



# THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN McCOMBS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

## GENERAL MANAGEMENT AND STRATEGY

Management 374  
Summer 2013

**Class Times/Location:**  
**Monday - Thursday 2:00 – 4:00 pm**  
**CBA 4.328**

**Instructor:** Bruce Greenbaum  
**Office:** CBA 3.332R  
**Office Hours:** Tuesday & Thursday, 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.  
and by appointment  
**Phone:** (917) 941-0344  
**E-mail:** bruce.greenbaum@phd.mcombs.utexas.edu  
**Course Web Page:** on Blackboard

### Required Course Materials

1. Course Packet – available at University Printing Services in the McCombs School of Business, GSB 3.136.
2. Book: Lewis, M. *Moneyball: The Art of Winning an Unfair Game*, available on Amazon.

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## I. Course Overview

Welcome to Management 374, General Management and Strategy.

In simplest terms, this course will help you understand and evaluate why firms make the decisions that they do. At the conclusion of this course, you will be able to explain why, how, and when strategic management is relevant. You will be able to confidently critique the strategy of a variety of organizations, from start-up ventures to well-known public firms. In addition, you will be familiar with and able to explain both classical and some new approaches to strategy.

Studying strategic management allows us to answer questions such as:

- Why does one firm succeed while a closely related competitor fails?
- Is success sustainable or will it always be temporary?
- Why are firms in some industries (e.g. high tech) typically far more profitable than firms in other industries (e.g. airlines, steel)?
- What types of decisions can and do general managers make to influence the success of their firm?
- What impact can managers' decisions have on the performance of the firm?
- What are some of the newer theories in strategic management, and how do these hold up against established theories?

At its core, strategic management is the search for sustainable competitive advantage. This search is carried out by individuals within organizations in environments that are quite often highly dynamic and uncertain. To capture the high level of complexity under which strategic management takes place, this course will predominately use the case method to examine how general managers create and maintain competitive advantage for their organizations. As we have all learned over the "Great Recession" of the last few years, complexity and constant challenges greet managers every day and shape all decisions. As Professor Nancy Koehn of Harvard Business School said recently, "turbulence in the new normal."

We will focus on two main ideas: strategy formulation (the "what," or content of a strategy) and strategy implementation (the "how," or process behind executing a chosen strategy).

Regarding strategy formulation, we will examine a variety of frameworks that have been accepted in the study of strategic management and implemented by many successful firms. These frameworks are important, as they will often guide the case study evaluations. For the most part, they are easy to commit to memory; doing so will serve you well throughout the course.

Strategy implementation is somewhat more complex and subjective. Most general management decisions are multi-functional in nature, thus we will integrate lessons from other functional areas (e.g., accounting, finance, marketing) to explore and reconcile the tensions that accompany implementing strategic decisions across the entire organization.

This course will build on the classes you have taken elsewhere in the business school and serve as a "capstone" class for your undergraduate studies at the McCombs School of Business. Therefore, the course will be an essential component of your business degree and will be critical

in providing you with the skills necessary to be an effective executive (i.e. a manager responsible for making the strategic decisions that impact the long-term viability of an entire firm or business unit).

At the end of the semester, you will be able to use your new knowledge to develop a reasoned and logical business strategy from a range of possible options. You will be able (and hopefully motivated) to integrate the tools, techniques, and concepts of strategy into your broader professional perspective, regardless of your chosen occupation or field.

**Writing Flag**

The majority of assignments in this course involve substantial writing. Students are expected to write succinctly, yet persuasively. Given its emphasis on writing, this course carries the Writing Flag. Writing Flag courses are designed to give students experience with writing in an academic discipline. As detailed in the assignment detail, you can expect to write regularly during the semester, complete substantial writing projects, and receive feedback from your instructor and your peers to help you improve your writing. You will also have the opportunity to build on such feedback when working on successive iterations of an assignment. For instance, feedback on written assignments can help you write better answers to case writeups and the Moneyball writeup. The course's emphasis on writing also implies that a substantial portion of your grade will come from your written work.

## II. Class Schedule

Class	Day	Date	Topic	Assignments	Case	Additional Reading
1	Mon	15-July	Introduction and Course Overview			
2	Tue	16-July	Strategy as Position - Industry Structure	<b>List of 3 individual case write-up preferences due</b>	Apple Inc. in 2010	1 - What is Strategy? (Porter) 2 - The Five Competitive Forces that Shape Strategy (Porter)
3	Wed	17-July	Strategy as Position - Generic Strategies I	<b>List of group members due</b>	Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.	
4	Thu	18-July	Strategy as Position - Generic Strategies II		Prelude Corp.	
5	Mon	22-July	Strategy as Leverage - Resource-Based View		Whole Foods Market, Inc.	1 - Competing on Resources 2 - The Core Competence of the Corporation
6	Tue	23-July	Strategy as Leverage - Developing Resources		Eli Lilly and Co: Drug Development Strategy (A)	
7	Wed	24-July	Strategy as Leverage - Leveraging Resources		Toyota Motor Corporation: Launching Prius	
8	Thu	25-July	Strategy as Arbitrage - Learning & Behavioral Strategy	<b>Company Paper Initial Plan</b>		The New Psychology of Strategic Leadership
9	Mon	29-July	Strategy as Arbitrage - Behavioral Strategy			The Case for Behavioral Strategy
10	Tue	30-July	Strategy as Arbitrage - Applying Behavioral Strategy	<b>Moneyball written assignment</b>	Moneyball: The Art of Winning an Unfair Game	
11	Wed	31-July	Strategy as Competitive Interaction - Game Theoretic View			The Right Game: Use Game Theory to Shape Strategy
12	Thu	1-Aug	Strategy as Competitive Interaction - Competitive Interaction I		Cola Wars Continue: Coke and Pepsi in 2010	Judo Strategy: The Competitive Dynamics of Internet Time
13	Mon	5-Aug	Strategy as Competitive Interaction - Competitive Interaction II		Responding to Wii?	
14	Tue	6-Aug	Strategy as Competitive Interaction - Competition and Disruption		Netflix	Disruptive Technologies: Catching the Wave
15	Wed	7-Aug	Strategy as Opportunity Capture - Complexity and Institutional Theories - Opportunities from Technology		A123 Systems	Strategy as Simple Rules
16	Thu	8-Aug	Strategy as Opportunity Capture - Opportunities from Market Creation		Linear Air: Creating the Air Taxi Industry / LinkedIn (A)	
17	Mon	12-Aug	Group Project Workday			
18	Tue	13-Aug	Group Project Workday			
19	Wed	14-Aug	Group Presentations	<b>Presentation Slides Due</b>	<b>Group Presentations</b>	
20	Thu	15-Aug	Group Presentations / Reflections, Debrief & Lessons		<b>Group Presentations</b>	
	Fri	16-Aug		<b>Final Paper Due by midnight</b>		

**Additional Schedule Reminders:**

1 - Your individual case write-ups are due at the start of the first class period in which that case is on the schedule (in the event that some cases are covered over the course of two class periods). The due dates are spread throughout the term (based on when the case is to be discussed in class). I will try to remind the class at the start of each week regarding deadlines, but it is your responsibility to submit these assignments on time.

2 - The schedule is subject to change, and I will adjust it based on our progress through the topics.

3 - I would highly recommend making progress on your group project over the course of the term. Not to sound like a parent, but leaving the assignment to the last minute will not produce high quality work. Also, your group is encouraged to schedule time to meet with me over the course of the term to discuss your group's progress; review any questions or issues that you are facing; and receive additional guidance from me regarding anything that you should keep in mind as you progress through your analysis. I will not be able to meet with any groups during the last week of class in advance of our in-class presentation days.

### III. Assessment and Grading

Your grade in our course will be determined as follows:

- In-Class Contributions: 25%
- Moneyball Written Assignment: 25%
- Two Written Individual Case Analyses: 30% (15% each)
- Group Paper & Presentation: 20%

Final grades are single-letter including + or –

- A (94 or higher), A- (90 to 93)
- B+ (87 to 89), B (84 to 86), B- (80 to 83)
- C+ (77 to 79), C (74 to 76), C- (70 to 73)
- D+ (67 to 69), D (64 to 66), D- (60 to 63)
- F (59 or lower)

#### Description of Assessments:

##### 1. In-Class Contribution (25% of course grade):

Effective strategy is almost always the result of debate and discussion. The same could be said for effective university courses. Put differently, this class will benefit greatly from your ideas, enthusiasm, and curiosity. Your participation is not only of value to you, but to me and the rest of your peers.

I believe in a few, simple guidelines for a successful class participation experience:

1. Be on time
2. Be prepared
3. Expect a lot of yourself
4. Expect a lot of your classmates
5. Expect a lot of me (your professor).

I do track individual participation. Your participation grade will be a composite of your attendance, and the frequency and relevance of your in-class comments. At the beginning of each class, you will be given an index card. At the end of the class, please sign your name on one side, and on the back, quickly note any comments you made during class. You may also use the card to share any lingering questions you still have, and I will get back to you individually.

Some students may be intimidated by the “obligation” of speaking up in class. Don’t be. Your anxiety will be reduced only through practice. Here’s the secret to cutting your stress level: BE PREPARED. If you have familiarized yourself with the case and readings, you will succeed if you speak up. Please keep in mind that the only measurable output of your preparation is your class discussion – but airtime is a scarce resource, so please use it wisely. Comments based solely on a “gut reaction” generally do not add as much value as those based on prior readings of the cases and book.

What does high quality class contribution entail? Here are some key ideas:

1. Demonstrating an understanding of the case
2. Asking appropriate questions
3. Being a good listener and building on the comments of others
4. Making evidence-based comments and recommendations
5. Respecting the opinions of others
6. Distinguishing between data, opinions, and guesswork

Note that class participation is not evaluated on whether comments are “right,” but on whether they reflect preparation.

My goal for our class discussion is to create an environment where you feel safe to take risks – without the worry that those risks will be detrimental to your grade. An environment where students are comfortable knowing that their comments won’t be ridiculed, but their comments will be challenged – either by a fellow student or by me. That sort of interactive environment is one that each of you will face when you enter the professional world after graduation. Unfortunately, those environments won’t always be as supportive or safe as our classroom.

### **Case introduction and conclusion**

At the very start of each case discussion, I will randomly ask two students to lead off the discussion to answer a particular question about the case or give their view of the major issues involved. If you have prepared the case, and are capable of answering the assignment questions, you should have no difficulty with this lead-off assignment. Effective leadoff comments can do a great deal to enhance a class discussion. They set a tone for the class that allows that class to probe more deeply into the issues of the case.

Similarly, at the end of each case discussion, I will call on two other students, again randomly, to summarize the key findings of the case and the take-away lessons to be learned from it. You will only be called on in this manner once during the semester. Your contribution at this time contributes to your class contribution grade.

Even if you are not called on in this manner, though, everyone should still come to class prepared with answers to the case questions and an action plan for the key protagonist in the case (either an individual or a firm).

### **Absences**

If you miss a class, for whatever reason, you will not receive any class participation credit for that class. If you must miss more than two classes, please see me as soon as possible. If you miss class for a University-sanctioned absence, please feel free to contact me for any relevant notes or materials.

## 2. Individual Written Assignment (25% of course grade)

During the first half of the term, you will be asked to complete a major written assignment based on Michael Lewis' book, *Moneyball*. The written assignment is 25% of your grade for the course and is to be completed individually. Do not consult your group project team members, class members, or others' analyses on the web.

Your write-up should be approximately 5 pages (single-spaced, 12-point font) and should provide substantive and logical answers to the following questions.

1. According to Lewis, the Oakland A's seem to have discovered an opportunity in the market for baseball players. Why did this opportunity exist? Why had no other teams learned about it? How could apparently false beliefs about the value of players persist?
2. What were the problems of implementing this different approach to selecting and evaluating players? Why was Billy Beane able to do it?
3. Assume other teams discover the same opportunities. What should the A's do?
4. Do you believe there are similar opportunities in other industries? Provide an example of an industry or setting where a similar opportunity could exist? How would you go about exploiting it and what factors would you take into consideration when doing so?

### Structure for Written Assignment

Your write-up should begin with an executive summary (1 full paragraph) that highlights the major issues discussed in the book and that clearly states your answers to the questions. The remainder of the write-up should develop in greater detail the arguments and analysis that support your conclusions. The role of the questions is to emphasize some key aspects of the book, but you may also identify other factors that you feel are relevant to the situation at hand that may not be explicitly included. The questions are also designed to get you to think about certain issues. But you should consider your write-up as an article that could stand on its own and so you should not answer the questions on a question-by-question basis. Rather, in writing it, adopt the perspective of an expert who has been hired to provide succinct analysis and advice on the issues. You will want to use the relevant tools from the course (particularly the readings on behavioral strategy) and stitch together your arguments in a smooth way in your write-up.

### Grading Criteria for Individual Written Assignment

#### Analysis

- Does the paper answer the questions?
- Does the paper contain analyses of the major issues?
- Does the paper properly incorporate the relevant concepts from the course?
- Are the assumptions made in the analysis stated explicitly?

#### Recommendations

- Are the criteria for making recommendations clearly stated and appropriate?
- Were other courses of action considered?
- Is the recommendation concrete and actionable?

### Overall Criteria

- Does the paper exhibit creativity and original thought?
- Is the paper logically consistent and effectively structured?
- Is there a high likelihood that the recommendations will achieve their desired results?
- Does the paper exhibit clear writing, namely, does the choice of words, grammar, and other elements of style improve the quality and clarity of the analyses and recommendations?

### **3. Two Written Individual Case Analyses (30% of course grade, 15% each):**

You will be asked to demonstrate your knowledge individually through two 5-page, written case analyses. You may pick any of the cases listed in the syllabus, with the exception of the Apple and Wal-Mart cases (they are discussed too early in the semester).

By our second class on July 16, please email me a list of three cases you would prefer to write about. I will get back to you within 24 hours with your two assigned cases. This process ensures that every case we discuss will have at least one or two “experts” in the room for discussion. Please make sure you will be able to attend the classes where your cases will be discussed, as your comments will support your participation grade.

Your case analyses are due at the beginning of the class on the first day that we will discuss your case. Case analyses submitted late are subject to the following penalties: Up to one day late (i.e. 1 to 24 hours late) = 1 letter grade reduction; up to two days late (i.e. 25 to 48 hours late) = 2 letter grade reduction; greater than two days late (i.e. 49+ hours late) = failing grade. While you are responsible for turning your paper in on time, I will do my best to remind you of these deadlines throughout the semester.

In writing your case analysis, please refer to the Guidelines for Case Analysis (Section IV) for additional insight as you prepare your case analysis. Exemplary work will follow these guidelines. The specifics of how you conduct your analysis and write your paper are up to you, with the following exceptions:

- These two papers should be written individually, so please do not discuss this case, or your analysis, with anyone else.
- Please double-space your papers and use 12-point Times New Roman font with margins of one inch.
- Your written analysis should be no longer than 5 pages, but you are welcome to use/create additional relevant exhibits (e.g., tables, figures, graphs) if you believe they effectively convey the information you wish to explain.

### **4. Group Paper and In-Class Group Presentation (20% of final grade):**

A considerable amount of work in both strategy formulation and implementation takes place in groups. Therefore, a significant assessment component of this class is your group project.

By the end of class on July 17, I'd like you to organize yourselves into groups of four students. The exact number of students per group will depend on the total number of

students enrolled in the class. You may work with whomever you like. However, I've found that the greater the diversity of functional expertise within a group, the better the presentation. If you are not in a group by July 17, I will assign you to a group. I also reserve the right to add a member to your group if needed.

The written part of this assignment is a 15-18 page paper plus exhibits (12 pt font, one-and-a-half or double-spaced), which is prepared by your four-person group. This paper focuses on understanding strategy within the context of a single firm or a business unit within a larger firm. Candidates include entrepreneurial companies such as Facebook or HomeAway, or business units of larger, more established firms such as General Electric, Dell, or Exxon Mobile. In selecting your company, please consider two things. First, it is often difficult to obtain information on privately held companies (so you may want to pick a publicly-traded company). Second, you might want to select a company where you have the potential to interview executives.

The intent of the company paper is to enable you to work with course concepts in the context of the strategy of a specific company (or business unit) that is of particular interest to you. It also provides a forum for you to work with course material with others, and an opportunity to improve your writing, analytic, and speaking skills. The paper should reflect thoughtful and thorough analysis using course concepts, secondary materials, and at least one interview (ideally a few) with an executive at the company. You will be asked to rate one another's contribution to the group. The goal is a cogently written analysis of the company's strategy and recommendations for future strategy.

There is an in-class presentation near the end of the term. The company paper will be due as indicated in the Course Schedule, and the paper and the presentation constitutes 20% of your grade. A more detailed description of the Company Paper will be posted on the course website.

The presentation is the only part of the course where your peers will evaluate you. Each member of the class will, anonymously, provide a grade (A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, or D) of the presentation. The group will receive the median class rating unless my own rating is a full letter grade higher or lower than that given by the class. If this occurs, I will assign the grade for the presentation myself.

Other than noting that you have a maximum of fifteen minutes, I leave the specifics of the presentation up to you. Also, there is no requirement for each member of the group to speak – I simply want the best presentation of which the group as a whole is capable. You therefore have a large amount of discretion here.

If a group wants to meet with me to discuss ideas or to ask any questions, I am happy to do so. Also, please save any PowerPoint file(s) onto a "memory stick" the day of your presentation, so I may load it on to my laptop before class. Please provide me with a hard copy of your slides at the beginning of the presentation day class period, as well.

**Presentation Topic: Strategic Analysis**

Your group will act as a strategic advisor to this company. In a 15-minute class presentation, your group should provide the following:

1. An analysis of past and current strategy
2. A recommendation for future strategy.

You will want to provide both a comprehensive and objective review of the company's current strategy, as well as well-reasoned advice for the company's future strategy. You may wish to address the following questions:

1. What has been the basis of the company's strategy up to this point? Has this approach been successful? In other words, has the company been able to achieve sustainable competitive advantage by using this approach? Why or why not?
2. Are reasons for the company's current position related to strategy formulation (content) or implementation?
3. What may other firms learn from this company's situation?

## IV. Guidelines for Case Analysis

Case analysis provides students with an in-depth and real-world look at the complexities of managerial situations, as well as the opportunity to practice analytical skills that are important in the real world. Cases allow you to associate relatively “clean” theoretical concepts and models of strategy formulation with the messiness of strategy implementation. The objectives of case analysis are clear thinking and sound analysis.

### Case Preparation

1. **Read the case quickly once** to gain the general overview of major issues presented in the case. Identify key actors. Try to gain a general grasp of their opinions, attitudes, and relationships to one another.
2. **Reread the case carefully a second time.** Read to gain a thorough understanding of the facts. Do not disagree with facts that are presented as such. Consider the opinions, judgments, attitudes, and feelings of actors in the case as “facts” that bear on the situation even if the opinions or judgments are clearly erroneous or biased. As objectively as possible, try to learn everything that contributes to understanding the situation.
3. **Make decisions about the nature of the underlying problems and/or opportunities.** You are trying to answer the question “What is going on here and why?” Be careful not to confuse the symptoms of a problem with the problem itself. Wherever possible, apply concepts and models discussed in class or in the readings. Good analysis requires you to distinguish between important and unimportant information. Understanding the source of a problem is critical to devising solutions that will work. Concepts and models presented in class are specifically designed to help ferret out real problems and thereby to suggest the beginnings of solutions.

Make reasonable assumptions if specific data are not available. For example, you may believe it is important to know the economic performance of the firm to understand their strategic options. Make a sensible assumption, state it clearly as an assumption, and continue. Be careful that your assumptions are not contradicted by other information in the case.

4. **Outline a clear statement of your analysis** that leads to your conclusion about the underlying problem or opportunity. You need a cogent argument that will convince anyone familiar with the facts of the case that your conclusions are correct. Your analysis of people, attitudes, events, structures, and relationships, which always underlie the problem or create the opportunity, constitutes the single most important step in case preparation. It sets the stage for recommendations. Outlining the analysis will lead you to discover where your thinking is faulty and will lead you to refine your thinking toward a better understanding of the situation.

Problem identification and analysis are obviously intertwined. However, problem identification ideally follows analysis. You might make a good and intuitive leap to problem identification, but recommendations for action based on first insights, even correct and

creative insights, often fail to account for important information. Regardless of how sure you are about your first assessment of the situation, it is critical that you conduct a formal analysis

5. **Propose a course of action** that addresses the problem or opportunity you have identified. Be very specific about your recommendation. If your analysis suggests that the organization needs a new strategy, what should the new strategy look like and why? How does the strategy you propose solve the problem specifically? Your proposed alternatives must be specific and be linked explicitly to the analysis you have conducted.

If there are any important timing issues or contingencies that affect your recommendation, spell these out. You need to think through a few questions. For instance, what will happen if this or that is done? What if things do not go as you expect they will? About what issues are you most uncertain? What recommendations can you make that accommodate these uncertainties? Managers need to be decisive but not blind.

Sometimes “doing nothing” is a legitimate course of action and recommendation. You would, of course, need to fully justify the *status quo*. Significant problems usually require action. Managers make decisions under conditions of extreme uncertainty all the time.

## V. Top 10 Tips for Success

### 1. Read this entire syllabus.

You're on page 13 of 22, so you're making good progress. If you have questions about anything, please check the syllabus first. I've made an effort to make it as comprehensive as possible.

### 2. Come to class prepared.

Read the assignments (chapters AND cases) before class.

I selected the Markus book because I believe it's everything a textbook should be: well written, informative, short and to the point. The chapters are relatively short and provide a wealth of information that will make reading the cases easier and more enjoyable.

I recommended that you read each case at least twice (as discussed in greater depth above in Section IV). The first reading should be a quick run-through of the text in the case. On your second reading, you should read in more depth, making an effort to understand the business and the situation. Ask yourself questions like: (1) Why has this company survived? (2) How does this business work? (3) What are the economics of this business? You will often find that you will need to apply one or more analytical techniques (for example, Porter's five forces, SWOT, etc.) in order to benefit most from the information. You will want to get at the root causes of problems and gather data from the case that will allow you to make specific action recommendations.

You are encouraged to deal with the case as it is presented. You should put yourself in the position of the general manager involved in the situation and look at the situation through his or her eyes. There is no reason to go beyond the assigned readings for general class preparation. Although additional data might be interesting or useful, the "Monday morning quarterback" syndrome is typically not an effective way to learn about strategic management.

### 3. Practice excellent writing: Get help when needed, proofread, and do your own work.

Effective writing skills are essential to effective strategic decision-making and implementation. As such, I expect a high standard of written communication throughout the class.

Of course, some writers are more advanced or confident than others. For students struggling with their writing, or for those who simply want to improve, I encourage you to consider using the Undergraduate Writing Center (FAC 211, 512-471-6222, <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>). The Undergraduate Writing Center offers free, individualized, expert help with writing for any UT undergraduate, by appointment or on a drop-in basis. Any undergraduate enrolled in a course at UT can visit the UWC for assistance with any writing project. They work with students from every department on campus, for both academic and non-academic writing.

The most effective way to ensure high-quality writing is to proofread your own work. Give yourself enough time to complete the assignment without rushing. It can often help to read your work aloud to catch any lingering errors.

Do not plagiarize. All individual and group reports will be run through plagiarism detection programs, such as those found at [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com). Again, if this is unclear, or if you are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, please talk to me.

Here are a few extra tips for excellent writing:

1. Be concise, clear and informative.
2. Avoid personal anecdotes, opinions and casual grammar.
3. Do other respected references provide a different opinion? If so, briefly mention the disagreement and cite the external reference.

#### **4. Respect your classmates and their ideas.**

At the risk of sounding like a broken record, our class depends on your participation. When you respect your classmates' ideas – even the ones that you may disagree with – you help create an atmosphere where your peers feel free to share their thoughts and ideas. In the end, we all benefit. (Note: this doesn't mean you have to agree. In fact, feel free to challenge and question your fellow classmates – it will make for a better and more intelligent discussion. Just do so with respect.)

#### **5. “Be present.”**

As per McCombs and Management department policy, laptop computers, PDAs, cell phones, Kindles, iPads, and any other electronic devices should be turned off at the start of class. Accommodations will be made for students with disabilities.

#### **6. Take advantage of office hours.**

I'm here to help you. Come see me if you're confused, frustrated, or curious about learning more about any topic we discuss.

#### **7. Mind your absences.**

As mentioned earlier, you are allowed two absences throughout the semester. If you must miss more than two classes, please see me as soon as possible, as every unexcused absence beyond the two allowed will drop your participation grade by 5%.

#### **8. Fill out an attendance index card every class.**

I'll be distributing index cards at the beginning of every class. Write your name on it and return to me at the end of the class. This will ensure that your attendance is counted. Briefly note the comments and contributions you made to that day's class. If you have any comments or questions you weren't able to ask in class, write these on the card and I'll be happy to address them either individually or with the next class.

**9. Check Blackboard regularly**

I will be posting a range of materials on Blackboard through the course of the semester, including the syllabus, lecture notes, grading procedures, and other materials as required.

**10. Speak up!**

Strategy requires thoughtful discussion. I want to hear your analysis, and the more you share, the more the class will benefit.

## VI. Administrative Policies

**Policy on Classroom Professionalism:** The highest professional standards are expected of all members of the McCombs community. The classroom experience is enhanced when:

- Students arrive on time. Timely arrival ensures that classes are able to start and finish at the scheduled time. Timely arrival shows respect for both fellow students and faculty, and it enhances learning by reducing avoidable distractions.
- Students are fully prepared for each class. Much of the learning in the program takes place during classroom discussions. When students are not prepared, they cannot contribute to the learning process, overall. This affects not only the individual, but also peers who count on him/her, as well.
- Students respect the views and opinions of their colleagues. Disagreement and debate are encouraged. Intolerance for the views of others is unacceptable.
- Laptops and phones are closed and put away. When students are surfing the web, responding to e-mail, instant messaging each other, and otherwise not devoting their full attention to the topic at hand, they are doing themselves and their peers a major disservice. Those around them face additional distraction. There are often cases where learning is enhanced by the use of laptops in class. Faculty will let you know when it is appropriate to use them. In such cases, professional behavior is exhibited when misuse does not take place.
- Phones and wireless devices are turned off. When a true need to communicate with someone outside of class exists (e.g., for some medical need) please inform me prior to class.

**Policy Regarding Re-reads of all graded coursework:** In the event that you feel something was missed in the grading of your work (be it mathematical error or other), please write a brief re-read request, including a summary of what you feel needs further attention and your original work with my comments within 1 week of receiving your grade. If you request a re-read, I will read the work again from start to finish, and your grade may go up or down. Each grade component is considered final one week after given to the class and will no longer be open for re-reading or discussion.

**Students with Disabilities and Policy on Academic Accommodations:** Upon request, the University of Texas at Austin provides appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) is housed in the Office of the Dean of Students, located on the fourth floor of the Student Services Building. Information on how to register, downloadable forms, including guidelines for documentation, accommodation request letters, and releases of information are available online at <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/ssd/index.php>. Please do not hesitate to contact SSD at (512) 471-6259, VP: (512) 232-2937 or via e-mail if you have any questions.

**Policy on Blackboard:** Password-protected class sites will be available for all accredited courses taught at The University. Syllabi, handouts, assignments and other resources are types of information that may be available within these sites. Site activities could include exchanging e-mail, engaging in class discussions and chats, and exchanging files. In addition, class e-mail rosters will be a component of the sites. Students who do not want their names included in these

electronic class rosters must restrict their directory information in the Office of the Registrar, Main Building, Room 1.

**Writing Center:** I expect a high standard of written communication in your assessment pieces. For students struggling with this requirement, I encourage you to consider using the Undergraduate Writing Center, FAC 211, 471-6222: <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>). The Undergraduate Writing Center offers free, individualized, expert help with writing for any UT undergraduate, by appointment or on a drop-in basis. Any undergraduate enrolled in a course at UT can visit the UWC for assistance with any writing project. They work with students from every department on campus, for both academic and non-academic writing.

## Appendix 1: Academic Integrity

**Policy on Academic Integrity:** The details of the Honor System are described at <http://new.mcombs.utexas.edu/BHP/Life-in-BHP/Honor-code.aspx?p=1> and below. By enrolling in this class, you have agreed to observe all student responsibilities described in that document. If the application of that Policy Statement to this class and its assignments is unclear in any way, it is your responsibility to ask me for clarification.

**Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty:** Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. You should refer to the Student Judicial Services website at <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/> or the General Information Catalog to access the official University policies and procedures on scholastic dishonesty, as well as further elaboration on what constitutes scholastic dishonesty.

**Honor Code Purpose:** Academic honor, trust and integrity are fundamental to The University of Texas at Austin McCombs School of Business community. They contribute directly to the quality of your education and reach far beyond the campus to your overall standing within the business community. The University of Texas at Austin McCombs School of Business Honor System promotes academic honor, trust and integrity throughout the Graduate School of Business. The Honor System relies upon The University of Texas Student Standards of Conduct (Chapter 11 of the Institutional Rules on Student Service and Activities) for enforcement, but promotes ideals that are higher than merely enforceable standards. Every student is responsible for understanding and abiding by the provisions of the Honor System and the University of Texas Student Standards of Conduct. The University expects all students to obey the law, show respect for other members of the university community, perform contractual obligations, maintain absolute integrity and the highest standard of individual honor in scholastic work, and observe the highest standards of conduct. Ignorance of the Honor System or The University of Texas Student Standards of Conduct is not an acceptable excuse for violations under any circumstances.

The effectiveness of the Honor System results solely from the wholehearted and uncompromising support of each member of the Graduate School of Business community. Each member must abide by the Honor System and must be intolerant of any violations. The system is only as effective as you make it.

**Faculty Involvement in the Honor System:** The University of Texas at Austin McCombs School of Business Faculty's commitment to the Honor System is critical to its success. It is imperative that faculty make their expectations clear to all students. They must also respond to accusations of cheating or other misconduct by students in a timely, discrete and fair manner. We urge faculty members to promote awareness of the importance of integrity through in-class discussions and assignments throughout the semester.

**Expectations Under the Honor System Standards:** If a student is uncertain about the standards of conduct in a particular setting, he or she should ask the relevant faculty member for clarification to ensure his or her conduct falls within the expected scope of honor, trust and integrity as promoted by the Honor System. This applies to all tests and papers, as well as group and individual work. Questions about appropriate behavior during the job search should be addressed to a professional member of the Career Services Office. Below are some of the specific examples of violations of the Honor System.

**Lying:** Lying is any deliberate attempt to deceive another by stating an untruth, or by any direct form of communication that includes the telling of a partial truth. Lying includes the use or omission of any information with the intent to deceive or mislead. Examples of lying include, but are not limited to, providing a false excuse for why a test was missed or presenting false information to a recruiter.

**Stealing:** Stealing is wrongfully taking, obtaining, withholding, defacing or destroying any person's money, personal property, article or service, under any circumstances. Examples of stealing include, but are not limited to, removing course material from the library or hiding it from others, removing material from another person's mail folder, securing for one's self unattended items such as calculators, books, book bags or other personal property. Another form of stealing is the duplication of copyrighted material beyond the reasonable bounds of "fair use." Defacing (e.g., "marking up" or highlighting) library books is also considered stealing, because, through a willful act, the value of another's property is decreased. (See the appendix for a detailed explanation of "fair use.")

**Cheating:** Cheating is wrongfully and unfairly acting out of self-interest for personal gain by seeking or accepting an unauthorized advantage over one's peers. Examples include, but are not limited to, obtaining questions or answers to tests or quizzes, and getting assistance on case write-ups or other projects beyond what is authorized by the assigning instructor. It is also cheating to accept the benefit(s) of another person's theft(s) even if not actively sought. For instance, if one continues to be attentive to an overheard conversation about a test or case write-up even if initial exposure to such information was accidental and beyond the control of the student in question, one is cheating, as well. If a student overhears a conversation or any information that any faculty member may reasonably wish to withhold from the student, the student should inform the faculty member(s) of the information and circumstance under which it was overheard.

**Actions Required for Responding to Suspected and Known Violations:** As stated, everyone must abide by the Honor System and be intolerant of violations. If you suspect a violation has occurred, you should first speak to the suspected violator in an attempt to determine if an infraction has taken place. If, after doing so, you still believe that a violation has occurred, you must tell the suspected violator that he or she must report himself or herself to either the course professor or the Associate Dean of the Graduate School of Business. If the individual fails to report himself or herself within 48 hours, it then becomes your obligation to report the infraction to the course professor or the Associate Dean of the Graduate School of Business. Remember that although you are not required by regulation to take any action, our Honor System is only as effective as you make it. If you remain silent when you suspect or know of a violation, you are

approving of such dishonorable conduct as the community standard. You are thereby precipitating a repetition of such violations.

The Honor Pledge: The University of Texas at Austin McCombs School of Business requires each enrolled student to adopt the Honor System. The Honor Pledge best describes the conduct promoted by the Honor System. It is as follows:

"I affirm that I belong to the honorable community of The University of Texas at Austin McCombs School of Business. I will not lie, cheat or steal, nor will I tolerate those who do."

"I pledge my full support to the Honor System. I agree to be bound at all times by the Honor System and understand that any violation may result in my dismissal from the McCombs School of Business."

## **Appendix II: Why We Use the Case Method<sup>1</sup>**

The case method is one of the most effective means of management education. It is widely used in schools of business throughout the world, and this use is predicated upon the belief that tackling real business problems is the best way to develop practitioners. Real problems are messy, complex, and very interesting.

Unlike other pedagogical techniques, many of which make you the recipient of large amounts of information but do not require its use, the case method requires you to be an active participant in the closest thing to the real situation. It is a way of gaining a great deal of experience without spending a lot of time. It is also a way to learn a great deal about how certain businesses operate, and how managers manage. There are few programmable, textbook solutions to the kinds of problems faced by real general managers. When a problem becomes programmable, the general manager gives it to someone else to solve on a repeated basis using the guidelines he or she has established. Thus the case situations that we will face will require the use of analytical tools and the application of your personal judgment.

### **Sources of Cases**

All the cases in this course, except for the introductory Alaska Gold Mine example, are about real companies. You will recognize many of the names of the companies, although some of them may be new to you. These cases were developed in several different ways. Occasionally, a company will come to a business school professor and request that a case be written on that company. In other situations, a professor will seek out a company because he or she knows that the company is in an interesting or difficult situation. Often, the company will agree to allow a case to be written.

Occasionally, cases will be written solely from public sources. This is perhaps the most difficult type of case writing because of the lack of primary data sources.

In those situations where a company has agreed to have a case written, the company must "release" the case. This means that they have final approval of the content of a given case. The company and the case writer are thus protected from any possibility of releasing data that might be competitively or personally sensitive. Public source cases do not require a release. Given the requirement for release, however, it is amazing the amount of information that companies will allow to be placed in a case. Many companies do this because of their belief in the effectiveness of the case method.

### **Class Discussions**

The instructor's role in class discussion is to help develop your ideas through intensive questioning. This use of the Socratic Method has proved to be an effective way to develop individuals' thinking capability. The instructor's primary role is to manage the class process and to insure that the class achieves an understanding of the case situation. There is no single correct

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<sup>1</sup> This appendix was adapted from work by Professor Dan R. E. Thomas. It is intended solely as an aid to class preparation.

solution to any of these problems. There are, however, plenty of wrong solutions. Therefore, we will try to come up with a solution that will enable us to deal effectively with the problems presented in the case.

After the individual lead-off presentation, the discussion will be opened to the remainder of the group. It is during this time that you will have an opportunity to present and develop your ideas about the way the situation should be handled. It will be important for you to relate your ideas to the case situation and to the ideas of others as they are presented in the class. The instructor's role is to help you do this.

### **More on the Use of Extra or Post-Case Data**

As discussed earlier in the syllabus, the "Monday morning quarterback" syndrome is typically not an effective way to learn about strategic management. For that reason, you are discouraged from acquiring or using extra- or post-case data. Each person should leave the classroom with his or her plan for solving the problem, and none should be falsely legitimized. The outcome of a situation may not reflect what is, or is not, a good solution. You must remember that if a company did something different from your recommendations, and was successful or unsuccessful, this is not an indication of the value of your approach.

It is, however, interesting and occasionally useful to know what actually occurred. Therefore, whenever possible, I will tell you what has happened to a company since the time of the case.