



Dillard College of Business Administration

Syllabus: Graduate Seminar in Business Policy
MGMT 6883 M 5:30 – 8:20p Dillard Building 324
Fall Semester 2021

Contact Information

Instructor: Jeff Stambaugh, Associate Professor of Management
Office: DB 233
Office hours: MW 9:00 am to 11:00 am, T 4:00 – 5:00 pm and by appointment. Zoom Office Hours ID: 576 769 3651 (you will enter the waiting room, and I'll bring you into the video conference)
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Zoom Link: <https://msutexas-edu.zoom.us/j/95989592284?pwd=ek1XWXRwWDZvNU8xTjFBcDY0REUrZz09>
Zoom Data: Class Meeting ID: 979 4880 3602 Passcode: 225097

Course Materials

BSG Simulation. Register online at <http://www.bsg-online.com/> (costs \$45)

Required readings are posted to D2L

Though not required, you may wish to purchase an older edition of a strategy textbook to refresh and inform yourself of the basic concepts. Two excellent choices would be Dess, G.G., Lumpkin, G.T., Eisner, A.B., & McNamara, G. *Strategic Management* and Hitt, MA, Ireland, RD & Hoskisson, RE *Strategic Management: Competitiveness & Globalization*. Buy a version 5-10 years old for under \$20.

Course Description

Analytical study of business decision-making, the creation of business strategy, and the creation of sound business objectives and policies. Takes an integrated or interdisciplinary approach to the role of the organizational executive.

Course Prerequisite(s)

Consent of Graduate Coordinator. Should be taken in student's last semester.

Learning Goals

I. General Learning Goals:

- Our students will integrate knowledge across business disciplines. The course highlights the various levels of integration and strategic partnerships used by most firms.
- Our students will produce creative responses to business situations. The course requires students to synthesize and analyze information weekly, particularly during the BSG simulation, which leads to creative solutions.

- Our students will communicate at a professional level. Students practice their oral presentation and written communication skills through in-class presentations and case analyses.
- Our students will exhibit the characteristics of leadership. Effective performance in the simulation and Great Debate phase depend on effective team building and leadership.

These general learning goals are among those established by the Dillard College of Business Administration. General learning goals represent the skills that graduates will carry with them into their careers. While assessing student performance in obtaining these general learning goals, the Dillard College is assessing its programs. The assessments assist us as we improve our curriculum and curriculum delivery.

- II. Course Specific Learning Goals: After completing this course, students should be able to:
- Recognize the interrelated roles that accounting, finance, marketing, management, and information systems play in business success.
 - Understand and apply models related to business performance.
 - Understand the decisions and trade-offs that top managers are faced with when running and setting the future directions for the firm.
 - Understand how to use data to make effective decisions and evaluate the impact of those decisions.
 - Develop the ability to think strategically

Course Policies

Attendance Policy: Regular attendance is expected. Participation in class discussion is graded, so reading the assigned material and completing assignments prior to coming to class is also expected. I consider participating via Zoom as equivalent to physical presence in the classroom. See the university catalog for the University Class Attendance Policy.

If attending via Zoom, you should be dressed as if attending class in person. Also, your camera must be on and your face visible at all times. If called upon, be prepared to unmute your microphone and speak promptly. I won't consider you "present and participating" in the class if you don't follow these instructions.

Other Related Policies

Grading and Evaluation:

Case Analysis (CA): This individual assignment requires you to thoroughly analyze a situation and make recommendations in writing. We then discuss the case in class.

Great Debate (GD): Two teams debate two sides of a strategic issue (one "pro" and one "con" if you will). We formalize the debate topics during the semester. Each side has 5 minutes to state their case and then make a 2-minute rebuttal. No slides are allowed. The purpose of the Great Debate is to think strategically, make a powerful presentation, and improve your ability to think on your feet. There is also a written component to this assignment.

Participation: Our class time is largely discussion-based. I expect great contributions from each student. I'll provide you feedback at least twice in the semester about how I view your class participation. Needless to say, if you don't attend a class session, you cannot receive credit for participation. In terms of grading, a student can earn up to 20 points per class session.

BSG Simulation (BSG): BSG is a business simulation where you are the top management team of an athletic footwear manufacturing firm. The purpose of the simulation is to practice analytical and critical thinking skills for the strategies being developed in the class. This requires you to draw on all of your former business courses (management, marketing, accounting, and finance) as you run the corporation. A key point is that the simulation is "live play" in that your fellow classmates are the competition. This means the simulation is

dynamic, interactive, and a lot of fun. The simulation is also a major time commitment and, accordingly, a major part of your grade. Specific graded components include: two multiple choice quizzes (40 points); your firm's actual performance in the simulation (125 points); and a "board of directors" presentation where you discuss your firm's performance (125 points).

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment

Element	Points
Case Analysis	150
Great Debate	200
Participation	180
BSG Quizzes	40
BSG Performance	125
BSG Presentation	125
Total Points	820

Table 2: Grading System

Grade	Points
A	738 or greater
B	656 to 737
C	574 to 655
D	492 to 573
F	Less than 491

Semester grades will be reported through normal University channels with no exceptions.

Grading Policies:

My intent is to motivate and educate you toward excellence. Therefore, for each assignment you will see a clear explanation of what constitutes excellent work. My written comments back to you usually focus on what was excellent about your work rather than what was wrong. However, I will be quite clear on why a piece was unsatisfactory in the unlikely case that you submit less than satisfactory (C or less) work.

Course Content and Outline:

1. Strategy Analysis
 - A. What is Strategy
 - B. External Analysis
 - C. Internal Analysis
2. Strategy Decisions
 - A. Business strategies
 - B. Corporate strategies
 - C. International strategies
3. Strategy Actions
 - A. Corporate Governance
 - B. Organizational Design
 - C. Strategic Leadership
 - D. Corporate Entrepreneurship

Major Field Test (MFT):

We schedule the MFT as part of this course. It is a standardized test that helps assess the quality of our MBA program. Note that the MFT lasts 3 hours so please plan accordingly. As an incentive to do your best, students that score in the top 10% (of all test takers worldwide) receive 25 bonus points in the course.

Academic Integrity:

With regard to academic honesty, students are referred to the “Student Honor Creed” in the graduate catalog. Academic dishonesty (cheating, collusion, and plagiarism) is taken seriously and will be investigated. **Please understand that integrity is very important to me. Cutting and pasting text from the internet without citing the source and setting off the “pasted text” in a form that identifies it appropriately constitutes plagiarism.** My rule of thumb is that if you are using three or more words in a row from a source, it needs to be identified as a direct quote and cited. Substantially drawing off another person’s case analysis would also constitute plagiarism. Copying material from the web and changing every few words also constitutes plagiarism. The same is true for oral presentations. Use your words and your original thoughts, not the words and thoughts of some source.

Americans with Disabilities Act:

If a student has an established disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act and would like to request accommodation, that student should please contact me as soon as possible. Any student requesting accommodations should also contact Disability Support Services at 940-397-4140 in room 168 Clark Student Center to document and coordinate reasonable accommodations if you have not already done so.

Syllabus Change Policy:

This syllabus is a guide for the course—not a “contract”—and is subject to change. Syllabus changes will be communicated via D2L and/or in class. I’ll provide a minimum of 48 hours’ notice before the relevant change takes place if at all possible.

Additional Information:

Written Assignments: All written assignments are to be **single-spaced**, have one inch margins, and use an 11 or 12-point font (specific font must present a business appearance and be similar in “size” to Times New Roman or Arial) and be uploaded to D2L in a **MS Word or PDF file format** (not Pages!).

Assignments: Assignments are due at the specified due date/time. By definition, professionals are not late with their work.

Words of Wisdom / General Policies: Perhaps the most important thing you can understand about me is that I am deeply interested in your success, both in the course and beyond. I am convinced this course can set the stage for your future success. Therefore, I significantly invest in this course and hope you’ll do the same. Just as in the “real world,” I try to run my course in a supportive yet professional and business-like manner. Here are some key points for professional behavior:

- The assignments you hand in should reflect your professionalism
- Class time is like a business meeting:
 - Be on time!
 - Laptops and smart phones are for course use during class—not surfing, emailing, texting, or networking. Incidentally, studies show note taking by computer is not as effective as note taking by hand.
- I can be very flexible and cooperative when you raise an issue with me before a class or due date. Notifications after the fact are usually indicative of unprofessionalism
- All communications must reflect respect for all parties.

- Integrity is the bedrock for successful business relationships. True in the course too!

Professionalism:

The faculty, staff, and students of the Dillard College of Business Administration are committed to being a “professional” in our words, conduct, and actions. The qualities of a professional include:

- A commitment to the development of specialized knowledge
- Competency in analytical, oral and written communication skills
- Self-discipline
- Reliability
- Honesty and integrity
- Trustworthiness
- Timeliness
- Accountability for words and actions
- Respect for others and other cultures
- Politeness and good manners
- A professional image (professionals look professional)
- An awareness of their environment and adaptability to different settings
- Confidence without arrogance
- A commitment to giving back to your community

COVID 19 Policies

Students may wear facemasks while in the Dillard Building. We'll maintain at least a 6' social distance in the classroom. If you feel ill (no matter how minor), please do not attend the physical classroom session and instead attend class via the Zoom live stream.

Course Flow

Please keep this syllabus as a reference! Students are responsible for all information contained in the syllabus and for any changes to the syllabus, which are announced in class or on D2L. I typically adhere closely to the original syllabus in my classes.

Course Schedule

Table 3: The below table has the class date, major topic and activity for each date, the associated readings, as well as the assigned projects and quizzes

Date	Major Topic or Activity	Reading	Due
8/23	Course Intro and What is Strategy?	W	
8/30	How do firms analyze the situation outside their firm?	W	BSG Teams
9/13	How do firms turn resources into capabilities?	W	
9/20	How does a company attract customers and compete?	W	
9/27	BSG Kickoff	BSG Players Guide	BSG PR 1, BSG Quiz 1
10/4	Corporate strategies, to include M&As	W	
10/11	BSG Rd 1		BSG Rd 1
10/18	Turnaround strategies and alliances	W	BSG Rd 2
10/25	How do firms compete globally?	W	BSG Rd 3, CA
11/1	How do firms organize and govern themselves?	W	BSG Rd 4 and Quiz 2
11/8	How do companies remain innovative?	W	BSG Rd 5, BSG Strategy Updates
11/15	How do influential strategic leaders perform their craft?	W	BSG Rd 6
11/22	Great Debates		BSG Rd 7
11/29	MFT		BSG Rd 8
12/6	BSG Presentations		BSG Peer Evals

W = Additional reading(s) is / are posted to D2L

BSG = Business Strategy Game

BSG Rd = BSG Decision Round deadline of 11 pm Wednesday of that week