

**USC Marshall**  
**School of**  
**Business**

**BUAD 497: Strategic Management (4 units)**

**Syllabus – Fall 2020**

<b>Sections:</b>	15102; T TH 10:00 – 11.50PM; Online 15111: T TH 4:00 – 5.50PM; Online 15108; T TH 6:00 – 7:50PM; Online
<b>Instructor:</b>	John Eklund
<b>Office:</b>	HOH 522
<b>Office Hours:</b>	By appointment on zoom
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**Course Description**

This course introduces the key concepts, tools, and principles of strategy formulation and competitive advantage. 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, skills and business judgment managers must use to craft strategies to 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 suppliers, buyers, competitors, the economy, technology, capital markets, the government and global forces and views the external environment as dynamic and characterized by uncertainty. The course draws together and builds on the ideas, concepts, and theories from your functional courses such as economics, accounting, finance, marketing 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 include selecting competitive strategies, creating and sustaining competitive advantages, defining firm boundaries and allocating critical resources over long periods of time. 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: (ACCT 410x or BUAD 281 or BUAD 305) and BUAD 302 and BUAD 304 and BUAD 307 and (BUAD 310g or BUAD 312g) and (BUAD 351 or ECON 351x) and (BUAD 352 or ECON 352x).

**Online Delivery of Course**

This course will be taught online without in-person meetings. Attendance at all synchronous class sessions is expected. Students should ensure that they can access all of the online tools via Blackboard prior to the start of classes.

Zoom is the platform used for all online sessions and online office hours. A link and instructions to join the Zoom sessions will be posted in the Blackboard Course Home Page under the “MarshallTALK (remote class sessions)” tab. For more information about Zoom, go to: Zoom Support Tutorials

## **Learning Objectives**

**Theory and Concepts.** BUAD 497 provides the key concepts, tools, and principles of strategy formulation and competitive advantage. The course covers theories and frameworks for in-depth industry and competitor analysis, for analyzing the impact of various forces (e.g. technological advances, government regulation) on industry competition and evolution and for anticipating and predicting future industry developments. The course also examines the economic underpinnings of competitive advantages and the fundamental conditions that allow firms to create and sustain advantageous strategic positions. The course also covers concepts and theories for corporate strategy decisions such as diversification and vertical integration as well as theories and frameworks for global strategy decisions.

**Analytical Skills.** Theoretical concepts are a great aid to understanding, but by themselves are not enough to solve real business problems. You also need a set of useful analytical tools and skills that can be applied to the data to question and validate the facts and the premises assumed in the theories. Some of the tools are quantitative e.g. analyzing financial statements or calculating the effect of scale on production costs, while others are qualitative. Learning how and when to apply these techniques is a key objective of the course.

The course will offer you experience in conducting a comprehensive strategic analysis of a company. This involves an in-depth external analysis of the firm's industry and competitors and a thorough internal analysis of the firm's objectives, strategies, competitive advantages and performance. You will also identify and analyze the key strategic problems faced by the company and develop effective solutions and an implementation plan.

**Critical Thinking Skills.** The course will place a special emphasis on developing your critical thinking skills and enhancing your ability to present a thoughtful critique of others' arguments, analyses and supporting evidence. These skills will also help you to gather information, prepare thoughtful analyses and build compelling arguments.

**Communication Skills.** The best analysis will have little effect if it cannot be communicated to others. Managers must be able to articulate their views coherently and persuasively. Management is a "verbal sport". As much as ninety percent of a typical manager's day can be consumed by communication. Time is often scarce. You must learn to make convincing arguments and to make them quickly. This skill takes practice and we will place a special emphasis on it in class through oral presentations and written reports.

**Heuristics.** Much of the knowledge that successful managers use consists of "rules of thumb" about what issues are likely to be important in certain kinds of business situations and about how best to deal with certain problems. These rules of thumb or heuristics are often implicit in managers' thinking yet they have never bothered to articulate them explicitly. An important goal of this course is to help you build up your set of useful rules of thumb or heuristics for your future managerial careers.

In this course, we are as much interested in developing an appreciation for the *art* of management as we are in understanding the *science* of management. Tools alone may make you a good analyst, but they will not make you a good strategist. While the ability to master analytical tools and frameworks is essential, ultimate success is more strongly predicated on vision, insight, good judgment and a willingness to act with conviction.

Upon successful completion of the course, students will have the knowledge and skills to:

1. Explain the fundamental characteristics of a well-conceived strategy and formulate an effective strategy for competitive advantage.
2. Analyze the main structural features of an industry and recommend a strategy that positions a company most favorably in relation to competition.
3. Explain the characteristics of disruptive innovations and recommend a strategy to develop disruptive innovations for competitive advantage.

4. Appraise the resources and capabilities of a firm and explain how they can be leveraged to earn above-average returns.
5. Diagnose a firm's competitive advantage and provide recommendations for creating, enhancing, and sustaining competitive advantages.
6. Analyze the dynamics in competitive rivalry and develop strategies for acting both proactively and defensively.
7. Conduct basic game-theoretic analysis to predict competitive interactions.
8. Describe a firm's corporate strategy, evaluate its effectiveness and recommend vertical and horizontal changes in the boundary of the firm.
9. Describe a firm's global strategy, evaluate its effectiveness and provide recommendations to enhance performance on a global level.
10. Recognize ethical challenges in business situations and develop effective recommendations for addressing them.
11. Explain the concept of shared value and provide recommendations for creating shared value.
12. Perform a comprehensive strategic analysis of a company, analyzing the key strategic problems it faces and providing effective solutions and an implementation plan.
13. Provide a thoughtful critique of others' arguments, analyses and supporting evidence.
14. Communicate your arguments coherently and persuasively.

## **Course Materials**

### **Required course materials**

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

**<https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/738900>**

Additional readings may be distributed in class or posted to Blackboard. When necessary, I may assign additional materials for you to purchase. Pre-class videos covering important course content will also be posted in Blackboard. Please see all the required videos before each class.

Blackboard (BB). BlackBoard will be the central platform we use for this class. 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. Links for all class sessions via Zoom will be posted here as well.

### **Optional course materials**

There is **no** required textbook for this course. The only required materials are the cases and readings in the Harvard coursepack. Some students have found that a textbook helps them cement their understanding of the basic concepts of the course. For further reading, I recommend the following **optional** textbook: Frank Rothaermel, *Strategic Management*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, McGraw-Hill Education, 2018. It is a good textbook that elaborates on many of the concepts discussed in the course.

## **Course Format**

**Online Class**. Students are strongly urged to actively participate in all synchronous sessions via computer or laptop, with a webcam and headset/speakers and be fully engaged throughout the duration of the class meeting. If students have an unreliable internet connection, time zone issues, or unavoidable distractions, they should communicate those with the instructor as soon as possible. Students with technology or internet needs should communicate those needs with the following sources:

- [Marshall Emergency Funding Resources](#)
- [USC Resources](#); [basicneeds@usc.edu](mailto:basicneeds@usc.edu)

Students are expected to ask thought-provoking questions, offer relevant comments, and answer questions from faculty in a clear and concise manner. In short, our online class meetings will closely mirror the structure and expectations of in-person classes. You are expected to join the online class session on time and be engaged.

As outlined in the student handbook, there are specific expectations of a student attending class online. When attending, present and act appropriate as if you were in a physical classroom.

Please do:

- Attend class from a quiet area, free of distractions.
- Dress respectfully. Video conference business meetings are and will be the norm, so practice your professional telepresence.
- If you use a virtual background, please keep it respectfully professional
- Display both your first and last name during video conferencing and Synchronous class meetings.
- Respectfully minimize distractions by muting and or turning video off when moving around
- Engage in appropriate tone and language with instructors or classmates
- Disagree respectfully
- Respectfully pay attention to classmates

Please do not:

- Engage in a simultaneous activity (e.g., using a telephone, reading a book, video games, etc.)
- Interact with persons who are not part of the class
- Leave frequently or not be on camera for extended periods of time unnecessarily
- Have other persons or pets in view of the camera
- Behave in an overtly inattentive manner (looking distracted, not participating)

Ultimately, what you get out of this class will be dependent on what you put into the class. Namely, prepare effectively for each class by doing all the required assignments and actively participate in the class. I am available for zoom office hours based on appointment. Just drop me an email and we can set up a time to meet on zoom to discuss the topic that you wish to address.

**Case 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 concepts 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 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 may cause 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, 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. As 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.

**Case Preparation.** Cases require careful preparation before coming to class. The following is a suggested list of steps to guide your case preparation.

1. Rapidly read the assigned case to gain a general understanding of the industry, the firm and the key strategic issues faced by the firm.
2. Carefully review the case discussion questions provided for the case on Blackboard to learn more about 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.
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. Use these numbers 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.
6. Prepare definitive conclusions before you come to class concerning the key strategic issues faced by the firm in the case and how they can be addressed as well as the issues raised in the case discussion questions.
7. Bring your detailed notes with you to class to help guide your interventions in the class discussion.

### **Course Evaluation**

Your course grade will be determined as follows:

#### **Individual work (80% of total)**

Class Participation	15%
Pre-class Quizzes	10%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	30%
Research Participation	5%

#### **Team work (20% of total)**

Team Final Project Paper and Presentation	<u>20%</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 team components. ***Please note that if your individual performance in the course is unsatisfactory, it will not be brought up by a good team 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 participation 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 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.**

**Class Participation (15%).** Because this course relies heavily on case materials, your active contribution to our case discussions is required to ensure the class' success. Each student has a responsibility to participate in class and to enhance the learning experience of all class participants.

Participation will consist of two components. Participating in pre-class polls and in class participation.

1. **Pre-class polls (6%).** These will be taken before each of 14 classes in which we cover a specific business case. Completion of each poll contributes **0.5 points up to a maximum of 6 points**. So you can miss two polls and still get full participation credit for this component of the participation grade. These polls must be completed by 11.59 PM PST the day prior to the relevant class.
2. **In class participation (9%).** Providing you have attended the required number of classes (see Attendance Policy Section), the **base participation score will be 5 points**. Over the semester top quartile contributors will receive 4 additional points, second quartile will receive 3 additional points, third quartile will receive 2 additional points and bottom quartile will receive 1 additional point. Your overall class participation will be closely monitored. You will have two chances to participate in class: through general class discussion and through presenting your break-out groups findings to the rest of the class following in-class group exercises. In grading oral participation, I will look at both the *quality* and *quantity* of your oral contributions. With regard to quality, the dimensions that I look for include:
  - a. *Clarity* – is the comment succinct and understandable?
  - b. *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.
  - c. *Analysis* – is the reasoning employed consistent and logical?
  - d. *Evidence* – have data from the case, from personal experience, from general knowledge been employed to support the assertions made?
  - e. *Importance* – does the contribution further our understanding of the issues at hand? Is a connection made with other cases we have analyzed?

It is expected that you will make notes while preparing a case for class discussion. Please use the case discussion questions provided for the case on Blackboard to identify the issues that require special attention in the case. Case notes typically include an analysis of the company's financial statements, an identification of the key problems faced by the company, proposed solutions to those problems and an implementation timeline. I expect you to rely on your notes when contributing to the class discussions.

**Quizzes (10%).** As part of the pre-class preparation I will be sharing videos that will cover key lecture material that cover key core course concepts. This will leave us time in classes to discuss and apply the concepts. There will be **a total of eight pre-class quizzes** during the semester where you will be expected to complete a short online Blackboard quiz on the concepts covered in these videos and pre-class readings. Each quiz will consist of 5 multiple choice questions to be completed in 10 minutes. Your lowest grade quiz will be dropped.

Your grade will simply be your total score out of 35 for these 7 best-scoring quizzes. I expect that most of you will get the majority of the points for these quizzes as they will be closely linked to the pre-class readings and videos. These quizzes will also help you prepare for the mid-term and final exams. Each weekly quiz must be completed by 11.59 PM PST on the Wednesday of the relevant week. The following weeks will have pre-class quizzes: 1. w/c Aug 24; 2. w/c 8/31; 3. w/c 9/7; 4. w/c 9/14; 5. w/c 9/28; 6. w/c 10/5; 7. w/c 10/19; 8. w/c 11/2.

**Midterm Exam (20%).** The mid-term will be a ninety-minute exam and will consist of multiple-choice questions on course readings and short-essay questions. This will cover all the materials up to and including the material in Class 11. More detailed instructions will be posted to Blackboard. Exams will be conducted using Blackboard and strictly timed.

**Final Exam (30%).** The final exam will be a two-hour exam and will consist of multiple-choice and on course readings and short-essay questions on a new case. The date and time of the final exam is shown on the course schedule page. You should attend the exam for your specific section. More detailed instructions will be posted to Blackboard. Exams will be conducted using Blackboard and strictly timed.

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

**Team Final Project Paper and Presentation (20%).** 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 and analyze the key strategic problems it currently 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 oral 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 project paper and presentation will be discussed in class and posted to Blackboard.

There are two key graded deliverables associated with the team project:

- Proposal document (5%): Due 11.59 PM PST 10/2. I will provide detailed feedback on your proposal in project feedback meetings in the 10/6 class session. Proposals will be graded coarsely on a Check Minus/Check/Check Plus basis.
- Final project presentation (15%): Due 11.59 PM PST 11/9. The grade for this part of the assignment will be based on the content of the presentation, how well the presentation is delivered and how well questions are answered.

Peer Evaluations. Each of you will complete a peer evaluation of the members of your team with respect to the team final project. You will complete two online survey providing feedback on your team members. The first will be prior to the project feedback meeting on 10/2. The second will be prior to the final day of classes 11/12. I will adjust your team grade up or down based on how well you contribute to your team.

➤ **If you experience any team-related problem (e.g. conflict, free-rider), 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.**

## Course Policies

**Add/Drop Process.** If you are absent three or more times prior to August 31, 2020, I may ask you to withdraw from the course by that date if you do not notify me prior to your absence. 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 at [blackboard.usc.edu](http://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 my emails are forwarded to your preferred email account such as your personal Gmail account. Given the online nature of this course, we will rely on BlackBoard heavily.

**Communication and Entertainment Devices.** Personal communication and entertainment devices such as mobile phones are to be turned off and kept off throughout the class session. Receiving or sending communication during class disrupts the learning environment and is rude to class participants. It is important that you stay engaged with the class discussion, even if you are participating remotely and through video conferencing. 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 and Conduct.** 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. Plagiarism or presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words, is a serious academic offense with serious consequences.

Students are expected to make themselves aware of and abide by the University's standards of behavior as articulated in the Student Conduct Code in *SCampus*, Part B, at [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](http://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b), including the discussion of plagiarism in Section 11 under "Behavior Violating University Standards". University policies on scientific misconduct can be found at [policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct](http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct).

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 [sjacs.usc.edu](http://sjacs.usc.edu). 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.

**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. 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.



## Support Systems:

*Counseling and Mental Health* - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call  
[studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling](http://studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling)

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline* - 1-800-273-8255 [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

*Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP)* - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call [studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault](http://studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault)

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

*Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)*- (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298 [equity.usc.edu](http://equity.usc.edu), or [titleix.usc.edu](http://titleix.usc.edu)

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following *protected characteristics*: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

*Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment* - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

[usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care\\_report](http://usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report)

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

*USC Support and Advocacy* - (213) 821-4710 [uscса.usc.edu](http://uscса.usc.edu)

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

*Diversity at USC* - (213) 740-2101 [diversity.usc.edu](http://diversity.usc.edu)

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost’s Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

*USC Emergency* - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call [dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu), or [emergency.usc.edu](http://emergency.usc.edu)

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

*USC Department of Public Safety* - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call [dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu)  
Non-emergency assistance or information.

*Office of Disability Services and Programs* - (213) 740-0776 [dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu), [ability@usc.edu](mailto:ability@usc.edu).

USC is committed to making reasonable accommodations to assist individuals with disabilities in reaching their academic potential. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs. If you have a disability which may impact your performance, attendance, or grades in this course and require accommodations, you must first register with the Office of Disability

Services and Programs ([dsp.usc.edu](http://dsp.usc.edu)) provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. 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 GFS (Grace Ford Salvatori Hall) 120 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

## Course Schedule

#	Date	Session Topic and Agenda
<b>Introduction to Strategy</b>		
1	T 8.18	Course Introduction and Overview
2	Th 8.20	Lecture: What is Strategy? (HBS #96608) (CP)
3	T 8.25	Case: Walmart Stores, Inc. (HBS #794024) (CP)
<b>Industry Analysis</b>		
4	Th 8.27	Lecture: The Five Competitive Forces that Shape Strategy (HBS #R0801E) (CP)
5	T 9.1	Case: Cola Wars Continue: Coke and Pepsi in 2006 (HBS #706447) (CP)
6	Th 9.3	Case: Tesla Motors (HBS #714413) (CP)
7	T 9.8	Lecture: Catching the Wave (HBS #95103) (CP) Self-Disruption Can Hurt the Companies That Need It the Most (HBS # H04MFC) (CP)
8	Th 9.10	Case: Netflix in 2011 (HBS #9615007) (CP)
9	T 9.15	Case: Fasten: Challenging Uber and Lyft (HBS #616062) (CP)
<b>Competitive Advantage</b>		
10	Th 9.17	Lecture: Creating Competitive Advantage (HBS #798062) (CP)
11	T 9.22	Case: Ducati (HBS #701132) (CP)
12	Th 9.24	Midterm Exam
13	T 9.29	Lecture: Organization Design Case: Microsoft: From Cloudy Outlook to Cloud Computing (CP)
14	Th 10.1	Case: Trader Joes (HBS #714419) (CP)
15	T 10.6	Project Feedback Session
<b>Competitive Dynamics</b>		
16	Th 10.8	Lecture: Competitor Analysis: Anticipating Competitive Actions (HBS #701120) (CP)
17	T 10.13	Case: Dogfight over Europe: Ryanair (A) (HBS #700115) (CP)
18	Th 10.15	Case: Bitter Competition: Holland Sweetener vs. Nutrasweet (A) (HBS#794079) (CP)
<b>Corporate and Global Strategy</b>		
19	T 10.20	Lecture: Note on Corporate Strategy (HBS #705449) (CP)
20	Th 10.22	Case: Walt Disney Co.: The Entertainment King (HBS #701035) (CP)
21	T 10.27	Case: Haier: Taking a Chinese Company Global (HBS #706401) (CP)
22	Th 10.29	Case: Danaher Case (HBS #708445) (CP)
<b>Business Ethics and Social Responsibility</b>		
23	T 11.3	Lecture: Creating Shared Value (HBS #R1101C) (CP)
24	Th 11.5	Course Review/Starbucks and Fair Trade Coffee mini-case (CP)
25	T 11.10	Final Presentations
26	Th 11.12	Final Presentations – Final project paper due
<b>Final Exam</b>		
	Section 15102:	Tuesday, November 24 <sup>th</sup> 8:00 – 10:00 AM
	Section 15111:	Tuesday, November 17 <sup>th</sup> 4:30 – 6:30 PM
	Section 15108:	Thursday, November 19 <sup>th</sup> 7:00 – 9:00 PM

CP = Harvard Course Pack

**Appendix A. Individual Research Participation**  
**Research Participation and Requirements – Fall 2020 BUAD 497**

- **Participation in Discussion Sections:** This part of your grade will be based on effective contributions to class discussions. These include input that is relevant to course content and the topic of discussion. Participation also includes involvement in research activities. You can choose one of two options below to fulfill this requirement. **Note:** If you do not complete one of these two options, you will lose points for the participation part of your grade.
  
- **OPTION 1: Participate in research studies.** To do this, you will attend sessions outside of class, participating in studies conducted by researchers in MOR at the Marshall School of Business. You will earn 0.5 or 1.0 credit for each separate study you complete; most sessions are no more than one-hour long. You will need to obtain **2.0 credits** during the semester to fulfill the research requirement. Students must be age 18 or older by **Sunday, October 4, 2020** to choose Option 1; otherwise, you will need to use Option 2.
  - **How to Choose Participation Option:** Register for a SONA account at <http://marshall-mor.sona-systems.com/> no later than **Friday, August 28, 2020**. Instructions are also posted on Blackboard. Those who do not register or reactivate by this date will be required to complete Option 2 (research papers; see below). After you verify your SONA account, you will need to check the SONA site regularly to find open studies and sign yourself to participate in them. Sometimes email announcements are made as well, but please do not rely on them. Studies are scheduled throughout the semester at various days and times (both online and in-person). Please remember to cancel within 6 hours if you cannot attend a study. While there are usually enough studies to accommodate all students, it is important that you complete your credit early for your own peace of mind and to be sure you can find all the studies you need. You are not guaranteed enough study spots. To receive full participation credits, you must earn your first credit by **Friday, October 2, 2020**. Your final credits can be earned any time before **Friday, November 13, 2020** (the last day of classes).
  
  - **Previous BUAD 304/497 Student? Important Information on Account Reactivation:**  
If you already have a SONA research study account from a past BUAD 304/497 course, you will still need to **email ([mor.sona@marshall.usc.edu](mailto:mor.sona@marshall.usc.edu)) the administrator from the website by Friday, August 28, 2020** in order to request account reactivation. Past credits earned CANNOT be used for current courses. If you see past credits appearing in you profile, you must notify the administrator immediately.
  
  - **If you are enrolled in Marketing (MKT) BUAD 307:**  
Please make sure you can visit the Marketing research study website your Marketing professor has given you (see your Marketing course syllabus). Each course has its own unique SONA Systems web address. Credits will NOT transfer from one course to another for credit fulfillment (no exceptions).
  
- **OPTION 2: Research Papers.** You can also complete the research requirement by writing a short (3-page) research paper on a topic pre-approved by your Professor. Papers must be turned in by **Friday, November 5, 2020** to your Professor.

**Questions about completion of studies (Option 1) should be directed to [mor.sona@marshall.usc.edu](mailto:mor.sona@marshall.usc.edu). Please review the SONA FAQs for additional assistance.**

## Research Participation and Requirements – Frequently Asked Questions – Fall 2020

### 1. I have questions, comments, or concerns. Who can I talk to?

Please email all questions and concerns related to research participation, requirements, and technical issues to [mor.sona@marshall.usc.edu](mailto:mor.sona@marshall.usc.edu). We will reply to your email within 2 business days.

### 2. What if I already had a SONA account from a past course?

All accounts are automatically deactivated at the end of each semester. **If you previously had an account for your BUAD 304 or BUAD 497 course, you will have to email [mor.sona@marshall.usc.edu](mailto:mor.sona@marshall.usc.edu) to request to manually reactivate your account using your USC email address.** Please note the deadlines for reactivation.

### 3. How do I setup a SONA account?

If you are currently taking BUAD 304, please create an account on the MOR SONA website in order to participate in research studies. Click on the blue “Request Account” button on the homepage.

Note: **You must create an account only using your USC email address** (not any other personal emails such as **gmail, yahoo, etc.**) will not be accepted/activated. **DO NOT** enter your student ID# as the user ID.

### 4. All the timeslots are full. What can I do?

Timeslots tend to fill up quickly because there are over 1000 other students looking for credits. If you cannot make it to a session please **CANCEL** as soon as you know to allow somebody else to sign up for the slot. You can cancel your slot by logging into the website and going to "My Studies".

If by the time you check online and no timeslots are available, there are a few things you can do:

1) Keep on checking to see whether somebody cancels.

2) You can show up for a session that works with your schedule and see if somebody does not show up and take their spot. However, you will only be admitted if somebody cancels. Please have you USC email address with you.

### 5. I switched sections. How do I update it so my credits are routed to the right Professor?

You can update this by logging into your account (<https://marshall-mor.sona-systems.com>), then clicking on "My Profile" at the top right corner of the web page. Here you can check and/or change the section as necessary.

### 6. Where are the studies located?

In-person studies will be held in the Lower Level (LL) of Verna and Peter Dauterive Hall (VPD). Depending on your study, the room may be in one of three rooms: LL102, LL110 or LL112. All rooms are on the Lower Level. After you enter the building, take the wooden stairs or elevator down and follow the signs. VPD is located across from the Law School and Popovich Hall. Here is a Google Maps link:

<https://goo.gl/maps/tsF1JmV9MP62>

**Appendix B. Relationship between Course Learning Goals  
and Marshall Undergraduate Program Learning Goals**

<b>Marshall Undergraduate Program Learning Goal</b>	<b>Course objectives supporting this goal</b>
<p><b>1. Our graduates will demonstrate critical thinking skills so as to become future-oriented decision makers, problem solvers and innovators.</b> Specifically, students will:</p> <p>1.1 Understand the concepts of critical thinking, entrepreneurial thinking and creative thinking as drivers of innovative ideas.</p> <p>1.2 Critically analyze concepts, theories and processes by stating them in their own words, understanding key components, identifying assumptions, indicating how they are similar to and different from others and translating them to the real world.</p> <p>1.3 Be effective at gathering, storing, and using qualitative and quantitative data and at using analytical tools and frameworks to understand and solve business problems.</p> <p>1.4 Demonstrate the ability to anticipate, identify and solve business problems. They will be able to identify and assess central problems, identify and evaluate potential solutions, and translate a chosen solution to an implementation plan that considers future contingencies.</p>	<b>1-14</b>
<p><b>2. Our graduates will develop people and leadership skills to promote their effectiveness as business managers and leaders in the 21<sup>st</sup> century's evolving work and organizational structures.</b></p> <p>2.1 Students will recognize, understand and analyze the roles, responsibilities and behaviors of effective managers and leaders in diverse business contexts e.g., functionally diverse, culturally diverse, geographically diverse, etc.</p> <p>2.2 Students will understand factors that contribute to effective teamwork including how to elicit, manage and leverage diverse perspectives and competencies.</p> <p>2.3 Students will recognize, understand, and analyze the motivations and behaviors of stakeholders inside and outside organizations (e.g., teams, departments, consumers, investors, auditors).</p>	<b>1-14</b>
<p><b>3. Our graduates will be effective communicators to facilitate information flow in organizational, social, and intercultural contexts.</b> Specifically, students will:</p> <p>3.1 Identify and assess diverse personal and organizational communication goals and audience information needs.</p> <p>3.2 Understand individual and group communication patterns and dynamics in organizations and other professional contexts.</p> <p>3.3 Demonstrate an ability to gather and disseminate information and communicate it clearly, logically, and persuasively in professional contexts.</p>	<b>14</b>
<p><b>4. Our graduates will demonstrate ethical reasoning skills, understand social, civic, and professional responsibilities and aspire to add value to society.</b> Specifically, students will:</p> <p>4.1 Understand professional codes of conduct.</p> <p>4.2 Recognize ethical challenges in business situations and assess appropriate courses of action.</p>	<b>10, 11</b>
<p><b>5. 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 so as to anticipate new opportunities in any marketplace.</b> Specifically, students will:</p> <p>5.1 Understand how local, regional and global markets interact and are impacted by economic, social and cultural factors.</p> <p>5.2 Understand that stakeholders, stakeholder interests, business environments (legal, regulatory, competitor) and business practices vary across regions of the world.</p>	<b>9</b>
<p><b>6. Our graduates will understand types of markets and key business areas and their interaction to effectively manage different types of enterprises.</b> Specifically, students will:</p> <p>6.1 Demonstrate foundational knowledge of core business disciplines, including business analytics and business economics.</p> <p>6.2 Understand the interrelationships between functional areas of business so as to develop a general perspective on business management.</p> <p>6.3 Apply theories, models, and frameworks to analyze relevant markets (e.g. product, capital, commodity, factor and labor markets).</p> <p>6.4 Show the ability to utilize technologies (e.g., spreadsheets, databases, software) relevant to contemporary business practices.</p>	<b>1-14</b>