

***Sul Ross State University***  
***Department of Business Administration***

**Business Strategy- Independent Study- Readings & Cases**

GBA 5302  
 Fall 2023  
 Section 1: TBA  
 Room: TBA  
[wgreen@sulross.edu](mailto:wgreen@sulross.edu)

Professor: Dr. William C. Green  
 Office: MAB 110  
 Office Phone: 837-8067; 8066 (sect.)  
 Office Hours: By appointment and;

**Course Description:**

Development of Business programs and strategies. In-depth integration of course content across the MBA curriculum. Recognition of both internal and external variables in formulating Business strategies. Emphasis on case method, readings and class discussion.

**Prerequisite:** 09 SCH of MBA course work or permission of instructor

**Course Material(s):**

Rothaermel: ***Strategic Management: Concepts 4<sup>th</sup> Edition***; New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2019.  
 ISBN: 978-1-259-92762-8 – **Must purchase E-Book!**

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

SLO 1	Analyze & solve complex business problems across major business functions, using advanced business principles and strategies
SLO 2	Communicate in-depth business information through written, oral and other delivery processes
SLO 3	Identify and discuss the impact of ethical and social responsibility issues in business

**Student Learning Objectives - Students will achieve:**

An advanced understanding of Business Strategy, from both theoretical and practical perspectives

An advanced ability to develop practical and comprehensive case analyses and solutions

A refined and expanded appreciation of the complex and dynamic nature of the environment of business

An enhanced appreciation for making decisions under uncertainty and or in dynamic market conditions

A refined and enhanced ability to make a professional presentation

An advanced understanding of and appreciation for the interdependence among business functions

An advanced working knowledge of business strategy to aid further study and career pursuits.

**Course Grades:**

Grades are determined on a percentage/points basis. Course requirements follow:

Attendance -	100	10%
Class Participation/Meetings	200	20%
CONNECT – Various	150	15%
Mini Case Assignments 4 @ 50	200	20%
Discussion Forum - Articles	150	15%
Chapter Questions 1 @ 200	<u>200</u>	<u>20%</u>
TOTAL	1000	100%

Grades in the course will be assigned as follows:

- A = 90 - 100%
- B = 80 - 89%
- C = 70 - 79%
- D = 60 - 69%
- F = Below 60

**Note: It is my expectation that satisfactory work in this course is at the B level or above. Thus, unless you perform less than satisfactorily for what I expect to be the minimal performance level for an M.B.A., you should not have to lay awake at night and worry about your grade!**

**Attendance: - NA**

Attendance is necessary in this course. There is considerable emphasis on class participation and one cannot fulfill that component if not in class!

**Class Participation: - NA**

This course is conducted as a seminar with a readings and case method format supplemented with lectures. Reading of materials and preliminary preparation of analyses are necessary to facilitate discussion. Therefore, active participation is mandatory. Deviations from this can only reflect negatively on your class performance and not enable you to achieve the course objectives.

In addition, you are expected to participate during and/or after formal presentations. Please, do not try to "shoot from the hip." If you are not prepared, admit it and be ready the next time. One or two instances of non-preparation will be overlooked but repeated instances of this will prove dysfunctional objectives.

You are urged to participate at your own initiative and determination of participation grades will be based upon both quantity and quality of comments. Thus, your attendance is at a premium and although roll will not always be taken, repeated absences from class can only hurt your class standing and not enable you to fully satisfy the course requirements. If you must miss class, let me know before class begins.

Also, it should be noted that the reading assignment is heavy. Try to be prepared for every class. You will be assigned questions pertaining to the readings which will help direct your studies but avoid the temptation to only answer the question posed without studying the entire work as the questions only serve as a point of departure for subsequent in-depth analysis. If you are having difficulty with any aspect of the course, please let me know. I will work with you but I have no way of knowing this unless you tell me.

### **Connect - Various:**

There are actually two *Learning Management Systems* (LMS) in this course – CONNECT – C - & Black-Board – BB. There are some assets with C that are valuable learning aids. Some are simply chapter learning aids and others are more involved. BB does not offer the same type of learning assets. As there is considerable material to cover, C is an effective way to assist. There are also things associated with BB that help with the general format of the course. The C & BB assignments will be individually based unless noted. Assignments will be announced in advance and C assignments will not be *linked* to BB as to grading and so forth. In other words, the grades will be compiled from C and uploaded to BB with the appropriate percentage applied. This is more efficient in avoiding confusion. There is one important issue to note. Less emphasis will be placed on the ***Learn-Smart*** component of CONNECT. It will still be available to anyone wishing to use it but the grade percentage associated with LS will be considerably less than historically has been the case. Also note that you may be expected to complete some assignments within a relatively short window (time span). Unless noted, quizzes and/or homework assignments are meant to be completed on an individual basis and should be completed entirely on that basis. Deadlines missed (on any assignments) will not receive full credit!

### **Mini Case Assignments:**

You will be asked to complete four mini case assignments. The purpose of these is to provide a practical vehicle for tying things together and thinking strategically. Also, this helps insure that you appreciate the various linkages and nuances among all business functions. Finally, these are a primary component in helping us achieve the course objectives.

"Cases" should be typed and single spaced. Length will be dependent on the number of questions assigned to address the issues of the case. However, typical length usually falls somewhere between 1 and 2 pages (excluding exhibits). Any case with more than five (05) mechanical errors (misspellings, typos, etc.) will be lowered by ten points. Cases will be evaluated on thoroughness of analysis of area(s), creativity and practicality revealed in your responses and the quality of organization, writing and clarity.

Remember that cases are written to inform in a professional, succinct and efficient way. Thus, verbosity should be avoided. I would urge you to work in groups of two when working on the case assignments to maximize synergy. However, the case analysis you submit must be independently written. As mentioned previously, you must prepare adequately for the case. I would think at a minimum, this would require an initial reading of the case for general content and then at least two more readings for fine tuning the detail and formulating your assessment of the case.

### **Discussion Forum - Articles:**

This class is conducted on an in-class basis which would normally enable a free flow of interaction, etc. However, it is felt that an online discussion forum on at least a few topics may be more beneficial. One element that does not change is that proper preparation and class involvement are important. In-class (FTF) classes require high levels of discipline and self-motivation to stay prepared and ready to go. Online forums afford a mechanism where one can think a bit before responding. But, in class participation and class contribution are still mandatory as noted above. We may also cover several articles which may be used to augment and/or replace forum topics.

Discussion forums and classic strategy articles are valuable and integral parts of the course. You are urged to contribute at your own initiative and online discussion grades, for example, will be based upon quality of comments more than on quantity. Thus, your *thoughtful contributions* are more compelling than your frequency of input!! Also, it should be noted that the reading assignment is heavy at times and again, this is largely dependent on your own initiative and time management capabilities. It is easy to stay up with course progress but much more difficult to catch up.

**Chapter Discussion Questions:**

At the end of each chapter, there are various discussion questions which provide an opportunity to link chapter content to specific situations much as a manager might do. Thus, these, along with other questions I may provide, are appropriate for a graduate course in strategy. When responding to these, make sure you answer the question as you think a working manager would answer rather than what you think I might be after or how I might lean. And, I do like to see practicality and thoughtfulness revealed in your responses. Your responses to these questions should not need to be supplemented with outside inquiries except in a very few instances. In short, most of your responses should flow from what you have learned from reading the chapter and the other elements of the class.

Question groups should be single spaced. Length will be dependent on the number of questions assigned and the depth of your answer. Needless verbosity will not be rewarded so in-depth and accurate substance wins out over length!! In fact, I will not put a minimum page limit on these but may place a maximum limit!! Any question group with excessive mechanical errors (misspellings, typos, etc.) will be penalized. These will be evaluated on the thoroughness of your response. Finally, these must be answered individually and in your own words!!

**Marketable Skills (MS):** I will explain this later.

**MS 1:** Students will understand the functions of the business enterprise in the general economy.

**MS 2:** Students will have the skills needed to effectively lead a business.

**MS 3:** Students will be able to craft effective business strategies for both existing businesses and new businesses.

**MS 4:** Students will be able to make effective oral presentations to both professional and general audiences.

**Final Points**

***PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS CAREFULLY: This syllabus represents the plan of action for the course. It is, in many ways, a contract between us. Should you lose this document, not understand any part of it, or most important, not agree with some component contained in it, please let me know and I will try to help fix the issue. Make sure to modify the tentative schedule as necessary. Students seeking accessibility services or other accommodations, per the Americans with Disabilities Act, are urged to contact Mary Schwartz, M. Ed., L.P.C., in Counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall, Room 112. Mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas - Telephone: 432-837-8691. Email [mschwartz@sulross.edu](mailto:mschwartz@sulross.edu).***

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

*The University expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is beyond reproach and to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of their classroom. The University may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials.*

*“Cheating” includes:*

- 1. Copying from another student’s test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computer files, data listings, and/or programs, or allowing another student to copy from same.*
- 2. Using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test.*
- 3. Collaborating, without authorization, with another person during an examination or in preparing academic work.*
- 4. Knowingly, and without authorization, using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, soliciting, copying, or possessing, in whole or in part, the contents of a non-administered test.*
- 5. Substituting for another student; permitting any other person, or otherwise assisting any other person to substitute for oneself or for another student in the taking of an examination or test or the reparation of academic work to be submitted for academic credit.*
- 6. Bribing another person to obtain a non-administered test or information about such a test.*
- 7. Purchasing, or otherwise acquiring and submitting as one’s own work any research paper or other writing assignment prepared by an individual or firm. This section does not apply to the typing of a rough and/or final version of an assignment by a professional typist.*
- 8. “Plagiarism” means the appropriation and the unacknowledged incorporation of another’s work or idea in one’s own written work offered for credit.*
- 9. “Collusion” means the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work offered for credit.*
- 10. “Abuse of resource materials” means the mutilation, destruction, concealment, theft or alteration of materials provided to assist students in the mastery of course materials.*
- 11. “Academic work” means the preparation of an essay, dissertation, thesis, report, problem, assignment, or other project that the student submits as a course requirement or for a grade.*
- 12. “Falsification of Data” means the representation, claim, or use of research, data, statistics, records, files, results, or information that is falsified, fabricated, fraudulently altered, or otherwise misappropriated or misrepresented.*

*All academic dishonesty cases may be first considered and reviewed by the faculty member. If the faculty member believes that an academic penalty is necessary, he/she may assign a penalty but must notify the student of his/her right to appeal to the department chair, the dean and eventually, to the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs before imposition of the penalty. At each step in the process, the student shall be entitled to written notice of the offense and/or of the administrative decision, an opportunity to respond, and an impartial disposition as to the merits of his/her case. The decision of the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs shall be final.*

*In the case of flagrant or repeated violations, the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs may refer the matter to the Dean of Students for further disciplinary action. No disciplinary action shall become effective against the student until the student has received procedural due process...*

*On a personal note – if I find anyone cheating, I will take it very seriously.....!!!!!!*

### Tentative Course Outline

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignment **</u>
Aug. 28	Introduction & Overview	
Sept. 04	Intro. & Process - <b><i>Holiday Monday</i></b>	Ch. 1 - 2
11	Continued –	Ch. 1 - 2
18	External and Internal Analysis CA - <b><i>MC #1</i></b>	Ch. 3 - 4
25	(cont.) - <b><i>DF</i></b>	Ch. 3 - 4
Oct. 02	(cont.) <b><i>CA</i></b>	Ch. 3 - 4
09	Competitive Advantage <b><i>MC #2</i></b>	Ch. 5
16	Business Strategy – <b><i>CA</i></b>	Ch. 6 - 7
25	<b><i>Spring Break</i></b>	
30	Business Strategy (cont.)	Ch. 6 – 7
Nov. 06	Corporate Strategy - <b><i>MC #3</i></b>	Ch. 8 - 9
13	(cont.) – <b><i>DF CA</i></b>	Ch. 8 - 9
20	Thanksgiving 22 - 24	Ch. 10 - 12
27	Other Topics – <b><i>MC #4 CA</i></b>	Ch. 10 - 12
Dec. 04	Other - Discussion – <b><i>CDQ #1 Due</i></b>	Ch. 10 - 12
11	Wrap-up – “Dead Day” 5-9 – <b><i>Finals begin May 10<sup>th</sup></i></b>	

DF = Discussion Forum; CA = CONNECT Assignment; MC = Mini Case