

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
MGMT 4300: STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT
CRN 20691
SPRING 2022

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Office hours: In person or virtual on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., or by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to Management 4300! This course focuses on the understanding of why some companies perform better than others. As advanced undergraduate students you already know that companies are complex entities that require many types of specialized knowledge such as accounting, finance, operations management, marketing and human resources management. In this class we will build on what you already know in these different areas while focusing on the behavior and performance of the entire organization.

More specifically, the course is designed to provide you with theoretical knowledge, frameworks and a business simulation experience to understand how companies can develop and sustain a competitive advantage through the development and redeployment of firm resources and capabilities within and across industries. The course can be described in two words: pragmatic and eclectic. It is *pragmatic* because I will be teaching about issues and concepts relevant for your future business career. It will contextualize key theoretical ideas through the use of a business simulation. It is *eclectic* because I draw upon a wide variety of theoretical ideas.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

To overarching goal of the course is to understand the key elements of strategic management of a company: analysis of the firm and its competitive environment, analysis of strategic alternatives, and development of strategic recommendations. This will be achieved through the following learning objectives and corresponding activities and assessments:

LEARNING OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITIES	ASSESSMENT
Define strategy and understand its importance	Readings: textbook chapter 1	Exam BBA assessment Final project
Understand the concept of competitive advantage	Reading: textbook chapter 1	Exam BBA assessment Final project

LEARNING OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITIES	ASSESSMENT
Understand the impact of the external environment on profitability	Readings: textbook chapter 2	Exam BBA assessment Final project
Understand the development and redeployment resources and capabilities as the source of competitive advantage	Readings: textbook chapters 3-6	Exam BBA assessment (except Chapter 6) Final project (except Chapter 6)
Understand vertical scope decisions and their impact on competitive advantage	Readings: textbook chapter 8	Exam BBA assessment Final project
Understand horizontal scope decisions and their impact on competitive advantage	Readings: textbook chapters 9 and 12	Exam BBA assessment Final project
Understanding strategic alliances and their impact on competitive advantage	Readings: textbook chapter 11	Exam BBA assessment Final project

In addition, the College of Business Administration has established learning objectives for its BBA program, which are assessed via this course. They are the following:

A1: BBA students will assess an organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and will integrate these factors into a viable strategic plan.

D2: BBA students will prepare and make a persuasive, professional speech on a current business topic.

LEARNING METHOD

To achieve the course learning objectives goals you are expected to read all materials, engage with the class through the response system and discussion boards, and collaborate with your team on a final project. I believe that learning occurs most effectively when you are actively engaged in the process. Therefore, if you want to learn and do well in the course you have to prepare and actively participate.

COMMUNICATION

I will use Blackboard to communicate with you regularly. For synchronous communication with individual students or teams I will use Zoom.

TEXTBOOK

Strategic Management and Competitive Advantage: Concepts and Cases, 6th Edition

The textbook is available in the following formats:

- eText: ISBN-13: 9780136878674
- Paper (rental): ISBN-13: 9780134743080
- Paper (unbound): ISBN-13: 9780134743554
- Paper (cloth): ISBN-13: 9780134741147

EVALUATION

See class schedule on Appendix A for a summary of important dates.

Overview

(1) Discussion boards	24%
(2) Class participation	10%
(3) Exams (3)	30% (10% each)
(4) BBA assessment	15%
• Exam	10%
• Video presentation	5%
(5) Group project	20%
(6) Group evaluation form	1%
(7) COBA exit survey (extra credit)	1%

Description

(1) Discussion boards

You will be required to participate in each discussion board typically by:

- Writing at least 150 words on your main post for each assigned discussion.
- Reply, with at least 50 words, to the entry of one of your classmates for each assigned discussion.

Grading: each discussion board assignment will be graded as complete/incomplete. To earn a “complete” grade, you must:

- submit your posts on time
- comply with the length requirements (i.e. if you are one word below the requirements you will not receive credit).
- be original when the type of question or issue allows it.
- make posts that are on topic and within the scope of the course material.
- take your posts seriously and review and edit your posts before submitting them.
- always be respectful of others’ opinions even when they differ from your own.
- not make personal or insulting remarks.

Read additional information on student conduct and Texas Senate Bill 212 on student conduct section (page 6).

- Dates (all closing at 11:59 p.m. MT – no extensions will be allowed):
 - 1/18-1/24: Discussion Board 1

- 1/25-1/31: Discussion Board 2
- 2/1-2/7: Discussion Board 3
- 2/8-2/14: Discussion Board 4
- 2/15-2/21: Discussion Board 5
- 2/22-2/28: Discussion Board 6
- 3/1-3/7: Discussion Board 7
- 3/8-3/14: Discussion Board 8
- 3/22-3/28: Discussion Board 9
- 3/29-4/4: Discussion Board 10
- 4/5-4/11: Discussion Board 11
- 4/12-4/18: Discussion Board 12
- 4/19-4/25: Discussion Board 13
- 4/26-5/2: Discussion Board 14

(2) Class participation

Individual synchronous class participation is an important component of the course. It will be assessed through iClicker. You can participate in class or remotely. Earning at least 80 % of all points available in the semester is required to obtain the full share of participation in the final grade. You must have attendance credit recorded through iClicker in order to earn participation points.

(3) Exams

There are three in-class closed-book exams. Each exam will be open for most of the assigned days for your convenience. You will need to use [Respondus Lockdown browser](#). The exams contain multiple-choice questions. *The questions can be based on the textbook, all other course materials, and class discussions.* Dates: February 10, March 24 and April 28.

(4) BBA assessment

It consists of (a) an in-class closed book exam and (b) an individual presentation. It assesses the degree of fulfillment of the BBA program's learning goals listed above. This information is utilized by the College of Business Administration for accreditation purposes. Additional information will be available on Blackboard. Deadline for individual presentation video: May 3 at 11:59 p.m. MT. Date for exam: May 5.

- Individual presentation: Each student is required to make and record a professional individual presentation, about three minutes long, explaining (a) their learning experience in the BBA Program, and (b) how this course ties to it. Regarding the learning experience in the BBA Program, describe mainly what you learned in your major(s). Regarding how the course ties to your BBA learning experience, describe of how this course helped in the accomplishment of the aforementioned BBA goals. Think of this video as a promotional tool you could use in your job search.

(5) Group project

You will work with your team in applying the relevant concepts and framework from the course to a company. The project is described in detail in Appendix B. Due date: May 9 at 11:59 p.m. MT. *Late assignments will not be accepted without a significant penalty.*

Originality:

- All submissions will be checked through SafeAssign.
- Note that no portion of the paper should be copied from any source without properly citing it.
- If you literally copy a fragment from a source make sure to use quotation marks. However, this may take space away from analysis (refer to the grading rubric for the weight assigned to analysis).
- For basic guidance regarding plagiarism go to:
 - <https://www.plagiarism.org/article/what-is-plagiarism>
 - <https://www.plagiarism.org/blog/2018/07/24/is-it-plagiarism-if-i-borrow-someones>
 - <https://www.plagiarism.org/blog/2018/07/24/how-can-i-properly-cite-my-sources-if-i>
- Let me know if you have any questions regarding how to cite sources or plagiarism in general.
- Please review the additional information on academic integrity on page 7 and in the project guidelines on references.
- *If plagiarism is suspected, the case will be forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.*

Grading: Refer to grading rubric in Appendix C. The grade from the rubric will be transformed to a 100 point scale.

Teamwork:

I expect teams to have some healthy task conflict and solve it in a constructive manner. *In extreme cases of team conflict I reserve the right to remove a student from a team.* An alternative assignment will be considered depending upon the specific circumstances of each case.

(6) Group evaluation form

You will be required to submit a short group evaluation form. How your group members assess you will not affect your final course grade. Refer to grading rubric in Appendix D. Due date: May 9 at 11:59 p.m. MT.

(7) COBA exit survey

You can earn a 1% extra credit by answering a survey proctored by the College of Business Administration. The link for the survey will be made available on Blackboard.

Course Grading Policy:

A: Represents achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.

B: Represents achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.

C: Represents achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.

D: Represents achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.

F: Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I (see also I).

I: (Incomplete) Assigned at the discretion of the instructor only under extraordinary circumstances, (e.g. hospitalization). It requires a written agreement between instructor and student.

Grading scale:

100≥A≥90

90>B≥80

80>C≥70

70>D≥60

60>F

Re-grading Policy:

- Requests must be submitted in writing to me. You must identify:
 - The item you believe was incorrectly graded
 - The reasons why
- All requests must be handed to me within a week of receiving your grade.

Make-up Work:

I will provide make-up work for students under unavoidable or legitimate circumstances. Such circumstances include, but are not necessarily limited to, documented illness (other than Covid-19), documented participation in athletic events or other group activities sponsored by the University, serious family emergencies, subpoenas, jury duty, military service, and religious observances. Note: specific policies for Covid-19 are described below. Make-up exams can be in essay format.

Student Conduct:

Professional and respectful conduct is expected of students. Therefore, I reserve the right to give zero credit for anything I perceive to be offensive, demeaning to others, stalking, or inconsistent with the maturity that I should expect from a graduate student. Recognize that there will often be records of these statements. In addition, note that given the nature of the delivery of this course, the meaning of comments can be misconstrued. We should all be extra careful for this reason. Finally, [Texas Senate Bill 212](#) requires all employees of Texas universities to “report incidents of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking allegedly committed by or against a student or employee, to a Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinator. Under this new law, an employee who fails to report or falsely reports such an incident will also be subject to criminal liability (misdemeanor) and termination of employment.” (source: <https://www.utep.edu/titleix/sb-212.html>)

Course Drop:

Course drop deadline is April 1. You must meet with an advisor to complete a course drop. If you do not drop the course and completely stop working on it without contacting me, you will get an “F” grade. Note: specific policies for Covid-19 are described below.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Disabilities:

If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu, or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass.

Counseling:

Your general well-being is very important to faculty and staff at UTEP. If you are facing a difficult personal situation, please contact the University Counseling Center at 747-5302, or by email to caps@utep.edu, or visit the office located in Union West, Room 202. UTEP has specialized staff who can help you.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

Academic Honesty:

"Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts." (UTEP's Handbook of Operating Procedures Section 1.2.2.1) Suspected cases of academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of the Dean of Students.

Covid-19:

If you have tested positive for COVID-19, you are encouraged to report your results to covidaction@utep.edu, so that the Dean of Students Office can provide you with support and help with communication with your professors. It is important to follow all instructions that you receive as part of the diagnosis, including isolation and staying at home until a negative test is produced.

If you experience COVID-19 symptoms, please follow the isolation protocol by staying at home and getting tested as soon as possible. If the test is negative but you are still seeking accommodations, please contact the Dean of Students Office for guidance in a timely manner. I will work with the Dean of Students Office to determine the extent of any such accommodations.

The university strongly encourage you to think and act proactively in all matters related to COVID-19 and your academic endeavors. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that people in areas of substantial or high COVID-19 transmission wear face masks when indoors in groups of people. The best way that Miners can take care of miners is to get the vaccine. If you still need the vaccine, it is widely available in the El Paso area, and will be

available at no charge on campus during the first week of classes. For more information about the current rates, testing, and vaccinations, please visit epstrong.org.

OTHER POINTS

It will often occur that I do not directly discuss some of the assigned reading material. In these cases, I believe that this material is important but is easily understood from your reading of it. If you have questions on this material please let me know.

Strategic management is an evolving discipline. I will let you know when the book has limitations on explaining some concepts.

If you have any questions or concerns about the class, please contact me.

ABOUT ME

I am Associate Professor of Management at UTEP. I have a Ph.D. in Business Administration with a focus on Strategy and International Management from the University of Minnesota (Carlson School of Management). I also have a M. Sc. in International Economics and Business from the Stockholm School of Economics in Sweden, and a B. Sc. in Industrial and Systems Engineering from ITESM (Monterrey Tech) Querétaro Campus in Mexico. I have primarily taught in the areas of strategic management and international business at upper undergraduate and graduate levels (MBA and Ph.D.). Before joining UTEP I was Assistant Professor of Management at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. I was also Full-Time Lecturer at ITESM Campus Guadalajara before pursuing my doctoral degree. Prior to my academic career I worked for Coca-Cola bottling groups in Mexico in marketing and distribution.

My research interests revolve around corporate strategy, international strategy, institutions, and economic geography. My work has been published in *Strategic Management Journal*, *Strategic Organization*, *Journal of International Management*, *European Journal of Political Economy*, *Advances in Strategic Management*, *Multinational Business Review* and *Innovating Strategy Process* (a Strategic Management Society Series book). I have presented my research at major international conferences organized by the Academy of International Business, the Academy of Management and the Strategic Management Society.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: THE CONTENT IN THIS SYLLABUS MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

APPENDIX A

COURSE SCHEDULE - MGMT 4300 (CRN 20691)	
DATE	ACTIVITY
1/18	Welcome and Course Overview
1/20	What is Strategy and the Strategic Management Process (Chapter 1)
1/25	Evaluating a Firm's External Environment (Chapter 2)
1/27	Evaluating a Firm's External Environment (Chapter 2)
2/1	Evaluating a Firm's Internal Capabilities (Chapter 3)
2/3	Evaluating a Firm's Internal Capabilities (Chapter 3)
2/8	Review for Exam 1
2/10	Exam 1 (Chapters 1 to 3 and related materials)
2/15	Cost Leadership (Chapter 4)
2/17	Cost Leadership (Chapter 4)
2/22	Product Differentiation (Chapter 5)
2/24	Product Differentiation (Chapter 5)
3/1	Flexibility and Real Options (Chapter 6)
3/3	Flexibility and Real Options (Chapter 6)
3/8	Collusion (Chapter 7)
3/10	Collusion (Chapter 7)
3/15	<i>Spring Break</i>
3/17	<i>Spring Break</i>
3/22	Review for Exam 2
3/24	Exam 2 (Chapters 4 to 7 and related materials)
3/29	Vertical Integration (Chapter 8)
3/31	Vertical Integration (Chapter 8)
4/5	Corporate Diversification (Chapter 9)
4/7	Corporate Diversification (Chapter 9)
4/12	Strategic Alliances (Chapter 11)
4/14	Strategic Alliances (Chapter 11)
4/19	Mergers and Acquisitions (Chapter 12)
4/21	Mergers and Acquisitions (Chapter 12)
4/26	Review for Exam 3
4/28	Exam 3 (Chapters 8, 9, 11 and 12)
5/3	Course Synthesis BBA Presentation due 11:00 p.m. via Blackboard
5/5	BBA exam
5/9	Final project due at 11:59 p.m. via Blackboard Peer review due at 11:59 p.m. via Blackboard

APPENDIX B GUIDELINES FOR GROUP PROJECT

Purpose: To apply the knowledge acquired in this class to a strategic problem or challenge of a company of your choice.

Sources:

- You must access the latest annual report available from the company.
- You must cite at least a total of ten sources (information gathered in different sections from the company's website counts as one source).
- Access electronic resources from the University library.
- Play close attention to the online sources you cite online. Citing websites that post analyses of companies for free or for sale can constitute academic dishonesty.

Format: The final project report should have between 20 and 22 pages of analysis (double-spaced, font size 12, one-inch margins). Cover pages(s), list of references and appendices with charts and tables are not included in this page limit. Attach list of references and appendices at the end. The information provided on them will be considered only if they are referred to in the analysis. You must cite all references.

Steps:

A. Company selection

Each group should select two public companies listed in the U.S. stock market they would like to analyze. Submit your company choices by February 6 ranked by preference. If multiple groups prefer the same company luck of the draw will decide. In making your company choices consider the following questions:

- Why are you interested in studying this company? What is the strategic problem or challenge you find interesting?
- Is the analysis of the strategic problem or challenge feasible given the length of the course?
- How familiar are group members with the company?
- How accessible are data on this company and its environment?
 - Note that your reports must be original.
- Companies featured in the cases of the textbook are not allowed.
- Make sure your choice is the whole company and not a portion of it.

B. Project content

1) Strategic challenge (introduction):

- Strategic challenge the company faces. At a general level, the strategic problem or challenge can start by identifying a company attempting to
 - gain a competitive advantage (if it currently does not have it).
 - regain a competitive advantage (if it had it in the past and lost it).
 - maintain its competitive advantage (if it currently has it).
- Include some quantitative assessment of the firm's performance relative to key competitors.

2) Analysis of the external environment:

- Chapter 2
 - Analyze the industry's 5 forces (i.e. threat of new competition, threat from existing competitors, threat of substitute products, threat of suppliers leverage, and threat of buyer's influence).
 - Identify industry structure and its implications.
 - Note that the level of analysis here is the industry not the firm.

3) Analysis of resources/capabilities and business-level strategy

- Chapter 3:
 - Evaluate of the firm's resources and capabilities
 - Do they pass the VRIO test?
- Chapters 4 and 5:
 - Identify the firm's dominant business-level strategy.
 - Identify if the strategy is cost-leadership or differentiation and explain why.
 - If the strategy has elements of both generic strategies explain why.

4) Analysis of the corporate-level strategy

- Chapter 7:
 - Evaluate the firm's vertical integration
 - Identify the type of corporate diversification
 - Can it be justified considering the logics for V(alue)? Why?
- Chapter 9:
 - Evaluate the firm's corporate diversification
 - Can it be justified considering the logics for V(alue)? Why?
 - If the source of V(alue) is economies of scope, can equity shareholders capture these economies on their own? Why? What are the implications?

5) Recommendations:

- Describe specific and feasible actions to address the identified strategic challenge.
 - If the firm is mainly focused in one industry, the recommendations can include vertical integration or corporate diversification opportunities (justified by the book's frameworks).
 - Strategic alliances and acquisitions can be part of the recommendations (if well-justified based on the book's frameworks).
- Evaluate of implications of your recommended actions

Additional Notes:

- *Choosing a company with a narrow industrial and geographic scope will significantly facilitate your analysis in terms of complexity.*
- *Contact me if you have any questions on the final project.*

**APPENDIX C
GRADING RUBRIC FOR FINAL GROUP PROJECT**

Group	Points	Score 5 = Excellent 4 = Needs Some Improvement 3 = Needs Significant Improvement 2 = Generally Below Expectations 1 = Unacceptable				
Issue Recognition						
(a) The analysis recognizes the critical issues of the assignment.		5	4	3	2	1
(b) The analysis identifies the relevant information. When information is not available, reasonable assumptions are made based on the context.		5	4	3	2	1
Analysis						
(a) The analysis deals with the relevant problems or critical issues.		5	4	3	2	1
(b) The analysis uses the relevant theoretical background from the textbook and additional materials in the course.		5 (x3)	4	3	2	1
(c) The analysis is coherent. The logical reasoning of the arguments is sound.		5	4	3	2	1
(d) The analysis is cohesive. Sections are well connected.		5	4	3	2	1
Presentation						
(a) The paper is well written. It has minimal misspellings and grammatical errors.		5	4	3	2	1
(b) The paper complies with the format guidelines.		5	4	3	2	1
Total Score:		Out of 50				

Note: Adapted from Prof. Steven Li (Florida International University) and Walvoord and Anderson (1998). Effective Grading, Jossey-Bass.

APPENDIX D
GROUP EVALUATION FORM FOR FINAL GROUP PROJECT

It is necessary to assess fairly the contribution that each member of the team made to the group assignments in general. This assessment should consider the following:

- Did the team member ...
- ... prepare well for team meetings?
 - ... work hard for the benefit of the team?
 - ... contribute proactively to team work?
 - ... help the team to perform better?

Evaluate the contribution of each team member except yourself based on the following scale: 0 (no overall contribution) to 10 (outstanding overall contribution). Use only integers.

Team Member Name	Grade

Provide comments below explaining your grades.

Team Member Name	Comments