

Professor: Colin Davison, Ph.D. | cdavison@wooster.edu

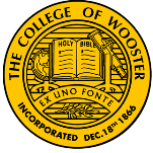
Class Location and Time: Morgan Hall 201 | 11:00am – 11:50am MWF

Office Hours: Morgan Hall 207 | Wednesday 3:00 – 5:00, Thursday 9:00 – 10:00

Email Hours: I respond to emails from 8:00am – 5:00pm EST, Monday – Friday.

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Course Description and Objectives

Strategic management is the study of why some companies generate sustained differential profits relative to their competitors. In this course, we adopt the perspective of the top management team of a firm to identify the underlying forces which drive firm performance and how the management team can make strategic choices that result in increased profitability. This course analyzes business problem-solving from the perspective of various functional areas within a complex external environment. The approach is a mix of theory and case study designed to give students an opportunity to apply previous course work while forcing them to consider tradeoffs and balance alternatives.



By the end of the course, our shared goal is that everyone will meet the following learning objectives:

1. Apply fundamental concepts of strategic management to real-world business cases.
2. Professionally contribute to an intellectually rich discussion of a real-world business case.
3. Be prepared to analyze any business and provide recommendations on how that business can strategically position itself for increased profitability.

Materials

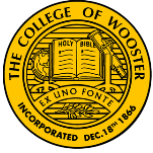
Please plan to bring physical copies of materials to class.

- *7 Powers: The Foundations of Business Strategy* by Hamilton Helmer (ISBN: 9780998116310)
- [Harvard Business School \(HBS\) cases and readings](#): we will be making frequent use of HBS cases and readings. Please do not buy all the cases and readings up front, rather please wait for instruction on what to purchase so that you do not purchase unnecessary cases or readings. You should budget for approximately \$100 in spending on HBS cases and readings throughout the semester.

Grading

Category	Number	% Each	% Total
Class Preparation/Quizzes	-	20	20
Class Participation	-	20	20
Exams	1	20	20
Writing Assignment	1	20	20
Final Project	1	20	20

Final grades will follow the traditional +/- scale: A = 93-100, A- = 90-92.99, B+ = 87-89.99, B = 83-86.99, B- = 80-82.99, C+ = 77-79.99, C = 73-76.99, C- = 70-72.99, D = 60-69.99, F = 59.99 and



below. Final grades will be rounded up to the nearest whole integer based on standard rounding rules so that a 79.50% would be rounded to a 80% but a 79.49% would not be rounded up to an 80%.

Class Preparation/Quizzes

As the class is primarily taught through the case method, your preparation for class is crucial to our ability to come to a shared understanding of how to apply the principles of strategic management to our course material. As such, I will employ various methods to gauge your preparation for class. This will generally take the format of “reading comprehension” questions to be answered before class or a quiz (sometimes unannounced) taken at the beginning of the class that assesses how well you understand the material or case. These questions and quizzes are primarily designed to ensure you have read and understood the material before coming to class while the “hard” work of applying the concepts of strategic analysis is reserved for our in-class discussions.

Class Participation

The quality of your individual analysis, dialogue, and debate to our class discussion is critical for both the success of everyone in the class, and my assessment of how well you can apply the principles of strategic management.¹ While both the quantity and quality of your participation are assessed, I place a greater emphasis on the quality of your contribution.

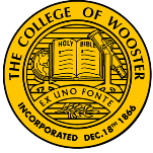
To gauge the quality of your contribution to our class discussion of the cases and other course material, each week I will assess your contribution on the following eight criteria. At the end of each week, you will receive a score, out of three, for each of the eight criteria (e.g. if your contributions displayed some evidence of course material familiarity you would receive 1/3 for the “Evidence of Course Material Familiarity” criterion).

0	1	2	3
No evidence of the criterion.	Some evidence of the criterion.	Moderate evidence of the criterion.	Significant evidence of the criterion.

1. **Evidence of Course Material Familiarity:** You demonstrates a thorough understanding of the course material by referencing relevant evidence provided to you in the course material, and you come prepared with thoughtful questions and perspectives on the course material.
2. **Relevance:** Your comments are related to the course material we are discussing, and they advance the conversation and do not distract.²

¹ The emphasis on class participation mirrors the focus on participation, discussion, and professionalism that is present in top-tier MBA strategy courses. Learning how to prepare for a meeting, engage, and contribute is critical for professional success in business and in graduate business school.

² Trying to pull in knowledge external to a case often distracts us from the focus of our conversation. Please do not reference information from outside the case materials without my permission.



3. **Logical:** Your statements follow logically from what is provided in the course material. You rightly understand the implications of your statements and they help to support your argument.
4. **Insight:** Your contributions demonstrate significant ability to apply the concepts of strategic management to the course material being discussed. You skillfully draw on frameworks and concepts learned in the course to make a compelling argument.
5. **Frequency:** You consistently participate an appropriate amount where you neither remain silent nor dominate the conversation.
6. **Clarity:** Your comments are succinct, understandable, and not repetitive.
7. **Respect:** You respect other viewpoints, carefully listening to your classmate's perspectives and respecting my role in guiding the conversation by not interrupting others and raising your hand to be called on.
8. **Punctuality:** You arrive on time and prepared to discuss the course material.

Attendance

Your attendance is a necessary condition for class participation. As such, each student is permitted two absences per semester, no questions asked, no penalty. If for some reason, I have to cancel class more than two times in the semester, each student will be given an additional number of unexcused absences in the amount of the number of classes I cancel in excess of two classes. After your excused absences have been used, each unexcused absence will result in a subtraction of eight points (each week you can earn up to 24 participation points, so a loss of 8 points corresponds to a loss of one day's participation) from that week's participation grade. All absences in excess of the excused absences are unexcused, no exceptions. Per the college's policy, attendance of less than 75% of classes will result in a "D" being your maximum grade in the course.

Electronic Device Policy

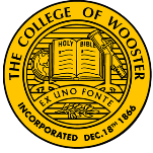
As the course is built upon engagement with each other, phones and laptops are not permitted in class. Two unpermitted uses of an electronic device is equivalent to one absence in regard to your class participation grade. I recommend that you purchase a physical copy of *7 Powers* and print off each case or course reading material so that you can annotate it before class and reference the material and your annotations during class.

Exam

The one and only exam in this course will test your knowledge of the fundamental concepts needed for strategic management. The exam is intended to solidify and test your knowledge of these concepts heading into the "case based" portion of the course. A solid foundation of these concepts is necessary for successfully engaging with the business cases.

Writing Assignment

Each student will individually complete a writing assignment where they analyze the strategy of one industry that a publicly traded company is operating in (you will not be permitted to cover a firm or



industry we have covered extensively in class). The writing assignment will be 5-7 pages inclusive of figures and tables and include the following elements:

- A “Five Forces” analysis of the firm x industry pair.
- Discussion of any of the “7 Powers” the firm x industry pair has, including how they came to possess that power.
- Discussion of resources or activities the firm engages in which do or do not support their ability to maintain a sustainable competitive advantage in the chosen industry.
- Discussion of the strategy of competitors and how that informs the firm’s strategy.
- Rationale for why the firm’s current strategy is optimal or recommendation on how the firm could improve their strategic position in the industry.
- Use of data (e.g. financial ratios for strategy or other financial metrics) to support your arguments.
- A discussion of what you learned from your analysis.

Final Project

Description

Students will form into groups of 3-4 for the final project. Each group will select an emerging privately owned company (i.e. less than 7 years old and has not gone public) and choice of company will be on a first come, first serve basis based on email sent to me. Every group must choose a different company. Each group will provide an in-class presentation in the final weeks of the course which covers the following two topics.

- A strategic analysis of the company.
- Three *specific* recommendations on how the firm can gain sustainable competitive advantage and achieve long-term performance.

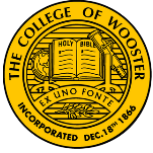
Your coverage of these topics should utilize the concepts of strategic management that we have learned throughout the course and should be supported by data. Each group will then take questions from the class (and me). The class will ask questions about your analysis and recommendations from the perspective of a prospective investor in the firm or top executive of the firm.

Your final project will be graded according to the following rubric

Self & Peer Evaluation	25%
Strategic Analysis	25%
Three Recommendations	25%
Q&A Response	25%

Self & Peer Evaluation

0	1	2	3	4	5
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<u>Both of the following are true:</u>	<u>Both of the following are true:</u>	<u>Both of the following are true:</u>	<u>Both of the following are true:</u>	<u>Both of the following are true:</u>	<u>Both of the following are true:</u>
<p>- The group member provided no evidence that points to an affirmative answer to the question.</p> <p>- The group member provided substantial evidence that points to a negative answer to the question.</p>	<p>- The group member provided little evidence that points to an affirmative answer to the question.</p> <p>- The group member provided substantial evidence that points to a negative answer to the question.</p>	<p>- The group member provided some evidence that points to an affirmative answer to the question.</p> <p>- The group member provided a moderate amount of evidence that points to a negative answer to the question.</p>	<p>- The group member provided a moderate amount of evidence that points to an affirmative answer to the question.</p> <p>- The group member provided a moderate amount of evidence that points to a negative answer to the question.</p>	<p>- The group member provided a substantial amount of evidence that points to an affirmative answer to the question.</p> <p>- The group member provided a small amount of evidence that points to a negative answer to the question.</p>	<p>- The group member provided a substantial amount of evidence that points to an affirmative answer to the question.</p> <p>- The group member provided no evidence that points to a negative answer to the question.</p>

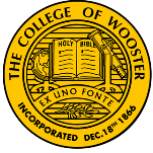
Every group member will provide a score on a scale of 0 – 5 for each below question for each group member, including themselves. Scores should be based on the criteria provided in the above rubric. In addition, you will be asked to provide open-ended feedback on the group member’s participation and work.

Each student will be given their own self-evaluated score out of 25, unless the self-evaluation score diverges from the average peer review score by more than 3 or more points. In this case, I reserve the right to replace the self-evaluation score with the peer reviewed score (or some score in-between the two) if it appears that the consensus of the group was that the student either over or under evaluated themselves.

Contribution

- Did the group member complete their assigned tasks by agreed upon group deadlines?
- Was the final product of the group member’s work of high quality?

Collaboration



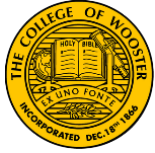
- Did the group member contribute to the peer review process by providing substantive, constructive, and high-quality feedback on the work of others in the group?
- Was the group member responsive to feedback and any requests for revision provided by other group members?
- Did the group member attend and engage in any scheduled group activities (e.g. meetings, practice presentations, etc...)?

Course Schedule

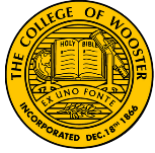
The course is split into two sections

1. Learning the Fundamentals of Strategy (Weeks 1-5, culminating in Exam #1)
2. Applying the Fundamentals of Strategy (Weeks 6-15, culminating in Final Project Presentations)

Wk.	Day	Date	Topic	Reading
1	W	Jan. 15	Intro	• What is Strategy? (Michael E. Porter)
	F	Jan. 17		• The Five Competitive Forces That Shape Strategy (Michael E. Porter)
2	M	Jan. 20	MLK Jr. Day	
	W	Jan. 22	Industry Analysis	• Cola Wars Continue: Coke and Pepsi in 2010 (HBS #711462)
	F	Jan. 24		• Cola Wars Continue: Coke and Pepsi in 2010 (HBS #711462)
3	M	Jan. 27	Power	• Foreword & Introduction
	W	Jan. 29		• 7 Powers: Ch. 1 (Scale Economies)
	F	Jan. 31		• 7 Powers: Ch. 2 (Network Economies)
4	M	Feb. 3	Power	Chosen by Vote
	W	Feb. 5		• Amazon Web Services (Acquired Season 11, Episode 3)
	F	Feb. 7		• 7 Powers: Chapter 8 (The Path to Power)
5	M	Feb. 10	Competitive Advantage	• 7 Powers: Chapter 9 (The Power Progression)
	W	Feb. 12		• Financial Ratios for Strategy
				• Commonwealth Joe Coffee Roasters (HBS #719451)



	F	Feb. 14	Financial Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commonwealth Joe Coffee Roasters (HBS #719451)
6	M	Feb. 17		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exam 1
	W	Feb. 19	Vertical Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intel Corporation: Outsourcing Dilemma (HBS #W25607) Intel's Death and Potential Revival Optional: Intel (Acquired Season 6, Episode 6)
	F	Feb. 21		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intel Corporation: Outsourcing Dilemma (HBS #W25607) Intel's Death and Potential Revival Optional: Intel (Acquired Season 6, Episode 6)
7	M	Feb. 24	Managing Complements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wintel (A): Cooperation or Conflict (HBS #704419)
	W	Feb. 26		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wintel (A): Cooperation or Conflict (HBS #704419)
	F	Feb. 28		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wintel (A): Cooperation or Conflict (HBS #704419)
8	M	Mar. 3	Pricing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ryanair: Dogfight over Europe (A) (HBS #700115)
	W	Mar. 5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ryanair: Dogfight over Europe (A) (HBS #700115)
	F	Mar. 7	Industry Dynamics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tesla in 2023: "Electrified" Competition (HBS #722375)
9	M	Mar. 10	Industry Dynamics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tesla in 2023: "Electrified" Competition (HBS #722375)
	W	Mar. 12	Competitive Advantage & Positioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hurtigruten: Sailing into Warm Water? (HBS #720410)
	F	Mar. 14		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hurtigruten: Sailing into Warm Water? (HBS #720410)
	M	Mar. 17	Spring Break	
	W	Mar. 19		
	F	Mar. 21		
	M	Mar. 24		
	W	Mar. 26		
	F	Mar. 28		
10	M	Mar. 31	Blue Ocean Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blue Ocean Strategy (Kim & Mauborgne)
	W	Apr. 2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blue Ocean Strategy (Kim & Mauborgne)



	F	Apr. 4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AmazonFresh: Rekindling the Online Grocery Market (HBS# 615013)
11	M	Apr. 7	Competitive Advantage & Positioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walmart: A New Era of Growth (HBS #CU20) [Oberholzer-Gee & Meier, 2015]
	W	Apr. 9		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walmart: A New Era of Growth (HBS #CU20) [Oberholzer-Gee & Meier, 2015] Special Guest: Sanjana Kumbhani
	F	Apr. 11		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hilti (A): Fleet Management? (HBS #718419)
12	M	Apr. 14	Competitive Advantage & Positioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hilti (A): Fleet Management? (HBS #718419)
	W	Apr. 16	Technological Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nucor at a Crossroads (HBS #793039)
	F	Apr. 18		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nucor at a Crossroads (HBS #793039)
13	M	Apr. 21	Competitive Advantage & Positioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEGO (A): The Crisis (HBS #713478)
	W	Apr. 23		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEGO (A): The Crisis (HBS #713478)
	F	Apr. 25	Final Project Presentations	
14	M	Apr. 28	Final Project Presentations	
	W	Apr. 30		
	F	May 2	I.S. Symposium	
15	M	May 5	Final Project Presentations	

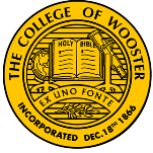
Course Policies

Late Assignments

Unless otherwise communicated, assignments will be due at the beginning of class. Any late assignment will have a 40% penalty assessed to it.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is a key value in this class and in the College. Violations of academic honesty as discussed in *The Scot's Key* include “turning in another person’s work as your own, copying from any source without proper citation, violating expectations for a group project, submitting an assignment produced for a course to a second course without the authorization of all the instructors, and dishonesty in connection with your academic work.” Please refer to [The Scot's Key](#) for more details on the Code of Academic Integrity.



In this course, students may use artificial intelligence (AI)-powered programs (e.g., ChatGPT) to help you with some assignments. These AI tools can facilitate learning and growth if used as complements to traditional research and writing methods, rather than as a replacement for them. When you use these tools, it is your responsibility as a scholar to make sure you are clearly communicating the AI involvement in your work. Please review the instructions in each assignment for more details on specifically how to show your work.

Rescheduling Exams

If you need to miss an exam for any reason, the weight of that exam will be distributed across your individual writing assignment and final group project. I do not reschedule exams that occur throughout the semester.

Exam Etiquette

If you need to use the restroom or otherwise step out of the classroom during an exam, then I ask that you drop your phone off in the classroom before leaving.

Course Withdrawal

Please visit the registrar's website for information on [academic deadlines](#) and for the [relevant online forms](#).

Support Services

As your instructor, I am your first line of support for all things related to this course. Yet, the College of Wooster offers many wonderful services that can help you in this course and more generally during your time at Wooster. I have compiled a list of some of these resources, which I encourage you to utilize.

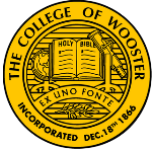
Mental Well-Being

Being a student can feel overwhelming at times. To help with this, I have designed my course using [trauma-informed teaching principles](#). In times of struggle you are encouraged to seek support at The Longbrake Student Wellness Center which offers [counseling services](#) that provide a safe, confidential, nonjudgmental space where students can explore a wide variety of issues and concerns.

Academic Resource Center



Students with diagnosed disabilities are encouraged to contact the [Academic Resource Center](#) (ARC) to secure accommodations. Please speak with me if you will be arranging accommodations with the ARC so that I can know how to be support you. The ARC also offers support in the areas of time management techniques, class preparation tips, test



BUEC 37000

Strategic Management

taking strategies, English language learning, and peer-tutoring. You can schedule an appointment [here](#).

The Writing Center

The [Writing Center](#) is the place for you to go if you are looking for feedback, help, or someone to talk about a writing project you are working on. Writing Center consultants can help with everything from brainstorming and outlining to major revisions and minor edits.

***Disclaimer:** Course policies, grading, and the schedule of the course can be adjusted at my discretion. The syllabus is simply meant to provide you a general outline of what you can expect from the course and what I expect of you.