2012

MGMT 600-04 Strategy and Organizations

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Xavier University  
Williams College of Business

MGMT 600: Strategy and Organizations  
FALL 2012  
Dr. Rashmi Assudani

Class Meetings: Saturdays 12pm – 4:20pm SMH 252

Readings: As assigned in the syllabus, and posted on the Blackboard.

Cases: Link to purchase cases: http://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cb/access/15856485


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Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:00pm – 2:30pm  
Wednesdays 9:30am – 12:30pm  
Thursdays 1:00pm – 2:30pm  
And by appointment

Williams College of Business Mission Statement:

“We educate students of business, enabling them to improve organizations and society, consistent with the Jesuit tradition.”

Course Objectives:

The main objective of this course is to develop your strategic thinking ability. Students taking this course will learn how to make strategic decisions by zooming into micro perspectives and zooming out to macro perspectives. Students will also learn how to implement management practices with the goal of maximizing contributions to stakeholders.

Course Description:

Our emphasis for the semester will be on managerial responsibilities within organizations. We will be discussing methods of assessing and acting on strategic opportunities, solving managerial problems, and coping with the challenges a company faces in a competitive and constantly changing global marketplace. We will emphasize application of concepts to actual business situations.

Learning Outcomes:

Students who fully participate in this course should be able to:
• Examine the strategic landscape and associated challenges and opportunities for businesses
• Develop strategic map of organizations on the basis of seminal strategy literature
• Offer recommendations for organization’s performance and business opportunities for realizing competitive advantage
• Critically evaluate these recommendations from a strategic lens.

Communication with Students regarding Class:

I will use Blackboard to post documents regarding class assignments and notes, including articles to read for class, etc. All the relevant documents can be accessed at the ‘Course Content’ tab on Blackboard.

I will also email class members with important information regarding class. It is your responsibility to regularly check both sources on a timely basis to keep abreast of class information. (Note: if you prefer to receive emails through an alternate email address – not your Xavier account – I suggest you forward your Xavier email to your alternate address).

Class Participation

Our class periods will comprise of brief lectures and interactive discussions of articles and case studies. Your learning, as also mine, is directly a function of our engagement, both on an individual and collaborative basis, with the readings, topics and discussions in this course. In MBA courses, a critical aspect of your learning is hearing the experiences and opinions of your fellow students. This learning is increased when you summarize and synthesize the material and are actively involved in discussion. Our discussions will center on applying the course material to a variety of business situations so you can develop an understanding of how you can use the concepts in your career.

Therefore, I’d like for you to read and ‘really immerse into’ the materials assigned in this class. For example, in preparing a case for a class discussion, you should read the case at least twice. The first reading just gives you the sense of the story. On the second read, you will be able to develop your own interpretations of the micro-elements in the story (e.g. key events, players, etc.). Refer to the hand-out on ‘Case Discussion’ for more details.

Class Structure

In general, classes will be structured in the following way:

1st half of the class:
- Introduction to concepts: 15 minutes
- Article discussion: 30 minutes
- Break: 10 minutes
- Case Discussion: 50 minutes

Break: 20 minutes

2nd half of the class:
- Introduction to concepts: 15 minutes
- Article discussion: 30 minutes
- Break: 10 minutes
Case Discussion: 50 minutes
Wrap-up

Grade Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Team</th>
<th>% allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Preparation &amp; Participation</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept Papers</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Presentation</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company Project</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BoD critique of group project</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

General Assignment Guidelines:

All papers should be single-spaced, border margins should be set at no less than one inch on all sides, and the font should be 12 point, Times Normal. Provide (a) double spacing between paragraphs, (b) page numbers, and (c) section titles.

Due Dates

All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. Assignments turned in late, but by the end of the day they are due, will be graded but will be subject to one grade penalty. Papers not turned in on the day they are due will not be accepted.

Attendance

Your performance in this course is in your hands, given that class participation holds significant weight towards your final grade. Therefore, it is up to you whether or not you come to class. My goal is to have an interesting and valuable class period each time we meet. It is my belief that you are here for the purpose of learning, and that learning in a class such as ours is an outcome of your intellectual engagement with your peers. If you elect not to come to class, it is your responsibility to obtain notes from another student to catch up on any material you have missed.

This is a very brief semester – one missed class equals two such missed classes in a regular semester. Therefore, my expectation is for 100% attendance for all classes, especially attendance on days of your team’s case study presentations and final project presentations. Please let me know if there is any conflict with your schedule.

Honesty

Any dishonesty will result in a grade of F for the course. Primarily, although not exclusively, dishonesty involves the representation of another’s work as your own. What is plagiarism?

- Plagiarism is using the work of another as if it were your own, without enclosing the words of others in quotations.
- Plagiarism is copying from the Internet, from a web page, or from another person without giving credit.
- Plagiarism is using ideas which are not your own without citing those ideas.
- Plagiarism can be applied to ideas, research, art, music, graphs, diagrams, websites, data, books, newspapers, magazines, plays, movies, photos, and speeches.

**Peer Evaluations**

Peer evaluation forms are posted on the Blackboard page. If you are dissatisfied with any team member's performance, please use the form and submit it to me after the team assignment. I will consider this feedback for each individual's performance on the team project. If I do not receive the peer evaluation form, I will assume that the team is functioning smoothly.

**Grading**

I grade both on an *absolute* and a *relative* basis. On an *absolute* basis, I look for how you answered or handled the specific assignment, etc. in terms of what was asked for. On a *relative* basis, I look for how your answer or assignment completion compares with your classmates, in terms of thoroughness, professionalism, creativity, etc.

**Grading Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>76-79.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-75.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-65.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;60</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Grading Rubric:**

- **A 100%** Unusually exceptional paper – far exceeding normal expectations. All necessary information and analyses are included in the paper. Discussion is in-depth. Virtually no grammatical errors exist.
- **A- 90%** Outstanding paper. Expectations are exceeded. All necessary information and analyses are included in the paper. Virtually no grammatical errors exist.
- **B+ 87.5%** Good paper. Most of the necessary information and analyses are included in the paper. Few grammatical errors exist. Expectations are met.
- **B 85%** Adequate paper. Not all of the required topics/analyses are included. Grammatical errors exist. Not all expectations are met.
- **C 75%** Poor paper. Several of the required topics are not included. Numerous grammatical errors exist. Little insight is displayed.
- **D 65%** The paper possesses significant problems. Paper is not acceptable.
TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Below is a description of the planned activities for each class period of the semester. It is subject to change, although every effort will be made to follow this plan as outlined.

Class #1a  Saturday, October 6: Strategic Thinking & Organizational Systems

Big Question: How can we make better decisions regarding organizational effectiveness by employing a systems view?

Reading: Preparing for Case Discussion

Description: We will examine the concept of strategy. We will also examine the concept of organizations as social systems. We will discuss how the various functions of an organization interact with each other as well as the other systems that impinge on the organization.

Your To-Do: As you read these articles, reflect on your own organizations to:
Map out strategy and strategy making at your own organizations. Review the mission and vision statements, as also any strategy documents that you have public access to. Also, speak to your seniors to get a sense of how strategy making happens in your own organizations.

Class #1b  Saturday, October 6: Strategic Thinking & Organizational Systems


Guest Speaker on Strategic Leadership

Class #2a  Saturday, October 13: Strategic Thinking, Organizational Systems & Strategic Leadership

Big Question: How can we determine the strategic context of organizations to allow better strategic decision making?

Case: Let’s Take This Private: Linens ‘n Things Versus Bed Bath and Beyond

Description: In continuation of our previous class, we will examine the concept of organizations as social systems and consider the implications for managerial action in this context. Using a case study, we will discuss the core concepts of strategy – strategic maps, SWOT analysis and performance management.

Your To-Do: As you read this case study, consider the following questions:
1. Can LNT’s strengths create a unique position for the company with the consumers?
2. Could (and should) a similar culture like BBBY be created at LNT?
3. Assume you are Robert DiNicola. What, in your view, will be the best course for LNT? Why?

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Class #2b Saturday, October 13


Your To-Do: As you read these articles, reflect on your own organizations to:
Reflect on the trends that are relevant to your own organization and the industry that your business belongs to. Which trends (listed in the article and others) have a potential to offer an opportunity and/or threat to your organization/industry.

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Class #3a Saturday, October 20: Teams


Case: MediSys Corp.: The IntensCare Product Development Team

Optional Text: Chapter 12 in the Organizational Behavior section of the textbook

Description: Working in teams has become a staple of most organization’s structures. We will learn about the unique aspects of team processes and how managers can best utilize teams to accomplish organizational objectives.

Big Question: When are teams best suited to achieving results and when might other configurations of employees be more effective?

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Class #3b Saturday, October 20: Organizational Change

Reading: Miles, Accelerating Corporate Transformations (Don’t Lose Your Nerve!), Harvard Business Review, January 2010

Case: Christina Gold Leading Change at Western Union

Optional Text: Chapter 17 in the Organizational Behavior section of the textbook

Description: Change is a given in today’s globally competitive environment. In addition to examining why change is so difficult, we will learn some of the techniques and principles that help managers implement organizational changes more effectively.

Big Question: How can we implement change initiatives in a manner that enhances organizational effectiveness while minimizing disruption?
Class #4a  Saturday, October 27: Motivation and Incentives


Case:  Engstrom Auto Mirror Plant: Motivating in Good Times and Bad

Optional Text: Chapter 7 in the Organizational Behavior section of the textbook

Description:  Motivating employees is a critical managerial responsibility. We will discuss a variety of means by which employee performance can be rewarded as well as systems for monitoring employee and work unit progress towards the accomplishment of organizational goals.

Big Question: What works and doesn’t work when it comes to motivating employees to do their best work?

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Class #4b  Saturday, October 27: Business-Level Strategy


Case:  Porter Airlines

Optional Text: Chapter 4 in the Strategic Management section of the textbook

Description:  The choice of strategies at the business unit level is the foundation for developing plans for the company’s daily activities. Implementation of strategy is as important as the plans underlying it.

Big Question: Where are the gaps in your company’s strategy?

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Class #5a  Saturday, November 3: Corporate-Level Strategies (Cooperative Strategies; Mergers and Acquisitions)


Case:  InBev & Anheuser-Busch Merger

Optional Text: Chapters 6, 7 & 9 in the Strategic Management section of the textbook

Description:  Mergers and acquisitions of a company’s business present unique challenges. What are the best ways to manage the issues in an M&A integration for long term value creation?

Big Question: How can a company ensure post acquisition strategic fit and alignment?
Class #5b  Saturday, November 3:
Guest Speaker/ Team work

Class #6a  Saturday, November 10: International Strategy
Case:  Tricon Restaurants International
Optional Text:  Chapter 8 in the Strategic Management section of the textbook
Description:  What do we need to know to evaluate the potential profitability of a move into the global arena?
Big Question:  Where are the greatest sources of opportunities in today’s global economy and how can companies position themselves to take advantages of these opportunities?

Class #6b  Saturday, November 10: Emerging Markets
Case:  LG Electronics
Optional Text:  No assigned readings
Description:  Changes in demand, market power and business models are starting to produce surprising new winners in emerging markets.
Big Question:  What are the critical points of learning to succeed in emerging markets?

Class #7a  Saturday, November 17: Innovation (Ethics & Corporate Social Responsibility)
Readings:  Anderson & Markides, Strategic Innovation at the Base of the Pyramid, MIT Sloan Management Review, Fall 2007
  Birkinshaw et al., The Five Myths of Innovation, MIT Sloan Management Review, Winter 2011
Case:  Danimal in South Africa
Optional Text:  No assigned reading in the text
Pre-empting the competition with new products or services is a critical aspect of strategy for most companies. We will take a look at how they can decide the most effective means of investing in the future through innovation.

**Big Question:** How can companies remain competitive without investing in projects that don’t bear fruit?

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**Class #7b Saturday, November 17: Sustainability (Ethics & Corporate Social Responsibility)**


Case: Sustainability at Millipore

Optional Text: No assigned reading in the text

Description: Sustainability initiatives in the business environment are potentially a way to save on expenses as well as develop competitive advantage. How are businesses responding to stakeholder demands to become more “green” in the way they conduct themselves?

**Big Question:** How can companies best prepare for the uncertainties that sustainability trends or forces may present?

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**THANKSGIVING BREAK**

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**Class#8a Saturday, December 1**

Wrap up

Guest Speaker

***BoD critique and questions on the team project are due today***

**Class#8b Project Discussions**

Reading: Student Project Papers

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**Class #9 Saturday, December 8: Project Discussions**

Reading: Student Project Papers
Brief Biography

Rashmi H. Assudani, PhD.

Academic Experience: I have a PhD in Management from McGill University, Canada. I have enjoyed teaching courses such as strategic management, managerial behavior, innovation and entrepreneurship at McGill U. as also at Xavier U. My research expertise lies in the area of innovation, creativity, virtual teams, knowledge management and learning. My research has appeared in multiple journal papers and in conference presentations, and has also received numerous awards.

Corporate Experience: I have had a diverse worldwide business experience with leading organizations such as Citibank, McCann Eriksson (world’s largest advertising company), and Bennett Coleman & Co. (largest media conglomerate in Asia). I gained my early experience with corporate intrapreneurship at Bennett Coleman & Co. when this publishing giant made a strategic decision to develop and harness new business concepts in other electronic media such as Radio FM (a new concept in India in the early 1990s) and television.

Community/NGO Experience: In addition to my corporate experience at for-profit organizations, I have also served at SAWCC - a non-profit organization devoted to the betterment of refugees in Canada. I have initiated socially responsible efforts at SAWCC to enhance language capabilities for non-English and non-French speaking refugees that were seeking to establish themselves in Canada. Currently, I am engaged with XU’s Eigeli Center for Community Engaged Learning.

Speaking Experience: I have had numerous opportunities to present in front of a wide variety of audiences in India, Canada, US, France and The Netherlands. Most recently, I was on TED talks: http://tedxtalks.ted.com/video/TEDxXAVIERUNIVERSITY-Rashmi-Ass;search%3ATEDxXavierU

Student Experience: I have truly enjoyed working with my students in all these years. One of the fruitful culmination of my engagement with Xavier students was the birth of Innovation Society at XU, and the 2011 launch (and continuation) of TED events at Xavier.
Background Information Sheet

Name:

Current Phone number:

Current Major/Class year:

Name of your organization:

What does your organization do?

What is your role in your organization?

Anything else you’d like to share about yourself?
ASSIGNMENTS

Class Preparation and Participation  10%

Articles and cases are assigned for each class period. Cases are used to explore how course concepts relate to real company situations. You are responsible for reading each case and preparing to discuss it in conjunction with 'Case Discussion' guidelines, which have been distributed at the beginning of the course. You should be very familiar with the content of each case. You are similarly expected to be thoroughly prepared to discuss each article assigned for reading.

Grading Rubric:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Points</th>
<th>Expected Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A=100%</td>
<td>Attended and contributed to discussion, reflecting a good understanding of material and evidence of preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A- = 90%</td>
<td>Attended and contributed somewhat to the discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B= 85%</td>
<td>Attended, but did not demonstrate any involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C = 75%</td>
<td>Leaving or arriving late</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Disruptive; texting/laptop use; irrelevant participation; absent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Concept Papers 20%

You are required to offer 2 critiques for the articles related to 2 topics that we will cover during the semester. The purpose of the critique is to invigorate your thinking in preparation for the class. It is your choice to critique articles for both topics on the same day or you may spread out your 2 critiques over 2 topics on different days. An ideal critique should go beyond simply describing the concepts and examples from the day’s readings and demonstrate a writer’s ability to make broader connections, synthesize new ideas, and generate questions without exceeding the word limit of 750 words.

Submit the critique papers to mgmt600xavier@gmail.com. In the subject heading of the email, mention ‘Your name - Concept Paper – First 3 words of the paper that you are critiquing’. The purpose of the critique is to invigorate your thinking in preparation for the class, and therefore they should be submitted before you come to class. Therefore, if you choose to do your concept paper on the reading on ‘Why teams don’t work’, you will email your paper on Saturday, October 20, 2013 by 9am. The subject heading of the email will be ‘Rashmi Assudani – Concept Paper – Why teams don’t’.

Grading Rubric:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critique offers synthesis of new ideas</th>
<th>Y/N</th>
<th>3%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critique forms broader connections</td>
<td>Y/N</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critique generates questions</td>
<td>Y/N</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case Study

Case Discussion

Throughout this semester, we will examine Harvard Business School (HBS) cases in class. The first case study (LNT versus Bed, Bath & Beyond) will be a common case study for all, and will not be graded. For the rest of the case studies, each team will be responsible for taking leadership for in-class presentation on 1 case. The assignment includes a presentation to the class. Cases will be allocated on the first day of class.

*Team presentation (an electronic copy of the hand-out – one per team - is due by 9am on the day of presentation):* The presentation worth 20% should be detailed, should address the assigned questions and should provoke thoughtful discussion questions for the class. The hand-outs will be graded on thoroughness of analysis, application of concepts, and additional research. Please make sure that you edit the hand-outs so that these are error-free.

Each case study has central challenges/issues that it is facing. You are required to examine these questions and provide recommendations on the basis of the assigned readings and additional research.

I will provide some discussion questions to get you started and to ensure the team stays on the same page. Please ensure your analysis of the case study integrates with the topic/material that is scheduled for that day. I expect you to do some research beyond the material contained in the case study. Please reference the sources that are not your own.

Tentative format of the case study discussion is as follows:

- **Overview of the case study:** 5 minutes
- **Discussion questions:** 15 minutes
- **Provide 3 recommendations to the case study challenge(s):** 10 minutes
  - Offer Pros and cons of each recommendation
- **Choose 1 recommendation and provide a rationale for choosing it:** 5 minutes
- **Open it up for class discussion/debate:** 15 minutes

Check List & Grading Rubric: Grading will be based on:

- thoughtfulness analysis
- reflect integration of articles,
- well organized, compelling, and supported by facts,
- additional research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overview of the case study</th>
<th>Y/N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Questions</td>
<td>Y/N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>Y/N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class discussion/debate on the chosen recommendation</td>
<td>Y/N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I expect that each member of the team has at least some time in front of the class making a portion of the presentation – though there is no requirement that each team member must have equal time. The grades will be awarded to the TEAM and not to the individual, so assign tasks in the best way you can to achieve your best performance.
Selected Case Studies for Presentation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Study</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MediSys Corp</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christina Gold Leading Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engstrom Auto Mirror Plant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Porter Airlines</td>
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<tr>
<td>InBev &amp; Anheuser-Busch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tricon Restaurants International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LG Electronics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability at Millipore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danimal in South Africa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grading Rubric:

- **A** 100% Unusually exceptional assessment – far exceeding normal expectations. Virtually no grammatical errors exist.
- **A-** 90% Outstanding assessment. Expectations are exceeded. Virtually no grammatical errors exist.
- **B+** 87.5% Good assessment. Few grammatical errors exist. Expectations are met.
- **B** 85% Adequate assessment. Grammatical errors exist. Not all expectations are met.
- **C** 75% Poor assessment. Numerous grammatical errors exist. Little insight is displayed.
- **D** 65% The assessment possesses significant problems. Assessment is not acceptable.
This assignment involves research on an industry and one of its firms which is a player in this industry. After you have formed teams, you will identify a public company and conduct a strategic analysis for this firm. The learning objective of this assignment completely coincides with those for this entire course (refer to pg. 2 of the course outline). Therefore, your team research should draw from the concepts and frameworks from this course.

The project has 3 components.

- **The first** involves writing a paper combining research and analysis for a public company of your choosing
  - pick a company that we are not using as one of the case studies;
  - pick a company from an industry which will be most useful to you/your team.

- **The second** is a recommendations paper that involves development of management proposals to enhance the success of your chosen company.

- **The third** component entails discussing your recommendations with the rest of the class by responding to their questions regarding your paper, as well as formulating questions for others regarding their papers.
  - Attendance for the project discussions is mandatory.

Further details on the company project are provided in a separate handout which is posted on the Blackboard.