

UC Davis GSM Organizational Strategy and Structure

Syllabus – Spring 2022 – Prof. Elizabeth Pontikes

Preliminary – subject to change (February 2023)

MGT 401B: Wed 9AM-12:50PM (4 credits)
TA: Tina Tian mmtian@ucdavis.edu
Office Hours: Wed 1:30 – 3:30 PM (office or zoom)

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Why do some firms succeed while others fail? A good product is not enough. To achieve high performance, managers must execute a viable strategy: the organization's plan to win. In this course, we will learn strategy creation and execution, drawing on interdisciplinary research for frameworks to understand competitive forces in the environment, the fundamentals of organization design, and how to bring these together in a well-designed strategy. This is not about day-to-day operations, but about achieving lasting competitive advantage.

Part I of the course covers strategy fundamentals. Part II focuses on trade-offs inherent in creating and executing strategy. Part III explores how companies can create strategies for social as well as economic value.

The objective of this course is to develop critical thinking skills to identify assumptions of a strategic plan, to construct a logical argument around why the strategy will succeed, and tools to design organizational structures to forward the strategic goal. Some of the required work is independent and some is in groups. This mirrors how you will be evaluated in the workplace. Lessons are uncovered through case-based analysis, exercises, lecture, and video.

Course Requirements and Grading

In class written exam	20%
Take home memo	15%
In-class team exercises	15%
Course contributions	20%
Final team project	25%
Peer assessment	5%

Course materials. All cases and readings are in the required course pack. **You must purchase your own course pack.** Some of the materials are video-based and cannot be shared. **Many of the links to the readings require you to be on campus or use the library VPN. Other readings are found on Study.net or the Harvard Business Publishing coursepack.**

Textbook. The book, *Reimagining Capitalism in a World on Fire* By: Rebecca Henderson, ISBN: 9781541730137 is available through the Bookshelf tool within the Canvas course, or it can be purchased elsewhere.

Course Schedule

Part I: Fundamentals of Strategy and Execution

Class 1. Strategy Identification (Apr 5)

What is strategy? In the first session we will learn how a firm's strategy will create and capture value, resulting in sustained performance and competitive advantage. We will learn the strategy identification framework and apply it to example firms.

Theory Readings:

- Porter, M. E. (1996). [What is Strategy?](#) *Harvard Business Review* (This link takes you to the HBR page of the library. Click on "Search within this publication" and then search for "AN 9611187954" in the second field.) [Need library VPN]
- Pontikes. Teaching note on *Strategy Identification*. [Canvas Under "MGT 401B 001 SQ 2023"]
- Bossidy and Charan (2011), *Execution* Ch 1 (13-34) [HBS]

Required readings for class expectations:

- [UC Davis Principles of Community](#)
- ["Avoiding Plagiarism"](#) OSSJA, UC Davis

Class Preparation:

1. Read the syllabus [Yes, the entire syllabus. Skim the discussion questions.]
2. Complete the background survey on canvas
3. Apply Strategy Identification to Southwest and IKEA from the description in Porter (1996): identify goal, scope, competitive advantage, and logic.
4. We will use UC Davis' principles of community to guide our discussions. Outline three steps you will take to listen in class discussions and respect people's lived experience, acknowledging that our society "carries within it deep-rooted injustices and biases."
5. What is the difference between research and plagiarism? Why is plagiarism so serious? What will you do to ensure you do not plagiarize?

Supplementary Material (Research informing class rules and guidelines)

- *Power Point hand-outs*: Worthington, D. and D. Levasseur (2015). ["To Provide or not to Provide Course Power Point Slides? The Impact of Instructor-Provided Slides upon Student Attendance and Performance."](#) *Computers and Education*.
- *Longhand vs laptop note taking*: Muller, P. and D. Oppenheimer (2014). ["The pen is mightier than the keyboard: Advantages of longhand over laptop note taking."](#) *Psychological Science*.
- *Laptop multi-tasking*: Sana, F., T. Weston and N. Cepeda (2013). ["Laptop multitasking hinders classroom learning for both users and nearby peers."](#) *Computers & Education*.
- *Student-as-consumer?* ["Students with consumer mindset get lower grades."](#) Original research: Bunce, L., A. Baird, and S. Jones (2017). "The student-as-consumer approach in higher education and its effects on academic performance." *Studies in Higher Education*.
- Nohria, N. ["What the Case Study Method Really Teaches."](#) Harvard Business Publishing Perspectives.

Class 2. Environmental Analysis, Competitive Advantage, & Core Competencies (Apr 12)

Whether a strategy can be successful depends on a firm's environment. We will learn Porter's five forces framework and apply it using the Merck & Co. case, and consider how Merck can create sustainable competitive advantage in its environment. We will also evaluate the implications of cost leadership versus differentiation strategies, and will consider strategic implications of integrating the cooperative advantage framework. A take-away from this class session is that there are often multiple approaches to creating sustainable competitive advantage even within the same industry.

Theory readings:

- Porter (2008). "[The Five Competitive Forces that Shape Strategy](#)," *Harvard Business Review*. (This link takes you to the HBR page of the library. Click on "Search within this publication" and then search for "AN 28000138" in the second field.) [Need library VPN]
- Porter (1985). *Competitive Advantage*. "Generic Competitive Strategies," 11 – 26. [HBS]
- Prieto, L. and Phipps, S. (2020) "[Cooperative Advantage: Rethinking the Company's Purpose](#)." *MIT Sloan Management Review*. [Need library VPN]

Case:

- Merck & Co, Inc. [HBSP site; McGraw Hill Education MH0035] [HBS]

In class (no prep required):

- Strategy Simulation: The Five Forces [HBS 7880-HTM-ENG] [HBS]

Class Preparation:

1. Apply Porter's five forces analysis to the pharmaceutical industry, based on the Merck & Co. case. Is it an attractive industry? Why or why not?
2. Identify Merck's capabilities. What has made them successful historically? What has changed to create the current challenges that concern CEO Frazier?
3. Consider Porter's generic competitive strategies. Where would you place Merck in this framework? Where would you place the typical "generic" pharmaceutical company?
4. Porter (1985) defines two types of competitive advantages, cost leadership and differentiation. How do Prieto and Phipps (2020) see advantage differently?
5. Merck is considering moving to open innovation. How could open innovation create competitive advantage? In what ways does open innovation rely on cooperative advantage?

Class 3. Strategy Execution: Organization Design and Strategy Logic (Apr 19)

Successful strategies depend on strategy execution. Managers need to map out their strategy argument to identify the underlying assumptions that will make their strategy viable (or not). A key element of strategy execution and the strategy argument is whether a firm's competencies, embedded in its organization design (critical tasks, formal structure, people, culture), enable it to execute the competitive advantage from its strategy. Bringing together classes 1-3, a firm's strategy is viable when their organization design is uniquely suited to execute a competitive advantage that creates and captures value in their environment.

In-Class written exam. The first hour of class will be an in-class written exam, with short-answer responses to three questions. The written exam will cover material from class 1-2 as well as the Bernstein reading from class 3. You may only view your word processing program and a printed copy of the lululemon case. Anyone who views any other material will receive a 0 for this assignment. See details on p. 12 of the syllabus.

Theory Readings:

- Bernstein, E., R. Raffaelli and J. Margolis. "Leader as Architect: Alignment." (9-415-039) [READ CAREFULLY]. [HBS]
- Carroll, G. and J. Sorensen, "[Why Good Arguments Make Better Strategy](#)," *MIT Sloan Management Review*. [Need library VPN]
- Note on the Value Chain: A Framework for Analyzing Firm Activities [HBS W90C02] [HBS]

Supplementary reading (review from MGT-401):

- Bernstein, E. and N. Nohria. "Note on Organizational Structure." (9-491-083) [HBS]

Case:

- Leadership, Culture and Transition at lululemon (multimedia, HBS 410705-HTM-ENG) [HBS]

In-class:

- Politico exercise (no additional prep required)

Class 4. Intrinsic Motivation: Culture Deep Dive (Apr 26)

Culture, the "software" of organization design, is a key – and often overlooked – tool. In this session we will learn how culture contributes to strategy execution. We will examine how managers can set up "macro level" structures that tap into people's psychological processes and motivations for a healthy work environment that creates unique competitive advantages. We will also understand how culture draws from and is reinforced by the larger community and the company's social mission.

Assignment: Final Project proposals due.

Theory readings:

- Clayton Christensen & Kirstin Shu (2006). "What is an Organization's Culture?" [HBS 399104-PDF-ENG] [HBS]
- Edmonson, A. (2019). Ch 2: "The Paper Trail." [The Fearless Organization](#), pp. 25 – 49. [Need library VPN]
- Rivera, L (2015). "[Guess who doesn't fit in at work](#)." *The New York Times*. [Need library VPN]

Cases:

- Zappos.com 2009: Clothing, Customer Service, and Company Culture (multimedia) [HBS]
- Prieto, L. and Phipps, S. (2019). [Chapter 3: "Charles Clinton Spaulding – the Father of African American Management Thought"](#), *African American Management History: Insights on Gaining a Cooperative Advantage*. (pp. 63-84). [Need library VPN]

Class Preparation:

1. What is Zappos' strategy, and what is the strategy argument for how it can have competitive advantage in this industry? Does Zappos' culture contribute to its ability to execute its strategy?
2. Drawing on the Christensen & Shu reading, (1) describe Zappos' culture, and (2) identify the *artifacts* or visible manifestations of its culture.
3. Does Zappos' culture create psychological safety, as described in the Edmonson reading? How? Be specific.
4. What formal structures and processes did Charles Clinton Spaulding put into place at North Carolina Mutual to create and maintain the culture?

5. In what ways did the organization culture at North Carolina Mutual draw from the larger culture in the community? How did it *contribute* to the community culture?
6. To what extent do you think the culture at North Carolina Mutual was due to the social mission of the company and Spaulding? What about for Zappos – how much do you think Hsieh’s social mission drove their unique culture?

In-class: Peer review mid-quarter check-in for in-class teams

Part II: Managing Trade-offs

Class 5. Corporate scope: Vertical Integration, Diversification, and M&A (May 3)

Every successful firm faces the question of how to scale. In this class, we will use our strategy framework to evaluate trade-offs of scaling through vertical integration and expanding scope through diversification – or, conversely, spinning off businesses when there are no longer synergies in strategy and/or organization design. We will also evaluate when this can be accomplished through acquisition.

Assignment: Guest speaker questions Due April 30

Theory readings:

- Rothaermal, Frank. Strategic Management. Chapter 8: focus on 8.3 – 8.4 (pp. 278 – 297); skim rest. [HBS]

Case:

- PepsiCo and Frito Lay: A Salty Combination? [HBP# CU282] [HBS]

In-class (questions for guest speaker required):

- Al Ko, CEO Early Warning

Class Preparation:

1. What is the difference between *economies of scale* and *economies of scope*?
2. When is acquiring (or operating) a business in another industry good strategy? Consider building core competencies and competitive advantage.
3. What were the initial reasons for PepsiCo’s entry into the restaurants business? Why did PepsiCo ultimately decide to spin-off Tricon?
4. What are the proposed synergies between snacks and beverages? Construct a *strategy argument* to answer this question (see class 3). What are the assumptions that underlie the argument to keep the businesses together or to spin-off? Ultimately, what do you recommend?

Class 6. People: Diversity and Organizational Learning (May 10)

Incorporating diversity of backgrounds and perspectives is important for fairness as well as organizational learning, to maintain competitive advantage and strategic value in a changing world. This class will cover research into why diversity matters, the conditions under which diversity confers benefits, how it can be difficult, and paradigms and practices for managing and promoting diversity in the workplace.

Theory:

- Phillips, Katherine (2015) “[Why Diversity Matters](#)” talk at Columbia (video).

- David Thomas & Robin Ely (1996). "[Making differences matter: A new paradigm for managing diversity](#)" *Harvard Business Review*. (This link takes you to the HBR page of the library. Click on "Search within this publication" and then search for "AN 9609167709" in the second field.) [Need library VPN]
- Frank Dobbin and Alexandra Kalev (2016). [Why Diversity Programs Fail, and What Works Better](#)," *Harvard Business Review*. [HBS R1607C-PDF-ENG] [Need library VPN]

Case bundle:

- Michel Landel (2015). "[Sodexo's CEO on Smart Diversification](#)," *Harvard Business Review* [HBS R1503A-PDF-ENG] [Need library VPN]
- Shifting the Diversity Climate: The Sodexo Solution [HBS 9-412-020] [HBS]

Class Preparation:

1. What is the paradox Phillips (2015) discovered in terms of how diverse teams *perform* as compared to how they *think* they have performed?
2. According to the Landel article, how does Sodexo's diversification create competitive advantage? Consider the lesson from class 5: what are the synergies among its varied businesses?
3. To be effective diversity initiatives must be incorporated throughout a company's organization design. Describe the diversity initiatives Anand implemented at Sodexo in the "Leader as Architect" framework.
4. Consider the three paradigms from Thomas and Ely (1996). Which do you think describes Sodexo's diversity initiatives?
5. Dobbin and Kalev describe why diversity programs based on control don't work, and suggest an approach based on engagement, contact, and accountability. Do you think Sodexo reflects these principles in their approach?

Class 7: Exploration and Exploitation: Execution vs Discovery (May 17)

Classic strategy assumes market statics: that environments change slowly enough such that firms can thrive by executing a strategy that is periodically updated. But in our era of disruption, market change is rapid and ongoing. To effectively compete under market dynamics, firms need to shift from exploiting existing competitive advantages to exploring to discover new competitive advantage. We will analyze 3M, a successful explorer firm, and learn how organization design can foster exploration and organizational learning

Theory Readings:

- Shih, W. 2013. "Exploration vs. Exploitation" HBS Module Note 9-614-004. [HBS]

Case:

- 3M: Profile of an Innovating Company (HBS 9-395-016) [HBS]

In class (no prep):

- Marshmallow Game
- Peer review mid-quarter check-in for final project teams

Class Preparation:

1. Describe key elements of the organization design of “classic” 3M (the McKnight era), using the “Leader as Architect” model.
2. How does the “classic” 3M organizational design encourage exploration? How does it create competitive advantage for 3M? How *efficient* is their organization design? What are the trade-offs?
3. Lou Lehr undertakes a major reorganization when he becomes CEO. Would you say his changes push 3M more toward exploration or exploitation, from Shih (2013)? Do you think he strengthens or weakens 3M? Explain.
4. A key consideration for an innovative company is the difference between waste and slack. To the extent that 3M is inefficient, how much would you say is due to waste versus slack?

Part III: Strategies to Create Social Value

Class 8: The Social Responsibility of Business: Managing Risk, Taking Responsibility (May 24)

What is the social responsibility of business? This question is increasingly important in our era as people are questioning old paradigms and creating new ones. In this session, we will examine how risk and corporate responsibility plays out in strategy, competitive advantage, and organization design, applied to BP and the Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill case. We will also engage with the emerging debate regarding shareholder value, stakeholder value, and corporate social responsibility – and more generally, how thought leaders are reimagining capitalism.

Assignment: Guest speaker questions due May 21.

Theory Readings:

- Edmonson, A. (2019). Ch 3: “Avoidable Failure.” [The Fearless Organization](#), pp. 53 – 76 **[Need library VPN]**
- [“Rethinking the Social Responsibility of Business,” Reason.com](#). Read Mackey’s argument, Friedman’s response, and Mackey’s response to Friedman. Skip T.J. Rogers.
 - o Supplemental reading - the original article: Friedman, M. (1970). [“The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase Its Profits,” The New York Times.](#) **[Need library VPN]**
- Henderson, R. (2020). Chapter 1, “When the Facts Change, I Change My Mind,” *Reimagining capitalism in a world on fire*.
- Rosenthal, C. [Slavery, Capitalism, and the Power to Commodify](#) KPFA *Against the Grain* podcast (listen until 21:45). *[Note: this podcast covers difficult topics. Please contact me or your TA if you are concerned about listening.]*

Case:

- BP and the Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill (Ivey School of Business – W11366) **[HBS]**

In-class (prep with the readings and thought questions/guest speaker questions):

- Guest speaker: Michael Mroz, former Treasurer for BP America, Inc.
- Debate on the Social Responsibility of Business, Shareholder Value, and the Function of Capitalism

Class Preparation:

1. In your opinion, what was the most problematic of the flawed decisions made by BP and its partners in this case? Why did so many employees deem it appropriate to take significant risks? Why didn't they more strongly oppose decisions they knew were flawed?
2. How did the political and regulatory environment affect decision-making by BP and its partners? Do you agree with Tony Hayward's quote at the end of the case – was this disaster a BP failure, or was it an industry accident?
3. Debate prep: What is Friedman's view on shareholder value and capitalism? How is it similar to and different from Mackey's view of stakeholder value? Which do you agree with?
4. What is Henderson's view on shareholder value and capitalism? What do you think about her assertion that institutional context makes a difference?
5. Rosenthal argues that the violence and coercion of slavery in the American south aided in the emergence of capitalist practices. Were you surprised to hear that capitalist systems had these roots? Why is it important to know that slave plantations were a form of capitalism that pioneered modern business practices?

Class 9. Balancing economic & social value; CSR for Competitive Advantage (I) (May 31)

Can a social mission be incorporated into strategy for competitive – or cooperative – advantage? With the IKEA case, we will discuss challenges overseeing suppliers when ethical issues arise, especially those operating in different countries across a cultural divide. We will consider options for how to move forward in a way that comports with their values and sustains competitive advantage. With the NG case, we will see how an intrepid CEO was able to – against all odds – create competitive advantage based on tactics to address climate change. We will discuss his approach and consider how it could be applied more broadly.

Take-home Memo Due. Should IKEA leave India as a source of rug production? See specific instructions on p. 12 of the syllabus.

Theory readings:

- Henderson, R. (2020). Chapter 2, "Reimagining capitalism in practice," *Reimagining capitalism in a world on fire*.
 - o Michael Porter and Mark Kramer (2006), "[Strategy and Society: The Link Between Competitive Advantage and Corporate Social Responsibility](#)," *Harvard Business Review*. (This link takes you to the HBR page of the library. Click on "Search within this publication" and then search for "AN 23081414" in the second field.) **[Need library VPN]**

Cases:

- IKEA's Global Sourcing Challenge: Indian Rugs and Child Labor (A) (HBS 906414) **[HBS]**
- Erik Osmundsen's NG turnaround (from the Henderson Reading)

Class Preparation:

1. What actions should Marion Barner take regarding the IKEA supply contract with Rangan Exports?
2. Should IKEA monitor child labor use themselves, or sign up with Rugmark?
3. What long-term direction would you suggest she take regarding IKEA's continued operation in India? Should the company stay or exit?

4. What tactics did Erik Osmundsen use to get stakeholder buy-in for his vision for NG? How was he able to make such a large strategy pivot successful?
5. Both the Henderson and Porter & Kramer readings suggest that the best approach to CSR is to integrate it into the company's business strategy. Can firms develop and execute a viable strategy that bolsters stakeholder value and the common good?

Class 10: CSR for Competitive Advantage (II) (June 7)

In this session we will examine how an established company can incorporate social values into their strategy. We will consider how Nike integrated CSR and sustainability initiatives with existing competencies. This case exhibits the leverage large companies can have on greater social change. A key takeaway is that established companies can create new sources of competitive advantage if they employ a strategy discovery process that includes material changes in organization design coupled with commitment from leadership. We will also consider the extent to which Nike is able to realize both economic and social goals and tensions that remain.

Survey nominating top 3 contributors to class discussion due.

Thought question: Henderson, Porter and Kramer, and executives in the cases covered in this section, take the position that companies can create strategies for both economic gain and that enhance social value. In this way business – and a “reimagined” capitalism – can create social as well as economic benefits. What do you think about this? Is it a (partial) solution to our global problems? Or are there more limitations to this approach than acknowledged?

Case: Governance and Sustainability at Nike (A) (HBS 9-313-146) [HBS]

Class Preparation:

1. What was the impetus for Nike's sustainability initiative?
2. Nike institutes a number of changes to improve sustainability. Map out these changes using the “Leader as Architect” framework: what changes were made in critical tasks, formal organization, people, and culture?
3. How have Nike's strategy/competitive advantages changed, and how have they stayed the same?
4. Nike merges sustainability with innovation. How does merging these areas help Nike create competitive advantage?
5. Should Nike revisit its commitment to “Road to Zero”? What stakeholder obligations do they need to consider?
6. Evaluate Nike's CR initiative overall. What was effective, and where did they fall short? What do you admire, and what would you do differently?

Guest Speakers

Albert Ko, Chief Executive Officer, Early Warning

Al Ko is Chief Executive Officer of Early Warning Services, LLC, a fintech company owned by seven of the country's leading banks. Prior to joining Early Warning, Ko served as Chief Transformation Officer for Intuit. Appointed to this role in 2017, Ko drove Intuit's operating rhythm and oversaw the cross-company

transformational change initiatives that allowed Intuit to re-imagine and re-invent itself in order to best serve its customers. Over his 13+ year career at Intuit, Ko held numerous leadership positions, including General Manager of Mint and Head of Product for Intuit's Small Business Group, where he was responsible for the global expansion of QuickBooks, Payments, and Payroll. Before joining Intuit, Ko was a management consultant at both the Boston Consulting Group and McKinsey & Company where he advised technology and industrial clients on strategy, organizational effectiveness, and supply chain management. Al holds a B.A. in History and International Studies from Yale University and a J.D. from Harvard Law School.

Michael Mroz, former Treasurer at BP America, Inc.

Michael Mroz is a former Treasurer at BP America Inc. He successfully led the firm's cash management response in the United States to the severe liquidity challenges which emerged from the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Michael was also a key player in satisfying the U.S. Department of Justice's mandate for the creation of a \$20 billion trust fund established to ensure that the various damage claims resulting from the incident would be paid. Michael holds a Masters of Business Administration (MBA) degree (Finance) from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business.

Course Requirements

In class written exam	20%
Take home memo	15%
In-class team exercises	15%
Course contributions	20%
Final team project	25%
Peer assessment	5%

In class written exam:

There is a one-hour in-class written exam in class 3. This is a short-answer response to three questions that will ask you to apply the frameworks from the course to lululemon. The only materials you may consult during this exam is a **printed** copy of the case. You may only have your word processing program open. Anyone who views any other program or materials will receive a 0 for this assignment. Sickness is the only excused absence for this exam. If you are sick on exam day, you have the option to make-up this part of the grade with a 6-page research paper responding to a question I provide.

Take-home memo:

A take-home memo is due before class 9, submitted on Canvas. Write a 2-3 page response to the question: **Should IKEA get out of India as a source of rug production?** This assignment is in two parts:

- (1) First, conduct your own analysis. Directly and explicitly address issues around India's culture and infrastructure as you consider IKEA's course of action. Draw from information in the case. You must also explicitly use the framework presented in the "Strategy and Society" theory reading. Consider trade-offs to outsourcing, considering both economic and social impact, and evaluate evaluating IKEA's decision to stay in India or not in terms of IKEA's value chain. Also explain the likely consequences that will result from their decision.
- (2) Second, critique ChatGPT. A response to the first question, generated by ChatGPT, is posted on canvas. Critique this response, considering what is incorrect, incomplete, or a surface-level

analysis, considering the information in the case and the reading. Be specific. Explain how a human (you!) can add value above and beyond the AI analysis.

In-class team exercises: In most classes, I will assign an exercise to apply lessons or analyze a case question. You will be assigned to an in-class group to complete the exercise, typically on a shared google document that you will submit. For each in-class exercise:

- Write the names of the group members in attendance. Adding the name of someone who is not in attendance is a violation of the honor code and will result in a zero for the entire team.
- Team exercises will be graded based on whether they show you understand the material and can apply it. In most cases, there is not one “right” answer, but there are better and worse analytical approaches and explanations.
- To accommodate illness, interviews, etc., I will drop your lowest team exercise grade.

Course Contributions:

This course depends heavily on participation. Discussions expose the ambiguities that are part and parcel of any case analysis. Through participation you will develop the skills of persuasion, analysis, and listening that are key to success.

In-class contribution: Students who actively and positively contribute to case discussions are performing a service for the whole class by improving everyone’s learning and they will be rewarded accordingly. In-class contributions are scored immediately after each class. In class, as in life, showing up matters. Any attempt to contribute counts. Positive contribution will merit the highest scores. Points are deducted if your behavior in class is inappropriate, e.g. you are disrespectful to others in the classroom, or if you violate the no-electronics policy and are on your computer or phone for non-class purposes. I understand that participation scoring can lead some students to say something once per class and then disengage. Such behavior will be noted and not rewarded; I find it as unproductive as you do. I understand that it is difficult to have full participation in large classes. Do your best. Though I may not be able to call on you every time, I notice who’s engaged in the conversation (and who’s web surfing or emailing – it’s a lot more obvious than you might think).

In-class participation cannot be made up. But please do not show up if you are sick! To accommodate illness, interviews, travel, etc. **I will drop your lowest course contribution grade.** There is no difference between excused or unexcused absences. You do not need to email me or your TA if you are going to miss class. I understand sometimes circumstances arise where you need to prioritize something else and miss more than one class. That is your choice, but understand you are making a choice. To be fair to your classmates and uphold standards, missing more than one class will affect your course contribution grade. **Please do not email me or your TA asking to make-up course contributions for additional missed classes.** I will not provide a make-up assignment. If you are an active participator during other sessions and on Canvas, and perform strongly on your other class assignments, even with missing two classes, the effect on your overall grade may be minimal. Of course, the more classes you miss, the lower your course contribution grade. If circumstances arise that make it difficult for you to attend multiple classes, e.g. a family tragedy, long illness, multiple interviews, travel for work, etc., you may want to consider dropping the course and re-enrolling when you have time to attend class (or enrolling in the online course).

Your course contribution grade also includes:

- Post-class contributions on Canvas. We will continue the discussion on Canvas. Each week I will post a prompt for responses. You can also post prompts either directly related to case

discussion, or branching out to relate issues from class to other pertinent topics. Discussions will close 1-week after the class.

- Questions for guest speakers. You are required to submit 1-2 questions for each guest speaker.

To prepare for class discussion, you will need to carefully read the case and all the readings. **First read the assigned theory reading(s) for the week, and keep the key concepts in mind as you read the case.**

Take time to dissect the main issues presented in the case. You may need to read the case twice. The frequency (i.e., the quantity) of your contributions in class is not the main criterion for effective class participation. The quality of your participation is most important. Criteria for effective class participation include:

- Does the participant demonstrate a thorough understanding of the assigned readings?
- Do the comments show evidence of analysis of the case?
- Does the participant productively further the discussion and test new ideas, and not simply repeat what has already been said?

You may discuss the materials with others. Study groups are encouraged. You also may draw on relevant outside information that brings depth, nuance, and perspective to your analysis. However, using outside information to substitute for your original analysis, whether from the internet, classmates who have previously covered the case, artificial intelligence like ChatGPT, is a violation of the code of academic conduct and strictly prohibited.

Final Team Project:

Your final is a team project that provides a strategic analysis of a firm that is undergoing a major change, or that is in trouble and needs to embark on a major change. The objective of this project is to *demonstrate you can apply theories and frameworks from the course to gain insight into a real firm's problems.*

You will be assigned to a project team between 4-5 members based on your interests, skills, and work experience as indicated in your Canvas survey.

You may analyze any type of organization, e.g. a non-profit, an established firm, or a start-up, as long as: 1) you can get sufficient data on it, 2) you can justify that the organization is in trouble or in the midst of a major change, 3) the organization operates in a competitive market context (or something comparable), i.e. no utilities, and 4) you have not used the firm in an assignment for another class.

Projects can use primary data (e.g. interviews) or secondary data (e.g. news reports), or a mix of the two. Be sure to choose a topic where you have **access to enough information about the design of the organization to integrate the full range of concepts from the course into your analysis.**

Your strategic analysis should diagnosis of the firm's problem(s) and/or the reason for its strategic change, including an analysis of the firm's environment, it's strategy (historically and currently), and how/whether its organization design supports competitive advantages necessary to compete in its environment. Your analysis should end with recommendations that flow naturally from your analysis and address problems you have identified. A thoughtful analysis is essential; projects should go beyond

statements of facts and events.

- **Class 4:** Project proposal due (one page)
- **Final paper due** at 4:00 pm Monday June 12th, uploaded to Canvas

Project proposals

Proposals should contain the company that you will analyze and how the frameworks from the course apply to your case. Identify the sources of data that will be used in your research.

Final project paper

The paper may not exceed 12 double-spaced pages of text with one-inch margins, in 12-point Times New Roman font. Only the text of the paper counts toward the page limit; table of contents, references, tables, and figures do not count toward the limit.

There is no required structure for the paper, but most good papers contain the following:

1. Problem definition: Give some firm background and history: what has the firm's strategy been, particularly its historical competitive advantages? What is its underlying economic logic? Has it changed recently or has the world changed?
2. The industry and environment: what is the 5-forces analysis of the firm's industry? How has it changed?
3. Discuss the firm: What was the source of the organization's competitive advantage, and why is it no longer sustainable? For start-ups, what is the intended source of competitive advantage? Why didn't the firm keep up? Use theories you have learned in the course to analyze the situation and diagnose the underlying cause of problems. You should discuss with your group a number of theories in relation to the firm you're analyzing, to select the best way to analyze your situation. In the paper, you should only present the one(s) that fits the situation. Do not simply reiterate the theories presented in class. Successful papers present a critical, thoughtful, and focused analysis that *applies* relevant theories with enough depth to reveal insight.
4. Recommendations: What should the firm do now?

Peer Assessment: Peer review is an important skill. It is also important to be a strong team contributor. Part of your grade is based on peer assessment. I will ask you to evaluate your team members for both your in-class groups and your final project. I will also ask you to vote on the top three course contributors. Whoever wins will receive bonus points for both peer assessment and course contribution.

- **Final peer assessments due** at 4:00 pm Tuesday June 13th, uploaded to Canvas

Course Policies

Accessibility

Please let me know if you need accommodations related to a disability or other condition, preferably within the first two weeks of class. All information will remain confidential.

Electronics Policy

Use of laptops, smartphones, and other electronics during lecture and class discussion are not allowed. Using electronics in class, even for note taking, is distracting to the user and classmates, and research shows it results in lower grades (see supplementary materials, class 1). Electronics are useful for collaboration and in-class polls, and I will ask you to use them for this purpose only. Otherwise they should be put away. Consult me if there is a necessary accessibility accommodation, or a one-off situation (for example waiting for an emergency call).

Grading

Requests for a re-grade must be presented in writing within one week of receiving your grade. The entire assignment will be graded again. To accommodate natural statistical fluctuations, grades can go up or down after a re-grade. Course contribution grades cannot be contested.

Integrity and Code of Academic Conduct

I expect that all of you take UC Davis' code of academic conduct as seriously as I do. You must exhibit integrity in all of your activities and adhere to the UC Davis code of academic conduct, described here: <http://sja.ucdavis.edu/files/cac.pdf>.

It is an academic conduct violation to present others' ideas or writing as your own (plagiarism), or to discuss cases with students who have already analyzed the case in class. You were informed about this code of conduct during orientation and signed a statement affirming that you understand it. No violations of academic conduct will be tolerated, and I will not hesitate to turn any violators over to Student Judicial Affairs.

Principles of Community

This course depends heavily on discussion, and much of the learning comes from sharing and listening to your classmates experiences as you integrate the readings and lessons. In discussions we are guided by the [UC Davis Principles of Community](#) that affirms the dignity inherent in all of us, and values individuality and diversity of perspectives and backgrounds as an opportunity to listen, engage, learn and grow. We reject all manifestations of discrimination.

Slide print-outs

I will not provide slide print-outs. My lectures are interactive and integrate polling and surprise findings. This makes for a better learning experience and does not comport with print-outs. In addition, research shows you will learn more without print-outs (see supplemental materials for class 1). I will upload slides to canvas after class.

Miscellaneous

If you have a situation that causes problems for you in fulfilling the course requirements, **tell me!** I'm almost always able to help. It is much easier to address problems early on; much more difficult after the course is over and assignments are in.

Additional Recommended Reading

Adner, Ron (2021). *Winning the Right Game: How to Disrupt, Defend, and Deliver in a Changing World*.

Bossidy & Charan (2011). *Execution: The Discipline of Getting Things Done*.

Collins, Jim (2001). *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap ... and Others Don't*.

Edmonson, Amy (2019). *The Fearless Organization: Creating Psychological Safety in the Workplace for Learning, Innovation, and Growth*.

Henderson, Rebecca (2020). *Reimagining Capitalism in a World On Fire*.

Nembhard, Jessica Gordon (2014). *Collective Courage: A History of African American Cooperative Economic Thought and Practice*.

Prieto, Leon and Phipps, Simone (2019). *African American Management History: Insights on Gaining a Cooperative Advantage*.

Ries, Eric (2017). *The Startup Way*.

Sorensen and Carroll (2021). *Making Great Strategy: Arguing for Organizational Advantage*.

Zingales, Luigi (2012). *A Capitalism for the People: Recapturing the Lost Genius of American Prosperity*.