



RUTGERS

## HR Strategy II: Business and Competitive Strategy

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Spring 2020

[Syllabus as of January 21, 2020]

*“Leaders establish the vision for the future and set the strategy for getting there.” – John P. Kotter*

*“I was drawn to the field of competition and strategy because it tackles perhaps the most basic question in both business management and industrial economics: What determines corporate performance?” – Michael Porter*

*“The essence of strategy is choosing what not to do” – Michael Porter*

*“The biggest risk is not taking any risk... In a world that is changing really quickly, the only strategy that is guaranteed to fail is not taking risks.” -- Mark Zuckerberg*

*“Leadership belongs to those who take it” – Sheryl Sandberg*

**Instructor:** Jane Baylis

**Class sessions:** Tuesdays, 4:30 – 7:10 pm; Levin Building, Room 219

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**Office Hours:** By appointment

### Course Overview

The primary objective of this course is to provide you with a deep understanding of strategic management. Topics to be covered will include competitor analysis, strategy formulation (at the business, corporate and international levels), acquisitions and restructuring, and cooperative strategies.

We will discuss the reality that some firms gain sustainable competitive advantage over industry rivals while others struggle to simply survive. How do factors such as a firm’s internal and external environment impact their selection and implementation of strategy? How do new firms effectively plan and execute strategies that will enable them to successfully compete against established firms? These are some examples of the types of questions we will seek to answer in our study of strategic management. To achieve these objectives, a balance of theory and practice will be applied in the form of textbook readings and discussions mixed in with “real life” business examples and cases.

# **SMLR / HR Management Learning Goals**

This course focuses on the following School of Management and Labor Relations / HR department learning objectives:

## **Cognitive Skills and Processes**

The cognitive skills and process area reflects the goal for SMLR programs to help students develop skills central to lifelong learning and participation in society and the workplace.

## **Written & Oral Communication – Communicate effectively at a level and in modes appropriate to an entry level professional.**

- Communicate complex ideas effectively, in standard written English
- Analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights
- Produce quality research papers with proper convention of attribution/citation
- Produce high quality executive summaries
- Make an argument using contemporary and/or historical evidence
- Present ideas and arguments in a logical and effective way

## **Knowledge of Theory, Practice and Application**

The knowledge of theory and application area reflects the goal for SMLR programs to ensure that students learn the key theoretical and foundation areas of study in their domains and realize opportunities to apply that knowledge to practice situations.

## **Theoretical Perspectives - Demonstrate an understanding of relevant theories and apply them given the background context of a particular work situation.**

- Demonstrate an understanding of the practical perspectives, theories and concepts in their field of study
- Evaluate and apply theories from social science disciplines to workplace issues

# Course Requirements and Grading

(Specific due dates noted on the course outline below, and on the detailed assignment documents)

**1) Class Participation (10% of course grade):** You will be expected to actively participate in class. One of the core discussions (for several classes) will be the assigned case studies. It is really important that you are prepared to discuss these case studies, as you will often be part of an “in-class” team that will discuss the case study and then share your insights with the broader class.

We may have one or two guest speakers in our class during the semester, and students are expected to participate in the discussions and topics brought forward by these experts.

**3) Individual Case Analysis Assignments #1 and #2 (20% and 20% of course grade):** This will involve analyzing two separate case studies. You will choose from a list of case studies, based on your interest in the topics covered in the cases. A separate handout detailing these assignments will be provided and posted on Canvas. **Case Analysis #1 is due on March 3rd and Case Analysis #2 is due on April 7<sup>th</sup>.**

**4) Final Team Project and Presentation (30% of course grade):** You will be assigned to a team early in the semester, and your team will choose an organization to both analyze and offer insightful and creative recommendations related to the organization’s strategy. A written summary will accompany your presentation and will be part of your grade. Each team will be assigned a grade for this presentation, and this grade will be shared by every member of the team. A separate handout detailing this assignment will be provided and posted on Canvas. **Final team presentations will be on April 28<sup>th</sup>.**

**4) Final Examination (20% of course grade):** This will involve analyzing a case study. You will choose from two case studies, based on your interest in the topics covered in the cases. A separate handout detailing these assignments will be provided and posted on Canvas one week prior to the due date. **The Case Analysis is due on May 5<sup>th</sup>.**

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**Note: All assignments (team and individual) will be submitted via Canvas, and the Turnitin verification service will be used for this class. Turnitin is a software program used by Rutgers and many other universities to check for originality and plagiarism.**

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## EVALUATION

Your course grade will be determined as follows:

Course Component	Percentage of Final Grade
Class Participation	10%
Individual Case Analysis 1	20%
Individual Case Analysis 2	20%
Final Team Project	30%
Final Examination	20%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Grading Scale

**90-100 = A**

**88-89 = B+**

**80-87 = B**

**78-79 = C+**

**70-77 = C**

**60-69 = F**

**Note: for most assignment grades, I will also use “minus” grades, i.e. A-, B-, C- ; in addition to the standard grades above.**

## Course Policies

You are expected to attend every class, which is critical to the success of the course. You are expected to complete all of the reading and come to class prepared to discuss what you have read. Further, you should be prepared to discuss and debate the material for the course to practice critical thinking and to build your understanding of the material. You should definitely be an active listener and be respectful of your classmates. Using cell phones or other electronic devices (i.e. texting) in class is not allowed. If for some reason you are unable to attend a class, please inform me prior to class. If you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible to find out about materials covered and any changes in schedule or assignments.

Assignments will not be accepted after the noted due date unless special arrangements have been made with the professor in advance. Students will not be permitted to take examinations after the exam date stated on the syllabus. All known student disabilities and religious holidays will be accommodated as appropriate. If you need any accommodation, you should discuss this with me no later than the second class session.

All students will be expected to be familiar with and abide by the University’s Academic Integrity Policy. Failure to comply with this policy will result in the student’s failure of the course and referral to the Office of Student Conduct.

Students should use their Rutgers e-mail addresses for class communications with the instructor and the members of their team. In addition, we will use Canvas as the primary source of class

content, and for other collaboration as required. **As such, students should check their Rutgers email and Canvas on a frequent basis.**

## Required Readings

Students are responsible for accessing and completing all readings prior to the class for which the readings are assigned. Required readings listed on the course schedule can be obtained as follows:

- Rothaermel, F.T. 2018. **Strategic Management: Concepts, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition**. McGraw-Hill Higher Education. *(All assigned chapters appear in the course schedule)*

**Note: The textbook will be available for purchase at the bookstore. Alternatively, you may purchase or rent the book from various sites online.**

### Harvard Business School Publishing:

You will see several “HBSP” references in the Course Schedule Below. There are two options for obtaining these reading materials (articles and case studies)

- I have set up a “course pack” unique to our class on the HBSP website. You can click on the following URL and follow the directions for purchasing this material. If you have not done so already, you will need to set up an account on the HBSP website.

**Link for Course Printed Materials:** <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/692411>

*If you experience technical difficulty, please contact the HBSP Technical Support Group:*

*Phone: 1-800-810-8858 (outside the U.S. and Canada, 1-617-783-7700); 24 hour availability or E-mail: [techhelp@hbsp.harvard.edu](mailto:techhelp@hbsp.harvard.edu).*

- You may be able to access some of this HBSP copyrighted material via the Rutgers library (note: certain case studies may only be available through Harvard Publishing)

### Specific List of Cases and Articles:

***For Class discussions - These are noted on the Course Schedule:***

1. Case: How does Digital Transformation Happen?
2. Case: Southwest Airlines--2002: An Industry Under Siege
3. Article: Singapore Airlines’ Balancing Act
4. Case: Climate Change and the Napa Valley Wine Industry
5. Case: Attack of the Clones: Birchbox Defends Against Copycat Competitors
6. Case: Making a Blue Ocean Strategic Move that Discourages Imitation: The Case of Wikipedia
7. Case: Neighborhood Watch: The Rise of Zillow

***For Individual Assignments - These case studies will be discussed in greater detail on the assignment sheet for the individual assignment:***

**Note: In addition to the above cases and articles, you will be required to purchase one additional case later in the semester for the final exam. Expect to spend about \$50 on the entire set of cases and articles for the course.**

## Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments (due at beginning of class unless otherwise noted)
Class 1 Jan 21	Course Introduction What is Strategy?	Chapter 1
Class 2 Jan 28	Strategic Leadership: Managing the Strategy Process	Chapter 2
Class 3 Feb 4	External Analysis: Industry Structure, Competitive Forces, and Strategic Groups <b>Guest Speaker – Julie Peters (Library Director)</b>	Chapter 3 <a href="#">How Does Digital Transformation Happen Case? (HBSP)</a>
Class 4 Feb 11	Internal Analysis: Resources, Capabilities, and Core Competencies	Chapter 4 <a href="#">Southwest Airlines Case (HBSP)</a>
Class 5 Feb 18	Competitive Advantage, Firm Performance and Business Models  SWOT Analysis	Chapter 5 <a href="#">Napa Valley Case (HBSP)</a>
Class 6 Feb 25	<b>Meet with Teams to discuss Final Team Project</b>	
Class 7 March 3	Business Strategy: Differentiation, Cost Leadership, Blue Oceans	Chapter 6 <a href="#">Birchbox Case (HBSP)</a> <a href="#">Singapore Airlines Article (HBSP)</a>  <b>Individual Case Assignment #1 Due March 3<sup>rd</sup></b>
Class 8 March 10	Business Strategy: Innovation Entrepreneurship, and Platforms	Chapter 7 <a href="#">Wikipedia Case (HBSP)</a>
March 17	Spring Break	
Class 9 March 24	Corporate Strategy: Vertical Integration and Diversification <b>Guest Speaker – Realtor Joseph Baylis</b>	Chapter 8 <a href="#">Zillow Case (HBSP)</a>
Class 10 March 31	Corporate Strategy: Strategic Alliances, Mergers and Acquisitions	Chapter 9
Class 11 April 7	Global Strategy: Competing Around the World	Chapter 10  <b>Individual Case Assignment #2 Due April 7<sup>th</sup></b>

Class 12 April 14	Organizational Design and Competitive Advantage	Chapter 11
Class 13 April 21	Corporate Governance and Business Ethics	Chapter 12
Class 14 April 28	<b>Final Team Presentations</b>	<b>Team Presentations and Written Reports Due (upload to Canvas)</b>
Class 15 May 5	<b>Final Examination</b>	

**\*HBSP: Harvard Business School Publishing (see Required Readings above)**

**Note: On dates when a case or article (i.e., any readings outside the textbook) is assigned, it is recommended you bring that reading to class.**