



SCHOOL of
BUSINESS &
ECONOMICS

California State University Channel Islands

BUS 499: CAPSTONE

Course Syllabus - Fall 2017



Instructor: Maria Ballesteros-Sola, DBA, Fulbright Scholar
 Class Meetings: Wednesday 3:00 pm –5:50 pm
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"I hear, and I forget. I see, and I remember. I do, and I understand"
 Asian proverb

Course Overview

This is a required upper division course for the Bachelor of Science in Business. The course is a culminating experience for business students that aim to integrate all previous learning. Students are required to develop comprehensive approaches to complex business situations. Students analyze cases and make their own business decisions via an intensive simulation experience. It is essential for students to understand the interrelated nature of all business sub-disciplines. Also, through intensive group activities, students gain an appreciation of working in teams for a common goal.

Business Program Learning Goals

1. Critical Thinking
2. Oral Communication
3. Written Communication
4. Collaboration
5. Conduct (Ethics)

6. Competency in Discipline.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's) for this course

After the course, the students who successfully complete it, should be able to¹:

1. Make and implement business decisions via a simulation exercise (1,2,4,6)
2. Produce and present business analyses orally and in writing to their peers and to a larger audience (1,2,3,5,6)
3. Create effective business plans and clearly describe strategies, goals and objectives (1,2,3,4,5,6)
4. Summarize orally and in writing the performance of businesses (2,3,4,6)

Other critical course objectives are team building, focused and precise writing, public speaking and presentation skills, and proficiency in Microsoft Power Point, Excel and Word, as well as in some web-based critical tools such as Google Doc and Google Presentations.

Students will also have the opportunity to reflect on future business career paths.

These objectives will be achieved through a mix of mini-lectures, interactive activities and discussions, writing assignments, guest speakers and a term simulation game.

The class follows an active hands-on approach to learning. In-class time will be used for collaborative and interactive activities – not your traditional 3 hour-lecture from the professor.

Course Topics

Using a simulation game and business case analysis, the course demonstrates the integration of marketing, production, finance, economics and human resource management. As a major focus of the course, students work in teams to identify and resolve problems, and implement plans.

The course uses a web-based business simulation to provide students with an experience in business-decision making under uncertainty. Students form teams to develop and implement strategies to operate an ongoing firm in an international environment. Each firm competes in a consumer good industry against several other firms. Students are responsible for

¹ Aligns with Program Learning Goals for the numbers indicated between brackets.

decisions related to product price, quality, production, aggregate planning, marketing and financing.

Students are expected to utilize knowledge and skills gained in the business core courses and to apply the appropriate techniques and tools. Students will be dealing with issues related to, but not limited to, the following:

Management: Planning, organization, motivation and communication.

Marketing: Product line management, promotion, pricing and analysis of the marketing environment.

Operations: Aggregate planning, production capacity, inventory management, quality control.

Finance: Application and interpretation of financial data. Financial ratios analysis, financial statements, and financial planning.

Economic & Statistics: Statistical analysis and quantitative forecasting methods including industry- and macro-environment factors.

Information Systems: Forecasting and financial simulation models.

Required materials

- **“Strategic Management and Competitive Advantage”** by Barney & Hesterly, 5th Edition (Pearson). Different formats available.
- **The Business Strategy Game: A Global Simulation** <http://www.bsg-online.com>. All students must purchase an individual pass (\$44.95)

Additional readings as posted on CI Learn and handed out in the classroom.

Optional Readings & Resources

- Periodicals & local newspapers (Pacific Business Time, LA Times, Time Magazine, Entrepreneur, HBR, etc.
- Boston Consulting Group Perspectives (@bgcperspectives)
- McKinsey Quarterly (@McKQuarterly)
- Radio XM: Business Radio powered by the Wharton School. XM 11.1
- Harvard Business Review Today - great podcast series!.
- Seekingalpha.com

Prerequisites: All Lower Division 21 units and other Upper Division 33 units required courses in the Business Major.

Grading

Course Components		
Business Strategy Game (BSG) Simulation		450
<i>Overall Team performance on 5 scoring measures (66.67%)</i>	300	
<i>BSG Online Quiz (2.2%)</i>	10	
<i>BSG Online Quiz 2 (4.4%)</i>	20	
<i>Final BSG Presentation (16.6%)</i>	75	
<i>Self & Peer Evaluation scores of co-managers (3.5%+ 6.5%)</i>	45	
In-class Midterm exam		100
In-class Final exam		175
Weekly News Link		25
Case Analysis 1		50
Case Analysis 2		100
Attendance & Participation		75
Social Selling Index (SSI) LinkedIn (Part A + Part B)		5+20
TOTAL		1000

Grading related issues

Final grade will be calculated on the weighted value of all components. Final grades will be given on the basis of the guidelines provided by school. The professor reserves the right to change the method for determining course evaluation at any time.

A+: 1000-980	A: 979-930	A-: 929-900
B+: 899-880	B: 879-830	B-: 829-800
C+: 799-780	C: 779-730	C-: 729-700
D: 699-600		
F: <600		

Class participation and attendance

You are expected to come to class with the assigned readings completed and fully prepared to participate in the discussion. Grading for this section will be based on **attendance, punctuality, preparedness, your contributions** toward advancing class discussion, and generally **fostering learning among peers**.

I reserve the right to start requesting written summaries of the readings if I sense that students don't come prepared to class.

Class participation² provides the opportunity to practice speaking and persuasive skills, as well as the ability to listen. Comments that are vague, repetitive, unrelated to the current topic, disrespectful of others, or without sufficient foundation will be evaluated negatively. What matters is the quality of one's contributions to the class discussion, not the number of times one speaks.

Outstanding Contributor: Contributions in class reflect exceptional preparation. Ideas offered are always substantive; provide one or more major insights as well as direction for the class. Challenges are well substantiated and persuasively presented. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would be diminished markedly. **Grade: 75**

Good Contributor: Contributions in class reflect thorough preparation. Ideas offered are usually substantive; provide good insights and

² Note: I obtained these guidelines directly from Dr. Caserta at the IE Business School (source: Caserta, 2013 – Quantitative Methods – Syllabus). In turn, these have been learned from someone else. Although the original attribution for the guidelines has been lost, they continue to be so useful to so many.

sometimes direction for the class. Challenges are well substantiated and often persuasive. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would be diminished. **Grade: 65**

Adequate Contributor: Contributions in class reflect satisfactory preparation. Ideas offered are sometimes substantive, provide generally useful insights but seldom offer a new direction for the discussion. Challenges are sometimes presented, fairly well substantiated, and are sometimes persuasive. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would be diminished somewhat. **Grade: 55**

Non-Participant: This person says little or nothing in class. Hence, there is not an adequate basis for evaluation. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would not be changed. **Grade: 40**

Unsatisfactory Contributor: Contributions in class reflect inadequate preparation. Ideas offered are seldom substantive; provide few if any insights and never a constructive direction for the class. Integrative comments and effective challenges are absent. If this person were not a member of the class, valuable airtime would be saved. **Grade: 20**

Only one undocumented absence will be allowed during the semester. Each additional undocumented absence will result in a 10-point penalty deduction from your class participation final grade.

Missed Classes. If you miss a class, you are responsible for obtaining any notes, handouts, additional reading materials, or assignment changes from your classmates or from CILearn. Please check first with them.

Late Policy. BSG Decision Round dates are fixed and no late submissions will be accepted. Your team must input your decisions by 11:59 p.m. on the due dates. Late submission of any other assignments will not be accepted unless you have an emergency reason that it is documented.

Work due (BSG Rounds, Case Analysis, etc.)

Written assignments will be uploaded to CI Learn **before 11.59 pm the day before class.** If you are not attending class be sure to submit BSG inputs into BSG website or assignments via CI Learn **prior to the class.** No exceptions. **Late assignments are not accepted. Avoid sending me an email with an attachment.**

Exams & Quizzes

The Mid-Term will serve as a check- up of your progress. Also it will give you an idea of what to expect on the Final. The format will be a mix of multiple choice questions, topic questions and mini-case analysis. No make ups exams will be given.

There are two scheduled “open-book” online quizzes related to the BSG Simulation.

QUIZ 1: All questions are drawn directly from the Player’s Guide so you must be sure to read and understand the Guide before taking the test.

QUIZ 2: It tests students understanding of the Industry Report and Competitive Intelligence Report provided after each Decision Round. It also tests student grasp of the different strategic options available.

Additional quizzes on the assigned readings smay be given randomly trough the semester with or without notice. If you do not come to class that day your score will be 0. No make-up exams.

News Link

Every week, two students will team up and present a relevant business article (five minutes max). Students will share the specifics, but more importantly, they will establish the connection with the week’s class topic. Students need to submit the article for professor’s approval by Sunday night. Use the Google Doc linked in CI Learn.

Business Game Simulation

In the Business Strategy Game (BSG), class members are divided into teams and assigned to run an athletic footwear company in head-to-head competition against companies run by other class members. Companies compete in a global market arena, selling branded and private-label athletic footwear in four geographic regions—Europe-Africa, North America, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America.

The computer simulation game allows students to apply previously learned concepts, skills and techniques in an international competitive and goal-oriented environment. Successful management of a firm requires a balanced emphasis among all functional areas. The game is a dynamic-interactive simulation. The effectiveness of team decisions rests both on the theoretical correctness of each simulated yearly decision and on the competitive decisions of other teams.

Team Size: Teams will be self-formed of 5 students (co-managers) per team. Try to get a good balance of backgrounds and skill sets amongst your teammates. You will review and grade your teammates contributions. I expect the students to work hard on the project, but also to have fun.

I will expect an email from a representative of each team letting me know who is on the team. You will need to pick a name for your team. Please send me an email with the team name in the subject heading along with the class information. When a student from the team communicates with me for general questions, be sure to copy the rest of the team members so we can keep everyone on the loop.

The project should be also used as an opportunity to build upon “soft” skills that will always be useful in different aspects of your future career, such as

- team building
- running effective meetings
- developing leadership skills
- using effective feedback
- speaking in public (*special focus during the semester*)
- writing effectively

Final Presentation

The team will deliver a final BSG Company Presentation in front of the class on the day assigned. Oral presentation should no be longer than 15 minutes. All team members are expected to speak in the presentation. After the presentation a 5 minute Q&A will be opened. No notes allowed during the presentation.

All students will evaluate each team’s presentation using the rubric provided by the professor.

Peer Evaluation

Each co-manager in the team will complete the BSG Peer Review (12 questions) online for each team member and also a self-evaluation (using the same form). The objective is to evaluate your teammates’ work. You will consider each of your teammate’s efforts, commitment to the success of the project, and contribution to the final results, knowledge of company’s operations, availability, dependability to get their work completed on time, leadership, etc. The answers are scored and recorded in the BSG online grade book; the peer evaluation grades range up to 100 points and weight a 10% of the BSG game total grade.

Social Selling Index – LinkedIn

As you start exploring professional options after graduation it is important to build and strength your **Professional Digital Identity**. LinkedIn is still the preferred professional social network. The goal of this assignment is to help you establish a LinkedIn presence and to strengthen it. For this purpose we will be working with the LinkedIn Social Selling Index (SSI).

SSI measures how effective you are at establishing your professional brand, finding the right people, engaging with insights, and building relationships. It is updated daily.

Full assignment description can be found on CI Learn. You can find more information on SSI here.

<https://business.linkedin.com/sales-solutions/blog/g/get-your-score-linkedin-makes-the-social-selling-index-available-for-everyone>

Case Analysis

You will prepare and analyze two cases during the term. All case analyses must be submitted on CI Learn. For each case, you will be given a list of specific questions. Answer each question separately. Do not write a generic “essay” about the case. Doing the analysis will help you to prepare for the in-class discussions.

Guest Speakers

In order to achieve the objectives outlined early in the Syllabus, I have invited several accomplished speakers who will share their business acumen and experience in different industries.

The speakers have provided me with tentative dates. Final dates will be confirmed via CI Learn/ classroom. I expect the students to research the speaker's company ahead of time, and be able to formulate thoughtful questions that will enrich our learning.

The following schedule of assignments is subject to change with notice.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

- T: Textbook
- G: Google

BSG: The Business Strategy Game
TP: Team Project

#	DAY	SUBJECT AREA	REQUIRED READING	ASSIGNMENT/ DELIVERABLE	OTHER ACTIVITIES/ READINGS
1	08/30	Introduction & Course Overview "What is Strategy and the Strategic Management Process"	Textbook Ch.1	Student ID pictures and personal card (in class)	Ice-breaker Intro to BSG Simulation Game
2	09/06	Evaluating the External Environment	Ch. 2 BSG Player's Guide	Final day to bring ID picture	News Link Create teams & provide names Enroll online in BSG
3	09/13	Evaluating a Firm's Internal Capabilities	Ch. 3 "Analyzing Cases" p. 343-346	Take online Quiz 1 before 09/12 11:59 SSI Part A: LinkedIn Profile	News Link
4	09/20	Business Level Strategies: Cost Leadership	Ch. 4	Written Case Analysis & First practice BSG Due on 09/19 11.59 pm	News Link Case Discussion Debrief of Practice Round 1
5	09/27	Business Level Strategies: Product Differentiation	Ch. 5	Second practice BSG Due on 09/26 11.59 pm	News Link Debrief of Practice Round 2
6	10/04	MIDTERM			Documentary Team-time to prepare Year 11 Decision Round
7	10/11	Corporate Strategies: Vertical Integration	Ch. 6	Year 11 Decision Round-due 10/10 11.59 pm	News Link
8	10/18	NACRA CONFERENCE- Blended Class - Year 12 Decision Round-due 10/18 at 6 pm			
9	10/25	Corporate Strategies: Corporate Diversification	Ch. 7 & 8	Mid-Game Peer Evaluation & Year 13 Decision Round-due 10/24 11.59 pm	News Link
10	11/01	Corporate Strategies: Strategic Alliances	Ch. 9	Year 14 Decision Round-due 10/31 11.59 pm	News Link
11	11/08	Corporate Strategies: Mergers & Acquisitions	Ch. 10	Quiz 2 due 11/07 11.59 pm (online) Year 15 Decision Round-due 11/07 11.59 pm	News Link
12	11/15	Corporate Strategies: International Strategies	Ch. 11	Year 16 Decision Round-due 11/14 11.59 pm Case Analysis 2 Due	News Link Case Discussion
13	11/22	Corporate Strategies: International Strategies (II)		Year 17 Decision Round-due 11/21 11.59 pm	News Link Documentary
14	11/29	Oral Communication – Special Workshop		Year 18 Decision Round-due 11/28 11.59 pm	News Link Prep. Time
15	12/06	BSG: End of Simulation - Oral Company Presentations. Peer evaluation due before class.			
16	12/13	FINAL EXAM			

In- Class Protocol: Cell phones and pagers are allowed in class only when they are silent/vibrate. If you need to answer an urgent call please leave the room. If your cell phone disturbs any part of the class you will be asked to leave the class and lose any points associated to that day. No exceptions.

Laptops are not allowed in the class unless you are using it to take class notes or to complete any of the assigned in-class exercises. No exceptions.

Writing Standard

The standard of writing is that of an upper division class. Students should have already achieved correct grammar and punctuation skills; those who have not should catch up by asking for help from the writing center or studying *The Elements of Style* or similar instruction. Poor writing will count against your assignment's grade. References/Bibliographies and writing must be APA style. **I do not accept hand written assignments.**

Cheating, Plagiarism and Other Forms of Academic Dishonesty

All work that students submit, as their own work must, in fact, be their own work. In accordance with CSU Channel Islands policy on academic dishonesty, students in this course who submit the works of others as their own (plagiarize), cheat on tests and examination, help other students cheat or plagiarize, or commit other acts of academic dishonesty will receive appropriate academic penalties, up to including failing the course.

Papers with plagiarized ideas or language will be graded "F" and must be rewritten with proper use of quotations and referencing. The grade of "F" will remain the recorded grade on the assignment.

The Internet is a great source of information and I encourage you to use it for research. However, do not copy another author's writing word for word, except for brief passages to support your thesis. When using another writer's work, accurately identify it with a proper citation and footnote.

Plagiarism or cheating on test and exams will results in an "F" (0 points) on the test or exams, very likely resulting in a lower or possibly a failing final grade in the course. To complete course requirements, students must retake the test or exam during the instructor's scheduled office hours.

Plagiarism on homework or project deliverables will result in 0 point grade for that document.

In case where the cheating or plagiarism was premeditated or planned, students may receive and “F” for the course.

Disabilities Accommodations

Cal State Channel Islands is committed to equal educational opportunities for qualified students with disabilities in compliance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. The mission of Disability Accommodation Services is to assist students with disabilities to realize their academic and personal potential. Students with physical, learning or other disabilities are encouraged to contact the Disability Accommodation Services office at (805) 437-8510 for personal assistance and accommodations. All requests for accommodations require appropriate advance notice to avoid delay in services. Please discuss approved accommodations with me ASAP!.

Disclaimer

Information contained in this syllabus, other than the mandated by the University, may be subject to change with advance notice.

Final Thoughts

This class and all that we strive to accomplish are about you and for you! Class is the safest laboratory that you will experience in your career. Make the most out of it! Work hard and have fun! Thank you for choosing this class. I am looking forward to working with you.

*"Inspiration exists, but it has to find you working."
Pablo Picasso*