



A M B R O S E

**BUS310 Business Strategy
(3 credit hours)**

Fall 2010

Class Schedule

Time: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:45-11:00am

Location: Room L2082

Moodle course link: <http://moodle.ambrose.edu/course/view.php?id=219>

Moodle enrolment code: 3100

Instructor Information

Instructor: Jeff Huebner, MBA

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Office hours: Wed & Fri 12:30-1:30pm & 3:00-4:00pm, Thurs 11:00-12:00pm,
or by appointment

Course Description & Objectives

In this course students learn to analyze the internal and external environments of a business firm and apply concepts relating to the formation and implementation of business-level and corporate-level strategies. The integration of strategic management and functional areas such as marketing, finance, etc., is also emphasized in highlighting the links between strategic challenges, management evaluation and decision-making, firm performance and competitive advantage.

Case analysis and class discussions will be the primary technique used to develop an understanding of course content. Students will be engaged in simulated management decision-making through case studies and analysis of business plans, evaluating a variety of strategies in order to gain a better understanding of the successes and challenges that businesses must manage. Students are expected to be well prepared for class discussion of cases, and to demonstrate an understanding of textbook material as it applies to the analysis of a case situation. Lectures and class discussion will be used to clarify and supplement text material. In addition, the course emphasizes applied learning in the form of written assignments and oral presentations.

Objectives:

The primary objective of the course is for students to develop the skills and ability to analyze, evaluate and develop corporate strategies for businesses in various environments and industries, and to present the results of their analysis clearly and persuasively.

Learning Outcomes:

- Gain a solid foundation of the basic theories, principles and concepts that encompass Business Strategy
- Critically analyze business strategy on the grounds of effectiveness, viability and ethical standards
- Practice skills for more effective communication and interaction with others
- Evaluate leadership styles to better understand the art and skill of strategic leadership
- To reflect on Christian values as they relate to business strategy

Prerequisite: BUS 100

Required Text & Materials

Textbooks:

Hitt, Ireland, Hoskisson, Rowe and Sheppard, *Strategic Management: Competitiveness and Globalization - **Concepts***, 3rd Canadian edition. Nelson Thompson Learning, 2009

Hitt, Ireland, Hoskisson, Rowe and Sheppard, *Strategic Management: Competitiveness and Globalization - **Cases***, 3rd Canadian edition. Nelson Thompson Learning, 2009

Supplemental readings as assigned:

The Globe & Mail newspaper
Harvard Business Review and Case Studies

The textbooks are available in the bookstore and will be an integral part of course readings and preparation for class discussions. In addition, news articles, audio visual presentations and guest speakers may also be used occasionally to supplement lectures and course materials.

Course Requirements

Course grading and evaluation will be conducted according to the following elements:

Midterm exam	15%
Final exam	20%
Hand-in assignments:	
Business case studies	20%
Self-assessment of Business Case Competition	10%
Presentations:	

In-class case presentation	10%
Business case competition performance	10%
Class participation & discussion	15%

Examinations:

A mid-term examination will be held in class during October, encompassing topics covered in the first half of the course. Further details will be provided at a later date. The course will conclude with a final examination covering all topics in the course, with a focus on those presented in the second half since the mid-term exam. The final exam will take place during the exam period in December as scheduled by the Registrar's Office. Graded final examinations will only be made available for supervised review, at the request of the student.

Business Case Study & Class Presentation:

One of the objectives of the course is for students to improve their skills in the analysis, writing and presentation of business case studies. In order to achieve this, students are required to write formal case study reports on a particular company or business strategy scenario. Working through the case to determine which information is relevant or not is part of the challenge. In many cases the information may not be complete. In reality, most business decisions are made without perfect or complete information. Managers must make sound decisions based on critical analysis using the best information available.

Students will be assigned business cases and follow a standard methodology for the write-up. The report must be brief (5-6 pages maximum in length: 12 point font, 1½ line spacing) while still covering all necessary information and areas of analysis, and applying principles presented in the course. Students will be challenged to write effectively and succinctly, presenting their ideas and recommendations in a style suitable for business executives to read and understand within a short period of time.

In addition to the written reports, students will also develop a presentation (10-15 minutes in length) to deliver in-class that summarizes their findings and recommendations from the case study. The format for this presentation will typically include PowerPoint or overhead slides along with hand-outs for the group. However, other creative elements such as audio/visual materials, simulations, etc., may also be utilized.

Business Case Competition:

This year students have the unique opportunity to participate in a business case competition being hosted by MEDA (Mennonite Economic Development Associates) as part of their annual North American convention taking place in Calgary, Nov 4-7th - <http://solutionstopoverty.com/web/connect/association-engagement/meda-2010-convention>. MEDA is a non-profit organization focused on the intersection of business and faith in the marketplace along with solutions to poverty and economic development around the world. As part of the BUS310 Strategy course, Ambrose students will take part in the MEDA student case

competition, competing against teams from other Christian schools in Canada and the U.S. The competition will take place downtown at the Westin Hotel on Saturday, Nov 6th, from 2-5pm. Each student's participation and performance in the competition will be evaluated as part of the course grade for BUS310. Further details regarding the event and specific business case information will be provided in class.

Self-assessment of Business Case Competition :

Students will be required to submit a detailed self-assessment (4-5 pages) of their experience and performance in the Business Case Competition. This report should focus on your effectiveness as a team member in researching, analyzing, developing and presenting your business case plan and recommendations in the student competition. Your self-assessment should address:

- what you aimed to achieve in the case competition
- what aspects you think you did well
- what aspects you think you could have done better
- your leadership and interactions with other group members during the preparation and practices leading up to the event and during the actual competition itself
- your thoughts and feelings about the competition experience
- what steps you could take to improve your engagement and performance in the future
- lastly, provide a brief assessment of each of the other members of your team in terms of the quality of their contribution and their level of motivation or engagement with the group work. If you had 10 marks in total to assign to all of the group members (including yourself), how would you divide them up and why? (e.g., equal marks to all members because everyone contributed equally; or higher marks to certain team members because their level of contribution and/or share of the workload was higher?)

Class Participation & Discussion:

Group discussions and analysis of course topics will be a key component of learning throughout the term. Students are expected to attend all classes, having prepared for class by reading the assigned text chapters and business cases ahead of time and actively participate in group discussions. The skills needed to participate effectively in class and present your ideas are the same skills required to be effective in the business world. The ability and willingness to speak up in front of others is an important skill for students to develop. Time will also be allowed throughout the term for discussion of current events and topics in the news that relate to business strategy. In addition, students may occasionally be required to complete take-away assignments prior to the next class that will assist in the learning and reinforcement of course material. If external circumstances or illness prevent you from attending or adequately preparing for a class, please let the professor know so that this can be taken into account, as repeated absences from class will negatively impact a student's individual participation grade.

Grading

The available letters for course grades are as follows:

<i>% Grade</i>	<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Description</i>
95% to 100%	A+	
90% to 94%	A	Excellent
85% to 89%	A-	
80% to 84%	B+	
76% to 79%	B	Good
72% to 75%	B-	
68% to 71%	C+	
64% to 67%	C	Satisfactory
60% to 63%	C-	
55% to 59%	D+	
50% to 54%	D	Minimal Pass
0% to 49%	F	Failure

To pass the course, students must achieve an overall grade of at least 50%. Failure to submit an assignment or write an exam on the assigned date without legitimate reason (i.e. evidenced illness) or prior approval of the instructor may result in a failed grade for the course. In the case of legitimate or approved absence, and at the instructor's discretion, the assigned date may be rescheduled to a later date, or if this is not practically possible, the marks reallocated to other components of the course grade.

All hand-in assignments and exams must include the student's name and ID number.

Important Dates for Registration, Withdrawal, and Course Auditing

September 17th, 2010, is the last day to enter a course without permission or to withdraw from a course without incurring a financial penalty in terms of tuition refund.

November 12th, 2010, is the last day to voluntarily withdraw from a course or change to audit without academic penalty.

Course withdrawal forms are available from the Registrar. Students who do not follow the proper withdrawal procedures will be recorded as having failed the course.

In-class Use of Electronic Devices

The use of personal electronic devices by students in-class is purely at the discretion of the instructor. The use of music players, earphones, cell phones, PDAs, or any other personal entertainment devices will not be allowed in-class at any time. Typically, laptop or notebook computers may be utilized only for taking notes or reviewing course materials if necessary. However, if laptop use becomes a distraction for other students in the class, or is used for activities that are not class-related (i.e. Internet browsing, playing games, watching videos, emailing, chatting, etc.), the instructor will ask the student to stop using the laptop and put it away, and make a deduction to the student's course participation grade – 20% deduction for first instances; additional 40% deduction and loss of laptop use for the remainder of the semester for any repeat instances.

Audio or video recording of class lectures is strictly prohibited without the prior expressed consent of the instructor.

Important Notes

Students are advised to retain this syllabus for their records. It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Student Handbook and Academic Calendar. Personal information, that is information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual, may be collected as a requirement as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a "Course Extension" from the Registrar's Office. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the appropriate deadline (as listed in the Academic Calendar <http://www.ambrose.edu/publications/academiccalendar>). Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control."

Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University College as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to give credit to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for

an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from Ambrose. Students are expected to be familiar with the policy statements in the current academic calendar and the student handbook that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Course changes, including adding or dropping a course, may be made during the Registration Revision period, as outlined in the Calendar of Events. All course changes must be recorded on a Registration form, available from the Office of the Registrar. Due to circumstances such as class size, prerequisites or academic policy, the submission of a Registration form does not guarantee that a course will be added or removed from a student's registration. Students may change the designation of any class from credit to audit up to the date specified in the Calendar of Events, although students are not entitled to a tuition adjustment or refund after the Registration Revision period.

Withdrawal from courses after the Registration Revision period will not be eligible for tuition refund. Students intending to withdraw from some or all of their courses must submit a completed Registration form to the Registrar's office. The dates by which students may voluntarily withdraw from a course without penalty are listed in the Calendar of Events. A grade of 'W' will be recorded on the student's transcript for any withdrawals from courses made after the end of the Registration Revision period and before the Withdrawal Deadline (also listed in the Calendar of Events). 'W' grades are not included in grade point average calculations. A limit on the number of courses from which Academic a student is permitted to withdraw may be imposed. Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.

An appeal for change of grade on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar in writing within 30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for appeal. A review fee of \$50.00 must accompany the appeal to review final grades. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.

BUS310
Weekly Reading Schedule

Date	Class Topic	Text chapters
Sept 9 th	Introduction and course overview	
Sept 14 th	Strategic Management and Competitiveness	1
Sept 16 th	Strategic Management and Firm Performance	2
Sept 21 st	The External Environment: Opportunities, Threats, Industry Competition, and Competitor Analysis	3
Sept 23 rd	The Internal Environment: Resources, Capabilities, and Core Competencies	4
Sept 28 th	<i>Business case & skills development class:</i> Effectively writing and presenting a business case study	
Sept 30 th	Business-Level Strategy <i>Assigning of groups for business case competition</i>	5
Oct 5 th	Competitive Rivalry and Competitive Dynamics Assignment: Case study #1 written reports due	6
Oct 7 th	Corporate-Level Strategy	7
Oct 12 th	Corporate-Level Strategy <i>Review for mid-term exam</i>	7
Oct 14 th	Mid-term exam	
Oct 19 th	No lecture – Group work on business case competition	
Oct 21 st	No class – Ambrose Community Day	
Oct 26 th	<i>Skills development class:</i> Preparation for business case competition	
Oct 28 th	Strategic Leadership	13
Nov 2 nd	Strategic Entrepreneurship <i>Review and discussion of mid-term exam</i>	14
Nov 4 th	<i>Skills development class:</i> Preparation for business case competition	

Nov 6th Saturday	Off-site class – MEDA business case competition, 2-5pm, The Westin Hotel downtown	
Nov 9 th	<i>Skills development class:</i> Review of business case competition	
Nov 11 th	No class – Remembrance Day holiday	
Nov 16 th	Acquisition and Restructuring Strategies Assignment: Case competition self-assessment reports due	8
Nov 18 th	International Strategy	9
Nov 23 rd	<i>Business case & skills development class:</i> Effectively writing and presenting a business case study	
Nov 25 th	Cooperative Strategy	10
Nov 30 th	Corporate Governance	11
Dec 2 nd	Organizational Structure and Controls Assignment: Case study #2 written reports due	12
Dec 7 th	Student in-class presentations Assignment: In-class case study presentations	
Dec 9 th	Course review for final exam	

Note: The dates and order of topics outlined in this schedule may be subject to change at the instructor's discretion throughout the term. Any changes will be communicated in advance.