

**Spring 2013**

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### **Course Description**

This course introduces the concepts, tools, and first principles of strategy formulation and competitive analysis. It is concerned with managerial decisions and actions that materially affect the success and survival of business enterprises. The course focuses on the information, analyses, organizational processes, skills, and business judgment managers must use to design strategies, position their businesses and assets, and define firm boundaries, to maximize long-term profits in the face of uncertainty and competition.

*Strategic Management (BUAD 497)* is an integrative and interdisciplinary course in two important respects:

1. The course assumes a broad view of the environment that includes buyers/consumers, suppliers, technology, economics, capital markets, competitors, government, and global forces. It assumes that the external environment is dynamic and characterized by uncertain changes. In studying strategy, this course draws together and builds on all the ideas, concepts, and theories from your functional courses such as Accounting, Economics, Finance, Marketing, Organizational Behavior, and Statistics. However, it is much more than a mere integration of the functional specialties within a firm.
2. The course takes a *general management* perspective. It views the firm as a whole, and examines how policies in each functional area are integrated into an overall competitive strategy. We designed this course to develop the “general management point of view” among participants. This point of view is the best vantage point for making decisions that affect long run business performance. The key strategic business decisions of concern in this course involve determining and shaping organizational purpose to evolving opportunities, creating competitive advantages, choosing competitive strategies, securing and defending sustainable market positions, and allocating critical resources over long periods. Decisions such as these can only be made effectively by viewing a firm *holistically*, and over the long term.

This course is intended to help you develop skills for formulating strategy. These skills will help you in whatever job you take after graduation as well as in your personal investing and choice of employment. The strategy formulation process demands the mastery of a body of analytical tools and the ability to take an integrative point of view. You will develop these skills through:

- In-depth analysis of industries and competitors
- Prediction of competitive behavior
- Techniques for analyzing how firms can develop and sustain competitive advantages over time

**NOTE: BUAD 497 is a core course taught by several instructors. Be sure to refer ONLY to your instructor’s syllabus.**

## **Learning Objectives**

The course is composed of four interrelated modules that build on each other. The learning objectives associated with each module are intended to enable you to develop:

- 1) cognitive understanding of terminology and relationships, the purpose of which are to help you develop factual and conceptual knowledge about the field of strategic management,
- 2) skills in being able to perform specific forms of analysis, the purpose of which is to help you develop procedural knowledge specific to the field of strategic management and metacognitive knowledge in how to go about solving problems in strategic management, and
- 3) critical thinking in evaluating the empirical evidence that exists currently concerning the use and mis-use of the concepts and analyses covered, the purpose of which is to help you develop knowledge in gathering, categorizing, analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating information.

All of the graded elements of this course are based on assessing your ability to demonstrate specific knowledge in these areas.

### **Module I: Industry & Competitive Analysis (ICA)**

1. Be able to distinguish industries from markets and to identify industry conditions most appropriate for using the ICA framework.
2. Be able to identify the sources for bargaining power among rivals and buyers, suppliers, and the relationships between bargaining power among rivals/buyers/suppliers as well as substitutes and barriers to entry.
3. Be able to identify competitive groups within industries as well as generic competitive strategies.
4. Be able to analyze appropriate industry situations as a new entrant or incumbent where ICA is more or less appropriate.

### **Module II: Internal Analysis**

1. Be able to identify resources from capabilities and competencies. Be able to identify the causes of sustainable competitive advantage.
2. Be able to understand a firm's positioning strategy.
3. Be able to use the resource-based view of the firm to diagnose firm competitive advantage and recommend alternative courses of action for improvement.
4. Be able to recommend alternative courses of action for creating dynamic capabilities.

### **Module III: Competitive Dynamics**

1. Be able to identify dynamics in competitive rivalry including competitive action and response, first-mover (dis)advantage, and winner-take-all.
2. Be able to conduct basic game-theoretic analysis to predict competitive interactions.
3. Be able to analyze underlying dynamics of winner-take-all situations and make appropriate recommendations for acting both proactively and defensively.
4. Be able to understand short vs. long term strategies and the basic role of board of directors.

### **Module IV: Corporate Strategy**

1. Be able to understand the basic idea behind responsible corporate strategies.
2. Be able to identify how firms allocate resources among related and unrelated businesses and how these processes can enhance or destroy synergy.
3. Be able to recommend integration strategies for firms that change their boundaries through diversification, mergers and acquisitions.
4. Be able to understand and deploy social network strategies.

## Required Materials

1. **Case Package:** The assigned cases and outside readings for this course are compiled in a Course Reader which is available from the University Book Store.
2. **Blackboard (Bb):** I use Bb as my primary method of communicating with you. In addition to direct communications, you will also find additional materials posted to Bb including any syllabus updates, an overview of each session including your required preparation, copies of required and supplemental reading, as well as news posts. You should check Bb daily for any new information posted relevant to upcoming sessions.

### **IMPORTANT:**

**Since e-mails that I send to the class originate from the Blackboard system, it is your responsibility for the accuracy of your e-mail address to Blackboard by insuring that your Blackboard account settings forward your messages to your preferred internet provider (IP) account.**

3. **3x5 Cards:** Please prepare a deck of 3x5 cards for recording your class participation (see description of class participation).
4. There is no required textbook.

## Prerequisites and/or Recommended Preparation

- **Prerequisite:** 1 from ([BUAD 250b](#) or [BUAD 281](#) or [BUAD 305](#)) and ([BUAD 304](#) and [BUAD 307](#)) and 1 from ([BUAD 215](#) or [BUAD 306](#)) and 1 from ([BUAD 302](#) or [BUAD 302t](#))
- **Corequisite:** 1 from ([BUAD 311](#) or [BUAD 311t](#))

## Course Notes

1. **Course Format and the Case Discussion Method.** In order to achieve the objectives of the course, we will devote the majority of our class time to the analysis and discussion of selected management, competitive strategy, and business policy cases. Occasional lectures will be given to elaborate on key theoretical models and frameworks or to reinforce crucial concepts. Cases provide a natural "test-bed" for theory and provide vivid examples that aid memory of concepts. While nothing can surpass firsthand personal industry and managerial experience as a basis for analysis and decision-making, case analysis is an indispensable proxy for the kind of knowledge that can only be gained through years of experience and research. A mix of classic and new business cases has been selected on a range of companies from a variety of industry settings. Each case is intended to teach us something specific, yet each can teach many things. We will not attempt to exhaust each case of all its learning experiences, but rather build up a "war chest" of analytical tools, skills and insights, progressively over all the selected cases.

There are other reasons for employing the case discussion method of instruction. First, it allows you to develop skills at problem definition in addition to problem solving. Cases typically do not have an obvious set of tasks whose performance will lead to mastery. Rather, they force you to sift through a mass of information, some of it irrelevant or contradictory, in order to identify the important or strategic issues. Second, the case method gives you a chance to deal with ambiguity. Most cases do not have obvious "right" answers. Managers must be able to function in situations where the right answer is not known, without falling into the trap of assuming that any answer is as good as another. Some analyses and proposed strategies are clearly wrong, and some are clearly better than others. A popular phrase in case analysis classes is "There are *no* right answers, but there are *wrong* answers." Case discussion techniques provide a chance to learn the *meaning* of analytical rigor in situations other than open-and-shut problems.

While I will direct class discussions, the quality of your learning experience will be directly determined by: (1) **your degree of preparation, active listening, and participation, and (2) your classmates' preparation, listening, and participation.** Some will not agree with you, and you may be asked to defend your argument or change your mind. So long as criticism is directed at arguments and not at individuals, is relevant to the issues at hand and coherently argued, it is very much welcomed.

2. **Case Preparation.** Because this course relies heavily on case material, extensive *before-class* preparation and *in-class* participation are required to ensure the class' success.
  - (1) *Preparation for a case discussion* should begin with a rapid reading of the assigned case and other materials.
  - (2) Then, it is worthwhile **to review the discussion questions posted on Blackboard** for clues as to what issues require special attention.
  - (3) The next step is normally to re-read the case carefully, taking notes which sort information, facts, and observations under a number of relevant headings. Push yourself to reach definitive conclusions before you come to class.
  - (4) You should perform quantitative analyses, “crunching” whatever numbers are available. It is also very important to provide quantitative support wherever possible, particularly when exploring various hypotheses as to the nature and importance of certain phenomena. If the requisite data are not available in the case, a precise description of what data are missing often triggers ideas for making creative use of the information that is available. It is usually worthwhile to identify trends in the firm or industry, preferably with a quantitative measurement. Some of these trends, often very important ones, will not be flagged in the text of the case.
  - (5) Finally, preparation will ideally include notes that can be used to guide your interventions in class discussions.

**NOTE: There is a good chance that you will feel a bit overwhelmed during the first module, or two, of the course.** This is a byproduct of the peculiar structure of the strategy course that does not build up linearly by successively adding components of knowledge week by week. Rather, every case in a sense contains all the material in the entire course. Furthermore, the early theoretical concepts probably won't have much meaning for you until you've worked through a few cases. As a result, there is no logical way to start off except by immersion, i.e. throwing you in the deep end of the pool and letting you struggle to stay afloat. The good news is that the number of new ideas for you to learn drops off quickly after experiencing some case discussions, and old ideas continue to be relevant. This way you will get multiple chances to master the basic concepts of the course.

## Grading Policies

Course grades will be determined by students' relative performance on the following course components:

Evaluation Components		Grade
Class Participation		15%
Research Participation		5%
Course Preparation and Knowledge Evaluation	Quiz	10%
	Group Case Presentation	10%
	Group Challenge Team	10%
Final Exam		25%
Group Project	Group Project Write-up Part A	5%
	Group Project Write-up Part B	10%
	Group Project Presentation	10%
TOTAL		100%

In order to pass this course successfully, a passing grade must be achieved in the combined average of the group projects AND in the combined average of the individual components. Plus and minus grades will be

assigned to those immediately above or below grade cutoff points. The distribution of grades will closely follow the guidelines of the Marshall School of Business.

**Class Participation.** This part of your grade will be based on effective contributions to class discussions. These include input that is relevant to the course content and the topic of discussion. Case courses work well, and are enjoyable effective learning experiences, if everyone is an active productive participant. Your overall class participation will be closely monitored. In grading in-class participation, I will look at both the *quantity* and *quality* of your class contributions/interventions. In-class participation is obviously a function of preparation, skills, attitude, and a willingness to actively commit yourself in front of me, and your peers. A classroom is a cost-free environment for experimenting and learning to "play the game." Make use of it. I recognize that some students are far more comfortable than others with in-class participation. However, **it is important you make an effort every class to contribute in some meaningful way.**

With regard to quality, the dimensions that we look for include:

- *Relevance* – does the comment bear on the subject at hand? Comments that do not link up with what the discussion is focusing on can actually detract from the learning experience.
- *Causal Linkage* – are the logical antecedents or consequences of a particular argument traced out? Comments that push the implications of a fact or idea as far as possible are generally superior.
- *Responsiveness* – does the comment react in an important way to what someone else has said?
- *Analysis* – is the reasoning employed consistent and logical?
- *Evidence* – have data from the case, from personal experience, from general knowledge been employed to support the assertions made?
- *Importance* – does the contribution further our understanding of the issues at hand? Is a connection made with other cases we have analyzed?
- *Clarity* – is the comment succinct and understandable? Does it stick to the subject or does it wander?

**Students will be called on, at random, to take the lead in various aspects of class discussions.** Typically, we will ask one or more participants to start the class by answering specific questions such as “If you were the person in charge in this situation, what would you do?” The quality of the contributions made during these periods affect a student’s overall participation grade. Factual misstatements, comments that demonstrate a lack of adequate preparation, or comments that come late in a discussion that distract the class and indicate that the student has not been actively listening will be noted as “negative” course participation.

#### Participation Cards

At the end of each case discussion, students who actively participated in the discussion should turn in a Participation Card. **These cards should list your name, the date, the case discussed that day, and a synopsis of your contributions during that day’s discussion.** The Participation Cards will be used in combination with my own daily evaluations to determine your participation grade for the day. For this purpose, please prepare a package of 3x5 index cards and bring them to each class.

NOTE: You are not required to turn in Participation Cards, but they are helpful for both you and me, especially during the first few weeks because I may not be able to memorize your name for the first few weeks. I do my best to record every single contribution (and disruption for that matter) you make in the classroom. Participation cards are a great way to remind me of your contribution throughout the semester.

#### Attendance Policy

**Class attendance is ABSOLUTELY essential.** This course heavily relies on your participation and discussion, unlike an instructor-led lecture. All missed classes will be noted. The policy on missed classes is to allow each student **three (3) absences**, no questions asked, no penalty, with the exception of missing a quiz. All further absences over the limit will reduce the student's participation grade, no questions asked, no excuses of any kind accepted. **Students with an excessive number of absences are at risk of failing the course.** Only Official University engagements, such as scheduled debating events, sports events, are accepted as exceptions to this policy. Job interviews, etc., are not excused, so choose your absences carefully. Habitual lateness and leaving class early, for whatever reason, will be noted as evidence of low course commitment and penalized.

### **Research Participation.**

The University of Southern California, of which you are a member, is one of the world's leading research universities. The Marshall School of Business is also a leading center of research within its scholarly domain including strategic management, organizational behavior, marketing, finance, accounting, and information and operations management. This recognition by the outside community enhances the value of your degree to employers as well as to other educational institutions to which you may subsequently apply for further education. Research universities are distinguished by not just educating students in past knowledge but also by being the primary engine that creates new knowledge for the advancement of society. Research within the Marshall School takes several forms from for example, historical analysis of published records, participant observation and in-depth interviews, surveys of current business practices, to laboratory research. You have an obligation as a student member of the University's scholarly community to contribute to the research mission because you personally benefit from the results of this research in your education by learning the latest information from leading research scholars in their field and the reputation by association you enjoy now as a student and in the future as a graduate. The stronger this reputation becomes over time, the more you personally benefit long after your days as a student. Therefore, there is a mandatory research requirement as part of your education in the Marshall School in this course. You can choose one of two options to fulfill this requirement. Please note that, if you do not complete one of these two options, you will lose the points for this part of your grade.

#### **Option 1:**

First, you can participate in research studies. To do this, you will attend sessions outside of class, conducted by researchers in MOR at Marshall. You will earn ½ credit or 1 credit for each separate study you complete; most sessions are no more than an hour long. You will need to obtain 4 credits during the semester in order to fulfill the research requirement. If you choose this option, please register for an account at <http://marshall-mor.sona-systems.com/> (see instructions posted separately to Blackboard) no later than February 1, 2013. Those who do not register or reactivate by this date will be required to complete Option 2. After you verify your account, you will need to check the site regularly to find open studies and sign yourself up for appointments. Studies are scheduled throughout the semester, on various days and times. It's important that you complete your credit early; if you wait until the end of the semester, there may not be enough studies available. You are not guaranteed an available study spot. *Please note: If you earn your first 3 credits by showing up to ALL of your scheduled sessions, on time, then you will earn your 4th credit "free," as a bonus. That is, the system is "earn three, get one free"-- again, provided that you show up to all three early sessions as scheduled and on time.* To receive full participation points, you must earn your first credit by March 15, 2013. Your other credits can be earned any time before May 3, 2013. As a courtesy to the researcher and other students waiting for spots, please use the online system to cancel your appointment ASAP if you can't make it.

#### **Option 2:**

Your second way to complete the research requirement is to write 3 short, 3-page research papers on topics prearranged with your discussion instructor or 497 professor. Students must be aged 18 or older by March 15, 2013 in order to choose Option 1; otherwise, you will need to use Option 2. Papers must be turned in no later than May 3, 2013 to your Professor or discussion instructor.

**IMPORTANT NOTES:** (A) If you have already have a research study account from a past BUAD 304 or BUAD 497 course, you will need to email the administrator from the website in order to request account reactivation. Past credits earned CANNOT be used for current courses. (B) If you are enrolled for Marketing BUAD 307, please make sure you visit the Marketing research study website your Marketing Professor has given you. Please see your Marketing syllabus. Each course has its own unique Sona Systems web address. **Credits will NOT transfer from one class to the other for credit fulfillment, no exceptions.**

- **Questions about completion of the studies (Option 1) should be directed to Ms. Jennifer Lim at [Jennifer.Lim@marshall.usc.edu](mailto:Jennifer.Lim@marshall.usc.edu) or (213) 740-0741 in BRI 306.**

**Quizzes and Knowledge Evaluation.** To evaluate your course preparation and your understanding of course materials, I will give short unannounced quizzes (3-6 total) during the course, which may cover a case or assigned articles. No make-up opportunities are available if you are absent or late. Your best 3 quizzes will be counted.

**Final Exam.** A final exam is scheduled according to the University's final exam schedule. You must attend the exam for your specific section. The exam will consist of multiple choice, true/false questions, and short answer questions on a case (which will be distributed a week before the exam). The final exam will be cumulative, based on all material covered in the course throughout the semester.

Please note: The date/time of the Final Exam is determined by the University. For the date and time of the final for this class, consult the USC *Schedule of Classes* at [www.usc.edu/soc](http://www.usc.edu/soc). Select the corresponding semester to view and click on the "Final Examinations Schedule" link on the left side of the screen.

Section 15094R: 8-10 a.m. Monday, May 13

Section 15096R: 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Friday, May 10

**It is your responsibility to verify the accuracy of this date and time.**

**Missed Examinations or Quizzes.** No make-up examinations and make-up quizzes will be given. A student must take the final exam to receive a passing grade for the course.

**Group Case Presentation.** You will participate in one case analysis presentation to the class as part of a group. You will make your group presentations with the aid of visuals, and use your business communication skills to explain and defend your conclusions. You may divide the task among team members but I expect all of you make equal contributions to the presentation. For example, some of you who are not presenting the visual materials should take on more work in answering questions. Presentations should take no longer than 50 minutes: up to 30 minutes of presentation and 20 minutes to respond to questions.

Content of your presentation will consist of your key recommendations to the managers in a case, along with the supporting logic for those recommendations. Your recommendations will be based on the strategic problems facing the managers, your analysis of relevant non-financial and financial data (using graphical presentation, as appropriate), alternative courses of action, and your assessment of the preferred course. You should not rehash facts from the case, since you will not have time to do this in 30 minutes. Instead, key facts should be used to support your position. Try to go beyond the facts provided by the case writer by doing some new analysis using the data in the exhibits. Case questions posted on BlackBoard will provide additional guidance.

Your group presentations will be evaluated based on your visual materials, your oral presentation, and your answers to questions. A hard copy of your visual materials should be turned in to me before the class. You should also email the visual materials to me before or right after the class and I will post them on the BlackBoard.

**Group Case Challenge.** When a team is presenting its case analysis, I expect everyone in the class will be able to ask questions. In order to maintain a high level of interaction and discussion, a non-presenting group will be designated as a "Challenge Team." This group will prepare questions for the Presenting Team. However, make sure that the questions that you ask the Presenting Team are those that you have an answer to yourself, as I may turn the question around and make you answer it. The role of "Challenge Team" rotates from one case to another so that all teams have opportunities to both present and challenge.

Your challenge team will be evaluated on the depth and relevance of your questions (and possible answers) during the presentation. The challenge team will generate a list of the questions that they intend to ask the Presenting Team and circle those that they actually asked during the class. You may also add by hand any additional questions that are asked that were not anticipated. This list must be turned into me by the end of the class period.

*Team Formation for Group Case Presentations/Group Challenge Teams/Group Project.* I will make time available in the class period for you to form yourselves into teams for these assignments. Each team will be randomly assigned a case to present and a case to challenge.

**Group Project.** The group strategy analysis project is a team exercise. Students are to prepare a complete strategic analysis of the current and future prospects for a real company and industry. Guidelines for the

selection of companies for strategic analysis will be discussed in class; in general, firms in industries that are in transition or firms that are undergoing major strategic changes are potentially the most interesting. *Your project proposal must be turned into me not later than the end of the eleventh session. However, you would be wise to turn it in sooner, as sign-ups will be on a first-come first-serve basis, because I will approve the companies selected by student groups.*

**The project proposal** should include:

1. The team name and names of all team members
2. A brief description (roughly 200 words) of your topic.

Part A of the write-up, which consists of an industry analysis, is due before the spring break. Part B of the write-up, which consists of a competitive analysis of a focal firm and your recommendations, is due during the 25<sup>th</sup> session together with Part A. The whole write-up should not exceed fifteen (15) double-spaced typewritten pages, with 1" margins and 12 point font. I will only read the first 15 pages of text, so please stay within the page limit. The limit does not include appendices, which you can use to provide charts, figures, or other background material, but should be no longer than five (5) pages. Appendices which are not directly referenced in the text will not be read. The appendix is not a catch-all for anything that might be relevant, but is to be used carefully to support your points. Always include page numbers. Staple papers only, (no binding, folders, clips, or anything other than plain paper).

Oral presentations will be given during the final 3 class sessions. Each presentation will be about 20 minutes in length, and additional time will be set aside for questions from other teams after the presentation. Both the oral presentation and written document should cover all of the key elements of your analysis. For grading purposes, it will not be sufficient to orally present an aspect of your analysis that does not appear in the written document.

The in-class presentation of your paper is worth 10% of the course grade. Half of these 10% will come from your peers, who will attend your presentation and afterwards score it, while the other half will come from my evaluation. It is therefore imperative that you both do well on these presentations and also attend the presentations of your peers. Also, I do not expect but welcome non-traditional forms of presentation. I expect that at this time of your USC career, you know how to give a professional presentation, so this may be a good opportunity to play around with the format. However, please remember that presentations that neglect content in favor of form are not likely to score well.

**Late Reports.** Late reports will be penalized 10 percent for missing the deadline, and 10 percent per day late. Group presentations **MUST** be given on the date assigned in order for credit to be received.

**Peer Evaluations.** Each of you will complete a peer evaluation of the members of your group case analysis/case brief challenge teams and another peer evaluation for your strategy analysis team (if different). The peer evaluation form is in the Appendix and another copy is in Blackboard intranet system. Your peer evaluation, in hard copy form, is due no later than the last day of class before the final exam period. (Electronic copies will not be accepted.) Your care in completing it forms part of your participation/commitment grade.



## **MARSHALL GUIDELINES**

### **Add/Drop Process**

If you are absent six or more times prior to *TBA, 2013* (the last day to withdraw from a course with a grade of “W”), I may ask you to withdraw from the class by that date. These policies maintain professionalism and ensure a system that is fair to all students.

### **Retention of Graded Coursework**

Final exams and all other graded work which affected the course grade will be retained for one year after the end of the course *if* the graded work has not been returned to the student (i.e., if I returned a graded paper to you, it is your responsibility to file it, not mine).

### **Technology Policy**

Laptop and Internet usage is not permitted during academic or professional sessions unless otherwise stated by the professor. Use of other personal communication devices, such as cell phones, is considered unprofessional and is not permitted during academic or professional sessions. ANY e-devices (cell phones, PDAs, I-Phones, Blackberries, other texting devices, laptops, I-pods) must be completely turned off during class time. Upon request, you must comply and put your device on the table in off mode and FACE DOWN. You might also be asked to deposit your devices in a designated area in the classroom. Videotaping faculty lectures is not permitted due to copyright infringement regulations. Audiotaping may be permitted if approved by the professor. Use of any recorded or distributed material is reserved exclusively for the USC students registered in this class.

### **Statement for Students with Disabilities**

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776. For more information visit [www.usc.edu/disability](http://www.usc.edu/disability).

### **Statement on Academic Integrity**

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one’s own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another’s work as one’s own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *SCampus*, the Student Guidebook, ([www.usc.edu/scampus](http://www.usc.edu/scampus) or <http://scampus.usc.edu>) contains the University Student Conduct Code (see University Governance, Section 11.00), while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A of *SCampus*.

Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>. Failure to adhere to the academic conduct standards set forth by these guidelines and our programs will not be tolerated by the USC Marshall community and can lead to dismissal.

### **Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity**

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.

Please activate your course in Blackboard with access to the course syllabus. Whether or not you use Blackboard regularly, these preparations will be crucial in an emergency. USC’s Blackboard learning management system and support information is available at [blackboard.usc.edu](http://blackboard.usc.edu).

SESSION	DATE	TOPIC	READING	NOTE
<b>Introduction</b>				
1	14-Jan	Course Introduction	Syllabus	
2	16-Jan	Introduction to Strategy	Reading: Michael Porter, "What is Strategy?" (HBS 96608)	
	21-Jan	---	Martin Luther King Day	
3	23-Jan	Preview case	Case: Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. (HBS 9-794-024)	
<b>Module I: Industry &amp; Competitive Analysis</b>				
4	28-Jan	Lecture: Strategy Formulation	Reading: Michael Porter, Five Competitive Forces that Shape Strategy (R0801E)	
5	30-Jan	Industry Analysis	Case: Cola Wars Continue: Coke and Pepsi in 2006 (HBS 9-706-447)	
6	04-Feb	Technology & Innovation	Case: Apple Inc., 2010 (HBS 9-710-467)	
<b>Module II: Internal Analysis</b>				
7	06-Feb	Lecture: Internal Analysis	Reading: Barney, Looking Inside for Competitive Advantage	
8	11-Feb	Resources and Capacities	Case: Cirque du Soleil (HBS 9-403-006)	
9	13-Feb	Positioning I	Case: IKEA Invades America (HBS 9-504-094)	
	18-Feb	--	President's Day	
10	20-Feb	Positioning II	Case: SONY's AIBO (HBS 9-502-010)	
<b>Module III: Competitive Dynamics</b>				
11	25-Feb	Lecture: Game Theory	Reading: Game Theory and Business Strategy (HBS 9-705-471)	Group Project Proposal Due
12	27-Feb	Game Theory	Case: Dog Fight Over Europe: Ryanair (A) (HBS 9-700-115)	
13	04-Mar	Platform-Based Markets	Case: Facebook's Platforms (HBS 9-808-128)	
14	06-Mar	Platform-Based Markets II	Case: Microsoft's Search (HBS 9-709-461)	
15	11-Mar	---	Time Reserved for Group Project	
16	13-Mar	Second Mover Strategy	Case: Target Corporation (HBS 9-109-010)	Group Project Write-up Part A Due
	18-Mar	---	Spring Break	
	20-Mar	---	Spring Break	
<b>Module IV: Corporate Strategy</b>				
17	25-Mar	Lecture: Responsible Corporate Strategies	Readings: Strategy & Society: The Link (R0612D)	
18	27-Mar	Responsible Corporate	Case: Wal-Mart: Nonmarket Pressure and Reputation Risk (HBS: Case P-52A)	

Strategies II				
19	01-Apr	Acquisition and Merger	Case: Ben & Jerry's and Unilever: The Bohemian and the Behemoth (HBS: Case UV0597)	
20	03-Apr	Diversification I	Case: Walt Disney Co.: The Entertainment King (HBS 9-701-035)	
21	08-Apr	Diversification II	Case: Google, Inc. (Abridged) (HBS 9-910-032)	
22	10-Apr	Lecture: Network Strategy	Readings: How to build your network (R0512B)	
23	15-Apr	---	Video Case: TBD	
24	17-Apr	---	Time Reserved for Group Project	
Review Sessions				
25	22-Apr	Course Wrap	No readings, attendance required	Group Project Write-Up Part A and Part B Due
26	24-Apr	Group Presentations	No readings, attendance required	
27	29-Apr	Group Presentations	No readings, attendance required	
28	1-May	Group Presentations	No readings, attendance required	Peer Evaluations Due

**Appendix: Peer Evaluation Form**

Please allocate 100 points (total) across all the members of your team apart from yourself to reflect your assessment of their individual contributions to the team effort. I will treat your assessments as confidential.

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Team-member name (exclude yourself):	Contribution:
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
Total:	100

In the space below, provide some summary comments for your team members on strengths and areas for improvement:

Greatest Strength:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

Areas for Improvement:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_