Capstone Course: Advanced Business Models BUS 498
Section/CRN: DL1/20830 (3 credit hours - Online)

Semester: Spring 2020
Instructor: Dr. Avinash Mainkar
Location: Online

Mark Your Calendar: School-wide Case Competition on April 10, 2020

Office: Enterprise Hall 207 (Inside Enterprise Hall 206)
Office Hours: By appointment
Phone: Email is the best way to reach me
Email: amainkar@gmu.edu
Website: https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu

Required Course Materials:

(b) Case packet: You will purchase the cases listed below electronically from Harvard Business School Publishing by clicking this link: https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/690616

Curled Metal Inc.--Engineered Products Division
Reed Supermarkets
Kids & Company: Entering the U.S.
Sandlands Vineyards
Autoliv QB: A Proposed Joint Venture
Ryanair: Flying Too Close to the Sun [Case competition case: To be used for In-class case competition presentation and School-wide case competition]

Please keep in mind the copyright laws and act responsibly – you are representing Mason - as you purchase the case packet from Harvard Publishing. The publisher is easily able to know what percentage of the enrolled students in the class bought the case pack.
Course Description: This capstone strategic management course explains why some firms outperform others. The course takes an integrative, multi-functional approach to the kind of broad organizational issues confronted by top executives. We will examine critical strategic issues that require a general management approach, using all the core business functions covered in the BUS curriculum, rather than a strictly functional one. An integrative perspective is essential because the formulation and implementation of effective strategies requires a precise understanding of the interrelationships among the different functions and the relationships of these functions to the business environment. Thus, this course represents the synthesis course for the School of Business.

Undergraduate Learning Goals:
1) Our students will demonstrate an understanding of the social, global, ethical, and legal contexts of business and will be able to reflect on the role of the individual in business.
2) Our students will demonstrate an understanding of and the ability to apply knowledge of professional skills necessary for success in business including effective business writing.
3) Our students will demonstrate technical and analytic skills appropriate for success in business.
4) Our students will demonstrate an understanding of and the ability to apply knowledge of core business disciplines including accounting, finance, information systems, management, marketing, and operations management.
5) Our students will demonstrate knowledge and skills appropriate for specialization in their majors.
6) Our students will demonstrate an understanding of how research in the business disciplines contributes to knowledge and how such research is conducted.

Course Objectives:
1) To familiarize the current literature of strategic management;
2) To understand the complexities and challenges of multi-functional organizational problems;
3) To focus attention on strategic issues confronting contemporary businesses;
4) To facilitate the development of strategic thinking; and
5) To further refine research, analytical, critical-thinking, team building, and communication skills.

Course Structure:
This online course uses a combination of reading assignments, class discussions, case analyses and lectures along with student presentations, auto graded homework exercises and online exams.

Prerequisites:

Grading scale for your course grade:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92.99</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89.99</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-76.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86.99</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-69.99</td>
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</tbody>
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### Component weights of your course grade:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Tool</th>
<th>% of Course Grade</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation in discussions (Individual)</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework and Chapter Quizzes in McGraw-Hill Connect (auto graded)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1 (Individual)</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simulation Practice Game (Group)</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Simulation Real Game 1 (Group)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Simulation Real Game 2 (Individual)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Simulation Quiz 1 (Individual)</td>
<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Simulation Quiz 2 (Individual)</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written assignment 1 (Group)</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written assignment 2 (Group)</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case Competition presentation (Group)</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 2 (Individual)</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Percentage</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Class Participation & Case Discussions:** Since this course is a discussion/case-based course, your participation is critical to the learning experience. Much of the learning that will take place in this class comes from the chance to express ideas, listen to what others have to say, and discuss these ideas in order to develop your critical-thinking skills. Please take advantage of this opportunity to gauge and hone your communication skills. Do not underestimate the value of what you and your classmates have to say. Your participation is vital to the success of the class as a whole!

Discussion of course concepts and assigned business cases are a central part of the course. All responses will be due midway through the week, and you must respond to two of your colleagues by the end of the week.

**If your response is posted after 11:59pm on Wednesdays after the due date, you will receive zero points.**

In order to receive full participation points you must also engage in dialogue with at least two of your fellow classmates. Online learning can be valuable experience—please feel free to share links to interesting websites, innovative leadership resources and creative training techniques and videos. You also may not use the words or sequence of ideas of other published or unpublished sources without giving proper attribution. Discussion participation will be graded based on the following criteria:
Complete response post
- Read/analyze the entire chapter/case
- Answer all the discussion questions/prompts
- Mention specifics using chapters concepts/information from the case
- Demonstrate thoughtful understanding and analysis of issue/question

Response to others
- Respond to two or more individuals. You must provide a thoughtful response that expounds on their opinion. You should support your opinion with examples from the cases or chapter concepts.

Online Discussion Protocol:
- Postings should be evenly distributed during the discussion period (not concentrated all on one day or at the beginning and/or end of the period).
- Avoid postings that are limited to 'I agree' or 'great idea', etc. If you agree (or disagree) with a posting then say why you agree by supporting your statement with concepts from the readings or by bringing in a related example or experience.
- Address the questions as much as possible (don't let the discussion stray).
- Try to use quotes from the text that support your postings. Include page numbers when you do that.
- Build on others’ responses to create threads.
- Bring in related prior knowledge (work experience, prior coursework, readings, etc.)
- Use proper etiquette (proper language, typing, etc.).

IMPORTANT: No credit will be given for discussion posts submitted after the deadline.

Homework and Quizzes: The best way to prepare for exams is to complete your weekly homework and chapter quizzes located in Connect (publisher platform). You will receive automated feedback/grade. Your homework assignments will include feedback, hints and helpful resources – take advantage of them and continue studying if you get any questions wrong.

Exams 1 and 2: Multiple-choice exams with questions randomly selected from larger pools of questions; questions will cover all learning objectives in the chapter. The exams are timed and only one attempt is allowed.

Business Strategy Game (BSG) Simulation:
Throughout most of the case analyses in this course, we will “discuss” challenging situations faced by real-life companies. In those situations, your job is to come up with a set of recommendations to improve the company’s competitive position. We will supplement this process by playing the online Business Strategy Game (BSG) Simulation. The game requires business decisions to be made as per the schedule suggested in the syllabus (team-level Trial Game, team-level Real Game 1 and individual-level Real Game 2). It is imperative that you read the Player’s Manual before we start playing the trial game.

Team-level Practice Game: We will have two trial decisions (Y11 and Y12). Your course grade does not depend on your performance at the end of this trial period. Therefore, use these trial decisions to learn as much about the game as possible.

Real Games 1 and 2: Practice game will be followed by team-level Real Game 1 (Y11-Y16) and individual-level Real Game 2 (Y11-Y16). In Game 1, your team will oversee the simulation company. In Game 2, you alone will oversee the simulation company. Your company’s performance after making the last decision in each game (most likely decision for year 16 but could be earlier (Y15) or later (Y17) due to unforeseen problems) will determine your corresponding simulation grade in this course. I will use the end scores and use the
following curve for Real Game 1 (top company gets 100, bottom company gets 70, median company gets 85, 
others extrapolated with the maximum curve limited to 50) if the median for your "industry" is below 85 or the 
lowermost company's score is below 70. I will use the end scores and use the following curve for individual-
level, Real Game 2 (top company gets 100, bottom company gets 60, median company gets 80, others 
extrapolated with the maximum curve limited to 40) if the median for your "industry" is below 80 or the 
lowermost company's score is below 60.

**Simulation Quiz 1 and Quiz 2:** Multiple-choice exams with questions randomly selected from larger pools of 
questions; questions will test your understanding of the simulation game.

**Written Assignments:** Each team needs to turn in two written group assignments. One team member should 
submit group assignments for grading on the behalf of the entire group. Details will be available in the 
appropriate “Weekly Module” folder.

**Case Competition Presentation:** Each team needs to analyze the assigned case (Ryanair: Flying Too Close to the Sun) and upload a video presentation to the discussion board. As before, one team member should upload 
on behalf of the entire group. Please explore information available under the Case Competition tab in Bb for more details: Case competition presentation guidelines and case competition evaluation form. Case competition website link: [http://business.gmu.edu/bus498/](http://business.gmu.edu/bus498/)

**School-wide Case Competition Presentation:** One team from your section will have the opportunity to 
compete and present in the school-wide Case Competition scheduled for April 10, 2020 (Friday). While yours is an online class, you will have to be physically present to participate in this School-wide competition. The winning team will get a cash prize of $1500! There is an opportunity for everyone to earn bonus points ranging from 1.5 to 3.0 by participating on April 10th. The details are available in the case competition presentation guidelines.

**Group Work Formalities and Peer Evaluation:**

**Group formation:** A maximum of eight groups for each section and no more than five students per group (to be confirmed once the enrollment stabilizes). You will work in the same group for all group projects. The instructor will form groups based on random selection.

**Group Charter/Contract:** This contract will serve as a strategy for your collective learning experience. It should outline group policies and procedures as well as a timeline for development of your team case analysis and final video presentation. You should recognize that this contract is a dynamic and changing document that may be revisited and updated throughout the process. Grading of this assignment will be dependent upon the thoughtful reflection by all group members.

**Team Participation:** Peer evaluation will be used as the basis of assigning individual grade to team members and ensuring every member contributes equally to project completion. At two points in the semester, each member of the team will submit a peer evaluation of themselves and their team members individually (and not in group) to your instructor providing informal feedback on how well each team member has added value to this project assignment. Based on this input each team member’s grade will be calculated. You will receive a zero if this peer evaluation is not completed. Failure to contribute fairly to the team project and related assignments can also result in a zero for team assignments. Please take your team responsibilities seriously.

**Peer evaluation of the project teamwork**
Each team member must demonstrate the ability to:

- Collaborate successfully and be inclusive of all members
- Support and respect other member opinions and ideas
- Distribute roles and workload fairly and equitably
- Meet all individual and team project deadlines
- Maintain accurate records of team communications and decisions
- Resolve team conflict
- Make sound and ethical decisions
- Produce professional quality work products
- Seek direction from and maintain communications with the professor as needed

Email Policy: Mason requires that students use their MasonLive email account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. Faculty may only respond to emails originating from Mason email accounts. Please see http://masonlive.gmu.edu for more information.

Business Library Liaison Information: Jo Ann J. Henson, MLIS Business and Economics Liaison Librarian. Fenwick Library Fairfax Campus: http://infoguides.gmu.edu/business

School of Business Standards of Behavior: The mission of the School of Business at George Mason University is to create and deliver high-quality educational programs and research. Students, faculty, staff, and alumni who participate in these educational programs contribute to the well-being of society. High-quality educational programs require an environment of trust and mutual respect, free expression and inquiry, and a commitment to truth, excellence, and lifelong learning. Students, program participants, faculty, staff, and alumni accept these principles when they join the School of Business community. In doing so, they agree to abide by the following standards of behavior:

- Respect for the rights, differences, and dignity of others
- Honesty and integrity in dealing with all members of the community
- Accountability for personal behavior

Integrity is an essential ingredient of a successful learning community. Ethical standards of behavior help promote a safe and productive community environment and ensure every member the opportunity to pursue excellence. School of Business can and should be a living model of these behavioral standards. To this end, community members have a personal responsibility to integrate these standards into every aspect of their experience at the School of Business. Through our personal commitment to these Community Standards of Behavior, we can create an environment in which all can achieve their full potential.

Mason Honor Code: To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work. The School of Business recommended sanctions for honor code violations are available in the miscellaneous folder in Bb.

http://catalog.gmu.edu/content.php?catoid=17&navoid=1310#Honor

Catalog: The University Catalog, http://catalog.gmu.edu, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university affairs.

Late assignments: Late assignments will not be accepted.
Make-up exams: No make-up exams will be given without prior permission.

Extra credit: There is no extra credit opportunity available other than participating in the School-wide Case Competition on April 10th. Please make a note of this date.

Disability Accommodations: If you have a learning or physical difference that may affect your academic work, you will need to furnish appropriate documentation to the Office of Disability Services. If you qualify for accommodation, the ODS staff will give you a form detailing appropriate accommodations for your instructors. Please bring that form to me as I cannot provide any accommodations until I receive that form. Please take the initiative to discuss accommodation with me at the beginning of the semester and as needed during the term so we can plan effectively. If you have contacted the Office of Disability Services and are waiting to hear from a counselor, please let me know.

Diversity: Diversity is a core value at Mason. We promote a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among our students, faculty and staff. Through our curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth. Please read Mason’s Diversity Statement at http://ctfe.gmu.edu/professional-development/mason-diversity-statement/.

Religion: Students who will miss class for religious reasons should inform me of their anticipated absences by email preferably within the first two weeks of the semester.

Counseling Center: George Mason University has a counseling center that can aid if you find yourself overwhelmed by life, want training in academic or life skills, or the like. More information is available at http://www.gmu.edu/departments/csdc/.

Writing Guidelines: All writing assignments should be formatted as follows: single-spaced, Times New Roman, 11-point font, and 1-inch margins. To cite and reference professional or academic sources, please use APA style. Specific instructions for in-text citations and referencing are found in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition or at http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/.

To help manage citations and seamlessly create reference lists, Mason supports free software called Zotero at https://www.zotero.org/. This program offers: Centralized bibliography management, ability to sync across computers, ability for teams to combine contributions to the references, and word plug-in that allows citation management within MS word.

George Mason University has a writing center that can help you improve your English writing skills. More information is available at http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/.

Inclement weather and campus emergencies: Information regarding weather-related changes in the University’s schedule (e.g., closing or late opening) will be provided on the GMU website and via MasonAlert. Students sign up for the Mason Alert system to provide emergency information of various sorts at https://alert.gmu.edu. An emergency poster exists in each classroom explaining what to do in the event of crises and that further information about emergency procedures exists on http://www.gmu.edu/service/cert

Miscellaneous: Electronic means such as SafeAssign may be used to check originality of work.

Course Calendar, available in Bb under the Syllabus and Course Calendar tab, is an integral part of the syllabus. It is not specifically embedded within this Word document.