



TEXAS A&M  
UNIVERSITY  
CENTRAL TEXAS

Online MGTK 585.120 – Business Strategy Seminar  
Fall 2017: Aug 28, 2017 - Dec 15, 2017

### INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION

**Instructor:** Dr. Vivien E. Jancenelle  
**Office:** Founder's Hall 318C  
**Phone:** (254) 519 5425  
**Email:** [vjancenelle@tamuct.edu](mailto:vjancenelle@tamuct.edu) – Email (or Messaging through Canvas) is preferred for communications. Please allow 24 hours for a response on a weekday, and 48 hours on a weekend.

**Office Hours:** Face-to-face, Mondays from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm or by appointment.

#### **Mode of Instruction and Course Access:**

This course meets *online*. The TAMUCT Canvas Learning Management System [<https://tamuct.instructure.com>] will be used for instruction and assessment.

#### **Student-Instructor Interactions:**

I check my email every day on weekdays. For emails sent on a weekend, please allow up to 48 hours for a response. Students with questions are encouraged to reach out to me after each class or during my office hours.

### UNILERT

Emergency Warning System for Texas A&M University - Central Texas: UNILERT is an emergency notification service that gives Texas A&M University - Central Texas the ability to communicate health and safety emergency information quickly via email, text message, and social media. All students are automatically enrolled in UNILERT through their myCT email account. Connect at [Unilert](https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/security/unilert.php) [<https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/security/unilert.php>] to change where you receive your alerts or to opt out. By staying enrolled in UNILERT, university officials can quickly pass on safety-related information, regardless of your location.

### COURSE INFORMATION

**Required Textbook:** *Crafting & Executing Strategy: The Quest for Competitive Advantage (Concepts and Cases)*, 21<sup>th</sup> Ed. Authors: A. A. Thompson, M. Petaraf, J. E. Gamble, A. J. Strickland. Publisher: McGraw Hill Education. ISBN 978-1259732782.

**Course Overview and Description:** This course is the integrating capstone course for the MBA program. The MBA Comprehensive Exam is represented by your combined individual score for the midterm and final examination of this course. We will examine the basic factors affecting the development and execution of business strategy, policy, and organizations as well as, examining the integration of the strategy and policy issues you have studied in the areas of marketing, finance, economics, distribution, and organization theory. The course will apply the analytical techniques of management and business through the use of case studies. How management intends to grow the business, how they will build a loyal clientele and outperform their rivals is the essence of crafting a strategy. The strategic plan must be implemented and executed in a manner that is superior to competitors and allows the firm to sustain a strategic competitive advantage. The strategy case will be an important emphasis of this course.

**Course Objective:** In this course, students will have the opportunity to learn about the theories, models, and frameworks that constitute the body of knowledge for strategic management. The course will demonstrate how those theories, models, and frameworks are applied in practice. Additionally, the course will provide students with the opportunity for synthesizing the theories, models, frameworks and tools of analysis within the context of a strategy case analysis and a business strategy simulation game.

**Student Learning Outcomes:** At the conclusion of the course the student should be able to:

- a) Understand what strategy is, why it is important, and how strategy plays a crucial role in determining a company's mission and direction.
- b) Understand the core concepts and analytical tools of the strategic management discipline, including the ability to analyze a company's external and internal environment.
- c) Understand how strategies are crafted, including generic competitive strategies, strategic competitive moves, international competition, and diversification.
- d) Understand how strategy is implemented, through building organizations capable of good strategic execution.
- e) Effectively apply the strategy concepts (stated in learning outcome a, b, c, and d) to a strategy case analysis and a business strategy simulation game, which will allow students to analyze, evaluate, and craft a strategic plan for a company which should lead to a competitive advantage, should attain or strengthen profitability, and should create stakeholder value, particularly shareholder value.

## **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT**

### **Technology Requirements:**

This course will use the TAMUCT Instructure Canvas learning management system.

Logon to TAMUCT Canvas [<https://tamuct.instructure.com>]

*Username:* Your MyCT username (xx123 or everything before the "@" in your MyCT e-mail)

*Password:* Your MyCT password

### **Technology Support:**

For technology issues, students should contact Help Desk Central. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

*Email:* [helpdesk@tamu.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamu.edu)

*Phone:* (254) 519-5466

*Web Chat:* <http://hdc.tamu.edu>

When calling for support please let your support technician know you are a TAMUCT student. For issues related to course content and requirements, contact your instructor.

## **COURSE AND UNIVERSITY RESOURCES, PROCEDURES, AND POLICIES**

### **Drop Policy:**

If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must complete a Drop Request Form, found through the Registrar's web page [<https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/business-office/droppolicy.php>]. Professors cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The Registrar's Office will provide a deadline on the University Calendar for which the form must be completed, signed and returned. Once you return the signed form to the Registrar's Office, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled. If you still show as enrolled, FOLLOW-UP with the Registrar's Office immediately. You are to attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalty for absence. Should you miss the drop deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course, which may affect your financial aid and/or VA educational benefits.

### **Academic Integrity:**

Texas A&M University - Central Texas values the integrity of the academic enterprise and strives for the highest standards of academic conduct. A&M-Central Texas expects its students, faculty, and staff to support the adherence to high standards of personal and scholarly conduct to preserve the honor and integrity of the creative community. Academic integrity is defined as a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Any deviation by students from this expectation may result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially a failing grade for the course. Academic misconduct is any act that improperly affects a true and honest evaluation of a student's academic performance and includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism and improper citation of sources, using another student's work, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. All academic misconduct concerns will be reported to the university's Office of Student Conduct. Ignorance of the university's standards and expectations is never an excuse to act with a lack of integrity. When in doubt on collaboration, citation, or any issue, please contact your instructor before taking a course of action.

### **Academic Accommodations:**

At Texas A&M-Central Texas, we value an inclusive learning environment where every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to a barrier free education. The Department of Access and Inclusion is responsible for ensuring that students with a disability receive equal access to the University's programs, services and activities. If you believe you have a disability requiring reasonable accommodations please contact the Department of Access and Inclusion at (254) 501-5831. The information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

For more information please visit our Access & Inclusion webpage:  
<http://www.tamuct.edu/departments/access-inclusion>.

TAMUCT supports students who are pregnant and/or parenting. In accordance with requirements of Title IX and guidance from US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, the Dean of Student Affairs' Office can assist students who are pregnant and/or parenting in seeking accommodations related to pregnancy and/or parenting. For more information, please visit <https://www.tamuct.departments/index.php>. Students may also contact the institution's Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to read more about these requirements and guidelines, please visit: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf>.

**Tutoring:**

Tutoring is available to all TAMUCT students, both on-campus and online. On-campus subjects tutored include Accounting, Advanced Math, Biology, Finance, Statistics, Mathematics, and Study Skills. Tutors are available at the Tutoring Center in Warrior Hall, Suite 111.

If you have a question regarding tutor schedules, need to schedule a tutoring session, are interested in becoming a tutor, or any other question, contact Academic Support Programs at 254-519-5796, or by emailing Kim Wood at [k.wood@tamuct.edu](mailto:k.wood@tamuct.edu).

Chat live with a tutor 24/7 for almost any subject on your computer. Tutor.com is an online tutoring platform that enables TAMUCT students to log-in and receive FREE online tutoring and writing support. This tool provides tutoring in over forty subject areas. Access Tutor.com through Canvas.

**The University Writing Center:**

Located in 416 Warrior Hall, the University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University – Central Texas is a free workspace open to all TAMUCT students from 10am-4pm Monday-Thursday during the summer semester (June 5, 2017 to July 27, 2017). Students may arrange a one-on-one session with a trained and experienced writing tutor by visiting the UWC during normal operating hours (both half-hour and hour sessions are available). Tutors are prepared to help writers of all levels and abilities at any stage of the writing process.

While tutors will not write, edit, or grade papers, they will assist students in developing more effective composing practices. By providing a practice audience for students' ideas and writing, our tutors highlight the ways in which they read and interpret students' texts, offering guidance and support throughout the various stages of the writing process. In addition, students may work independently in the UWC by checking out a laptop that runs the Microsoft Office suite and connects to WIFI, or by consulting our resources on writing, including all of the relevant style guides. Whether you need help brainstorming ideas, organizing an essay, proofreading, understanding proper citation practices, or just want a quiet place to work, the University Writing Center is here to help. If you have any questions about the University Writing Center, please contact Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at [bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu](mailto:bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu).

**University Library:**

The University Library provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. They offer over 200 electronic databases containing approximately 250,000 eBooks and 82,000 journals, in addition to the 72,000 items in our print collection, which can be mailed to students who live more than 50 miles from campus. Research guides for each subject taught at TAMUCT are available through our website to help students navigate these resources. On-

campus, the library offers technology including cameras, laptops, microphones, webcams, and digital sound recorders.

Research assistance from a librarian is also available twenty-four hours a day through our online chat service, and at the reference desk when the library is open. Research sessions can be scheduled for more comprehensive assistance, and may take place on Skype or in-person at the library. Assistance may cover many topics, including how to find articles in peer-reviewed journals, how to cite resources, and how to piece together research for written assignments.

The 27,000-square-foot facility on the TAMUCT main campus includes student lounges, private study rooms, group work spaces, computer labs, family areas suitable for all ages, and many other features. Services such as interlibrary loan, TexShare, binding, and laminating are available. The library frequently offers workshops, tours, readings, and other events. For more information, please visit their homepage: <https://tamuct.libguides.com/>

## **INSTRUCTOR POLICIES**

### **Spelling, Grammar, and Writing Skills for reports**

The content of all written assignments is what you will be evaluated on, provided that your spelling and grammar does not have major issues. While a few spelling and grammar mistakes are acceptable and will not affect your grade, I reserve the right to remove up to 10% of the points of a written assignment for excessively bad grammar and spelling mistakes. Students who proofread their work, use spelling and grammar checking tools, or obtain help from the University Writing Center (described above) should not be affected by this policy.

### **Participation in Group Work**

This class includes an important group work component. All members in a group are expected to do their fair share of work. If a group member is not pulling his or her weight in a group project, any other group member can contact me to request that a peer-evaluation be given at the end of the semester for their group. If a group elects to do a peer review, each group member will be asked to fill out an evaluation form based on a 5-point scale. A student needs an average rating of 2.5 to receive the full group grade. Students receiving an average grade below 2.5 and above 1.5 from the other group members will see their group grade reduced by 40%. If a student has an average group grade under 1.5, this student will receive zero points on the group work component of the course. If no members of a group request a peer review, then I will assume that the work was shared fairly, and all students will receive the same grade for group work.

### **Academic Honesty and Cheating**

All work for individual assignments and exams must be your own. You may not collaborate in any way on online exams. Any students who deliberately cheats on an exam will receive a zero grade for that exam and be reported to the university's Office of Student Conduct.

### **Submitting Assignments and Late Policy**

Students need to submit their assignments (e.g., forum posts and response to a fellow class member, midterm and final examinations) within the allotted time for each module. As can be seen on the course outline, modules close at a preset date and time. Once a module is closed, the submission period is over and students will receive zero points for the module. Late submissions will only be allowed for unanticipated and legitimate reasons (e.g., unforeseeable emergency).

Traveling, loss of internet access, or simply forgetting about an assignment are not considered to be unanticipated and legitimate circumstances.

### **Required Studying: Instructor-Created/Provided Materials and Book Chapters**

Lessons are a major type of module used for instruction in this online class. While *Lesson Forum Discussions* (detailed next in the Assessments section of the syllabus) are the equivalent of face-to-face discussions, studying the materials as instructed is the equivalent of attending a lecture. You are required to study the material as instructed if you want to succeed in the class. Studying for a module may include: listening/watching to instructor-created audio and/or video content (e.g., narrated presentation), listening/watching instructor-provided audio and/or video content (e.g., a news segment about an event that impacts business strategy), reading instructor-created notes and PDFs, reading instructor-created slides, reading-instructor provided slides, and lastly, reading book chapters as instructed.

## **ASSESSMENTS**

### **INDIVIDUAL WORK COMPONENT**

#### **Lesson Forum Discussions (12 x 10 points)**

Lesson forum discussions are intended to emulate a class setting and to trigger conversations between classmates about strategy. This is an essential component of any strategy scores, as students typically share a wealth of knowledge derived from everyone's unique thoughts, ideas, experiences, and background. Forum discussions rely on the principles of *learner-learner interaction* to deepen the understanding of each lesson. As your instructor, I will rarely intervene in discussion, but will read every post and grade them according to their adequacy. To receive a maximum grade for a forum discussion, students must make at least two posts: 1. a primary post should respond to a set of questions asked by the instructor regarding the subject matter (questions to which answers will often be opinion or research based); and 2. a secondary post should respond to at least one other students (an answer should include at least 4 sentences and be relevant to the fellow student's initial post—generic answers will not get points). As you can see, grading for forum discussions largely depend on your ability to follow instructions and give well-justified answers; and not on your ability to be right or wrong like in an exam. Students are encouraged to enjoy learner-learner interactions in forums and should see them as equivalent to a class discussion. Lesson forum discussions are mandatory for all modules, and students who do not participate in a given module will not earn points for that module.

#### **Midterm and Final Examination (2 x 200 points)**

This course has two equally-weighted examinations. The midterm examination will reflect lessons and chapters 1 through 6, while the final examination will reflect lessons and chapters 7 through 12. Examinations include both multiple choice and essay questions. Announcements with more information will be made prior to each examination.

If you are an MBA student subject to a comprehensive examination, then this course's midterm and final examination will constitute your comprehensive examination. Strategy is the capstone course for MBA programs, and incorporates the knowledge you have acquired in other courses.

GROUP WORK COMPONENT

Note: Group composition differs by assignment.

**Strategy Case Analysis (300 points)**

Students will have to write a full strategy case analysis that covers all aspects of strategic management taught in this class. This is the most important single assignment of the MBA capstone course and the highest weighted (300 points). As such, the case analysis requires a significant time commitment from all group members. Groups of no more than 4 students will conduct a full strategic management case analysis consisting of an 8 to 12 pages single-spaced report, in addition to required attachments and appendices.

The strategy case analysis component of the course will start after the midterm and a dedicated module will be made available on Canvas. As their first tasks, students will get to pick a company and group. The instructor will decide which strategy cases are available to groups. Specific instructions will be provided when the module opens, on Mon, Oct 23.

**Business Strategy Game (180 points).**

The Business Strategy Game (BSG) simulation is intended to give you an opportunity to practice the concepts taught in this class. Students will be assigned to teams at the beginning of the game, and will have an opportunity to design a strategy aimed at winning competitive advantage for their company in head-to-head competition against companies run by their classmates. Students are encouraged to read pages 12-16 of the course textbook to learn more about the BSG.

The BSG is fully administered by Brady Miller (brady.miller@tamuct.edu) and all specific questions related to the game should be forwarded to him. Students should follow the deadlines set by the teaching assistant for all decisions to be made during the game. The game assigns grades automatically, and the instructor has no power over the BSG grade component.

**SUMMARY OF GRADING CRITERIA**

<u>Assessments:</u>		<u>Points:</u>	<u>Percentage:</u>
Lesson Forum Discussions	12 x 10	120	12%
Midterm Examination		200	20%
Final Examination		200	20%
Strategy Case Analysis		300	30%
Business Strategy Game (administered separately)		180	18%
		1000	100%

**Total points:**

*Note:* Final grades will be calculated using a standard scale (900-1000 points=A, 800-899 points=B, 700-799 points= C, 600-699 points=D, less than 600 points= F). Students begin the class with 0 points and earn points throughout the semester. Although changes to this grading criteria are rare, I reserve the right to adjust point allocation based on the pace of the class. Grades will be posted on Canvas on a regular basis, although it may take the instructor up to 7 days to post grades.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

(Subject to change at the instructors' discretion)

**Important, read first:**

- Modules will be made available on Mondays at 6pm (latest) and will close on Sundays at 11:59pm (aside from the Midterm & Final Exam modules, which closes on Wednesdays at 11:59pm).
- The Business Strategy Game is administered and graded separately. See page 9 for due dates.

<b>Module Name</b>	<b>Starts (opens)</b>	<b>Ends (closes)</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Graded activities (BSG due dates separate)</b>
Course Orientation	Mon, Aug 28	Wed, Dec 13	Post to the “Present yourself “ forum <i>Read and review syllabus</i> Optional post of your questions to the Q&A Forum	
BSG instructions	Mon, Aug 28	Wed, Dec 13	Read BSG instructions. Participate in BSG game throughout the semester. Administered and graded separately.	
Lesson 1	Mon, Sept 4	Sun, Sept 10	Study professor-provided/created content and <i>Chapter 1 - What is strategy and why is it important?</i> Post to the Lesson 1 forum and respond to at least one other student's post.	Lesson 1 forum posts
Lesson 2	Mon, Sept 11	Sun, Sept 17	Study professor-provided/created content and <i>Chapter 2 - Charting a company’s direction</i> Post to the Lesson 2 forum and respond to at least one other student's post.	Lesson 2 forum posts
Lesson 3	Mon, Sept 18	Sun, Sept 24	Study professor-provided/created content and <i>Chapter 3 - Evaluating a company’s external environment</i> Post to the Lesson 3 forum and respond to at least one other student's post.	Lesson 3 forum posts
Lesson 4	Mon, Sept 25	Sun, Oct 1	Study professor-provided/created content and <i>Chapter 4 - Evaluating a company’s resources, capabilities, and competitiveness</i> Post to the Lesson 4 forum and respond to at least one other student's post.	Lesson 4 forum posts
Lesson 5	Mon, Oct 2	Sun, Oct 8	Study professor-provided/created content and <i>Chapter 5 - The five generic competitive strategies</i> Post to the Lesson 5 forum and respond to at least one other student's post.	Lesson 5 forum posts
Lesson 6	Mon, Oct 9	Sun, Oct 15	Study professor-provided/created content and <i>Chapter 6 - Strengthening a company’s competitive position: Strategic moves, timing, and scope of operations</i>	Lesson 6 forum posts
Midterm	Mon, Oct 16	Wed, Oct 18	<b>Midterm.</b> Lessons and chapters 1-6. Will be online on Mon, Oct 16 at 6:00pm. Students have until Wednesday, Oct 18 at 11:59pm to take the midterm.	Midterm examination
Strategy Case	Mon, Oct 23		Read the <i>Strategy Case Analysis Instructions</i> Choose a group and strategy case	Group & case choice

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Lesson 7	Mon, Oct 23	Sun, Oct 29	Study professor-provided/created content and <i>Chapter 7 - Strategies for competing in international markets</i> Post to the Chapter 1 forum and respond to at least one other student's post.	Lesson 7 forum posts
Lesson 8	Mon, Oct 30	Sun, Nov 5	Study professor-provided/created content and <i>Chapter 8 - Corporate strategy: Diversification and the multibusiness company</i>	Lesson 8 forum posts
Lesson 9	Mon, Nov 6	Sun, Nov 12	Study professor-provided/created content and <i>Chapter 9 - Ethics, corporate social responsibility, environmental sustainability, and strategy</i>	Lesson 9 forum posts
Lesson 10	Mon, Nov 13	Sun, Nov 19	Study professor-provided/created content and <i>Chapter 10 - Building an organization capable of a good strategy: People, capabilities, and structure</i>	Lesson 10 forum posts
Lesson 11	Mon, Nov 20	Sun, Nov 26	Study professor-provided/created content and <i>Chapter 11 - Managing international operations: Actions that promote good strategy execution</i>	Lesson 11 forum posts
Lesson 12	Mon, Nov 27	Sun, Dec 3	Study professor-provided/created content and <i>Chapter 12 - Corporate culture and leadership: Keys to good strategy execution</i>	Lesson 12 forum posts
Strategy Case		Sun, Dec 10	Time to finish case analysis. Submit case analysis by Sun, Dec 10 at 11:59pm.	Submit case analysis
Final	Mon, Dec 11	Wed, Dec 13	<b>Final.</b> Lessons and chapters 7-17. Will be online on Mon, Oct 16 at 6:00pm. Students have until Wednesday, Oct 18 at 11:59pm to take the final	Final examination

**TENTATIVE DUE DATES FOR BSG**

Due dates provided by Brady Miller, TA for the BSG section of the course.

**Important:** An online tutorial will be held by Brady Miller on Sept 5<sup>th</sup>, from 7 to 8pm.

Activity	Due Date
Practice Decision 1 - Practice Year 11	11-Sep-17 11:59 PM
Practice Decision 2 - Practice Year 12	18-Sep-17 11:59 PM
End of Practice Period (Data reset to Year 11 and practice results are no longer available)	22-Sep-17 11:59 PM
Quiz 1 Available	25-Sep-17 11:59 PM
Decision 1 - Year 11	25-Sep-17 11:59 PM
Quiz 1 Deadline	2-Oct-17 11:59 PM
Decision 2 - Year 12	2-Oct-17 11:59 PM
Decision 3 - Year 13	9-Oct-17 11:59 PM
Decision 4 - Year 14	16-Oct-17 11:59 PM
Decision 5 - Year 15	23-Oct-17 11:59 PM
Decision 6 - Year 16	30-Oct-17 11:59 PM
Decision 7 - Year 17	6-Nov-17 11:59 PM
Decision 8 - Year 18	13-Nov-17 11:59 PM
Decision 9 - Year 19	20-Nov-17 11:59 PM

**KEY UNIVERSITY DATES**

Classes Begin	Mon, Aug 28th
Add/Drop/Late Registration Ends (16 week & 1st 8 week)	Wed, Aug 30th
Priority Deadline to Submit Graduation Application	Fri, Sept 1st
Labor Day	Mon, Sept 4th
Last day to drop 16 week classes with no record	Wed, Sept 13th
Deadline to Submit Graduation Application for Ceremony Participation	Fri, Oct 6th
Veterans Day	Fri, Nov 10th
Last day to drop a course with a Q or withdraw with a W (16-week classes)	Fri, Nov 10th
Thanksgiving	Thu, Nov 23rd
Thanksgiving	Fri, Nov 24th
Student End of Course Survey Opens	Fri, Dec 1st
Last day to withdraw from the University (16 week and 2nd 8 week classes)	Fri, Dec 15th
Fall Term Ends	Fri, Dec 15th
Last day to file for Degree Conferral (Registrar's Office)(\$20 Late Application Fee)	Fri, Dec 15th
Last day to apply for \$1000 Tuition Rebate for Fall graduation (5pm)	Fri, Dec 15th
Commencement Bell County Expo Center 7p.m.	Fri, Dec 15th
Student End of Course Survey Closes	Sun, Dec 17th
Final grades due from faculty by 3pm (16 week & 2nd 8 week)	Tue, Dec 19th
Winter Break	Fri, Dec 22nd