not selling its products. Your perspective should be that of an analysis, not a customer.
- I am interested in your thoughts and analyses, not those of some company public-relations copywriter. Put responses into your own words and make sure you understand what you are saying.
- Company Selection: Companies that are commonly used for case discussions in this or other classes; companies that have been the subject of published cases (e.g., Harvard Business School Cases); and companies with cases in the textbook are not eligible for selection. A list of example companies that are specifically not eligible is given below:

3M	Ford	PepsiCo
Amazon	GM	Southwest
Apple	Google	Airlines
Best Buy	Harley Davidson	Starbucks
Boston Beer Co.	Home Depot	Target
Cabela's	Jamba Juice	Tesla
Coca-Cola	Johnson &	Trader Joe's
Columbia	Johnson	Twitter
Dell	Kohl's	Under Armour
Disney	Microsoft	Wal-Mart
eBay	Nelnet	Whole Foods
Exxon Mobil	Netflix	Mkt
Facebook	Nike	FedEx
FedEx	Oracle	Ford

I reserve the right to reject any company selection if I feel that it will present problems in meeting the educational objectives of the assignments.

The Hot Seat: At the beginning of lecture/discussion class periods (the class periods indicated with a * in the course schedule), five students will be randomly selected to come to the front of the class and share their answers to the *Company Analysis* assigned questions in addition to sharing one thing that the student learned from the reading.

Students can be called upon to be on the Hot Seat a maximum of two times over the course of the semester. All students in the class will have at least one opportunity to participate on the Hot Seat. Students that are selected more than one time will have their grades averaged for their final grade for this assignment. If a student's name is drawn while the student is absent from class, he/she will receive a 0 for this assignment unless the absence is excused (see attendance policy for an explanation of excused absences), in which case they will be given another opportunity in a later class period. Also, if you are called to participate in the Hot Seat and are not present when your name is called, you will receive a zero on that assignment.

For the Hot Seat assignment, students will be graded on being present when their name is called, actively participating in the Hot Seat, demonstrating reasonable knowledge about their selected company, the quality of their answers to the assigned questions (students are welcome to read their answers if they choose), and their ability to defend their answers to the instructor and/or peers. A student's grade on the Hot Seat assignment can range between 0 and 50 points.

Case Assignments

Group Case Assignment: Analyzing the strategic issues of a real company can be an effective way to develop thinking skills in a way that is a complement to trying to operate a business. Each BSG team will be assigned one of two cases, and this case will need to be purchased. We will discuss each case in class. More information will be available later.

Individual Common Case Assignment: A common assignment will be given to all students across all sections of the MNGT475 course. This assignment will require a written analysis of a business case study. Information about a particular business case study will be posted on Blackboard on the afternoon of **Friday, November 11, 2016**. Once the information is posted, students should immediately proceed to obtain/purchase the full case. The rubric that faculty will use to grade the students' submissions will also be posted.

Each student has to submit (upload) an **individually** written analysis **on Blackboard by 5pm, Friday, November 18, 2016. ABSOLUTELY NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED. The assignment must be submitted via Blackboard and cannot be submitted to the instructor via email or any other means.** Students should strictly follow the following format for the submitted document: maximum 3 pages long, single spaced, 12 pt Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins, and with appropriately titled headings for paragraphs. Inclusion of an Appendix (maximum of additional 2 pages) as part of the submitted document is optional.

This is an **individual** assignment. Students may not work on the case together, nor can they even discuss the case until the deadline on **November 18, 2016**. Collaboration or outside help of any kind will be considered a violation of the Nebraska Student Code of Conduct. The minimum penalty for such a violation will be a grade of zero for the assignment, but, depending on the severity of the violation, may result in a grade of F in the course or dismissal from the University (See above “Academic Integrity”). More information about the common assignment will be available later in the semester.

Business Strategy Game

The Business Strategy Game (BSG) is an industry simulation where each BSG team represents a competitor in the industry. This simulation is an integral part of the learning process in this course. Please read the ***Business Strategy Game Assignments & Schedule Overview*** document carefully for specific guidelines and details regarding each specific BSG assignment. *Instructions regarding when and how to sign up for the Business Strategy Game will be provided in class.*

Midterm Exam & Final Exam:

Both exams are required for all students in the course. Both exams will be closed book. Exams will be representative of material covered in the text, class notes, homework, and in-class exercises. All the questions in the exams will be either true/false or multiple choice. There will be 50 questions in each exam. Make up exams will not be given unless the student can produce documentation of a legitimate reason that s/he will be unable to be present on the day of the exam. Arrangements for an allowed make-up exam must be made **prior** to the date of the regularly scheduled exam. The instructor reserves the right to determine whether or not an excuse for a test date absence will be deemed legitimate. If a student misses a regularly scheduled exam and has not made prior arrangements for a make-up exam, a make-up exam will be permitted only in cases of dire mitigating circumstances and the instructor reserves the right to determine whether or not the circumstances warrant the administration of a make-up exam. The student will bear the burden of providing adequate documentation to establish the existence of such mitigating circumstances.

Major Field Test:

All students enrolled in MNGT 475 are required to take the Major Field Test exam. For students in MNGT 475 Section 001, the Major Field test will be administered on Tuesday, November 29th from 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm in the Computer Labs and Testing Center (CBA12, 14, 33 and 37). If a student has a conflict with the assigned exam time or any other questions about the Major Field Test, he/she should contact Margo Young at myoung1@unl.edu.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

This syllabus provides a general plan for the course. Deviations may be necessary.

Week	Class	Focus	Content Covered	Simulation Assignments	Other Assignments
1	1: T Aug 23	Introduction/Review Syllabus			
	2: TR Aug 25	Lecture/Discussion on Strategic Management	Chapter 1		
2	3: T Aug 30	*Lecture/Discussion on The Moral Imperative of Firms & Business Ethics/Intro to Business Strategy Game	Beyond The Business Case For Corporate Sustainability Article; What Should You Do If You Lose Faith In What You Are Selling Article; Huffington Post Article	Register for Business Strategy Game prior to class on Sep. 6	Company Analysis Assignment (CAA) Due @ 8:00 AM
	4: TR Sep 1	*Lecture/Discussion on Business-Level Strategy	Chapter 4	BSG Quiz 1 opens @ 5:00 pm	CAA Due @ 8:00 AM
3	5: T Sep 6	BSG Workshop: Work on Practice Round 1	BSG Players Guide		
	6: TR Sep 8	*Lecture/Discussion on External Environment	Chapter 2	BSG Quiz 1, due @ 5:00 pm; BSG Practice Round 1, due @ 5:00 pm	CAA Due @ 8:00 AM
4	7: T Sep 13	BSG Workshop: Debrief Round 1/Do Practice Round 2			

	8: TR Sep 15	*Lecture/Discussion on the Internal Organization/Introduction to Jet Fighter Exercise	Chapter 3 (pg. 73-89)	BSG Practice Round 2, due @ 5 pm (Data reset to Year 11 at 5 pm on Sep 17)	CAA Due @ 8:00 AM
5	9: T Sep 20	BSG Workshop: Strategic Intent			
	10: TR Sep 22	*Jet Fighter Exercise & Value Chains	Chapter 3 (pg. 89-91); Jet Fighter Instructions	BSG Year 11, due @ 5 pm	CAA Due @ 8:00 AM
6	11: T Sep 27	*Lecture/Discussion on Competitive Rivalry & Competitive Dynamics	Chapter 5	Strategic Intent Assignment Due @ 5 pm; Submit via Blackboard	CAA Due @ 8:00 AM
	12: TR Sep 29	Exam 1 Review		BSG Year 12, due @ 5 pm	
7	13: T Oct 4	Guest Speaker – Derek Hancock			
	14: TR Oct 6	Exam 1		BSG Year 13, due @ 5 pm	
8	15: T Oct 11	*Lecture/Discussion on Corporate-Level Strategy/Discuss Exam	Chapter 6	BSG Quiz #2 opens at 5 pm	CAA Due @ 8:00 AM
	16: TR Oct 13	BSG Quiz #2		BSG Year 14, due @ 5 pm; BSG Quiz #2, Due @ 5 pm on Oct. 19	
9	17: T Oct 18	FALL BREAK – NO CLASS!!			
	18: TR Oct 20	*Lecture/Discussion on Merger & Acquisition Strategies	Chapter 7 (pg. 193-212)	BSG Year 15, due @ 5 pm	CAA Due @ 8:00 AM
10	19: T Oct 25	Acquire	Acquire Instructions		
	20: TR Oct 27	*Lecture/Discussion on Corporate Governance	Chapter 10 (pg. 295-313; 317-318)	BSG Year 16, due @ 5 pm	CAA Due @ 8:00 AM

11	21: T Nov 1	*Lecture/Discussion on Strategic Leadership	Chapter 12		CAA Due @ 8:00 AM
	22: TR Nov 3	Guest Speaker – Dr. Tyler Martin		BSG Year 17, due @ 5 pm	Group Case Study Assignment Due on Nov 3rd @ 5 pm; Submit via Blackboard
12	23: T Nov 8	Discuss Group Case Studies/BSG Workshop	Assigned Case Studies (To Be Determined)		
	24: TR Nov 10	*Lecture/Discussion on International Strategy & Cooperative Strategy	Chapters 8 (pg. 224-248) & 9 (pg. 263-267; 271-286)	BSG Year 18, due @ 5 pm	CAA Due @ 8:00 AM; Common Case Available @ Noon, Friday Nov. 11th
13	25: T Nov 15	Workshop: Common Case Assignment			
	26: TR Nov 17	*Lecture/Discussion on Strategic Entrepreneurship	Chapter 13		CAA Due @ 8:00 AM; Common Case due @ 5 pm, Friday Nov. 18th
14	27: T Nov 22	Exam 2 Review			
	28: TR Nov 24	HAPPY THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS!!			

15	29: T Nov 29	Guest Speaker – Russ Gronewold		BSG Peer Evaluations Open @ 5 pm	Major Field Test from 6:30 to 9:00 pm in the Comp. Labs and Testing Center (CBA12, 14, 33 and 37)
	30: TR Dec 1	BSG Team Presentations			
16	31: T Dec 6	BSG Team Presentations			
	32: TR Dec 8	BSG Team Presentations		BSG Analysis & Report Due @ 5 pm via Blackboard; BSG Team Member Peer Evaluations Due @ 5 pm via BSG Website	
17	33: T Dec 13 (Finals Week)	In-Class Exam 2 on Tuesday, Dec 13th from 7:30 to 9:30 am			