

MANAGEMENT 409
BUSINESS POLICY & STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

Professor Jamal Shamsie
e-mail: shamsie@msu.edu

BASIC OBJECTIVES

This course has been primarily designed to study the firm from the perspective of its managers. A principal concern of managers is to conceive, develop and implement strategies that will allow their firm to perform better than its competitors. As such, the course focuses on the conceptual tools and analytical models that can assist managers at various levels within the organization to raise its performance to a level that is above all others within its industry.

COURSE STRUCTURE

This course will be based on Education Abroad to India. Course material will be covered during a couple of sessions in the six weeks before departure for India. Students will be expected to submit answers to a quiz based on the material that will be covered during these sessions. While in India, students will be expected to participate by asking questions during visits to firms and in discussions outside of these visits. Upon return, students will be required to submit a case report on one of the firms that we visit. Finally, we will have a session in January to wrap up the course.

READING MATERIALS

All the material that is required for the course will be posted on the D2L course website during the fall semester. There is not textbook recommended for the course.

GRADING CRITERIA

The course grade will be weighed as follows:

Quiz	30%
Participation	30%
Report	<u>40%</u>
	100%

Participation

An evaluation of your participation represents a critical aspect of the grade for the course. Your participation grade will be based on the following:

Attendance and contributions during the two sessions in October and November

Attendance and contributions during the session in January after we return
Questions and comments that you raise during the visits to firms in India
Contributions that you make during discussions before and after these visits.

You will receive a list firms that we will visit in India a few weeks before we leave. You are encouraged to gather some information about each of these firms. This will prepare you to ask questions and make comments during the visits to these firms.

Taken together, participation will count for 30% of your overall grade.

Quiz

You will be required to submit answers to an on-line quiz based on material that will be presented during two sessions in the fall. It will consist of questions that will require short answers. The quiz can be completed at home and answers can be submitted on-line. The answers to the quiz must be submitted by November 29. The quiz will count for 30% of your overall grade.

Report

Each of you must select one of the firms that we will visit to prepare a case report. If you make the selection ahead of time, you can make sure you obtain the information that you may need when we make the visit. You can supplement the information you receive from the firm with any information that you can get from secondary sources such as the Internet. The report should NOT exceed 2000 words and should be typed with a minimum font size of 12. All exhibits can be attached as extra pages. The report will count for 45% of your final grade.

More guidelines for the report are provided in the Appendix. The report will be due on or before January 4, 2020.

COURSE TOPICS

The topics for the course will be covered in two different sessions in October and November. You will be provided information about the dates, times and locations. Power point slides on these topics will be posted on line.

October 29

Topic 1
STRATEGY CONCEPT

Topic 2
STRATEGIC POSITIONING

November 19

Topic 3
STRATEGY PROCESS

Topic 4
STRATEGIC INNOVATION

APPENDIX
OUTLINE FOR REPORT

The report should contain a short description of the firm and an analysis of its strategy. The report must be typewritten, using 12-point font and should not exceed 2000 words (excluding appendices, tables and references). The cover page should contain the name of the firm that is being studied and your name. You may use the following questions to develop your report.

- I. Provide a brief outline of the firm's background and history. Start with the founding of the firm and provide a summary of its subsequent development.
- II. Provide a detailed description of the firm's current strategy. Be sure to include the target market of the firm and the dimensions on which it is trying to provide value to this market.
- III. Describe the steps that the firm has been taking to provide these different kinds of value. What is the role of some of the firm's resources and capabilities?
- IV. Provide your assessment of the specific aspects of the firm's strategy that would be hardest for competitors to imitate. Provide support for your answers.