INSTRUCTOR
Elisa Alvarez-Garrido,
Office: +1.404.413.7568
e-mail: ealvarezgarrido@gsu.edu
Appointments by request. We can usually work it around class time.

GENERAL INFORMATION

TEXT and REQUIRED READINGS:

Text:
[Textbook only; we will not use the casebook] [You can use the 8th Ed, just check chapter names]

Cases and Articles:
On line at study.net. Look for my name, Alvarez-Garrido, and PMBA 8820 (Fall 2014).

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Global Competitive Strategy
This course explores methods of directing an entire organization or a significant division in an internationally competitive environment. The perspective is that of the general manager who must integrate many business functions to successfully lead a multinational organization. Topics include the identification of organizational competence in light of external environmental and international conditions, the development of business/corporate strategy that addressed the international marketplace, and the internal processes required for the successful implementation of that strategy.
COURSE OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this course is to provide a forum that stimulates and improves your thinking about business and solving the complex problems their managers often face. During the semester, you should: 1) acquire an understanding of the strategic issues confronting general managers, 2) develop methods for thinking about and for analyzing these issues, 3) examine the ways in which strategies are formulated and implemented, and 4) gain an appreciation for the dynamic nature of the business enterprise.

We will read about and attempt to understand real world issues, problems, and topics. Yet this course can only be suggestive, since it is impossible to anticipate the issues that you will have to confront in the future. What we can try to do, however, is use the assigned topics to develop ways of thinking that will enable you to deal effectively with those issues that you will confront throughout your lifetime. Beyond fulfilling the objectives outlined above, course activities are designed to get you to think about your thinking, a process called metacognition. This, more than any set of tools or techniques, will enable you to maintain a fresh perspective during your careers, increasing the likelihood that you will successfully perceive and adapt to changes in the business environment and be able to make insightful decisions.
COURSE POLICIES

ATTENDANCE AND PREPARATION

Each student is expected to attend all scheduled class meetings for the entire duration of the class meeting. An attendance sign-up sheet will be circulated each class period.

Any student who is absent from more than the equivalent of three modules will be dropped from the course. Absences include the first week of class regardless of when a student registered for the course.

A special word to VA students: Due to required University oversight of students receiving VA benefits, you have a special burden of faithful class attendance. Under present guidelines, absence for a ten-consecutive calendar day period necessitates a report to that effect to the VA Office at GSU, with (presumably) a consequent adverse effect on your status vis-à-vis the U.S. Government. Please keep this in mind.

DISABILITIES OR SPECIAL NEEDS

Students who wish to request accommodation for a disability may do so by registering with the Office of Disability Services. Students may only be accommodated upon issuance by the Office of Disability Services of a signed Accommodation Plan and are responsible for providing a copy of that plan to instructors of all classes in which accommodations are sought. [This is required language] Please let me know if you have a disability or special need that requires accommodation.

MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES

- Be punctual for class — when you’re tardy, you miss important course announcements and you disrupt the learning process for others. If you do arrive late, enter and take a seat quietly. Repeated tardiness will result in a significant impact in your marks for Participation and Professionalism.
- Be courteous -- All students are to conduct themselves consistent with University policies concerning behavior in the classroom and toward others in the University community. Students should consult their student handbook, “On Campus”, for details on these policies.
- Turn off cell phones and pagers and use a computer only to access course materials.
- Participate in class discussion and group activities, but don’t interrupt other students or attempt to dominate the conversation. Stay focused on the assigned topic.
• The instructors in the RCB will use students’ e-mail addresses (as shown on GoSolar) as the primary means of communication. Students should therefore check their GSU e-mail accounts at least on a daily basis.
• There will be a ten-minute break during most classes. It will occur at about the midpoint, but it may vary based on the flow of the material.

LATE WORK
Any assignments which are turned in after the deadline (date and time) will be penalized 10% of the total points available for the assignment for every 24-hour period they are late.

MAKE-UP EXAMINATIONS
The exam for this course is electronically administered and as such will be due on the date shown in the syllabus. If you cannot take the exam at the scheduled date, you are responsible for informing the instructor and arranging a make-up exam prior to the scheduled exam date. No make-up exams will be given to accommodate vacation, or other social plans.

GSU ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

“As members of the academic community, students are expected to recognize and uphold standards of intellectual and academic integrity. The University assumes as a basic and minimum standard of conduct in academic matters that students be honest and that they submit for credit only the products of their own efforts. Both the ideals of scholarship and the need for fairness require that all dishonest work be rejected as a basis for academic credit. They also require that students refrain from any and all forms of dishonorable or unethical conduct related to their academic work.

The University’s policy on academic honesty is published in the Faculty Affairs Handbook and the Student Handbook, On Campus, which is available to all members of the University community. The policy represents a core value of the University and all members of the University community are responsible for abiding by its tenets. Lack of knowledge of this policy is not an acceptable defense to any charge of academic dishonesty. All members of the academic community, including students, faculty, and staff, are expected to report violations of these standards of academic conduct to the appropriate authorities. The procedures for such
reporting are on file in the offices of the deans of each college, the Office of the Dean of Students, and the Office of the Provost.

In an effort to foster an environment of academic integrity and to prevent academic dishonesty, students are expected to discuss with faculty the expectations regarding course assignments and standards of conduct. Students are encouraged to discuss freely with faculty, academic advisors, and other members of the University community any questions pertaining to the provisions of this policy. In addition, students are encouraged to avail themselves of programs in establishing personal standards and ethics offered through the University’s Counseling Center. (…)

**Plagiarism** is presenting another person’s work as one’s own. Plagiarism includes any paraphrasing or summarizing of the works of another person without acknowledgment, including the submitting of another student’s work as one’s own. Plagiarism frequently involves a failure to acknowledge in the text, notes, or footnotes the quotation of the paragraphs, sentences, or even a few phrases written or spoken by someone else. The submission of research or completed papers or projects by someone else is plagiarism, as is the unacknowledged use of research sources gathered by someone else when that use is specifically forbidden by the faculty member. Failure to indicate the extent and nature of one’s reliance on other sources is also a form of plagiarism. Failure to indicate the extent and nature of one’s reliance on other sources is also a form of plagiarism. Any work, in whole or part, taken from the internet without properly referencing the corresponding URL may be considered plagiarism. An author’s name and the title of the original work, if available, should also be included as part of the reference. Finally, there may be forms of plagiarism that are unique to an individual discipline or course, examples of which should be provided in advance by the faculty member. The student is responsible for understanding the legitimate use of sources, the appropriate ways of acknowledging academic, scholarly or creative indebtedness, and the consequences of violating this responsibility. (…)

**Penalties** to be imposed in incidents of academic dishonesty are classified as academic or disciplinary. Academic penalties include such sanctions as assignment of a failing grade for a particular course requirement, or for the course itself, or for other tests or program assignments. They are set by the faculty member. Disciplinary sanctions can be sought in addition to those considered academic and could include, but are not limited to, the following penalties: suspension, expulsion, transcript annotations (temporary for a period of five years or permanent, as designated). Course credit earned at other institutions while on suspension may not be transferred to GSU. Disciplinary penalties can be requested by the faculty member, in consultation with the chair; they must be reviewed by the University Senate Committee on Student Discipline and they are set by the provost.”
ADDITIONAL NOTES ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

Plagiarism and misrepresentation of work are serious offenses, which can lead to expulsion and a grade of “F” for the course. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, taking material from any source written by another and presenting it as your own by failing to indicate full and accurate attribution to the correct author/creator. This includes marginally altering material taken from another source and calling it your own creation. Plagiarism includes materials taken from internet sources. Proper citation requires quote marks or other distinctive set-off for the material, followed directly by a reference to the source. The source details may be in the footnotes/endnotes/references section, but only listing a reference without proper indication in the text is not proper attribution and can be considered plagiarism.

Misrepresentation of work includes, but is not limited to, presenting material that was prepared for another class or outside work as an original work product that was produced for this class. All work turned in for this class is represented by the student(s) to be original material prepared in fulfillment of this course’s requirements.

Team members should be mindful of the fact that by placing your name on a team project you are representing ALL of the material included in the project is consistent with the policies on plagiarism and misrepresentation of work stated here and in the University Policy on Academic Honesty.

In short, all work that is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for this course is represented as original work prepared for this course and for this course alone by all students whose name(s) appear on the work. While specific culpability may be determined ex ante, delays may occur in assigning final grades and in awarding degrees to all group members of questionable submissions. If at any point in the semester you have concerns about the source of any work being incorporated into a project on which you intend to place your name, please speak to me as soon as possible BEFORE submitting the work. By distributing this syllabus to you, I am assuming that you have read and understood the above paragraphs. If you do not understand any portion of the above paragraphs, please contact me immediately for clarification.

GSU WITHDRAWAL POLICY

A student who withdraws prior to the midpoint in the semester or term will be awarded a “W”. A student who withdraws after the midpoint will automatically receive a “WF.” You are responsible for understanding and adhering to the W limit policy which is described at http://robinson.gsu.edu/resources/files/ouaa/policy_flyer.pdf
STUDENT ASSESSMENT
Your constructive assessment of this course plays an indispensable role in shaping education at Georgia State. Upon completing the course, please take time to fill out the online course evaluation.

ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

GRADING POLICY
The Final Grade will be based on the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Organizational equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
<td>Promoted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellence</td>
<td>Raise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>Mastered material</td>
<td>No Raise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>Tagged the bases</td>
<td>Reviewed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>50.0-59.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 50.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Points
- 95.0-100.0
- 90.0-94.9
- 85.0-89.9
- 80.0-84.9
- 75.0-79.9
- 70.0-74.9
- 65.0-69.9
- 60.0-64.9
- 50.0-59.9
- Below 50.0

In general, in MBA and PMBA prefix courses about 35% of the students will receive a grade of A+, A, or A-. Generally, the majority of the remaining students will receive grades of B+, B, or B-. Students who demonstrate significantly lagging performance shall earn grades at the C-level or lower as appropriate.

If you have any question, at any time, about your academic standing in the course, please make an appointment and your instructor will be happy to discuss your performance with you. To preserve your privacy, please do not attempt to discuss your performance directly before or after class, except by appointment.

GRADE COMPONENTS

- Team Paper Draft: 5%
- Team Paper: 30%
- Team Presentation: 10%
- Participation: 20%
- Final Exam: 35%
Final Exam:
The final exam will be take-home and due on the date listed in the course outline, at the end of this syllabus. There will be no class on that date. You will have the exam 2 weeks before the due date. The exam consists on a case just like the ones we analyze in class, and the goal is to provide an analysis of the problem the firm faces and a plan for a solution to that problem. In the unlikely event that you need alternative arrangements, contact me so we can set an earlier due date.

Participation:
Your class contribution grade for this course will be assessed in terms of the quality and quantity of your participation in the discussion of the assigned cases and the text readings, including but not limited to:
1. your depth of analysis;
2. the realism of your comments or analysis;
3. the clarity of your presentation;
4. the integration of your comments into the ongoing discussion (i.e., willingness to listen to classmates);
5. your ability to respond to questions and to defend your arguments; and
6. the contribution of your comments to the class’s learning.

Essentially, you will be graded on the thoroughness, sophistication, persuasiveness, and logic of your classroom comments. While quality is what matters more, attending class and participating often will increase your likelihood of contributing meaningful comments. Therefore, attendance is critical to build a good participation score – please arrange your schedule so that you will be able to arrive on time, attend each class, and stay for the entire class period.

Team Paper and Presentation:
Your team project will consist of a complete strategic analysis of your target firm. In essence, you are trying to answer two basic questions. First, is the firm’s strategy consistent with its internal resources and capabilities, as well as the external environment? Second, what changes should be made in the current strategy, and in investments in resources and capabilities, to improve or sustain overall performance? To answer these questions you will have to analyze every aspect of the firm and its understanding of the firm’s current situation and what can realistically be done to improve it. Importantly, you will want to support your conclusions with logical analysis. The “why” portion of your analysis is as important as the “what.”
Successful projects tend to require much team interaction and collaboration. In that spirit, this project will be performed with your PMBA teammates with whom you have been working throughout the program. Besides, your team will present a preliminary draft so that I can provide feedback and guide your efforts towards the final write-up and presentation.

The deliverables and dates are explained in the content outline, at the end of this syllabus. There will be a written draft that will be graded, a presentation, and a written paper.

I will upload a document on MyRobinson with detailed information on each of the deliverables, the goals of the paper, and the criteria for evaluation.

Grading of your write-up will be based on the following factors: 1) how well you integrate course concepts throughout the paper, 2) the quality of your insight, 3) the caliber of your written presentation. Please note that this assignment requires analysis and justification for your position, not just a presentation of facts.

The entire presentation will comprise 10% of your course grade and is based on my evaluation of the quality of your presentation (criteria are outlined in the Team Project Guidelines handout).

Note: Attendance is MANDATORY on the presentation day. Please do not ask for an exception.
COURSE OUTLINE

This is a tentative schedule; I reserve the right to make adjustments if necessary.

8/21 Topic 1: The Concept of Strategy
Reading: Chapter 1, The concept of strategy [skim]
Chapter 2, Goals, values, and performance [skim]
Finding Information for Industry Analysis, Rivkin&Cullen 2010 [skim]
Mini Case: The Ketchup Conundrum, by Malcolm Gladwell, The New Yorker (September 6, 2004)

9/4 Topic 2: From Industries to Ecosystems
Reading: Chapter 3, Industry analysis: The fundamentals
Chapter 4, Further topics in industry and competitive analysis
Case: Cola Wars Continue: Coke and Pepsi in 2010

Topic 3: The Pillars of Strategy: Resources and Knowledge
Reading: Chapter 5, Analyzing resources and capabilities
Chapter 6, Developing resources and capabilities
Case: Southwest Airlines 2002.
Project: Project topics due

9/18 Topic 4: Business Models: Dollars In, Dollars Out
Reading: Chapter 8, The nature and sources of competitive advantage
Chapter 9, Cost advantage
Chapter 10, Differentiation advantage
What is Strategy? (Porter, 1996)
Case: Samsung Electronics
10/2  Topic 5:  Building Fit and Synergies
     Reading:  Chapter 7, Organization structure and management systems: the fundamentals of strategy implementation.
     Case:  Philips versus Matsushita: The Competitive Battle Continues

Topic 6:  Evolution and Business Model Innovation
     Reading:  Chapter 11, Industry evolution and strategic change
               Chapter 13, Competitive advantage in mature industries
     Case:  Ready-to-Eat Breakfast Cereal Industry in 1994 (A)

10/16  Topic 7:  Technology Dynamics and the Management of Innovation
     Reading:  Chapter 12, Technology-based industries and the management of innovation
     Case:  iPod vs. Cell Phone: A Mobile Music Revolution?

Topic 8:  Path to Growth: Focus or Diversify, Outsource or Integrate
     Reading:  Chapter 14, Vertical integration and the scope of the firm
               Chapter 16, Diversification strategy
     Case:  Newell Co: Corporate Strategy
     Project drafts due. I will provide feedback within a week.

10/30  Topic 9:  Path to Growth: International Strategy
     Reading:  Chapter 15, Global strategies and the multinational corporation
     Case:  Lincoln Electric: Venturing Abroad

Topic 10:  Looking Forward: Strategic Change and Ethical Dilemmas
     Reading:  Convergence and upheaval (Tushman et al, 1986).
               Ethics at the Frontier (Harris, 2014).
     Case:  GE's Two-Decade Transformation: Jack Welch's Leadership

11/13  Your turn! Team presentations
     Papers due.

12/4  Final exam due – no class meeting.