

BUSI 4940

Business Policy & Strategy



2024 Spring Semester, In Person (Face-to-Face) Class

Section 4: Wednesday, 6:30 – 9:20 p.m. in room BLB 055

Section 5: Wednesday, 3:30 – 6:20 p.m. in room BLB 090

Section 6: Thursday, 2:00 – 4:50 p.m. in room BLB 005

Course Syllabus

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Kenneth Cory
OFFICE: BLB 312M

E-MAIL: kenneth.cory@unt.edu
OFFICE HOURS: By Appt Monday, or Via Zoom Most Anytime
(but before 8:00 p.m. for Zoom calls please)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Business Policy (BUSI 4940) is a capstone course that focuses on Strategic Management supported by a semester-long team case study. The class takes the perspective of the senior executive team of a company, and essentially helps the students understand the types of activities and decisions needed to successfully run a business. The students will learn to examine and understand both the external environment (outside of the company) and the internal environment (cross-functional understanding of the company itself) to determine a course of action that maximizes the chances the company will survive and thrive in a competitive marketplace.

PREREQUISITES: Completion of all other business foundation courses with a grade of C or better and senior standing. It is intended to be taken during the last term/semester of course work.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

This course is designed to help you achieve at least four major objectives:

- 1) Integrate knowledge and skills acquired in the business foundation courses across disciplines
- 2) Improve skills at working collaboratively with a multidisciplinary team
- 3) Develop skills needed to analyze real world business situations and offer recommendations for solutions that will allow an organization to survive and then hopefully gain a sustainable competitive advantage
- 4) Develop and refine critical thinking, business writing, and presentation skills

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK OR E-TEXT: Hitt, M., Ireland, D., & Hoskisson, R. (2020). *Strategic Management: Competitiveness & Globalization*. (13th edition). Boston, MA, USA: Cengage Learning Inc.

E-books are fine for this class and generally cheaper. I suggest you buy your book from the publisher (Cengage) online or from the UNT bookstore to avoid having to get a special 'course key' to access the book. I have a link to the publisher in Canvas.

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU GET THE 13TH EDITION

CANVAS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

CANVAS. This course will make extensive use of an online software system you are probably already very familiar with called Canvas. It is your responsibility to keep up with material, instructions, announcements, e-mails, and grade postings that will be made available to you throughout the semester in Canvas. As a general rule, all assignments will be submitted through Canvas.

Tutorial for CANVAS and Zoom. To help those students who are new to Canvas or who would like to improve their knowledge of the system, here is a link that will help. Not only does it provide a tutorial for Canvas, but it also provides a tutorial for Zoom which might be helpful both for UNT and for when you graduate and begin working. <https://online.unt.edu/learn>

ANNOUNCEMENTS. The Announcements section on Canvas provides official bulletins and communications from the instructor. Since the Announcements section is an "official site" within Canvas and part of the course, you are responsible for knowing the information there. As always, the instructor accepts and replies to regular e-mail (kenneth.cory@unt.edu) on any course-related matter. **I diligently try to respond to all emails within 24 hours – usually much sooner than that.**

Emails to the class will be sent through Canvas. The default email address in the system is your UNT account. If necessary, please change your email address to ensure that you receive all class communications.

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION:

I will be providing in-person lectures for each of the chapters and supplemental materials assigned in this syllabus. However, I will also leave updated versions of my online narrated lectures with subtitles on Canvas as an additional resource to help students throughout the semester. **To be clear, I still expect students to attend every class and listen to the in-person lectures because I will be able to go into much greater depth and answer real-time questions in ways that are not possible in the online lectures.** In general, you should expect to read the chapter in the textbook (**prior to class hopefully**), listen to the recorded lecture, and attend the lecture in class for each chapter assigned during the semester. The class will be conducted using Textbook-based Readings, Narrated Lecture Presentations (found in Canvas), Live "In-Person" Lectures, Individually Scheduled Zoom Meetings (if requested), Three Individual Examinations, Three Team Project Assignments, and a variety of other online and in-class exercises. Teams will be formed during the first week of class. We may have an occasional speaker visit with the class. If this occurs, a set day and time will be shared in advance so that strong attendance can be achieved.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION AND GRADING

Your grade in this course will be determined primarily by your performance on the following assignments. However, you can lose points if certain assignments are not submitted on time or if your teammates provide a poor 'peer evaluation' score on a team project. The point distribution is as follows:

INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENTS: CUMULATIVELY WORTH 620 POINTS

1) Individual Writing Assignments – Mandatory	0 Points
2) First Destination Survey – Mandatory	0 Points
3) Critical Thinking Videos	20 Points
4) Exam 1	200 Points
5) Exam 2	200 Points
6) Exam 3	200 Points
Individual Subtotal	620 Points

TEAM ASSIGNMENTS: CUMULATIVELY WORTH 380 POINTS

7) SWOT (External & Internal Analysis) Template	125 Points
8) Strategy & Forecasting Template	125 Points
9) PowerPoint Formal Presentation Video (Case Competition)	130 Points
Team Subtotal	380 Points
Total Class Points	1,000 Points

LETTER GRADE EQUIVALENT: These scores already include an adjustment for 'rounding'

A = (896 to 1000 points) [89.6% - 100%]

B = (796 to 895 points) [79.6% - 89.5%]

C = (696 to 795 points) [69.6% - 79.5%]

F = (695 points or below) [69.5% or below] **You must get a C or higher to pass this course and graduate**

POSSIBLE EXTRA CREDIT POINTS: The instructor may from time to time provide opportunities for extra points that comply with University policy. The instructor will announce if and when these opportunities arise.

DESCRIPTION OF CERTAIN ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMS

REQUIRED: INDIVIDUAL WRITING ASSIGNMENT: COVER LETTER (Mandatory)

This assignment is required by the Dean's office, so it is mandatory to complete the assignment. Each student will write a formal cover letter to the fictional strategic planning department of the case company we select for the semester in response to a job opportunity in the strategy department. (We are not actually sending anything to any company. This is just the format for the writing sample). A fictional job description can be found in Canvas to use as a guide to help you write your cover letter. The letter should be no longer than one page. This is a good chance for you to practice your writing skills as well as your job acquisition skills. We will provide you guidance on the due date and formatting in Canvas.

This is a cover letter, not a resume. Please format it as a cover letter and not as a resume

Please do not attach a real resume to your submission but add the word "enclosure" at the bottom of the one-page letter as if you were attaching a resume.

REQUIRED: FIRST DESTINATION SURVEY (Mandatory)

See Instructions in Canvas. This is basically a straight-forward survey about your job status and job plans.

This assignment will assist the Ryan College of Business with collecting data through our *First Destination Survey*. The *First Destination Survey* is a tool that enables the Ryan College of Business to better understand the post-graduation plans of upcoming graduates at the time of graduation – and on average it **takes fewer than ten minutes** to complete. Even if you are still in a decision-making process or are still job searching your response is valuable, so please take a few minutes to report your status. Your participation in this survey is greatly appreciated because it:

1. Contributes to improved rankings by publications such as US News and World Report
2. Is a requirement for UNT's Ryan College of Business accrediting agency
3. Assists RCOB to better participate in national rankings for MBA programs
4. Provides benchmarks that many prospective students and families are researching as they make decisions about where to attend school.

In short, your participation matters because it contributes in a positive way to the well-being of Ryan College of Business and ultimately increases the value of your degree!

SPECIFIC INFORMATION REGARDING THE EXAMINATIONS:

There will be **three exams** this semester, each worth 200 points towards your final grade.

The exams will be administered in class on Canvas during the classroom period, **so bring your laptops to class.** We will take the exams at the beginning of class, so please don't be late. Once the exam is started the student will have a specified period of time to complete all the questions. **Please make sure that your laptop battery is fully charged and you have downloaded the appropriate Respondus Lockdown software.**

Respondus Lockdown. Each student will be required to access and take the exam using Respondus Lockdown software which is available through the university.

<https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/respondus-lockdown-browser>

If you experience problems with your browser or with Canvas during your exam please come see me at the front of the classroom immediately. If the problem cannot be resolved immediately and was not within your control (e.g., not a bad battery situation), you may be asked to wait until another day when a different 'make-up' test can be developed for you. The instructor will make a determination based on the situation, University policy, and past practice.

Following standard university policy on academic dishonesty, you are not allowed to use or access any notes, websites, or any other form of support materials or communications with others during the exam. You are also not allowed to take a photograph of, screenshot of, or share any aspect of the exam with anyone at any time during or after the semester. Finally, you are not allowed to access any computer code related to the exam or the Canvas shell on which the exam is published.

EXAM 1 – INTRO TO STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT SUPPLEMENT, PLUS CHAPTERS 1 & 2

- **50** Multiple Choice and/or True/False Questions (4 points per question) 200 points total

EXAM 2 – CHAPTERS 3 & 4, PLUS FINANCE & ECONOMICS SUPPLEMENT

- **50** Multiple Choice and/or True/False Questions (4 points per question) 200 points total

EXAM 3 – CHAPTERS 6 & 10, PLUS SUSTAINABILITY SUPPLEMENT

- **50** Multiple Choice and/or True/False Questions (4 points per question) 200 points total

DESCRIPTION OF TEAM PROJECTS

Students will be assigned to teams during the first week of the semester, and each team will research and complete a set of templates related to the steps in the strategic planning process. There will be two team research projects and one team PowerPoint Video final presentation that will be submitted to the college-wide case competition (three team projects total).

TEAM PROJECT 1: SWOT (EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT) ANALYSIS TEMPLATE. This assignment requires each team to gather research materials and use a variety of tools to analyze both the external environment (factors outside the firm that affect the performance of the firm) and the internal environment (factors inside the firm that either help or hinder the company's ability to perform well). Once research materials are gathered and assessed, the team will be asked to show their research then provide in-depth answers to summary questions about the findings of the research.

TEAM PROJECT 2: STRATEGY FORMULATION & FINANCIAL FORECASTING TEMPLATE. Once the external and internal analyses are completed, it is extremely important to learn how to formulate strategic options and select, justify, and explain the preferred strategic path for the company. This will require a significant amount of *Critical Thinking*. Once the preferred strategy is selected, teams will be required to estimate the likely financial impact of the plan on the company. Team Project 2 will require that each team complete a template of questions and summary sections, plus prepare a financial forecast of at least five-years in duration. Rubrics and specific research questions are provided in the lecture.

TEAM PROJECT 3: FORMAL STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS POWERPOINT VIDEO PRESENTATION (VIDEOS WILL ALSO BE SUBMITTED INTO THE CASE COMPETITION). Detailed instructions for the video presentation and the grading rubric are provided in Canvas. Teams will be required to prepare a well-produced video where they present their final strategy recommendations and a synopsis of the financial forecast as if they were speaking directly to the executive team and board of directors of the case company. Team presentations will be limited to no more than 15 minutes.

CASE COMPETITION. We will be selecting a list of the Top Ten video presentations from across all sections of BUSI 4940. At a minimum, these students will be able to put on their resume that they were a finalist in the UNT Strategic Management Case Competition. These top ten case videos will then be judged by (probably) Dean Wiley, Dr. Mark Davis, and potentially a few other leaders of the college. These scores will then be used to help determine the top two set of teams that will receive additional awards.

INDIVIDUAL INVOLVEMENT IN TEAM ACTIVITIES

TEAM FORMATION: Team assignments in this course make up a significant portion of your grade. Teams are formed by the instructor on a random basis with the exception that we intentionally diversify the team according to majors (i.e., cross-functional expertise). **Team leaders are asked to volunteer at the very beginning of the semester.**

Each team will consist of approximately 5 – 7 team members depending on the registered number of students in the class.

PEER EVALUATIONS: (This is important because it can significantly affect your overall individual grade)

Your involvement and interaction in team activities and contribution to assignments will be evaluated by your peers using a Peer Evaluation process. Team member assessments will be based on, a) Your ability to foster team spirit and display initiative while working on the project, b) Your timely attendance at scheduled meetings (including virtual meetings), c) Your participation in group discussions, and d) Your completion of assigned work and contribution to project completion (content quality and timeliness).

Peer evaluations will be completed at the end of EACH TEAM PROJECT. The peer evaluation will include the evaluation of the student's own contribution and that of every other team member. Each student will submit a copy of his/her Peer Review into Canvas. If the average peer score for an individual falls below 95%, that team member's overall score will be reduced proportionately (see below). The peer evaluations will be due **the same day** that the assignment is due.

The peer evaluation does not count as a grade on its own, but the professor may deduct 5 points for every time you do not submit a peer evaluation on time.

HOW PEER EVALUATIONS CAN AFFECT YOUR INDIVIDUAL GRADE: (PLEASE READ THIS)

If your peers award you a 100% average across all the evaluation metrics, you will receive the full grade for the assignment awarded to the team. However, if your peers award you a lower percentage, **that percentage is multiplied by the team grade to determine what your grade will be on that specific team assignment.**

Example: Assume the team grade is 90% (a low "A"), and you're graded at 100% by your peers. Your grade on the assignment is the full 90%.

Alternatively, assume the team grade is 90% like before, but that average of the peer grades is 70%. Your grade on the assignment is now only 63%. In other words, in this scenario your grade can fall from a low A to a failing D on that assignment based on the peer reviews.

NOTE: Any team member may request that the instructor arbitrate team ratings. If arbitration is requested, it will only be conducted when a majority of relevant team members are available to meet, and the decision of the instructor will be final.

WORKING OUT PROBLEMS WITH TEAM DYNAMICS: It is very important that you communicate openly with your teammates during the peer review process and **try to resolve problems** before you give someone else a lower score. These scores can *significantly* affect someone's grade, so do not take this responsibility lightly. Lower peer scores should only be given if the situation has not been resolved and further efforts need to be taken to raise awareness that changes in behavior are needed. **Remember, this is not a confidential process.** *The point of giving lower peer scores is to help communicate with team members that they are not contributing to the level expected by the rest of the team so that behaviors can be modified. In other words,*

the point is not to be punitive but to learn how to communicate regarding difficult situations where a change of behavior and improved team dynamics are the objective.

If teams cannot work out behavioral problems by themselves, then they should contact the instructor for a final resolution. But be aware that the instructor reserves the right to ask one or more of the team members to leave the team and be responsible for a different case study from scratch by him or herself. This is a very difficult and time-consuming path that students generally prefer not to pursue, so we highly suggest you learn how to maintain good and harmonious team interactions.

SUBMISSION DEADLINES: Each assignment submission date is posted in Canvas. It is your responsibility to submit and validate your submission in Canvas. If your submission is late for any reason that is not covered by a university approved and documented reason, you may receive a zero grade on the submission (individual or team). If there is some issue with the computer system you may temporarily send the instructor your submission via email, but it must be sent on or before the deadline.

IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND POLICIES

SUNDOWN POLICY: You have one week (from the date a grade is posted) to inquire about or to appeal your grade after which no appeals will be entertained. The purpose of this policy is to resolve any issues promptly during the term. Each assignment builds on the next, so it is important to stay on top of each assignment and your grade. Please check your grades every week!

POLICY FOR MAKE-UP EXAMS: If you miss an exam because of a university excused absence (e.g., hospitalization, contagious disease, religious holiday, death in the family), and would like to take a makeup exam, **you must provide the instructor with evidence supporting the excuse.** All make-up examinations will be coordinated with the instructor.

REFERENCES AND CITATIONS: Plagiarism includes the use of data or ideas that are not your own without the appropriate acknowledgement of the source. Individual and team assignments are research oriented and will require the use of references and citations. The format requires each submission to include an APA formatted reference list at the end of each submission. For convenience, we accept students using an 'end note' format where citations are referenced using a number, e.g., (1), in the text, with that number referring to a specific reference listed in the back of the document. The references should be listed in numerical order in the back of the deliverable. Any evidence provided in a written submission that is not your own thought or common knowledge must include a citation and reference. Instructions are provided in the lecture and in assignment instructions. Students who do not provide the appropriate use of citation and references could receive a deduction in points.

ONLINE SWOT ANALYSES: There are sites on the web where you can see SWOT analyses for a large number of different companies that were created by students or folks at other universities or institutions. Often, these analyses are wrong, and they are certainly out of date given the pandemic. We are aware they exist, and we check your answers to make sure they do not match the online SWOT answers. If they do (which is plagiarism), you could have your grade reduced to "0" (zero) and possibly also cause your teammates to get an F for a major assignment. **DO NOT USE THESE SITES.**

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: Students caught cheating or plagiarizing may receive a "0" for the assignment or exam. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students, who may impose further a penalty,

including course failure and inability to graduate. According to the UNT catalog, the term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to, a) Use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations, b) Dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments, c) The acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university, d) Dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s), or e) Any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to, a) The knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment, and b) The knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

UNACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR: Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunities to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be referred to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at <http://deanofstudents.unt.edu>.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION – EAGLE CONNECT: Your access point for business and academic services at UNT occurs within the my.unt.edu site (<http://www.my.unt.edu>). All official communication from the university will be delivered to your Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward your e-mail: <http://eagleconnect.unt.edu/>

ADA STATEMENT: The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course.

You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation via email attachment, during faculty office hours, or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the Office of Disability Access website at <https://disability.unt.edu>. You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

ILLNESS AND CLASS ATTENDANCE: Students are expected to attend every in-person class meeting and to abide by the attendance policy established for the course. It is important that you communicate with the professor and the instructional team prior to being absent, so you, the professor, and the instructional team can discuss and mitigate the impact of the absence on your attainment of course learning goals. Please inform the professor and instructional team if you are unable to attend class meetings because you are ill, in mindfulness of the health and safety of everyone in our community.

Remote instruction may be necessary if community health conditions change or you need to self-isolate or quarantine. If you need to self-isolate, please contact the instructor so that he/she can arrange alternative instruction for the period you are isolated or quarantined.

ASSIGNMENT POLICY: Due dates for each assignment are clearly posted in Canvas and on the last page of this syllabus. Team projects should be submitted in a compatible MS Office software per the statement below. All assignments will be submitted through Canvas.

SERVER AVAILABILITY. The University is committed to providing a reliable online course system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty which prevents students from completing a time sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will extend the time windows or provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and contact the UNT Student Help Desk: helpdesk@unt.edu or 940.565.2324 and obtain a ticket number. The instructor and the UNT Student Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.

REQUIRED ACCESS TO SOFTWARE AND HARDWARE.

Microsoft Office Suite® and Adobe PDF Reader are the official software packages for this class. You are enrolled in a College of Business class therefore, you may obtain a free-of-charge copy at <https://cob.unt.edu/students/microsoft-campus-licensing-agreement>. Please **do not send me assignments in Pages®, Word Perfect®, or linked to Google Docs®**. Canvas is not compatible with those types of files, and I can't open them to review or grade them.

Spring 2024 – BUSI 4940 – Dr. Cory

DAILY CALENDAR FOR THE SEMESTER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
14-Jan	15-Jan MLK, Jr. Holiday	16-Jan CLASSES BEGIN Intro to BUSI 4940 Break Into Teams	17-Jan	18-Jan	19-Jan Team Leaders DUE Selected by Teams	20-Jan
21-Jan	22-Jan Intro to Strategy Supplement Portions of HIH Chapter 1	23-Jan	24-Jan	25-Jan	26-Jan	27-Jan
28-Jan	29-Jan Chapter 2 - HIH Text	30-Jan	31-Jan	1-Feb	2-Feb Writing Assessment DUE All Sections via Canvas	3-Feb
4-Feb	5-Feb IN-CLASS EXAM 1	6-Feb	7-Feb	8-Feb	9-Feb	10-Feb
11-Feb	12-Feb Chapter 3 - HIH Text	13-Feb	14-Feb	15-Feb	16-Feb	17-Feb
18-Feb	19-Feb Finance & Econ Supplement	20-Feb	21-Feb	22-Feb	23-Feb Team Project 1 Due	24-Feb
25-Feb	26-Feb Chapter 4 - HIH Text	27-Feb	28-Feb	29-Feb	1-Mar	2-Mar
3-Mar	4-Mar IN-CLASS EXAM 2	5-Mar	6-Mar	7-Mar	8-Mar	9-Mar
10-Mar	11-Mar SPRING BREAK	12-Mar SPRING BREAK	13-Mar SPRING BREAK	14-Mar SPRING BREAK	15-Mar SPRING BREAK	16-Mar
17-Mar	18-Mar Chapter 6 - HIH Text	19-Mar	20-Mar	21-Mar	22-Mar	23-Mar
24-Mar	25-Mar Sustainability Supplement	26-Mar	27-Mar	28-Mar	29-Mar	30-Mar
31-Mar	1-Apr Chapter 10 - HIH Text	2-Apr	3-Apr	4-Apr	5-Apr Team Project 2 Due	6-Apr
7-Apr	8-Apr Winter Storm Make Up Day Final Project Discussion Test Prep and Review	9-Apr	10-Apr	11-Apr	12-Apr	13-Apr
14-Apr	15-Apr IN-CLASS EXAM 3	16-Apr	17-Apr	18-Apr	19-Apr	20-Apr
21-Apr	22-Apr First Destination Survey Final Project Workday	23-Apr	24-Apr	25-Apr	26-Apr	27-Apr
28-Apr	29-Apr Final Project Workday	30-Apr	1-May Team Project 3 Due	2-May	3-May READING DAY NO CLASSES	4-May
5-May	6-May FINAL EXAMS	7-May FINAL EXAMS	8-May FINAL EXAMS	9-May FINAL EXAMS	10-May FINAL EXAMS	11-May