Standard Course Outline

I. General Information

Request for GE Integrative Learning Capstone

- Course Number: MGMT 425 (GE Integrative Learning Capstone)
- Title: Business Strategy and Policy
- Units: 3
- Prerequisites: ACCT 202 or 320, MGMT 300, MKTG 300, FIN 300, IS 301
- Course Coordinator: Dr. Chailin Cummings
- SCO Revised by: Dr. Chailin Cummings
- Date Revised: March 15, 2017

II. Catalog Description

Prerequisites: ACCT 202 or 320, MGMT 300, MKTG 300, FIN 300, IS 301

Integration and application of knowledge, theories and techniques derived from the study of business disciplines. Use of the case method and business simulations to formulate business strategies and plans. Written reports required.

Letter grade only (A-F).

III. Curriculum Justification(s)

*Business Strategy and Policy (MGMT 425)* is a CBA capstone core course that introduces the principles of strategy formulation, implementation and competitive analysis. The course helps students to develop skills and business judgment in crafting and implementing strategies, securing and defending sustainable market position, in addition to defining firm boundaries, so as to maximize long-term profits in the face of uncertainty.

This course is an *Integrative Learning GE Capstone* course in three important respects. *First*, the course takes a general management perspective that requires students to integrate strategic formulation with strategic implementation. This enables students to view firm as a whole and examine how important business processes and functions need to be mutually reinforcing in order to generate sustainable competitive advantages.

*Second*, students learn strategy formulation as an integration of internal and external environmental analysis. The course analyzes a wide range of factors of a dynamic environment that includes customers, suppliers, competitors, technologies, market conditions, along with government and global forces. Combined with assessment of the firm’s internal resources and capabilities, students learn how to shape organizational
purpose to evolving opportunities/threats with the goal of defending a sustainable market position.

Third, the course is multidisciplinary in nature. It helps students develop higher order managerial skills that draw together ideas from lower division functional/discipline-based courses, such as Accounting, Economics, Finance, Marketing, Organizational Behavior, and Statistics, to address strategic management related problems. The application and synthesis of the general theoretical frameworks and analytical tools from this set of functional disciplines is essential for deriving advanced insights on strategic management process. Because general managers are responsible for the entire organization, they must be familiar with all of its elements, which include the functional areas. Such familiarity is important because the functional areas impact organizational performance, which is one of the ultimate concerns of strategic management. Organizational performance is a key determinant of the health and survival of the organization. Though adopting this multidisciplinary lens, students learn to develop a comprehensive understanding of how to manage organizations strategically for achieving long-term success.

Through case-based discussions, simulation exercises, written assignments, team reports, and exams, students learn to address business problems in a strategic way by integrating and applying knowledge, theories and techniques derived from the study of all business functions, practices and related theories.

Course content and instruction methods should be designed to fulfill the following CBA undergraduate learning goals:

- Critical Thinking (General)
- Ethics (General)
- Team & Interpersonal Skills
- Business Functions (Management-Specific)
- Domestic & Global Environment (Management-Specific)

IV. Measurable Student Learning Outcomes, Evaluation Instruments, and Instructional Strategies for Skill Development

A. Content-Based Outcomes – This course is designed to meet the GE Content-Based Outcome relevant to “Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World” through the social scientific study of strategic management and policy.

1. Measurable Benchmarks – Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to:
   a. Understand the components of the strategic management process
   b. Conduct internal and external analyses of organizations
   c. Apply the tools of industry analysis in understanding both
domestic and international market environments
d. Formulate business-level, corporate-level, and international strategies
e. Evaluate factors contributing to sustainable competitive advantage
f. Explain the impact of globalization on strategic management
g. Understand the purposes and mechanisms of inter-organizational relationships
h. Design organizations for the international environment
i. Incorporate knowledge of world business, social and political events into strategic decision making
j. Understand the issues related to the implementation of corporate, business and functional strategies.
k. Develop ethical and social responsibility mind-sets towards local, regional, and global communities.

2. Evaluation Instruments – Specific assignments will vary by instructor, but typical assignments include written assignments, case-based discussions, simulation exercises, team reports and exams that incorporate both theoretical and applied questions.

3. Instructional Strategies – Instructional strategies vary by instructor, but typically include reading assignments, class lectures, in-class discussions, simulation exercises, team learning assignments, and a variety of writing assignments.

B. Shared GE Skills-Based Outcomes

1. Critical Thinking (SLO – GE Essential Skill)

a. Measurable Benchmark – Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to demonstrate critical thinking as evidenced by their ability to acquire, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information relevant to strategic management. In particular, students will demonstrate their ability to:
   i. Conduct strategic analysis in a variety of industries and competitive situations.
   ii. Apply knowledge gained in earlier business courses to analyze strategic problems.
   iii. Evaluate alternate solutions to strategic problems and provide well-reasoned recommendations for strategic business problems.
b. **Evaluation Instruments** – Specific assignments will vary by instructor, but typical assignments include case-based written analyses, business simulations, research papers, and scenario-based exam questions that require students to demonstrate conceptual learning and problem-solving skills.

To develop students’ *problem solving* skill, course assignments may focus on the following dimensions:

- What are the critical challenges a company faces?
- What are the underlying issues a company must resolve in order to deal with the set of critical challenges?
- What strategic options should a company consider for resolving the underlying issues?
- Which of these options do you recommend?
- What are the anticipated outcomes upon implementation?

To develop students’ *conceptual learning* skill, course assignments may focus on the following dimensions:

- What is the current state of a company?
- What are the key strategic concepts that can explain the existing organizational and industry dynamics?
- What are the predictable outcomes of a company’s actions?
- What strategies should an organization formulate based on both internal and external analysis?
- What organization structure should be utilized for implementing a particular strategy?

c. **Instructional Strategies** – Specific instructional strategies will vary by instructor, but typical strategies may include:

i. Design in-class exercise activities that help students to organize information, develop lines of reasoning, put forth persuasive argumentation, and use what-if analyses to evaluate action alternatives.

ii. Conduct case analysis and/or simulation-based exercise.

iii. Form team-based discussions and oral presentations.

iv. Use standardized rubrics for evaluating critical thinking skills.

2. **Written Communication (SLO – GE Essential Skill)**

a. **Measurable Benchmark** - Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to demonstrate effective writing process and outcome that conform to social science conventions. Such written communication skills include developing core ideas,
formulating thesis statements, crafting arguments, synthesizing theoretical perspectives and empirical evidence, citing appropriate sources using the American Psychological Association standard, and adopting appropriate syntax and mechanics.

b. **Evaluation Instruments** - Specific assignments will vary by instructor, but typical assignments include a series of case written analyses, research papers, and simulation reports that require students to develop written communication skills in the course.

Citing GE Education Policy 7.10.3 and 7.10.4, there should be at least a total of 2,500 words in the various written assignments, and these assignments must be a factor in evaluating students’ performance. Instructors may choose to offer various writing assignments throughout the course or a cumulative report/project. To help improve students’ writing skills, instructors are expected to provide early feedback on writing assignments in the first one-third of the term; that is, the first one-third of the fall and spring semester or the first one-third the summer term. Ongoing evaluation and feedback throughout the term should also be offered, including the opportunity for revision where needed.

Evaluation criteria for written assignments may include the following items:

- Does the analysis/report illustrate a thorough understanding of the context and purpose?
- Does the analysis/report clearly communicate the central ideas?
- Does the analysis/report use appropriate content to demonstrate the mastery of subject matter?
- Does the analysis/report following the APA format?
- Does the analysis/report use credible and relevant sources for developing ideas?
- Is the analysis/report free of grammatical errors?

c. **Instructional Strategies** – Specific instructional strategies will vary by instructor, but typical strategies may include:

i. Using standardized rubrics to assess organization, content, reasoning, grammar, and writing conventions.

ii. Explaining rubrics for writing expectations before and after the assignments.

iii. Discussing components of well-written analysis in
class.
iv. Providing feedback on early drafts and allow for revision.
v. Engaging in peer review/editing processes.

3. Inquiry and Analysis (SLO – GE Essential Skill)

a. Measurable Benchmark – Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to explore core strategic issues facing organizations, decipher complex elements of internal and external business environments, collect and analyze empirical evidence, and craft recommendations for developing and sustaining organizations’ competitive advantages in both domestic and global environments. For instance,
i. Students will apply knowledge gained in other functional-based courses, such as Accounting, Economics, Finance, Marketing, Organizational Behavior, and Statistics to analyze strategic problems.
ii. Students will develop their capacity to think strategically about a company, its business position, and how it can gain sustainable competitive advantage.
vi. Students will learn to formulate strategy based on an integration of internal and external analyses of the organization.
vii. Students can incorporate knowledge of world business, social and political events into strategic decision-making.

b. Evaluation Instruments – Instructors should use appropriate evaluation instruments, such as in-class discussions/exercises, case analyses, and research papers to help students identify the key problems an organization faces, search for possible root causes, collect supportive evidence to illustrate insightful patterns, and develop logical conclusion through synthesizing multiple theoretical approaches.

In particular, these assignments may focus on the following dimensions:

- Relevance: does the analysis bear on the subject on hand?
- Causal linkage: are the logical antecedents or consequences of a particular argument traced out?
- Analysis: is reasoning consistent and logical?
Evidence: are data from the case, from personal experience or from general knowledge used for support?

Clarity: is the analysis succinct and understandable?

c. **Instructional Strategies** – Specific instructional strategies will vary by instructor, but the typical strategies should focus on building a comprehensive understanding of issues related to strategic management. These may include:

i. Incorporate current social, economic and political events into lecture and in-class discussions.

ii. Explore multiple perspectives in addressing a particular issue.

iii. Conduct in-class exercises that focus on problem identification, selection, and solution.

iv. Instruct students on how to navigate library resources for conducting research.

v. Discuss the process of case analysis.

vi. Utilize multiple means for generating feedback (e.g., standardized rubric, instructor written comments, and peer editing).

To help students develop *inquiry and analysis* skills, instructors may ask student to follow the steps below for the case preparation process:

- Carefully read the case, take notes, and sort case facts under a number of relevant headings.
- Use the discussion questions to guide thinking about the issues.
- Formulate theories or hypotheses about what is going on within a company (e.g., "the company loses money on small orders"), modifying or rejecting them as new information surfaces (e.g., "Table 2 shows that shipping costs per unit are higher for small orders, but only for long-distance shipments").
- Perform relevant analyses and use adequate tools for evaluating business data.
- Prepare definite conclusions concerning the issues raised in the discussion questions.
- Anticipate the sequence of likely events upon implementing recommendations.
- Bring detailed notes to class to help guide participation in class discussions.
V. **Outline of Subject Matter**

- Components of the strategic planning process
- Tools of industry analysis and strategic analysis
- Competitive strategy and competitive advantage
- Corporate diversification and the analysis of diversified firms
- Global and multinational corporate strategies
- Implementation of corporate, business, and functional strategies in both domestic and international market environments.

VI. **Methods of Instruction**

Instructors should use appropriate instruction methods that are consistent with the course description stated in Section II and serve the GE student learning outcomes listed in Section IV of this SCO.

Examples of instruction methods for the course include:

- Class lecture/discussion
- Case analyses
- Individual and team written assignments
- Team project and discussions
- Simulations and exercises
- Team/individual presentations
- Media presentations

VII. **Extent and Nature of Technology Use**

The use of technology will depend on individual instructors, but may include Beach Board and its embedded online functionalities, a variety of web resources specific to the course, and the use of digital social-science databases offered by the CSULB Library. Film and video may be used in the classroom.

VIII. **Information about Textbooks/Readings**

Instructors should use appropriate textbooks that are consistent with the course description stated in Section II and serve the GE students learning outcome listed in Section IV of this SCO. No further bibliography is needed.

The following is a list of textbooks that are considered appropriate for this course. This list is not complete and new textbooks can be added.

IX. Instructional Policies Requirements

Instructional policies should be consistent with the course description stated in Section II, and should serve the student learning outcomes listed in section IV of this SCO.

Due to the integrated nature of the course content and intended shared GE skill-based outcomes, the class size is capped at 25 students but may be increased to 28, at the discretion of the instructor.

Instructors may specify their own policies with regard to plagiarism, withdrawal, absences, etc., as long as these policies are consistent with the University policies published in the CSULB Catalog. It is expected that every course will follow University policies on Final Course Grades, Grading Procedures, and Final Assessments (PS 05-07), Attendance (PS 01-01), Course Syllabi (PS 11-07), Final Course Grades, Grading Procedures, and Final Assessments (PS 05-07), and Withdrawals (PS 02-02 rev). If some or all sections of the course are to be taught, in part or entirely, by distance learning in the future, the course must follow the provisions of PS 03-11, Academic Technology and the Mode of Instruction.

All sections of the course will have a syllabus that includes the information required by the syllabus policy adopted by the Academic Senate. Instructors will include information on how students may make up work for excused absences. When class participation is a required part of the course syllabus will include information on how participation is assessed.

Students with Disabilities. Students with disabilities are responsible for notifying their instructor as early as possible of their needs for an accommodation of a verified disability. A student with a disability is urged to consult with Disabled Student Services as soon as possible in order to identify possible accommodations to enhance academic success.