



MGT 725
On-Line Strategic Management
Class Syllabus
Spring '07

I. Contact Information

Professor: **Dr. Richard Dool, DMgt.**
Phone: 908.627.2600
Email: Email me through Webct or directly at rdool@earthlink.net
Course Website: Log directly into Webct and click on "MGT725" or Log onto Pipeline, Click on "My Courses", and Click on "MGT725"

Note: Please rely on email first to contact me, if you need to talk about something, feel free to call me at 908.627.2600

II. Course Materials

Text: Porth, S. (2003) Strategic Management: A Cross-Functional Approach, First Edition, Prentice Hall: New Jersey. ISBN# 0-13-042213-4

There are supplemental readings (articles and/or cases) for most classes. Most of those readings will be available on Webct. If not, the instructions for how to obtain those readings are included on the Course Schedule (see following section).

III. Course Schedule

The Course Schedule (see Webct homepage) includes a summary of what we will be covering in each week (e.g., topics, text chapters, additional readings) as well as the due dates for individual and team assignments. Please refer to this schedule on a regular basis. Revisions may be made to the schedule as the semester progresses and will be announced in class. For each week of the semester, I will also post a summary of what we will cover that week, which will include a reminder of all readings, discussion questions (see "participation below"), and assignments due.

IV. Course Objectives

The Strategic Management course is designed to integrate and apply as much of your knowledge and experience in the context of the development of Business Policy and the practical application of Strategic Management.

The problems and issues of strategy formulation and implementation cover the whole spectrum of business and management. Many variables and situational factors must be

dealt with at once. Weighing the pros and cons of strategy entails a total enterprise and a skill for judging how all of the relevant factors add up to shape what actions need to be taken. This makes the study of strategic management quite fun and challenging, as it is a “big picture” course that will require you to constantly tap into your experience and knowledge of all areas of business and integrate that knowledge to craft and implement the most appropriate strategic plan.

Specific objectives of this course are:

1. To develop an understanding of the elements of the Strategic Management process, research and theories.
2. To learn how to apply the Strategic Management process to real life business cases, including current world/business news, and develop recommendations to help firms create and sustain competitive advantage.
3. To improve your communication skills through the use of various team and individual assignments, as summarized in the table below.
4. To develop an appreciation for the general manager’s cross-functional perspective of complex problems and the decision making process required to build strategy in organizations.

V. Course Tests & Assignments

Readings, lectures, case analyses/discussions, and class exercises will be employed to achieve the above objectives.

Your grade in the course will be based on the following:

Individual Assignments:

Class Participation	30%
2 Case Memos	20% (10% each)
News/Article Analysis	15%

Team Assignments:

Team Member Evaluation	5%
Strategic Plan: Written Report	20%
Presentation	10%

TOTAL	100%

Brief Description of Assignments:

Class Participation

To get the most learning from this course, you must actively participate in the classroom experience. Participation means actively participating in the course discussions. We will have Discussion Questions every week of the course except weeks 8, 12 and 13. You will be assigned discussion question(s) based on the topics for that classroom experience. Each discussion question will have its own threaded discussion space on the Webct site. You are expected to offer responses to these questions and/or comments on your classmates' responses. I will monitor the quantity and quality of your responses. At a minimum, you will be expected to post at least one **substantive** quality posting in response to the Week's discussion question and at least 4 responses to the postings of myself or your peers each week. In other words, the minimum number of postings each week is 5. Participation accounts for 30% of your grade, approximately 3% for each of the 10 weeks of discussion. Assuming equal quality, the grading for each week's participation is the following:

1-3 postings: 1.8 – 2.1/3 or 60 - 70%

4-5 postings: 2.4 – 2.67/3 or 80 – 89%

6+ postings: 2.7 – 3/3 or 90 – 100%

Of course if the quality of your postings is not sufficient, the points will not be earned. You are expected to contribute to the class discussions in meaningful ways. That means:

- Contributing new and relevant information to the course discussion and from readings of the textbooks;
- Commenting in a positive manner;
- Building on the remarks of your fellow students;
- Posing questions of your fellow students; and sharing quotes, websites, and other supplementary information.
- Demonstrating practical application of the week's key concepts from your professional/personal experience.

“Substantive” does not include “I agree,” “Great point” or “You’re wonderful” type postings. These types of postings are examples of positive “teaming” and are fine but not by themselves. They do not add depth or breadth to the discussion. A “substantive” posting should include:

- Your thesis (main point)
- Your supporting arguments
- A reference to class or outside material to support your thesis
- An example from your experiences to support your thesis.

Case Memos

Each student will write 2 case memos that include an analysis of a business case discussed in class. This memo should be addressed to the top management of the company that is the subject of the case, as a consultant engaged by the company to assess their strategic issues. Like the presentation, the memo should include an in-depth analysis of the company's current situation and offer strategic recommendations. This memo should be 5-6 pages in length (not including the cover page), double-spaced, but can have unlimited exhibits, figures, and attachments. All memos are expected to make use of exhibits, figures and attachments. In the Webct site, click on "Assignment Descriptions" and "Case Memo" for more information.

News or Article Analysis

To get practice applying strategic theory, we will study current business events that illustrate strategic concepts learned. To help with this, each student will identify and analyze a current business event or article that illustrates a strategic management topic covered in class. See course schedule for a summary of topics. The analysis should be in the form of a 3-5 page (not including the cover page) double-spaced paper and should be submitted by the end of the week in which that topic is discussed. The paper should include a brief (one paragraph) summary of the article with the remainder of the paper focused on analyzing how it relates to course concepts. Students can also include their assessment of what they expect will happen to the firm as well as recommendations for strategic improvements. At the beginning of the semester, the instructor will assign each student a topic to cover with the corresponding week it will be due. In addition to the paper, you are expected to refer to your example when responding to course discussion questions. In the Webct site, click on "Assignment Descriptions" and "News Analysis" for more information.

Team Member Evaluation

Students will form teams of about 5 persons on the first day of class. You will work in these teams throughout the semester. At the end of the course, you will evaluate your teammate contributions to the team assignments. This evaluation will be factored into the final grade to adjust for any members that do more or less than their share of the team's work. You will also complete a mid-term evaluation of your teammates. However, this is for my information only, and will not be factored into your grade. Of course, I also encourage and welcome you to come see me at any point during the course to confidentially discuss teammate issues. In the Webct site, click on "Assignment Descriptions" and "Team Member Evaluation" for a copy of the team member evaluation.

Strategic Plan

A significant part of the course requirement is a major, semester-long project in which your team will develop a strategic plan for an actual company that your team has chosen. The plan will include an analysis of a firm's internal and external environment and recommendations for how to create and sustain long-term competitive advantage.

Written Report: The Strategic Plan will culminate in a written report that summarizes the team's analysis and findings. I will provide you an outline for the strategic plan at the beginning of the semester that will correspond with topics discussed.

Presentation: The Strategic Plan will be presented through the use of a Powerpoint presentation that you will develop. The presentation will be between 15 -20 slides. More information will be provided on this during the course.

In the Webct site, click on "Assignment Descriptions" and "Strategic Plan" for more information on the assignment as well as samples from prior semesters.

VI. Ethical Conduct

The following statement is printed in the Stevens Graduate Catalog and applies to all students taking Stevens courses, on and off campus.

"Cheating during in-class tests or take-home examinations or homework is, of course, illegal and immoral. A Graduate Academic Evaluation Board exists to investigate academic improprieties, conduct hearings, and determine any necessary actions. The term 'academic impropriety' is meant to include, but is not limited to, cheating on homework, during in-class or take home examinations and plagiarism."

Consequences of academic impropriety are severe, ranging from receiving an "F" in a course, to a warning from the Dean of the Graduate School, which becomes a part of the permanent student record, to expulsion.

Reference: The Graduate Student Handbook, Academic Year 2003-2004 Stevens Institute of Technology, page 10.

Consistent with the above statements, all homework exercises, tests and exams that are designated as individual assignments must contain the following signed statement before they can be accepted for grading.

"I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment/examination. I further pledge that I have not copied any material from a book, article, the Internet or any other source except where I have expressly cited the source."

Signature _____

Date: _____

The following statement is printed in the Stevens Graduate Catalog and applies to all students taking Stevens courses, on and off campus. I will follow these guidelines in our class.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a common ethical offense. Please note that the definition provided by Webster's for plagiarism is: "the unauthorized use of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own." It is the responsibility of

the student to understand basic rules for referencing material. The excuse that you did not understand such rules (e.g., because of language barriers) is not acceptable.

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VII. Grading

A: 89.5% - 100%	C: 70% - 79.5%
B: 80% - 89.5%	F: 69.5% and below

VIII. Submission Requirements

I expect professional, high-quality work. Writing style, grammar, and spelling will be considered in determining your grades. Unless otherwise noted, all written assignments must be typed on a computer, double-spaced, with a 12-point font and one-inch margins.

All assignments must be submitted on or before the specified due date. I will accept late assignments if it is discussed with me beforehand and I am not surprised. However, late penalties will be assessed for late assignments regardless of the reason and even with my prior approval. The late penalties are:

Late Penalties:

1 -2 days late: 5% point deduction

3-7 days late: 10% point deduction

8-10 days late: 15% point deduction

11+ days late: 25% points deduction

Under no circumstances will an assignment be accepted after the last official day of class. Any missing assignments when the class ends will receive a “0.”

IX. Special Note

Throughout the course, I may make changes to any of the information outlined above. I will give you reasonable advance notice of such changes. But it is up to you to read any announcements and to check Webct frequently.