

**ENTREPRENEURIAL BUSINESS STRATEGIES - ENT 6385-501**  
**T 7-9:45pm, SOM 2.902**

**Course Syllabus**  
**SPRING 2011**

**Instructor information**

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**Student assistant information**

TBD

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Office hours: TBD

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**Course Description**

This course consists of the interdisciplinary study of strategy and entrepreneurship. As a field, strategy is a nexus for organizational research that spans multiple disciplines (i.e. economics, psychology, sociology) and its fundamental question is the pursuit of competitive advantage in a single market or industry. Research in the domain of strategic management has indicated that the greatest portion of a firm's profitability is associated with the conception and implementation of business strategies. Entrepreneurial firms are no exceptions to the above. However, since these firms often operate in rapidly changing environments and with (sometimes) severe resource constraints, entrepreneurial firms must go about developing their strategies in different ways.

This course is designed to discuss strategy design and implementation for entrepreneurial firms. The course is divided into (1) a preliminary review of the fundamental pillars of strategic management; (2) a discussion of how traditional strategic management must be tweaked to account for the uniqueness of opportunities and constraints characterizing the entrepreneurial firm; (3) applications of the concepts above via case studies and in-class exercises.

My goal is to give you an understanding of how strategic issues are framed around the entrepreneurial firm. It will be important to integrate the knowledge that you have accumulated through your other classes and work experience, in order to generate the information necessary for strategic problem solving. Another objective of this course is to cultivate your ability to make well-grounded recommendations as to how an entrepreneurial firm is or should be competing.

**Class Format**

This course places an emphasis on using case analysis as a way of practicing your business thinking skills, your oral presentation skills, as well as your writing skills. Thus, professionalism and integrative thinking are emphasized. The use of cases provides a mechanism to help you learn skills and techniques associated with oral presentations and written briefs. These skills can

make the difference in your job performance. For the class to work well and for you to benefit from this experience, your attendance and preparation are essential.

### **Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes**

By the end of this course, students are expected to fulfill the following two objectives:

1. Articulate advanced concepts of strategy in the context of the entrepreneurial firm.
2. Identify the challenges faced by entrepreneurial firms in several different industries and identify viable strategic solutions to these challenges using the tools learnt in class. This includes cases, readings, lectures and in-class discussions.

This course requires extensive reading, writing, active discussions, and diligent attention to the exercises. Each student will be expected to spend several hours a week on this course in addition to class time. Failure to fully prepare for class limits class discussion and is a detriment to other students. It is the student's responsibility to read the syllabus thoroughly, understand all the requirements, and keep track of all the important dates in order to succeed.

### **Required Materials**

The reading material for this class consists of a custom book containing chapters from a number of books, as well as several cases and articles from the Harvard Business School and other scholarly sources. The book is to be purchased prior to the beginning of the class from the on- or off-campus bookstores. Additional articles can be downloaded directly from the library through Management Power Search at: <http://www.utdallas.edu/library/resources/databases/business.htm>

### **Grading, Course and Instructor Policies**

The breakdown for grading is as follows:

Presentations	20%
Participation	20%
Written Assignments	20%
Final Exam	20%
Peer Evaluations	20%

Final grades will be given in letter form with +/- where applicable, but for on-going grading purposes all grades given during the term will be in numerical form as follows:

98 – 100	A +
94 – 97	A
90 – 93	A –
87 – 89	B +
84 – 86	B
80 – 83	B –
77 – 79	C +
74 – 76	C
70 – 73	C –
60-69	D
59 – below	F

## Written Assignments

The written assignments consist of 2-5 questions on the case to be discussed on that day. You should answer the questions **as a group** and turn in your work (typewritten) at the beginning of class. **No answer should be longer than 5 sentences**, or I will not grade it. The grading will be done based upon the quality of the response in terms of content as well as presentation. Also, the grading will follow a 1-5 scale, where a score of 1 will equal 60 percent, 2 will equal 70 percent, etc. Not turning in an assignment at the beginning of class will amount to a score of zero for that assignment, without exceptions. I will average the scores at the end of the semesters.

## Presentations

Whenever indicated on the schedule, you will be asked to prepare an oral presentation related to the case to be covered on that day. More precisely, **your group** will have to review the business press and identify an article that adds value to the case discussion that we will have in that session. However, **the article should not be about the company directly**. Instead, it should be about one of the company's competitors, the company's industry, changes in the environment that can affect the company's strategy, etc. During the presentation, you will be asked to cover two essential parts: The first is a short but effective summary of the key points of the article, including the article source. This should not take more than 5 minutes. The second is a clear discussion of how the article adds value to the case discussion. Put differently, you need to be able to explain to the rest of the class why the article you covered helps us to understand the case and its implications better. This portion should take 5 minutes, as well, for a total presentation length of 10 minutes. You will be asked to stop at the end of this time, even if you have not covered all your presentation, so be sure to time yourself accordingly. Only one member of a group is required to present on a given day. However, I will assign equal points to each group member for the choice of article and the quality of the presentation and slides. No presentation should have more than 3 slides.

## Final Exam

On the last day of class you will take a final exam. This exam will be in essay form and it will test you on the key points covered in class throughout the semester. You should expect questions on both the theory as well as any of the articles and cases discussed in class. My main interest is for you to take away concepts that you will be able to apply to a variety of business situations, rather than for you to memorize material. Therefore, when preparing for the exam, do not try to memorize facts and figures. Instead, make an attempt to understand the theory and be able to explain how the tools learnt in class may apply to different business situations.

## Class Participation & Peer Evaluation

Class participation is one of the best ways by which you can demonstrate your understanding of the material. I will keep a record of your participation during class, by assigning credit to the students contributing to the discussion. As a consequence, you are expected to be fully prepared for each class and you may be called upon at any time, whether to open the class with a summary of the key issues of a case, or to answer a specific question. The assigned course readings provide conceptual material and background information that will help you analyze the cases you will be graded on.

## **Final Grade**

Following the university's guideline for grade distribution, the final grade of a student will be based on the relative standing of his or her total credit points accumulated from all the requirements as compared with the rest of the class.

In compliance with the university's policy of confidentiality, no grade information will be transmitted via phone or e-mail.

See details of grading and evaluations at the end of the syllabus.

## **Technical Support**

If you experience any problems with your UTD account you may send an email to: [assist@utdallas.edu](mailto:assist@utdallas.edu) or call the UTD Computer Helpdesk at 972-883-2911.

## **Field Trip Policies Off-campus Instruction and Course Activities**

Off-campus, out-of-state, and foreign instruction and activities are subject to state law and University policies and procedures regarding travel and risk-related activities. Information regarding these rules and regulations may be found at the website address [http://www.utdallas.edu/BusinessAffairs/Travel\\_Risk\\_Activities.htm](http://www.utdallas.edu/BusinessAffairs/Travel_Risk_Activities.htm). Additional information is available from the office of the school dean. Below is a description of any travel and/or risk-related activity associated with this course.

## **Student Conduct & Discipline**

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD printed publication, A to Z Guide, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the Rules and Regulations, Series 50000, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's Handbook of Operating Procedures. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391) and online at <http://www.utdallas.edu/judicialaffairs/UTDJudicialAffairs-HOPV.html>

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

## **Academic Integrity**

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic Dishonesty, any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

## **Copyright Notice**

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted materials, including music and software. Copying, displaying, reproducing, or distributing copyrighted works may infringe the copyright owner's rights and such infringement is subject to appropriate disciplinary action as well as criminal penalties provided by federal law. Usage of such material is only appropriate when that usage constitutes "fair use" under the Copyright Act. As a UT Dallas student, you are required to follow the institution's copyright policy (Policy Memorandum 84-I.3-46). For more information about the fair use exemption, see <http://www.utsystem.edu/ogc/intellectualproperty/copypol2.htm>

## **Email Use**

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

## **Withdrawal from Class**

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

## **Student Grievance Procedures**

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's Handbook of Operating Procedures. In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

## **Incomplete Grade Policy**

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of F.

## **Disability Services**

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:

The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22

PO Box 830688

Richardson, Texas 75083-0688

(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)

[disabilityservice@utdallas.edu](mailto:disabilityservice@utdallas.edu)

If you anticipate issues related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with the Coordinator of Disability Services. The Coordinator is available to discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course. If you determine that formal, disability-related accommodations are necessary, it is very important that you be registered with Disability Services to notify them of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. Disability Services can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations. It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations.

Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

### **Religious Holidays**

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

### **Important Notes**

Throughout the semester, each student is expected to follow the university's guideline on student conduct with regard to cheating and other dishonorable behaviors. Severe consequences can occur if such rules are not followed. The instructor also reserves the right to deduct from a student's individual class participation credit if the student has shown severe non-constructive behavior in class (such as disrupting the class or abusing another individual), in addition to other disciplinary actions. If a student is absent or late to a class meeting, it will be his or her responsibility to catch up with all the missed materials including to learn of any announcement made while the student was absent. No make-up exams or lectures will be given. It will also be the students' responsibility to accept any consequences that may result from absences. No late assignments will be accepted. Finally, it is a student's responsibility to read the syllabus thoroughly and regularly and keep track of all the important dates and requirements every week. Experience shows that the answer for most questions that students ask can in fact be found in the syllabus.

All descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.

## Class Schedule

DAY & TOPIC	ASSIGNMENTS
01/11 Defining the boundaries: What is Strategy? What is performance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Porter, “What is Strategy?” (Reprint 96608)</li> <li>» Porter, “The Five Competitive Forces that Shape Strategy” (R0801E)</li> <li>» Grant, Chapters 1 &amp; 2</li> <li>» What is an Entrepreneurial Firm?</li> </ul>
01/18 Defining the boundaries: What is Entrepreneurship?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Bhide, “How Entrepreneurs Craft Strategies that Work” (R94202) **</li> <li>» Bhide, “The Questions Every Entrepreneur Must Answer” (R 96603) **</li> <li>» Johnson <i>et al.</i>, “Reinventing Your Business Model” (R0812) **</li> <li>» “Keeping the Entrepreneurial Spirit Alive” (5412BC)</li> </ul>
01/25 Understanding the external environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Porter &amp; Rivkin, “Industry Transformation” (9-701-008)</li> <li>» Ghemawat and Rivkin, “Creating Competitive Advantage” (9-798-062)</li> <li>» Grant, Chapters 3 &amp; 5</li> <li>» Shane, Chapters 6 &amp; 7</li> </ul>
02/01 Understanding competitive advantage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Grant, Chapters 8, 9 &amp; 10</li> <li>» Shane, Chapter 9</li> </ul>
02/08 Case Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Apple Inc., 2008 (Case #9-708-480)</li> <li>» Written assignment 1</li> <li>» Article presentation</li> <li>» Kim and Mauborgne, “Blue Ocean Strategy” (R0410D) **</li> <li>» Collins and Porras, “Building Your Company's Vision” (96501) **</li> <li>» Quinn, “Outsourcing Innovation” **</li> <li>» Magretta, “Why Business Models Matter” **</li> </ul>
02/15 Case Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Zipcar: Refining the Business Model (Case #803-906)</li> <li>» Written assignment 2</li> <li>» Article presentation</li> </ul>
02/22 Case Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Pandora Radio: Fire Unprofitable Customers? (Case #9-610-077)</li> <li>» Written assignment 3</li> <li>» Article presentation</li> </ul>
03/01 Case Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Haier: Taking a Chinese Company Global (Case #9-706-401)</li> <li>» Written assignment 4</li> <li>» Article presentation</li> </ul>
03/08 Case Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Yieldex (A) (Case #809-090)</li> <li>» Written assignment 5</li> <li>» Article presentation</li> </ul>
03/22 VC Strategy Case Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Robert and Barley, “How Venture Capitalists Evaluate Potential Venture Opportunities” (805-019)</li> <li>» Gompers and Lerner, Chapter 7</li> <li>» Shane, Chapters 8</li> <li>» Reuer and Ragozzino, “Using IPOs to Prove Value of M&amp;A Targets” (10/05/06, Financial Times)</li> </ul>
03/29 Case Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Tivo 2007: DVRs and Beyond (Case #9-708-401)</li> <li>» Written assignment 6</li> <li>» Article presentation</li> </ul>
04/05 Case Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Netflix (9-607-138)</li> <li>» Written assignment 7</li> <li>» Article presentation</li> </ul>
04/12 Case Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» BRL Hardy: Globalizing an Australian Wine Company (Case #9-300-018)</li> <li>» Written assignment 8</li> </ul>
04/19	» Exam review and course wrap-up
04/26	» FINAL EXAM

\*\* articles available through the library

## Written Assignments Questions

### Assignment 1

- 1) What are Apple's competitive advantages?
- 2) Analyze the dynamics of the PC industry. Are these dynamics favorable or problematic for Apple?
- 3) The iPod-iTunes business has been a spectacular success. Has Jobs found a new formula to create a sustainable competitive advantage for Apple?
- 4) How would you assess Apple's initial strategy for the iPhone? Why did Apple change so quickly to a different strategy?

### Assignment 2

- 1) Evaluate the potential venture and its progress.
- 2) What is the company's business model? How has it changed between 12/1999 and 05/2000?
- 3) Do the results from operations show promise or concerns?
- 4) What would be your strongest point to stand behind your company if you were Chase at the Springboard forum?

### Assignment 3

- 1) Map out the key elements of Pandora's business model.
- 2) What are the key elements that tell Westergren whether his business is working or not.
- 3) Should Westergren and Kennedy accept funding from the VC that they just visited?
- 4) Which option would you choose to handle high usage customers?

### Assignment 4

- 1) Why was Haier so successful in China?
- 2) Evaluate Haier's decision to expand internationally by entering in developed markets early on.
- 3) Can Haier build on its success in niche products to become a dominant global brand?

### Assignment 5

- 1) If you were advising Doug Cosman, would you recommend that he accept the offer from Turn to acquire Yieldex? Why or why not?
- 2) If Cosman rejected the Turn offer, what deal should he strike with Tom Shields?
- 3) If you do not like the deal in the case, what alternative would you propose?

### Assignment 6

- 1) What was TiVo's strategy during its initial years of operations?
- 2) Related to question 1, what are the key advantages and disadvantages of that strategy?
- 3) What is Tom Roger's planning for the future of TiVo's?
- 4) What do you think TiVo's better option might be?

### Assignment 7

- 1) Would you buy Blockbusters' or Netflix's stock at the time of the case? Why?
- 2) Highlight the key differences between BB and Netflix in terms of their strategies.

- 3) Explain what you would do if you were in charge of Netflix and why.
- 4) What are the major hurdles of your proposed strategy?

#### Assignment 8

- 1) How do you account for BRL Hardy's remarkable post merger success?
- 2) How well has Steve Millar handled the differences between Davies and Carson?
- 3) Should Millar approve Carson's proposal to launch D'istinto? Why or why not?