

## BUAD 497: Strategic Management

### Syllabus – Fall 2013

**Sections:** 15102; TTh 2:00 - 3:50pm; MHP B7B  
15097; TTh 4:00 - 5:50pm; MHP B7B  
15100; TTh 6:00 - 7:50pm; ACC 201

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**Office Hours:** By appointment

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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. In studying strategy, 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

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

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. Recognize the different stages of industry evolution and recommend strategies appropriate to each stage.
3. 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.

4. Demonstrate understanding of the concept of competitive advantage and its sources and the ability to recognize it in real-world scenarios.
5. Distinguish the two primary types of competitive advantage: cost and differentiation and formulate strategies to create a cost and/or a differentiation advantage.
6. 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.
7. Formulate strategies for exploiting international business opportunities including foreign entry strategies and international location of production.
8. 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.
9. Make recommendations for horizontal changes in the boundary of the firm based on an understanding of the conditions under which diversification creates value.
10. Demonstrate the ability to think critically in relation to a particular problem, situation or strategic decision through real-world scenarios.
11. Recognize strategic decisions that present ethical challenges and make appropriate recommendations for ethical decision-making.

## **Required Materials**

**Textbook.** Grant, R. and Jordan, J. 2012. Foundations of Strategy. NY: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

**Course Reader.** Assigned cases and readings for this course are compiled in a course reader available from the University Bookstore. Additional readings may be distributed in class or posted to Blackboard. When necessary, I may also place additional materials in the bookstore for you to purchase.

**Blackboard (Bb).** I will post various course materials to Blackboard including 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 class participation (see description of 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 management and competitive strategy 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 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 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**

Course grades will be determined as follows:

<b>Course Contribution</b>	20%
<b>Individual Tests (2)</b>	25%
<b>Individual Final Exam</b>	25%
<b>Individual Research Participation</b>	5%
<b>Team Final Project</b>	<u>25%</u>
	100%

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

1. Your average 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.

The distribution of grades will closely follow the guidelines of the Marshall School of Business.

## **Attendance Policy**

Class attendance is absolutely essential. All missed classes will be noted. The policy on missed classes is to allow each student **two (2) 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.**

**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.

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 including case analysis, critique and update. Your overall commitment and attitude toward this course, and your active participation will be closely monitored. In grading class participation, I will look at both the quantity and quality of your class 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, the topic 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 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 turn in individually prepared, but brief, answers to the case discussion questions. These should be a maximum of one typed page, single-spaced. *Any case notes must be turned in at the beginning of class to receive credit.* These case notes will be noted toward a student's course contribution grade. Please note that you cannot submit case notes to make up for a class absence. (These notes will not be graded but will be checked with a plus, check or minus depending on quality and thoroughness.) 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. Students are encouraged to turn in at least five (5) case notes during the term. Even if you are an active class participant you should submit several case notes.

In-Class Assignments. Students are expected to participate in several written in-class assignments. These assignments provide an opportunity to apply the concepts learned in a particular session or module and consist of questions on a brief reading.

Unannounced Quizzes. Short unannounced quizzes may be given at any time during the course to test the level of student preparation for case discussions. Multiple choice and short answer questions may be given at the beginning of classes where a case is assigned for class discussion. No make-up opportunities will be given to students who are absent or late. Student performance on these quizzes will be used to determine a student's course contribution grade.

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 Tests (25%).** I will give two tests during the course to test your understanding of material covered in the two previous modules. These tests will consist of multiple choice and True/False questions. Both tests will count toward your final grade. No make-up opportunities are available if you are absent or late.

**Individual Final Exam (25%).** 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, readings 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 A 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 its strategic options, and present a set of recommendations to maximize the firm's long-term performance.

**Mid-term Paper.** By the mid-point in the course we will have covered two of the four modules and so, the mid-term paper covers only the first two modules. The mid-term paper is due on Oct. 8, 2013.

**Final Paper.** The remainder of the assignment is due on Dec. 12, 2013.

**Final Presentation.** 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. Each presentation is followed by questions.

Detailed instructions regarding the Team Final Project including instructions on the mid-term paper, final paper and final presentation will be discussed in class and posted to Blackboard.

## **Course Policies**

### **Add/Drop Process**

If you are absent four or more times prior to Sept. 13, 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.

### **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, assignment information, general announcements 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 is not permitted during academic or professional sessions unless otherwise stated by the professor. Other personal communication devices, such as cell phones, Blackberries, etc. capable of sending and/or receiving electronic communication 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.

### **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](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.

### **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.

### **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.

## Course Schedule

#	Date	Session Agenda & Topics	Readings/Assignments
<b>The Concept of Strategy</b>			
1	T 8/27	<b>Course Introduction and Overview</b>	
2	Th 8/29	<b>The Concept of Strategy - Lecture</b> Form Teams.	<u>G&amp;J, Ch. 1:</u> The Concept of Strategy <u>Article:</u> What is Strategy? (CR)
3	T 9/3	- Business Strategy	<u>Case:</u> Starbucks (CR)
<b>Industry &amp; Competitive Analysis</b>			
4	Th 9/5	<b>Industry &amp; Competitive Analysis - Lecture</b>	<u>G&amp;J, Ch. 2:</u> Industry Analysis <u>Note:</u> The Five Competitive Forces that Shape Strategy (CR) Company selection for team project due
5	T 9/10	- Industry Analysis, Industry Dynamics and Evolution, Disruptive innovation	<u>Case:</u> Apple Inc. in 2012 (CR)
6	Th 9/12	- Industry Analysis, Rivalry	<u>Case:</u> Cola Wars Continue: Coke and Pepsi in 2010 (CR)
<b>Competitive Advantage</b>			
7	T 9/17	<b>Resources and Capabilities – Lecture</b>	<u>G&amp;J, Ch. 3:</u> Resources and Capabilities Proposal for team project due.
8	Th 9/19	<b>The Nature &amp; Sources of Competitive Advantage – Lecture</b> - Cost Leadership	<u>G&amp;J, Ch. 4:</u> The Nature & Sources of Competitive Advantage <u>Note:</u> Creating Competitive Advantage (CR) <u>Case:</u> Wal*Mart Stores (CR)
9	T 9/24	- Differentiation	<u>Case:</u> eHarmony (CR)
10	Th 9/26	- Dual Advantage	<u>Case:</u> Samsung Electronics (CR)
11	T10/1	- Business Models	<u>Case:</u> Google (CR)
12	Th 10/3	<b>Brief Case; Test 1</b>	
<b>Competitive Dynamics</b>			
13	T 10/8	<b>Competitive Dynamics - Lecture</b> Midterm paper short presentations.	<u>Note:</u> Competitive Dynamics (CR) Midterm paper due.
14	Th 10/10	- Competitive Dynamics	<u>Case:</u> Revitalizing Dell (CR)

15	T 10/15	- Competitive Rivalry - Coopetition	<b>Case:</b> Delta Airlines (CR) In-class exercises.
16	Th 10/17	- Competitive Dynamics - Innovation	<b>Case:</b> Netflix (CR)
17	T 10/22	<b>Competitive Dynamics in technology-based industries – Lecture</b>  - Standards Wars	<u>G&amp;J, Ch. 6:</u> Technology-based Industries <b>Case:</b> DVD War (CR)
18	Th 10/24	- Standards Wars	<b>Case:</b> Qualcomm (CR)
<b>Corporate &amp; Global Strategy</b>			
19	T 10/29	<b>Global Strategy – Lecture</b> Brief case; Exercises	<u>G&amp;J, Ch. 8:</u> Global Strategy <b>Brief Case:</b> Levendary Café (CR)
20	Th 10/31	- Globalization strategy	<b>Case:</b> Haier: Taking a Chinese Company Global in 2011 (CR)
21	T 11/5	<b>Diversification Strategy - Lecture</b>	<u>G&amp;J, Ch. 7:</u> Corporate Strategy <u>Note:</u> Note on corporate strategy (CR)
22	Th 11/7	- Growth Strategy; Diversification	<b>Case:</b> Virgin Group: Finding New Avenues for Growth (CR)
23	T 11/12	- Growth Strategy; Diversification	<b>Case:</b> Patagonia (CR)
24	Th 11/14	<b>Vertical Integration - Lecture</b>	<u>G&amp;J, Ch. 7:</u> Corporate Strategy
25	T 11/19	- Vertical Integration; Acquisitions	<b>Case:</b> Walt Disney and Pixar: To acquire or not to acquire? (CR)
26	Th 11/21	<b>Brief Case; Test 2</b>	
27	T 11/26	- Outsourcing	<b>Case:</b> Proctor and Gamble: Global Business Services (CR)
28	Th 11/28	<b>Thanksgiving. No Class.</b>	
29	T 12/3	<b>Final Project Presentations I</b>	Final Paper due.
30	Th 12/5	<b>Final Project Presentations II</b>	

CR = Course Reader

G&J = Grant & Jordan

### **Final Exam**

**Sections:** 15102 (TTh 2-3:50pm):

Thursday, Dec.12, 2013, 2-4pm

15097 (TTh 4-5:50pm):

Thursday, Dec. 12, 2013, 4:30 – 6:30pm

15100 (TTh 6-7:50pm):

Thursday, Dec. 12, 2013, 7 – 9pm

## Appendix A. 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 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 Friday, September 13, 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 Friday, October 25, 2013. Your other credits can be earned any time before Friday, December 6, 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 Friday, October 25, 2013 in order to choose Option 1; otherwise, you will need to use Option 2. Papers must be turned in no later than Friday, December 6, 2013 to your Professor.

**IMPORTANT NOTES:** (A) If you 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 [limj@marshall.usc.edu](mailto:limj@marshall.usc.edu)**

## Appendix B. Guide to Case Analysis

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

- a. 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.
- b. Carefully review the discussion questions provided for the session for clues as to what issues require special attention.
- c. 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.
- d. 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").
- e. 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.
- f. Prepare definitive conclusions before you come to class concerning the issues raised in the discussion questions.
- g. Bring your detailed notes with you to class to help guide your interventions in class discussions.

## Appendix C. 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?

## 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.	