

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, CARLSON SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT
MGMT 3004: BUSINESS STRATEGY (VIRTUAL DELIVERY)
FALL 2020

Professor Jiao Luo

(Co-developed with Minnesota Strategy Faculty Moshe Barach, Mary Benner, & Alex Wilson)

Section 2: Mon Wedn 9:45 – 11:00 a.m. Zoom
Section 5: Mon Wedn 1:00 – 2:15 p.m. Zoom

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Office hours: 11:15 am - 12:15 pm, Mondays & Wednesdays on Zoom (sign-up for slots on Canvas Calendar) OR by appointment

Required readings: A textbook and case packet are required for this course. The textbook is available through the University bookstore at: <http://www.bookstores.umn.edu>.

Textbook: Hitt, Ireland and Hoskisson, 12th edition, Strategic Management -- Concepts

You may purchase or rent used versions of the textbook from sources other than the bookstore, just make sure you get the 12th edition (we are using the 12th edition because it will be much cheaper than newer editions). The 12th Edition -- Concepts and Cases version works fine also. There might be differences across versions/editions, and you will be responsible for any discrepancies between the material in the 12th edition of the book and the version you purchase. You do not need Mindtap.

Digital Case packet: for Prof. Mary Benner (Spring 2020, MGMT 3004, sections 1 and 3)

The case packet is available in electronic format and must be purchased directly from HBS publishing at <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/744784> (Links to an external site.). It will cost around \$25.5 pre-tax, and contains 6 cases.

Other required readings will be posted on the Canvas course website, provided in class, or available within the UMN library databases: <https://www.lib.umn.edu/subjects/rqs/144>

Course website:

Weekly materials and updates for this course will be posted on the Canvas course site. You can access the Canvas site for this course through the “MyU” portal at www.myu.umn.edu. Please check the site at least once a week. For help with Canvas, see the online help page at <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701> or call the IT helpdesk at 612.625.5550.

Course Objectives:

This course encourages you to analyze the problems of managing organizations in domestic and international settings. We will focus on the competitive strategy of the firm, examining issues central to its long- and short-term competitive position. You will solve problems related to the development or

maintenance of the competitive advantage of the firm, and also develop your ability to assess an organization's strategic situation. This includes assessing a firm's current competitive situation, analyzing its resources and capabilities, and determining the appropriateness of its current strategy given characteristics of the competitive environment, organizational objectives, and opportunities for creating and sustaining competitive advantage.

The goal of the course is to help you develop an analytic toolkit for understanding strategic issues and to enrich your appreciation for the thought processes essential for strategic analysis. In this course, you have an opportunity to develop a general management perspective by combining your knowledge of specific functional areas with an appreciation for the challenges posed by the need to integrate functions and functional strategies into a coherent whole. You will develop your judgment and ability to structure complex business problems and make decisions in situations that offer limited information. You will also develop your ability to craft and communicate recommendations for an organization.

Approach:

The course involves a combination of pre-recorded, short video lectures, class discussions and activities, case discussions, and group work. These are designed to familiarize you with the important strategic frameworks, knowledge, and basic vocabulary required to analyze a company and make assessments about sources of its competitive advantage. You will increasingly learn to make good strategic decisions with limited information. Although part of strategy is sound judgment and problem solving, part of effective strategy-making in organizations is also the ability to communicate and defend your ideas, which is an important aspect of both the case discussions and group work.

Course Delivery Method:

Each week we will explore a different topic related to business strategy. Video recordings of brief lectures on each topic will be posted to canvas the week before (if not earlier). Students are expected to view these recordings and complete the assigned readings and quizzes in preparation for each week's discussion session.

Typically, the first virtual session of the week (on Monday) will be an open discussion to review key concepts from the week's video lectures and readings and clarify any questions you might have. These sessions are **OPTIONAL** and no attendance or class participation will be assessed during them. My intent is to provide an opportunity for you to engage with me and discuss anything on which you would like clarification. I will also plan to provide examples and activities to drive home these concepts. In all likelihood, these sessions will not last 75 minutes, and you can use the remaining time as you please (including working on group assignments). But I will be available the entire 75 minutes should you want to go over any course concepts. This also means that these sessions are **NOT** a substitute for the video lectures or course readings. I expect you to have reviewed all that material before you attend an optional discussion session. The Monday sessions are meant to supplement those readings, allowing you to clarify what you have read and discuss additional topics of relevant interest.

Typically, the second virtual session of the week (on Wednesday) will then apply the concepts for the week through an in-depth analysis of the assigned cases. This means attendance to this session is expected of all students. The purpose of this discussion will be to explore an application of the course concepts in a real-world context using a set of stylized facts. For your convenience discussion questions for each case analysis have been provided in the overview to each module. These represent only a starting point, however; class discussions may often go beyond these questions.

There are some exceptions to this course plan. In Week 12 we will have a mandatory case discussion session on Monday November 23 and have no class on Wednesday November 25. In Week 14 we will have mandatory sessions for final presentation on Monday December 7 and Wednesday December 9. Please always refer to course schedule (posted under the 'Welcome Module').

Class discussions:

Classes will consist of a combination of lecture and discussion on each strategy topic. Some weeks will include an in-depth analysis and discussion of a case. Preparation is essential. To prepare for class discussion, please read all of the assigned materials for the week. In class, you should be prepared to analyze the concepts from the case and the readings and to discuss the preparation questions provided.

The goal of our discussions is to enhance the class's understanding of strategic issues. A productive learning environment is created from the active engagement of all class members. This type of participation and discussion works best when everyone 1) attends class and participates; 2) has carefully prepared by reading the assigned materials; 3) can identify the important managerial issues related to the case and/or readings; 4) can use that analysis to define a concise and logical position on the issues (you should avoid pure repetition of the case facts, and should instead be able to show how a concept from class is illustrated in the case or suggest how the substantive problem presented in the case can be solved); and 5) can listen and analyze *constructively* the positions of classmates. You can contribute to this goal by asking or answering questions or responding to others' comments with a clarifying, supporting, or differing view. Sometimes it can be difficult to achieve this sort of fruitful discussion in a large class. Sometimes you will not be able to speak when you want to; other times you will feel like students are off-track or just repeating what other students have already said. Remember that we all share responsibility for the quality of our class discussions. If you think a discussion is stagnating or missing the important points, think of a better way to answer the question and raise your hand. I may use cold calling to ensure preparation and some balance in participation throughout the course. You should also expect a few quizzes during the semester. These help me assess the level of student preparation for the case discussions.

Grading:

Grades are the way we assess the extent to which you have mastered the material in the course. We will gauge your comprehension of the material through both the individual exams and quizzes, as well as your ability to apply concepts and make recommendations as part of a group project.

The weights for each part of the course grade are outlined below:

Assignment	% of final grade
Quizzes	10%
2 Group Case Write Ups	10%
2 Midterms	50%
Group Final Project (Paper, Presentation)	30%

Quizzes:

Quizzes are short, simple, multiple choice tests. They are to be taken after watching videos and are designed to allow you to assess your grasp of material. I may also run short quizzes on an unannounced basis during mandatory sessions. They are designed to reward attendance and preparation, since we all benefit in the class discussions from having everyone prepared.

Group case writeups:

You will be assigned to groups of four or five students for the group project assignment. You will be asked to meet with your group and develop a case write up prior to our case discussions. Two per group per semester. Schedule will be posted on Canvas.

Midterms:

There are two exams. They are scheduled in advance, and they will feature multiple choice and short-answer questions. Exams will be administered using Proctorio. I will administer one or more practice tests with the same security settings so that you know what to expect and technology issues can be addressed.

Final Project:

With the same group, you will develop a final project, which includes a presentation during the last few days of class and a final paper due at the end of the semester. More details on the project will be provided in separate materials later in the course. Some class sessions will provide opportunities to meet with your group to discuss the group project or other course topics.

Due Dates and Late Work:

All due dates and times have been added to the course calendar. Please be sure to meet deadlines for your group assignments, as we often rely on your input to move the class forward. Late group submission will not be accepted.

That said, this semester is a little different compared to others and I know that sometimes we need to prioritize overall wellbeing over other tasks. In order to offer additional flexibility, you may email me and request a 24-hr extension for maximum two individual submission. Otherwise, late individual submissions will not be accepted.

Attendance Requirement:

While there are no penalties for being absent from the case discussions per se, I expect all students to attend everyone of the sessions marked as mandatory. As already mentioned, the open discussion sessions are entirely optional but highly recommended.

Final Grade Calculation:

At the conclusion of the semester, your final grade will be determined by assessing your scores on the graded components. The course components are weighted, so your final grade will not be based on a simple sum of the points you received throughout the semester. Basic grade cut-offs are established in accordance with a distribution that conforms to the Carlson School grading policies. This course tends to be challenging, so you should not necessarily worry if your grade percentages are relatively low. Final

letter grades tend to be higher than the typical letter grades associated with percentage scores (from high school). If you truly demonstrate mastery of the course material, you will do well in this class, even if other students also do well. A breakdown of the scores and (minimum) corresponding letter grades are below; they may be adjusted (i.e. the score range may start lower for each letter grade), depending on the difficulty of the exams.

93% to 100%	will be an	A
90% to 92%	will be at least	A-
87% to 89%	will be at least	B+
83% to 86%	will be at least	B
80% to 82%	will be at least	B-
77% to 79%	will be at least	C+
73% to 76%	will be at least	C
70% to 72%	will be at least	C-

Other considerations for grading:

Grades may decrease when: A student frequently misses team meetings, fails to prepare for discussions and other activities, avoids answering questions, does not make constructive contributions to team/class discussions, negatively impacts the course progress (through lack of preparation, or showing lack of respect or professional consideration for colleagues).

Grades may increase when: A student makes important contributions in class and team interactions. This type of student is well prepared the majority of the time and shares constructive, thoughtful ideas that will advance everyone's learning. This does not mean that the student monopolizes class conversations or the team project, but that he/she/they consistently add value to our learning process.

Students will have an opportunity to assess their teammates' individual contributions to the group project at the end of the course. I may take these into account in determining final grades for the course.

OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Zoom Recordings

This course will include video and audio recordings of class lectures and classroom activities. These recordings will be used for educational purposes and the instructor will make these available to students currently enrolled in MGMT3004, Sections 002 and 005. Students must seek instructor permission in order to share either course recordings or course content/materials. Similarly, instructors who wish to share zoom recordings with other sections or classes must seek and document permission from students whose image or voice are in these recordings.

Virtual Learning Expectations:

While you engage in learning virtually—whether through Zoom, Google hangouts, email, blogs, group chats, video chats, etc.—please know that the expectations for participation and conduct are the same as if you were taking the class in person. The following expectations for participation in online learning (via Zoom, Google hangouts, email, group chats, etc.) apply to all students:

- Students have the right to express themselves and participate freely in an online class.
- Students are expected to treat each other, instructor(s), and all other staff members with courtesy and respect.
- Only individuals registered and enrolled in a particular course may access the course materials, lectures, group discussions, etc. in the online environment, unless otherwise approved by the instructor. Links to course materials, including video meetings, should not be shared with individuals who are not enrolled in the course unless otherwise approved by the instructor.
- Offensive or inappropriate language or images should not be used in any form of communication e.g., emails, discussion postings, group projects, and submitted assignments. This includes background images and settings in Zoom and other video platforms.
- The discussion area of the course is reserved for postings related to course work only. Postings of a personal or non-academic nature are not permitted and may be removed by the instructor should they appear.
- Grades and personal issues should be handled by private email or chat to the instructor.
- Emails or chats to the instructor that are considered offensive or inappropriate will be sent back to the writer with a request to rewrite and resubmit.
- If students receive inappropriate emails or chats from others in the class, they should notify the instructor immediately.

Academic integrity:

The Carlson School expects students to show respect for themselves, their classmates and their community by maintaining a high standard of academic conduct. The School defines academic misconduct as any act by a student that misrepresents the student's own academic work or compromises the work of another. This includes (but is not limited to): cheating on assignments or examinations, plagiarizing, i.e. misrepresenting as one's own work any work done by another, submitting the same paper, or substantially similar papers, for credit in more than one course without the approval of the instructors concerned, or sabotaging another's work. Students found guilty of academic misconduct face penalties ranging from lowering of the course grade or awarding a grade of F or N for the entire course, to suspension from the University.

A note on plagiarism: plagiarism is the act of stealing words or ideas directly from other sources and presenting them as your own. Cutting and pasting text directly from searches on the Internet without proper citation or attribution is obviously plagiarism. But stealing ideas is also plagiarism. For example, using another writer's assessment of the three 'most important' factors in a given situation requires proper attribution, even if you don't use the exact words. In your group projects, you are required to carefully cite and attribute everything you take from other locations. The goal is to add your original thought, synthesis, and the application of course materials to the unique situation you are addressing.

Course Schedule:

We will adhere as closely as possible to the projected schedule; however, the schedule is subject to change. Notification of changes will be delivered in class, posted on the course Canvas site, and/or sent via email.

Code of Professional Conduct:

- Join us for class discussions: Treat this class like you would an important client/customer. Try to avoid conflicts with class; much of the learning in the course occurs during our time in class.

- Arrive on time and stay for the duration. Late arrivals and early departures are disruptive to the learning process for the whole class. Arriving late and leaving early can imply a lack of respect for others' time. Avoid going in and out of the room during class time. In a business setting it would be unusual to casually walk in and out of a conference room during meetings.
- Come prepared and ready to actively participate in class discussions. Your perspectives are valuable for helping you and others learn. Plus, it's useful in business to be viewed as a contributor and leader, engaged in the enterprise, not a passive bystander.

Where to turn for help:

- Accommodations for Students with Disabilities. The University of Minnesota is committed to providing all students equal access to learning opportunities. Disability Services is the campus office that works with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations. Students registered with Disability Services, who have a letter requesting accommodations, are encouraged to contact the instructor early in the semester. Students who have, or think they may have, a disability (e.g. psychiatric, attentional, learning, vision, hearing, physical, or systemic), are invited to contact Disability Services for a confidential discussion at 612-626-1333 (V/TTY) or at ds@umn.edu. Additional information is available at the DS website <http://ds.umn.edu>.
- Help with stress, anxiety, depression, and other issues. At times, we all can feel stressed, anxious, depressed or overwhelmed. Sometimes these problems go away on their own. There are times when these issues don't resolve or they get in the way of our ability to do our best in school and in life. When this occurs it may be time to seek professional help. Donna Kulakowski is CSOM's wellness counselor. She is available to meet with any enrolled undergraduate who might find themselves struggling with issues that interfere with school or life. Her office is located in the Academic Advising suite, HMH 2-190. Any Carlson undergraduate is welcome to schedule an appointment by calling 612-624-3323. All services are free and completely confidential.
- University Counseling and Consulting Services can help students with a variety of issues, such as improving grades, choosing a major, and tackling personal problems. For more information, visit www.uccs.umn.edu or call 612-624-3323.

COURSE CALENDAR

MGMT 3004 – Professor Luo – Fall 2020

(Details are subject to change, regularly check the course Canvas site for updated information)

Week	Date	Day	Pre-recorded Videos	Topic
1	Sep 9	Wedn	V1.1: Welcome; V1.2: About me	Course overview and introductions
2	Sep 14	Mon	V2.1: Strategy Defn; V2.2: Value Creation Framework; V2.3: Good strategies	Q&A; Examples
	Sep 16	Wedn		What's Strategy? Mini-case: WholeFoods
3	Sep 21	Mon	V3.1: Why 5 Forces +1; V3.2: Rival and Substitute; V3.3: Buyers and Supplier; V3.4: Threat of Entry and Complementors; V3.5: How to apply	Q&A; Examples
	Sep 23	Wedn		External Environment (US Airlines Case)
4	Sep 28	Mon	V4.1: Why resources and capabilities; V4.2: What are resources and capabilities; V4.3: "VRIN" test	Q&A; Examples
	Sep 30	Wedn		Internal Environment (Intel Case)
5	Oct 5	Mon	V5.1: Introduction; V5.2: Cost Leadership; V5.3: Differentiation; V5.4: Focus	Q&A; Examples
	Oct 7	Wedn		Business Strategy I (Dell Case)
6	Oct 12	Mon		Q&A; Midterm I Review
	Oct 14	Wedn		Midterm I
7	Oct 19	Mon		Q&A; Examples
	Oct 21	Wedn		Business Strategy II (Ducati Case)
8	Oct 26	Mon	V8.1: Introduction; V8.2: Value of diversification - financial reasons or strategic reasons; V8.3: Common fallacies and diversification discounts	Final Project Consulting Day (5 groups)
	Oct 28	Wedn		Corporate Strategy (Disney Case)
9	Nov 2	Mon	V9.1: Introduction - what's vertical integration; V9.2: Why/How vertical integration; V9.3: M&A	Final Project Consulting Day (5 groups)
	Nov 4	Wedn		Mergers and Acquisitions (Pfizer-Pharmacia Case)
10	Nov 9	Mon	V10.1: Types of International Expansion / Entry Modes; V10.2: Why? V10.3: Assessing Markets	Final Project Consulting Day (5 groups)
	Nov 11	Wedn		International strategy (L'Oreal Case)
11	Nov 16	Mon		Midterm #2 Review
	Nov 18	Wedn		Midterm #2

12	Nov 23	Mon	V12.1: Structure; V12.2: Implementation	Strategy implementation (Cisco Case)
	Nov 25	Wedn		No Class (Thanksgiving)
13	Nov 30	Mon		Guest speaker
	Dec 2	Wedn		Strategy beyond markets
14	Dec 7	Mon		Presentation I
	Dec 9	Wedn		Presentation II
15	Dec 14	Mon		Course Wrap Group paper due