MBA 620.01
Strategic Analysis
Spring 2007
Tuesday, 2:00 - 4:45 PM
Bryan 205

Professor: Dr. Moses Acquaah
Office: 354 Bryan Building
Phone Contacts: 334-5305 (Office)
334-5691 (Department); Fax: 334-4141
Office Hours: T 1:00 – 1:45PM, and by appointment
Email: acquaah@uncg.edu

COURSE MATERIALS:


Cases: To be given out in class.

Additional Readings: As identified in weekly class meetings or by email. Additional readings will typically be posted into the “Course Documents” area of Blackboard and will occasionally be distributed in class.

COURSE GOAL
The purpose of the course is threefold:
1) To equip the student with a variety of models and tools that can be applied to determine and analyze firm strategy.
2) to provide the student an opportunity to critically apply these models and tools to analyze organizational positions, initiatives and to recommend future courses of action;
3) to provide the student the opportunity to practice defending their recommended courses of strategic action.
CLASS FORMAT:

Each physical class meeting will include: (1) lecture and discussion of the assigned chapters and readings; (2) a break; (3) presentation and discussion of an assigned case study. Some classes will include an exercise or video presentation.

EVALUATION

The class grade contains the following components:

(1) Group Case - Lead 20%
(2) Group Case – Appreciative Inquiry and Challenge 15%
(3) Individual Case Paper 20%
(4) Class participation 20%
(5) Exams 25%

Course grades will be assigned on a numeric scale from 0 to 100 for each element of the course. The weighted average of the numeric grades will be converted into final letter grades as follows:

A: 90 -100%  B: 80 – 89%  C: 70 – 79  D: 60 – 69  F: 0-59

EVALUATION COMPONENT DESCRIPTIONS:

(1) Group Case - Lead.
Students have been pre-assigned to groups as indicated on page 5 of the syllabus. The group will be responsible for applying models and tools from this course to critically analyze:

a) Industry conditions and an organization’s current position in an industry 
b) Historical actions of the organization and the organization’s competitors that have contributed to that position 
c) Strategic actions that would contribute to more effective, more vision and mission consistent, organizational outcomes in the future.

The group will lead the case discussion by presenting their analyses to the class. The targeted class presentation time is approximately 30 minutes. An additional 30 minutes will then be allotted for appreciative inquiry and challenges to the presentation by other students in the course.

The group will be evaluated on the quality of analyses underlying the presentation, all aspects of delivery and responses to subsequent questioning.

The schedule for Group Case - Lead is provided on page 6 of the syllabus.
(2) Group Case – Appreciative Inquiry and Challenge.
The group for this case will be the same as your group for “Group Case – Lead”. The group should prepare the case at a level consistent with presenting the case discussion. The task of the group is to react to the presentation made by probing and “grilling” the presenting group on their interpretation of the firm’s current position, the reasons for that position and the desirability of proposed future courses of action.

The group may think of themselves as a Board of Directors. Their purpose is to ask good and sometimes hard questions to clarify statements made by the presenting group (appreciative inquiry), challenge conclusions and guide the presenting group to a more considered final conclusion.

In playing this role the group should assume that like most Boards of Directors, their goal is to move the firm forward in a positive direction. But like most Boards, they are sensitive and defensive about critical analyses of prior decisions made on their watch. They are also simultaneously wary of presentations that lack substantive critiques.

The group will be evaluated on the extent to which they ask good questions of the presenting group, the extent to which they effectively challenge the group’s conclusions and on evidence of case challenge preparation. The form of the evidence of case preparation may vary from group to group (e.g. handwritten notes, blackboard threaded discussions, etc). Any method the group chooses is acceptable if it is assessable. However, the group must choose one rather than many methods for purposes of instructor assessment. Methods for conveying case preparation will be discussed further on the first day of class.

The schedule for Group Case – Appreciative Inquiry and Challenge is provided on page 6 of the syllabus.

(3) Individual Case Paper.
Each student will prepare a written case analysis of five pages or less, excluding title page and appendices, on one of the cases to be discussed in class starting from the second week. However, a student cannot prepare a written analysis of a case his/her group will either be leading or presenting an appreciative inquiry and challenge.

The case paper should reflect a synthesized analysis of the firm’s industry conditions, past courses of action, current position and recommended future courses of action. You may include appendices, which are excluded from the 5 page limitation, that provide additional support or detail for the information provided in the body of your text. However, you should write the body of the paper with the assumption that the reader may not have time to review some or all of your appendices.

While you are welcome to discuss the case with your peers you should not seek peer assistance in writing your paper nor should you ask or agree to read their paper.
The case write-up is due on the date it will be discussed in class. For example, if a student selects the Nexity case, it will be due in class on March 20, 2007.

The paper format must include:

Title page: Name of the case
Body of paper (5 pages or less):
- Font: Times New Roman
- Font size: 12 or greater
- Line spacing: 1.5 or greater
- Margins: Top, bottom, left and right margins of 1 inch or greater
- Page numbering
- You will lose points equal to 5% of the case grade for the violation of each of the format requirements.

Appendices (optional)

(4) Class Participation.
The evaluation of class participation will be comprised of several variables including but not limited to:
- Class attendance.
- Respect for peers.
- In-class attentiveness.
- In-class contributions to the lecture/discussion.
- Evidence, both verbal and non-verbal, of being current with course materials.
- Evidence that course concepts are being applied to the analysis of current events
- Asking good questions on case presentations.

Students begin the course with a course participation mark of 90 and adjustments are made upward for exceeding expectations, downward for falling below expectations and are unchanged for meeting expectations. Expectations are that the student attend class, is respectful of the peer learning environment and participates verbally in in-class activities such as case discussions, lecture discussions and class exercises.

(5) Final Exams
There will be a final examination on the last day of class (April 24, 2007). The exam may take one of two forms: Either it will (1) cover the concepts covered in the textbook/readings, which may be given in multiple choice questions or an essay, format; OR (2) focus on the application of the concepts covered in the textbook/readings through a case analysis. If the exams are given in essay format, there will be four questions in which you will be required to answer all the questions. Samples of the essay examination questions will be posted on blackboard on the fifth week of class (April 10, 2007).
Other:

Blackboard and Electronic Communications: A number of course documents, including course lecture slides and readings, will be posted in Blackboard. Typically an electronic communication will be sent to the class indicating that a new posting has been made. Having access to and frequently checking Blackboard will be important to your success in this course.

Email Communications: For purposes of this course I will assume that you check your UNCG email daily. Thus I assume you will be aware of any communications or requests sent at least 24 hours prior to our class meetings. If you have any questions about UNCG email you can obtain assistance by calling 256-tech during normal business hours or by asking for assistance in the Bryan School computer labs.

Inclement Weather: The University of North Carolina at Greensboro will remain open during adverse weather conditions unless the Chancellor makes the administrative decision to make a schedule change. Students can obtain details on those decisions from the Adverse Weather Line at (336) 334-4400 or the web address: http://www.uncg.edu/iss/weather.htm

Honor Code: All students, by the act of registering for this course, have agreed to abide by the UNCG Honor Code. If you are not familiar with the content of this agreement you can go to www.uncg.edu and search on the term honor code.

GROUP MEMBERSHIP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
<th>Group 3</th>
<th>Group 4</th>
<th>Group 5</th>
<th>Group 6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chiang</td>
<td>Chou</td>
<td>Cvijanovic</td>
<td>Earle</td>
<td>Everly</td>
<td>Friedeck</td>
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<td>Frisby</td>
<td>Gilet</td>
<td>Heinbockel, J</td>
<td>Jansson</td>
<td>Lee</td>
<td>Liang</td>
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<tr>
<td>Murray</td>
<td>Musselwhite</td>
<td>Liu</td>
<td>Sandman</td>
<td>Shue</td>
<td>Stadler</td>
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<td>Stevens</td>
<td>Supornpijit</td>
<td>Velasquez</td>
<td>Heinbockel, L</td>
<td>Walker</td>
<td>Wang</td>
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Note: Occasionally group members will desire to be in a different group. This may be due to known schedule conflicts or for interpersonal reasons such as friendships and prior group project experiences. Group members can “change” groups on the first evening of class if they can find a counterparty to agree to an exchange. For example, Mr. Frisby in Group 1 could exchange with Ms. L. Heinbockel in Group 4 if they mutually agree to the change.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th><strong>Key Chapters 2:00 – 3:15 PM</strong></th>
<th><strong>Break 3:15-3:30 PM</strong></th>
<th><strong>First Case Lead 3:30 – 4:05 PM</strong></th>
<th><strong>Case Inquiry &amp; Challenge 4:05 – 4:40PM</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 13</td>
<td>Chapters 1 &amp; 2 The Concept of Strategy; Goals, Values &amp; Performance</td>
<td>Class &amp; Acquaah Robin Hood</td>
<td>Acquaah &amp; Class Global Leadership of Carlos Ghosn</td>
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<td>March 20</td>
<td>Chapters 3 &amp; 4 Industry Analysis</td>
<td>Group 1 Nexity and the US Banking Industry</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
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<td>March 27</td>
<td>Chapters 5 &amp; 6 Resources &amp; Capabilities; Organizational Structure</td>
<td>Group 3 MacDonalds</td>
<td>Group 4</td>
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<td>April 3</td>
<td>Chapters 7, 8 &amp; 9 Competitive Advantage &amp; Competitive Strategy</td>
<td>Group 5 JetBlue Airways</td>
<td>Group 6</td>
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<td>April 10</td>
<td>Chapters 13 &amp; 14 Vertical Integration Global Strategies</td>
<td>Group 2 Zara: Fast Fashion</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
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<td>April 17</td>
<td>Chapters 15 &amp; 16 Diversification; &amp; Multibusiness Corp</td>
<td>Group 4 Starbucks Corporation</td>
<td>Group 3</td>
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<td>April 24</td>
<td><strong>FINAL EXAMS (2:00 – 3:15)</strong></td>
<td>Group 6 Kmart-Sears Merger of 2005</td>
<td>Group 5</td>
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