

BUAD 497: Strategic Management

Syllabus – Fall 2015

Sections: 15112; TTh 12:00 - 1:50pm; HOH305
15097; TTh 4:00 - 5:50pm; ACC201
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Course Description

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

Strategic Management (BUAD 497) is an integrative and interdisciplinary course. It assumes a broad view of the environment that includes buyers, suppliers, competitors, technology, the economy, capital markets, government, and global forces and views the external environment as dynamic and characterized by uncertainty. The 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.

The course takes a *general management* perspective, viewing the firm as a whole, and examining how policies in each functional area are integrated into an overall competitive strategy. The key strategic business decisions of concern in this course involve selecting competitive strategies, creating and defending competitive advantages, defining firm boundaries 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.

Prerequisites. The course prerequisites as listed in the USC catalogue are as follows: BUAD 281 or BUAD 285*b* or BUAD 286*b* or BUAD 305 and BUAD 304 and BUAD 307 and BUAD 215*x* or BUAD 306 and BUAD 302 or BUAD 302*T*; *corequisite*: BUAD 311 or BUAD 311*T*.

Learning Objectives

The course is composed of six 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 is 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 misuse 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 and Competitive Analysis (ICA)

1. Analyze the main structural features of an industry and develop strategies that position the firm most favorably in relation to competition and influence industry structure to enhance industry attractiveness.
2. Use evidence on structural trends within industries to forecast changes in competition and profitability in the future.
3. Recognize the different stages of industry evolution and recommend strategies appropriate to each stage.

Module II. Competitive Advantage

1. Appraise the resources and capabilities of the firm in terms of their ability to confer sustainable competitive advantage and formulate strategies that leverage a firm's core competencies.
2. Distinguish the two primary types of competitive advantage: cost and differentiation and formulate strategies to create a cost, differentiation or dual advantage.
3. Make recommendations for sustaining a firm's competitive advantage.

Module III. Competitive Dynamics

1. Analyze dynamics in competitive rivalry including competitive action and response, first-mover advantage, co-opetition and winner-take-all and make appropriate recommendations for acting both proactively and defensively.
2. Conduct basic game-theoretic analysis to predict competitive interactions.
3. Analyze competitive dynamics in technology-intensive industries and formulate strategies for exploiting innovation and winning standard battles.

Module IV. Corporate Strategy

1. Make recommendations for horizontal changes in the boundary of the firm based on an understanding of the conditions under which diversification creates value.
2. Make recommendations for vertical changes in the boundary of the firm based on an understanding of the advantages of vertical integration and outsourcing and the factors that determine the relative efficiency of each.

Module V. Global Strategy

1. Identify the key benefits of international expansion.
2. Analyze distance between countries and recommend strategies for global value creation.
3. Recommend a foreign entry strategy based on an analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of different entry modes.

Module VI. Executing Strategy

1. Understand the interdependence of strategy formulation and execution in achieving and sustaining superior competitive performance.
2. Make recommendations for effective strategy execution.

The relationship between the course learning goals and the Marshall School of Business' undergraduate business program learning goals is described in Appendix A.

Required Materials

Harvard Coursepack. Assigned cases and readings for this course are compiled in a course reader available from Harvard Business School Publishing at the following link:

<https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/37971527>

Additional readings may be distributed in class or posted to Blackboard. When necessary, I may assign additional materials for you to purchase.

Blackboard (Bb). I will post various course materials to Blackboard including the course syllabus, powerpoints, lecture notes, case discussion questions and assignments. Please check Blackboard regularly for any new information or materials relevant to upcoming sessions.

3x5 Cards. Please bring a deck of 3x5 index cards to every class to record your oral class participation.

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 business cases. Occasional lectures will be given to elaborate on key theoretical models and frameworks. These lectures, however, will be subordinate to the case analysis. Cases provide a natural "test-bed" for theory and provide vivid examples that aid the memory of concepts. While nothing can surpass first-hand 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 set of 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 us 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 key 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 are. A popular phrase in case analysis classes is "**There are *no* right answers, but there are *wrong* answers.**"

These rationales are offered because the case method may be unfamiliar to some of you and frequently causes initial confusion. There will be many times when I will not reveal my own opinions about a particular issue, and there will be many cases that do not end up neatly packaged with an "answer." You may discover that your preparation "misses" key points of a case, especially at first. This is a normal part of the learning experience.

The quality of your learning experience during our class discussions 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. 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. Please refer to Appendix B for a *Guide to Case Analysis* and to Appendix C for a *Guide to Article Analysis*.

Course Evaluation

Your course grade will be determined as follows:

Individual work (75% of total)

Course Contribution	20%
Quizzes (2)	15%
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	20%
Research Participation	5%

Group work (25% of total)

Team Final Paper and Presentation	<u>25%</u>
	100%

In order to pass this course successfully, a passing grade (> 50%) must be achieved in the combined average of the individual components and in the combined average of the group components. ***Please note that if your individual performance in the course is unsatisfactory, it will not be brought up by a good group grade.***

Final grades represent how you perform in the class relative to other students. Three items are considered when assigning final grades:

1. Your weighted score as a percentage of the available points for all assignments (the points you receive divided by the number of points possible).
2. The overall average percentage score within the class.
3. Your ranking among all students in the class.

Attendance Policy

Class attendance is absolutely essential. All missed classes will be noted. The policy on missed classes is to allow each student **three (3) absences**, no questions asked, no penalty. All further absences over this limit will reduce the student's course contribution grade and final course 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 officially scheduled USC Marshall sponsored case competitions and sports events, will be 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. **Simply put, you cannot learn from our class discussions, and your classmates cannot learn from you, if you are not present.**

Individual Course Contribution (20%). Because this course relies heavily on case materials, extensive *before-class* preparation and *in-class* participation are required to ensure the class' success. What you get from this course will depend on what you put in – not just in terms of your reading and analysis of the cases, but your willingness to question and to seek alternate perspectives, to be clear about your own position, and to defend your arguments. Unless you have thought about the cases, it is very hard to learn from others' questions and contributions to class.

Oral class participation. Students are expected to participate in oral discussions and to serve as case discussion leaders, taking the lead in various aspects of case discussions. Your overall commitment and attitude toward this course, and your active oral participation will be closely monitored. In grading class participation, I will look at both the quantity and quality of your oral contributions. Class participation is obviously a function of preparation, skills, attitude, and a willingness to actively commit yourself in front of all class participants. In relative terms, a classroom is a cost-free environment for experimenting and learning to "play the game". Make use of it.

With regard to quality, the dimensions that I 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?

At the end of each class session, students who actively participated in the discussion should turn in a participation card. These cards should list your name, the date, and a synopsis of your oral 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 purchase a package of 3x5 index cards and bring them to each class.

Case notes. Recognizing that it is not always possible for every student to contribute to every case discussion, and that some students are naturally more reserved than others, students can submit individually prepared, but brief, answers to the case discussion questions. These should be a maximum of one typed page, single-spaced. Case notes must be emailed to me prior to the beginning of class to receive credit. These notes will not be graded but will be checked with a plus, check or minus depending on quality and thoroughness. Student performance on these notes will be used to determine a student's course contribution grade. Note, however, that these notes do not substitute for contributing to our core learning environment. Each student has a responsibility to participate in class and enhance the learning experience of all class participants. Moreover, case notes cannot be submitted to make up for a class absence. **Students should turn in at least five (5) case notes during the semester.** Even if you are an active class participant you should submit five (5) case notes.

Written in-class assignments. Students are expected to participate in several written in-class assignments both individually and as part of a team. These assignments provide an opportunity to apply the concepts learned in a particular module and generally consist of questions on a case, article or video.

Case quizzes. Short case quizzes may be given at any time during the course to test the level of student preparation for case discussions. Expect several! These quizzes will generally consist of multiple choice and short answer questions and will be given at the beginning of classes where a case is assigned for class discussion. Answers will be posted to Blackboard. Quizzes are not returned in class and may be viewed by coming during office hours. Student performance on these quizzes will be used to determine a student's course contribution grade. No make-up opportunities will be given to students who are absent or late.

Peer Evaluations. Each of you will complete a peer evaluation of the members of your team with respect to the team final project. A copy of the peer evaluation form is found on the last page of this syllabus and is due on the last day of class. **If you experience any group-related problem (e.g. conflict, free-rider etc.), please let me know immediately. Do not wait until the end of the semester. If you report this problem too late, there is not much I can do.**

Individual Quizzes (15%). There will be two quizzes during the course to test your level of understanding of the material previously covered. Quizzes will consist of 25 multiple choice and True/False questions. Both quizzes will count toward your final course grade. No make-up opportunities are available if you are absent or late.

Individual Midterm Exam (15%). There will be one midterm exam covering the first two modules of the course: industry analysis and competitive advantage. The exam will consist of 50 multiple-choice and True/False questions.

Individual Final Exam (20%). The final exam is scheduled according to the University's final exam schedule. You should attend the exam for your specific section. It will be a two-hour comprehensive exam covering all of the modules and related material (lectures, cases etc.). The exam will consist of 50 multiple-choice and True/False questions and may also involve some questions about a case handed out on the last scheduled day of class for you to analyze.

Individual Research Participation (5%). Please refer to Appendix D for a detailed description of this important component of your grade.

Team Final Project (25%). You will prepare a strategic analysis of an existing company as part of a group. You will apply the concepts, analytical tools and frameworks of this course to analyze the firm's external and internal environments, identify the key strategic issues it faces, and present a set of recommendations to maximize the firm's long-term performance. Two days near the end of the course are set aside for presentations of your final project. The presentation allows each team to report their analysis and recommendations to the class. The exact presentation date and time for each team will be assigned by a random drawing. Detailed instructions regarding the team final paper and final presentation will be discussed in class and posted to Blackboard.

Course Policies

Add/Drop Process

If you are absent three or more times prior to September 4, 2015, 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.

Course Communication: Blackboard

A Blackboard website has been created for this course: <https://blackboard.usc.edu>. You should develop the habit of checking Blackboard on a regular basis. The course syllabus, powerpoints, lecture notes, assignment information, and additional course materials will be posted on this site throughout the semester. Since e-mails sent to the class originate from the Blackboard system, it is your responsibility to ensure that your Blackboard account settings forward your messages to your preferred email account such as Gmail or Yahoo.

Communication and Entertainment Devices

Laptop and Internet usage are not permitted during class unless otherwise stated by the professor. Other personal communication devices such as mobile phones and all entertainment devices such as iPods or other MP3 players are to be turned off and kept off throughout the class session. Receiving or sending communication and entertainment during class disrupts the learning environment and is rude to class participants. 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 the class.

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, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A. <http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/>.

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.

Disruptive Classroom Behavior

Disruptive classroom behavior can take many forms. It can involve a student talking constantly while the professor is delivering a lecture or a student who loudly and regularly interrupts the flow of class with questions or interjections. Such behavior is unacceptable to the University and will not be tolerated because it interferes with the learning process for other students and hinders the professor's ability to teach effectively. Further information can be found at

http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/pages/faculty/disruptive_behavior.html

Class Notes Policy

Notes or recordings made by students based on a university class or lecture may only be made for purposes of individual or group study, or for other non-commercial purposes that reasonably arise from the student's membership in the class or attendance at the university. This restriction also applies to any information distributed, disseminated or in any way displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email or otherwise on the Internet, or via any other medium. Actions in violation of this policy constitute a violation of the Student Conduct Code, and may subject an individual or entity to university discipline and/or legal proceedings.

No student may record any lecture, class discussion or meeting with me without my prior express written permission. The word "record" or the act of recording includes, but is not limited to, any and all means by which sound or visual images can be stored, duplicated or retransmitted whether by an electro-mechanical, analog, digital, wire, electronic or other device or any other means of signal encoding. I reserve all rights, including copyright, to my course syllabi, lectures, powerpoints, prior exams, answer keys, and all supplementary course materials available to the students enrolled in my class whether posted on Blackboard or otherwise. They may not be reproduced, distributed, copied, or disseminated in any media or in any form, including but not limited to all course note-sharing websites.

Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity

In case of emergency, and travel to campus is difficult, 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.

Students With Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) (<https://dsp.usc.edu>) each semester. DSP's address and phone number are as follows: 3601 Watt Way, Grace Salvatori Hall, Room 120; (213) 740 – 0776. Please obtain a letter of verification for approved accommodations from DSP and deliver it to me as early in the semester as possible.

Course Schedule

#	Date	Session Topics & Agenda	Readings/Assignments
The Concept of Strategy			
1	T 8/25	Course Introduction and Overview	
2	Th 8/27	Introduction to Strategy <i>Lecture, exercise, form teams</i>	<u>Read:</u> Introduction to Strategy (CP) Register for a research study account
3	T 9/1	- Strategic positioning, growth strategy <i>Case Discussion</i>	<u>Case:</u> Starbucks: A Story of Growth (CP)
4	Th 9/3	- Competitive strategy, internal consistency <i>Case Discussion</i>	<u>Cases:</u> Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. (CP) Walmart Update (CP)
Industry and Competitive Analysis			
5	T 9/8	Industry Analysis: The Fundamentals <i>Lecture, case, exercises</i>	<u>Read:</u> Industry Analysis (CP) <u>Case:</u> The US Airline Industry in 2012 (CP)
6	Th 9/10	Further Topics in Industry Analysis <i>Lecture, exercises</i>	
7	T 9/15	Finding information for industry analysis <i>A review of key resources and databases at Marshall</i>	Proposal for final project due
8	Th 9/17	Industry Life Cycle; Scenario Planning <i>Lecture, exercises, video</i>	<u>Read:</u> Industry Evolution & Strategic Change (CP) Quiz #1
Competitive Advantage			
9	T 9/22	Internal Analysis <i>Lecture, case analysis</i>	<u>Read:</u> Resources and Capabilities <u>Case:</u> P&G: Marketing Capabilities (CP)
10	Th 9/24	Competitive Advantage <i>Lecture, video, discussion</i>	<u>Read:</u> Competitive Advantage (CP)
11	T 9/29	- Differentiation, innovation <i>Case Discussion</i>	<u>Case:</u> Apple, Inc. in 2012 (CP)
12	Th 10/1	- Dual advantage <i>Case Discussion</i>	<u>Case:</u> Samsung Electronics (CP)
13	T 10/6	Sustaining Competitive Advantage <i>Lecture, case analysis</i>	<u>Read:</u> Sustaining Competitive Advantage (BB) <u>Case:</u> Tesla Motors in 2013 (CP)

14	Th 10/8	MIDTERM EXAM	
Competitive Dynamics			
15	T 10/13	Competitive Dynamics <i>Lecture, case analysis</i>	<u>Read:</u> Competitive Dynamics (CP) <u>Case:</u> A350 XWB: Airbus' answer to Boeing's Dreamliner (CP)
16	Th 10/15	Competitive dynamics in technology-intensive industries <i>Lecture, case analysis</i>	<u>Read:</u> Technology Strategy CP) <u>Cases:</u> Qualcomm (CP) The Last DVD format War (CP)
17	T 10/20	- Competitive Dynamics <i>Case Discussion</i>	<u>Case:</u> Revitalizing Dell (CP)
Corporate Strategy			
18	Th 10/22	Corporate Strategy <i>Lecture, exercises</i>	<u>Read:</u> Corporate Strategy (BB) Working full outline of final project due
19	T 10/27	- Outsourcing <i>Case Discussion</i>	<u>Case:</u> P&G: Global Business Services (CP)
20	Th 10/29	- Diversification <i>Case Discussion</i>	<u>Case:</u> Walt Disney: The Entertainment King (CP) Case Flash Forward (CP)
21	T 11/3	- Acquisitions <i>Case Discussion</i>	<u>Case:</u> Disney and Pixar: To Acquire or not to acquire? (CP)
Global Strategy			
22	Th 11/5	Global Strategy <i>Lecture, video, exercises</i>	<u>Read:</u> Competing Globally (CP) Quiz #2
23	T 11/10	- Adaptation <i>Case Discussion</i>	<u>Case:</u> Wal-Mart Stores: “Everyday Low Prices” in China (CP)
24	Th 11/12	- Regional and global strategies <i>Case Discussion</i>	<u>Case:</u> The Globalization of East Asian Pop Music (CP)
25	T 11/17	- Arbitrage, Ethics <i>Lecture and Case Discussion</i>	<u>Case:</u> IKEA’s Global Sourcing Challenge (CP) <u>Read:</u> Ethics: A Basic Framework (CP)
Executing Strategy			
26	Th 11/19	Executing Strategy <i>Lecture, exercises</i>	<u>Read:</u> Executing Strategy (CP) First draft of final project due
27	T 11/24	Turnaround, leadership <i>Case Discussion</i>	<u>Case:</u> Best Buy’s Turnaround Strategy (CP)
	Th 11/26	Thanksgiving – No Class	

28	T 12/1	Final Project Presentations I	Final paper due
29	Th 12/3	Final Project Presentations II	

CP = Harvard Coursepack

BB = Blackboard

FINAL EXAM

Section 15112 (TTh 12:00 - 1:50pm): Tuesday, December 15, 11am – 1pm

Section 15097 (TTh 4:00 - 5:50pm): Thursday, December 10, 4:30pm – 6:30pm

Appendix A. Relationship between Course Learning Goals and Marshall's Undergraduate Business Program Goals

In this class, emphasis will be placed on Marshall's Undergraduate Business Program Goals as follows:

Goal	Description	Course Emphasis	Relevant Course Topics
1	Our graduates will understand types of markets and key business areas and their interaction <i>to effectively manage different types of enterprises.</i>	High	Strategic frameworks which advance students' ability to analyze markets, industries, and regional and global economies are introduced in all modules. Repeated exposure to these frameworks through numerous case studies accelerate student learning from one class session to another.
2	Our graduates will develop a global business perspective. They will understand how local, regional, and international markets, and economic, social and cultural issues impact business decisions <i>so as to anticipate new opportunities in any marketplace.</i>	High	A global business perspective is developed through case studies of multinational companies and a dedicated global strategy module.
3	Our graduates will demonstrate critical thinking skills <i>so as to become future-oriented decision makers, problem solvers and innovators.</i>	High	Students will use the USC-CT critical thinking framework to analyze business cases. In the context of advanced problem solving, the model drives students to identify critical problems and to provide a compelling rationale for the recommended solutions.
4	Our graduates will develop people and leadership skills to promote their effectiveness as <i>business managers and leaders.</i>	Moderate	Students will engage in multiple team exercises during the course including a team final project.
5	Our graduates will demonstrate ethical reasoning skills, understand social, civic, and professional responsibilities and aspire to add value to society.	High	A framework for ethical decision-making is covered in the course. In addition, several cases studies including ethical issues are discussed in class. The instructor may also bring up a current event featuring an ethical dilemma and lead a class discussion on what happened, why, and what might have been done to address the issue in a different manner.
6	Our graduates will be effective communicators <i>to facilitate information flow in organizational, social, and intercultural contexts.</i>	Moderate	The team final project gives students an opportunity to apply concepts and frameworks learned in class to analyze a company of their choice. A written report and a team presentation are required at the end of the semester providing an opportunity to present the analysis to the class.

Appendix B. A Brief Guide to Case Analysis

Cases require careful preparation before class. The following is a list of steps to guide your case preparation.

1. Rapidly read the assigned case and other materials to gain a general understanding of the industry, the firm, and the general competitive situation and issues.
2. Carefully review the discussion questions provided for the case for clues as to what issues require special attention.
3. Carefully re-read the case, taking notes that sort information, facts, and observations under a number of relevant headings. Use the discussion questions to guide your own thinking about the issues.
4. Formulate theories or hypotheses about what is going on as you read ("the company loses money on small orders"), modifying or rejecting them as new information surfaces ("Table 2 shows that shipping costs per unit are higher for small orders, but only for long-distance shipments").
5. 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, precise descriptions 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.
6. Prepare definitive conclusions before you come to class concerning the issues raised in the discussion questions.
7. Bring your detailed notes with you to class to help guide your interventions in class discussions.

Appendix C. A Brief Guide to Article Analysis

The following set of questions are provided to guide your analysis of the articles assigned in this course.

1. What is the purpose of this article? What problem or issue does it address?
2. What are the basic assumptions/assertions/values that underlie this piece? (View of human nature; purpose of organization e.g. economic efficiency vs. human satisfaction; degree to which planning is possible etc.) Are these assumptions explicit or implicit?
3. What is the basic argument/thesis? What are the major findings and conclusions?
4. What is the nature of the evidence presented in support of the argument/thesis? Are the conclusions well supported?
5. What problems or concerns are you left with?
6. How does the article relate to other articles you have read and to your own knowledge and experience? How does it contribute to your overall understanding of business strategy?

Appendix D. Individual 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 data sciences and operations. 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: historical analysis of published records, participant observation, in-depth interviews, surveys of current business practices, laboratory research etc. As a student member of the University's scholarly community, you have an obligation to contribute to the research mission of the university because you personally benefit from the results of this research in two ways: 1) by learning the latest research findings from leading research scholars in their field and 2) through the reputation by association that 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 **September 14, 2015**. Those who do not register or reactivate by this date will be required to complete Option 2 (research papers). 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 is important that you complete your credits 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. To receive full participation points, you must earn your first credit by **October 23, 2015**. Your other credits can be earned any time before **December 4, 2015** (the last day of classes). 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.

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.

Option 2: Your second way to complete the research requirement is to write 3 short, 3-page research papers on topics prearranged with your instructor. Papers must be turned in no later than **December 4, 2015** (*the last day of classes*) to your instructor.

Students must be aged 18 or older by October 23, 2015 in order to choose Option 1; otherwise, you will need to select Option 2.

IMPORTANT NOTES: (A) If you already have a research study account from a past BUAD 304 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 limj@marshall.usc.edu**

Peer Evaluation

Your name: _____

Please allocate 100 points across all the members of your team including yourself to reflect your assessment of individual contributions to the team effort.

I will treat your assessments as confidential.

Team-member name:

Contribution:

1. Your name: _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

Total: 100

In the space below, provide some summary comments that can be fed back to each of your team members:

Greatest Strength	Areas of improvement
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	