# Business Strategy Capstone
**BA-5080 (002):** Tuesday, Thursday 11:00am–12:20pm; Lindner 220  
**Spring 2018**

## Course Syllabus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTRUCTOR</th>
<th>Dr. Joanna Campbell</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PREREQUISITES</strong></td>
<td>Senior standing and the completion of all course requirements in the Junior Core. If you do not meet the course prerequisite requirements, you are responsible for dropping this class from your schedule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COURSE DESCRIPTION</strong></td>
<td>This course is intended to be the culmination of your undergraduate curriculum. As a capstone course, it provides a framework for integrating knowledge from functional foundation courses throughout the undergraduate curriculum. You will be expected to analyze and assess internal operations of a firm and the external and competitive environment of an industry. Students will also be asked to formulate effective competitive strategies for firms under conditions of uncertainty. Comprehensive case studies, readings, videos, and industry simulations will be used to help you understand the difficulties and challenges of effectively implementing strategic plans. This course is designed to challenge your analytical and decision-making skills, as well as develop interpersonal skills important to your future success.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
  *Note: This text is available via Blackboard as an e-book with a required application called Connect. Do not purchase at the bookstore.*  
  The discounted cost of the package is $100.  
  • CAPSTONE Simulation by Capsim. The cost is $46. **Please do not try to register until advised to do so.** I will discuss all the specifics in class at the appropriate time, and e-mail instructions with how to register for the simulation then. |
| **OFFICE/E-MAIL** | 505 Lindner/ campb2j8@ucmail.uc.edu |
| **OFFICE HOURS** | Tuesdays, 03:30pm–6:00pm. If you have a conflict and need to see me outside of regular office hours, please e-mail me for an individual appointment. I will do my best to accommodate your schedule. |
| **IMPORTANT DATES** | First class meeting: Tuesday, January 9  
  Spring Break: Monday–Sunday, March 12-18  
  Last class meeting: Thursday, April 19  
  Spring Semester ends: Thursday, April 26  
  Final exam (COMPXM) due: **Thursday, April 26 @ noon** |
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

University rules and regulations will be enforced. All students are responsible for abiding by these rules. See The Student Code of Conduct (https://www.uc.edu/conduct/Code_of_Conduct.html) for further details. If you have any questions, please ask the instructor.

Course Objectives:

1. To develop a managerial point of view - a capacity for analyzing and solving problems from a broad business and company-wide perspective.

2. To integrate the knowledge learned in functionally oriented classes.

3. To practice distinguishing between basic causes of business problems and attendant symptoms.

4. To deepen understanding of the ethical and social implications of management decisions and actions within organizations.

5. To practice conceptualizing, communicating, and implementing business strategic plans.

6. To develop habits of orderly, analytical thinking and skill in reporting conclusions effectively in both written and oral forms.

7. To practice organizing and conducting tasks within a group (team) setting.

GRADE EVALUATION:

| Individual – Course Participation | 100 points |
| Individual – Connect Chapter Quizzes (Avg.) | 200 points |
| Individual – Connect Case Quizzes (Avg.) | 100 points |
| Individual – CompXM Final Exam | 200 points |
| Team – Capstone Simulation | 200 points |
| Team – Case paper | 100 points |
| Team – Case presentation | 100 points |
| Total | 1000 points |

Grading Scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>900+</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>899–800</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>799–700</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>699–600</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;600</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Fail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Computer software packages such as spreadsheets and word processors will be available as learning support tools in the computer lab. Most of the case assignments will require the use of these packages.

Students are encouraged to use e-mail as a primary communication vehicle with the instructor. The course syllabus, assignments, and other course material will be available via Blackboard. **Important Note: Laptops, cell phones, and other electronic devices should NOT be used during class time unless specifically allowed by the instructor at the particular time.**

**Teams**
Teams will be formed in the first two weeks of classes, and each team will be expected to complete a number of assignments during the semester. Team size will vary depending on the class size. The instructor will announce the maximum team size during the first week of classes. You may choose your own teams, subject to the approval of the instructor. If you do not choose a team, you will be assigned one. Teams are expected to be self-directed and self-managed. If your team is experiencing problems, please see the instructor as soon as possible for assistance in resolving them. **Each team member will evaluate other team members’ participation at the end of the term and these evaluations will be factored into each individual’s course participation grade. Important: If you do not participate with your team on the simulation and case paper and presentation, you will not pass this class. Team members are expected to report any “free riders” to the instructor early on, before final actions are necessary.**

**Class Participation & Quizzes**
Your participation grade will be a function of three inputs. First, you cannot participate if you are not present. Therefore, attendance will be taken every class period via a sign-in sheet. **It is your responsibility to sign this sheet every class period.** Second, you must come prepared to discuss assigned readings and cases. Students are expected to regularly volunteer comments relating to the assigned readings and cases. You may also be called upon at random to discuss assigned readings and cases. Because of the size of the class, I will not attempt to grade your verbal participation during the class, as this detracts from the discussion. Therefore, at the end of the semester, each person will submit a self-assessment of their verbal participation during class. This self-assessment should include any information that substantiates your contributions. As a hint, you might find it useful to maintain a personal log of your class comments and/or questions to document your self-evaluation. Third, I will factor in your team members’ assessment of your contribution to team projects and assignments in the course. **Quizzes will be administered via Connect and are due BEFORE every class covering a new chapter or case from the textbook, beginning in the second week of classes.** This assures that you have read the assigned material before class. Grading policy associated with these quizzes will be explained in class.

**Exams**
There will be one self-paced, online final exam (referred to as CompXM) at the end of the semester. More details will be provided as the date of the exam approaches.

**CompXM® for Capstone**
As the CEO of your company, each decision you make influences the assessment items you must answer. This combined simulation and assessment (exam) gives you the opportunity to prove your business acumen in business decisions and content knowledge.
Team Assignments

Capstone® Simulation
As part of the top management team of your Capstone Company, you will learn the complexities of coordinating decisions across four primary functional areas. You will get the opportunity to analyze market conditions and develop strategies that will position your company for success. You will also make tactical decisions to implement your chosen strategies. You will need to consider issues such as: What customer segments should we focus on and how will our products meet the customers’ needs? How much should we invest in our marketing and sales? You will have to decide whether to automate your production processes and how much inventory to produce. Not to mention, how you will finance these decisions. You will put your business acumen to work in one strategic, competitive, and engaging learning experience.

The initial decisions will be more time consuming as your team learns the mechanics of the simulation, but it will become easier as the semester progresses. The simulation offers an opportunity for you to practice formulating and implementing various strategies in a dynamic and competitive market.

TeamMATE®
An online peer evaluation allows you to evaluate your team members and their contribution. There will be two (2) peer evaluations in the course (mid-term and final peer evaluation).

Team Assignments - continued
In addition, each team will be assigned a case to develop an analysis and recommendations in a term paper and a brief Executive presentation at the end of the term. The assignment questions for the case analyses and additional guidelines for structuring the case analyses will be posted on Blackboard later in the semester.

Administrative Policies

A. **Weather-related policy:** During periods of severe inclement weather, university officials may announce that some or all of the university's offices and facilities are closed for part or all of the day. Announcements about a weather emergency are made via UC’s electronic mail system, homepage, text messages, and through the local news media. Students must follow all university snow policies and procedures. All classes are canceled when the university has closed. On days when the university delays opening, classes will resume at the hour the university reopens if this is at or before 3:00pm. Students should assume that classes are in session unless there is a closing announcement for a given day.

B. **Special needs policy:** If you have any special needs (e.g., visual impairment, hearing impairment, physical impairment, communication disorder, and/or specific learning disability, etc.) that may influence your performance in this course, you must meet with the Accessibility Resources Office to arrange for reasonable accommodations to ensure an equitable opportunity to meet all the requirements of this course. If you require accommodations, please contact them at 556-6823, Campus Location: 210 University Pavilion. You will be provided an Accommodation Form indicating your accommodation for the semester. Please present this form to me by the second day of class to ensure your accommodation needs are discussed, agreed upon, and provided.

C. Topics discussed in this class will be covered through a combination of lectures, case studies, activities, videos, and group discussions. A course accomplishes its objectives only when students prepare and become involved in the activities of the entire class.
D. I understand that other demands such as interviewing, job requirements, and illnesses may require you to miss a couple of class meetings. This is generally not a problem. Note that your course grade may be reduced for excessive absences, in addition to grade reductions for lack of participation.

E. I would appreciate it if you would let me know in advance via email if you are planning to miss a class. If you are sick, let me and your team members know, but do not attend class when there is a possibility you may get others sick. If you do miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out from your classmates what material was covered and what additional assignments (if any) were made.

F. Some assignments will be done in a group setting and must be completed in part outside of class. Because of the amount of group work required, class time will be allocated to team meetings when appropriate; however, if you cannot meet outside of class with your team, you should not take this class.

G. You are expected to be prepared for every class. You should let me know before the start of class if some emergency has made it impossible for you to be adequately prepared for class.

H. Class discussions are interactive and diverse opinions will be shared; please be thoughtful in sharing your perspectives and responses with one another. Other behaviors that can be disruptive are chatting and whispering during class, the use of electronic equipment, reading other material during class, preparing to leave before class is over, and consistently arriving late to class. Please keep these behaviors to a minimum. Abusive language is inappropriate and will not be tolerated. **UNLESS INSTRUCTED OTHERWISE, please turn off and put away ALL cell phones, laptops, tablets, and other electronic devices during class time.**

I. Team assignments may not be turned in late.

J. No makeup work will be assigned, except for excused absences.

K. There will be no individual extra credit available, aside from any opportunities available to all students announced in class. Please do not make any requests for extra credit of the instructor.

L. Any changes to this syllabus, due dates, or grading requirements will be made as far in advance as possible. All students will be held responsible for completion of all course components. Failure to meet these requirements in a timely manner will result in a failing grade being given for that portion of the class.

M. **Any important announcements, including class cancellations, will be made via Blackboard. The announcement will include information related to any changes to the course schedule and due dates.**

N. If you believe that your grade on a written assignment is inaccurate and you wish to dispute it, please do the following:
   1. Type your specific comments in a Word Document and turn it in to me via e-mail (as an attachment) **within three days of the return** of the subject material (grade).
   2. Clearly state why you believe you deserve a higher grade (based on substantive reasons).
   3. Last, please be aware that I will re-grade the entire assignment, and thus reviews can lead to decreases as well as increases in total points.
**Explanation for the Policy Regarding Electronic Devices:**
I do not permit electronic devices (laptops, tablets, and phones, etc.) in class. I appreciate that this is frustrating to those of you who find this technology beneficial, and I apologize in advance. Let me explain my reasoning. After teaching many classes for several years, and a great deal of trial and error, I have come to the conclusion that electronic devices are generally harmful to the learning environment. Many students use them for non-class-related purposes, which ends up distracting them, affecting me, and disturbing the concentration and learning of those around them. The third outcome is what led me to the implementation of this policy. There is also emerging research to support the idea that electric devices in the classroom, even for the purposes of note-taking, generally impede learning.

Those of you interested in this issue might like to consider this article by Clay Shirky, a widely-cited commentator on (and strong proponent for) new media and internet technologies: [https://medium.com/@cshirky/why-i-just-asked-my-students-to-put-their-laptops-away-7f5f7c50f368](https://medium.com/@cshirky/why-i-just-asked-my-students-to-put-their-laptops-away-7f5f7c50f368)