



THE UNIVERSITY of NORTH CAROLINA
GREENSBORO
Bryan School of Business and Economics

Course Syllabus: Spring 2017
MBA 741.51: Strategic Management in Action
Bryan Building; Room 205

Instructor Information:

Faculty:	Mr. Joseph Erba, faculty of record Asst. Dean for External Affairs	Ms. Dianne Garrett Lecturer, MEHT department
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Required Text:

- Subscription to the Wall Street Journal: [WSJ-Student edition](#) (\$15 for 15 weeks)

Optional (suggested) Readings:

- Harvard Business Review Publishing Corporation (2011). *HBR's 10 Must Reads: The Essentials*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Publishing. Product #: 13292-PDF-Eng
- *Flawless Consulting: A Guide to Getting Your Expertise Used*; Block, Peter, 3rd edition 2011; ISBN: 978-047-0620748 (prior editions are useful as well)
- *Execution: The Discipline of Getting Things Done*. Bossidy, L. & Charan, R., Crown Business Publishing, 2002. ISBN 0-609-61057-0
- *Good to Great, Why Some Companies Make the Leap and Others Don't*, Harper Collins Publishing, 2001
- DGarrett's Guidebook for Successful Business Writing: pre-draft edition: [D. Garrett- Guidebook](#)

Catalog Description:

Integration of tools and techniques of strategic analysis, formulation and implementation of competitive and corporate strategy. Students engage in professional consulting and/or experiential projects with local organizations.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):

Upon completing the course, the student should be able to:

- 1) Demonstrate integration of strategic analysis, strategy formulation and strategy implementation in an organization.
- 2) Assess the managerial activities to create sustainable competitive advantage for their companies.
- 3) Apply the tools of strategic and competitive analysis in the global business environment by analyzing a firm's industry and strategy and developing recommendations.
- 4) Analyze the managerial task associated with formulating, implementing and executing company strategies and the actions managers can take to promote competent strategy implementation.
- 5) Synthesize the knowledge gained in a variety of different business and related courses, and the case discussions to provide a professional consulting advice to local organizations to solve a business problem in order to gain competitive advantage.

Teaching methods and assignments for achieving learning outcomes:

The use of lectures, videos, situational vignettes and guest speaker presentations, as deemed appropriate. The "lecture" sessions will rely on the "Socratic" method to the extent possible. The assignments and assessment mechanisms are described, following in this document.

Graduate Consulting Project (SLOs 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5):

The consulting experiential project includes the following four elements:

1. Written Report (Draft & Final documents)

The written report is the most important component of your consulting project as it represents the final recommendations of the group to the client. A suggested framework has been posted to Canvas. See "*Components of a Formal Consulting Engagement Report*". Each report should contain an executive summary describing the key recommendations. The main body of the report will describe the recommendations in detail and be heavily data driven.

The report is expected to be a professional piece of work, presented clearly and concisely, free of grammatical, spelling or syntax-related errors. The final written report should be handed to the client at the conclusion of the oral presentation. Please see Canvas for additional information.

The analysis should be of original thought. Therefore, no more than **15%** of the final document submitted should be references from citations used (including charts/graphs). Exceeding this limit will negatively impact your grade significantly.

Each student team is required to submit a final report draft, per the *Schedule of Assignments*. The draft will be reviewed as a finished product and graded for the quality of work focusing on format, grammatical composition and content.

2. Oral Presentation

Each consulting team will make a formal presentation to the client on a date and time to be determined, towards the end of the semester. The student teams are responsible for scheduling the presentation date. The instructor will be responsible for reserving the room on campus, if necessary. All team members are expected to participate evenly in the presentation.

Presentations may be made at the Bryan School or the client's location and should target 30 minutes for the formal presentation and 30 minutes for questions and answers. Presentations are expected to include the use of visual tools (PowerPoint, Prezi, etc.) and handouts should be provided to the client.

Any delays in completing either the written document or oral presentation, may, at the instructor's discretion, result in a grade penalty.

Important Note: Grading of the document and presentation is team-based, but the instructor reserves the right to individually grade team members if, at his sole discretion, it is warranted due to lack of participation or effort by individual team members. The instructor will consider comments and grading from each "Peer Evaluation" (see following) in determining final grading. In that case, it is possible for team members to earn different grades for both assignments.

3. Statement of Work

A key component of the practice of consulting is the creation of the Statement of Work (SOW). It is a written agreement between the consulting team and the client that clearly states the project intent, expectations, timelines (with milestones) and deliverables.

The first consulting project deliverable of this course is a final, signed SOW. Student teams are expected to meet with their client to discuss and agree on the SOW. **Before** a signed agreement is reached, each student team will need to secure an approval note on the scope of work, from the instructor (to avoid over-commitment by the team).

4. Peer Evaluations

The successful completion of a high quality consulting project requires a great deal of work and cooperation across team members. For this reason, team members, as well as the instructor will determine a portion of each student's grade based on their assessment of the student's contribution to the project's success (see #2 above and "Evaluation Descriptions" in the Grading section below). A peer evaluation is due from each student at the completion of the consulting engagement. (see Exhibit A following: "*Peer Evaluation Form*").

Class participation and contribution (SLOs 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5)

This is an important element of the class, therefore it dictates close attention by each student.

Each student should be prepared for insightful discussions of all aspects of the material assigned for each class session, be it articles and/or supplementary material. Students should be prepared to proactively participate in classroom discussions, especially when guest speakers are involved. Students will be evaluated at each session on the quality and quantity of their participation/contribution. Class contribution and participation grading is based on student preparation and readiness, how perceptively a student analyzes the situation being studied, the usefulness of the observations and suggestions made by the student, the depth of a student's understanding, and the student's ability to put across ideas with clarity and conviction.

Class attendance alone will not earn a student class participation/contribution credits. However, poor attendance will dramatically reflect on a student's participation grade. That is, a student cannot participate/contribute if absent from the class. There are no "excused absences" in this class (for work-related activities, illnesses or otherwise). Each missed class will affect your participation grade.

Grading will be based on a simple A-B-C-F format with "A" defined as excellent involvement, "B", good, "C" average for the class and "F" for failure to provide any significant value, as deemed by the instructor of record.

Note: Use of electronic tools (laptops and tablets only) in class are solely for the purpose of classroom activities that day. The instructors reserve the right to limit use of electronic tools, individually or in total, at their sole discretion, during any classroom activity.

Graded Assignments:

There are individual and team-based assignments in the course. The specific instructions for each are included in the "Assignments" section of Canvas. The due dates are posted accordingly in the *Schedule of Assignments* document.

Each teammate will receive the same grade for the team-graded assignments (with exceptions noted above) and are due by class time on the date posted in the *Schedule of Assignments* (regardless of whether we met as a class on the due date). The instructor reserves the decision to accept a late submission. If so, the instructor reserves the right to deduct grade points for each late submission(s) accepted.

GRADING & EVALUATION:

GRADING:

	Individual graded	Team-graded
Participation	10%	
Statement of Work (SOW)		
Draft		5%
Final		2.5%
Industry & Market Analysis		12.5%
Gantt Chart		5%
Consulting Report:		
Draft #1		5.0%
Draft #2		12.5%
-Final document		25%
Project Presentation		15%
EI-Reflection paper	7.5%	
Teammate/Peer review	Not graded	
Totals	17.5%	82.5%

EVALUATION DESCRIPTIONS:

Grading scale for individual & team-based assignments (letter)

- A= Excellent:** indicates achievement of distinction. Student(s) exceed expectations and requirements as stated in the “Student Learning Objectives –SLO’s”. Completed work is of exceptional quality in the eyes of the instructor. The work demonstrates a clear understanding of the material under study, including materials and knowledge gained from previous class work, as well as a superior ability to articulate the material.
- B = Good:** indicates general achievement superior to the acceptable standard of performance. The work demonstrates a solid understanding of the work under study and is prepared and presented effectively, with very few errors or omissions.
- C = Average:** indicates the acceptable standard for meeting the course requirements. Work demonstrated a minimal understanding of the theory, application and/or concepts needed to successfully complete the assigned project(s). Work completed did not meet the expectation of the instructor and/or client company.
- F = Failure:** indicates failure to perform to a minimum standard of performance. Work was not completed in a timely manner, or lacked little comprehension of the materials taught during the MBA program. Included here is the lack of participation of the student to any of the team-based projects.

As grades are tallied for the year, they will be finalized in letter grade form, per the chart below:

A+	98% - 100%	C	73% - 76.9%
A	93% - 97.9%	C-	70% - 72.9%
A-	90% - 92.9%	D+	67% - 69.9%
B+	87% - 89.9%	D	63% - 66.9%
B	83% - 86.9%	D-	60% - 62.9%
B-	80% - 82.9%	F	Below 60%
C+	77% - 79.9%		

*Note: Instructor reserves authority to round fractions up or down at his discretion

Performance Monitoring:

This section applies to all team exercises.

In every teaming situation, issues appear. Yet, in today's business environments "knowledge work" has become a key, competitive position. You will be required to work effectively with people of different skill levels, interests and motivations to succeed. As such, you will have the opportunity to do so in this course.

Peer Evaluations (Exhibit 1 at end of syllabus): Each individual in a team will be required to complete a peer evaluation on his/her teammates at the conclusion of the team project. This evaluation will be used to assess an individual's contribution to the project. I expect honest, professional assessments. In the case where a team member receives consistently inferior ratings from his/her teammates, a person's total project grade will be appropriately reduced.

Process: In the case where a team member consistently underperforms during the development and completion stages of the project, action can be taken by the team, in sequential steps, as follows (underperformance includes but is not limited to missing scheduled meetings, not completing agreed-upon assignments in the time required, or agreed to, etc.)

1. Team members meet with the underperformer(s), discuss the issues and clearly delineates the expectations of the team. This meeting is documented and the notes of such are sent to the instructor.
2. If, after a reasonable period of time, determined by the team, performance does not improve, the team can request a meeting with the instructor to discuss the issues at hand. At that time, the instructor will request a meeting with the underperformer(s).
3. After such meeting and a reasonable amount of time to correct the issues has passed, the team will be given the authority to "fire" the under-performer(s), with the approval of the instructor (supporting "just cause").

If a student is "fired" from a team, he/she will receive a score of zero (0) for the entire consulting project and will fail the course, regardless of other scores earned in the class. No make-up work is available to counteract this failing.

General:

ACADEMIC HONOR CODE:

By the singular act of registering for this course, you are agreeing to abide by the UNCG Academic Integrity Policy. All written work submitted must be original and produced by the student/team for this class only. If you are for any reason unfamiliar with the contents of the code, please review it on the school's website link: <http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/complete/>. Violations will be pursued.

Academic Integrity applies to all aspects of MBA719. Please be aware that the following also constitute Integrity Violations in MBA719:

- Signing an attendance sheet for another student and/or failing to attend the entire class is a falsification of your attendance and an academic integrity violation.
- Falsification of any material used in the preparation or development of assignments is a code violation.

The Bryan School of Business and Economics has recently developed and accepted Faculty and Student Guidelines focusing on the expected performance of each. Since these guidelines are new, please take the time to review them. They can be found at the following link:

http://bae.uncg.edu/assets/faculty_student_guidelines.pdf.

Students with Disabilities: UNCG seeks to comply fully with The Americans with Disabilities Act and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Students requesting accommodations based on a disability must be registered with the Office of Disability Services in 215 Elliott University center, 334-5440, www.uncg.edu/ods.

Communicating:

For purposes of this course, I will request that you check your personal e-mail (E-Spartan) daily as well as Canvas for messages and/or assignments.

Incident Weather:

UNCG will remain open during adverse weather conditions until and unless the Chancellor makes the administrative decision to postpone/cancel class. Students can obtain details on those decisions by calling the Adverse Weather Line at 336-334-4400 or accessing the website at: www.uncg.edu/iss/weather.htm.

Extra Credit:

There is no extra credit assignments scheduled for this course. If a situation presents itself during the semester, all students will be given equal opportunity to participate.

Biographical sketch of Instructors:

Joseph Erba, Jr. serves as the Assistant Dean for External Affairs for the Bryan School of Business & Economics at UNCG. Prior to this current position he taught undergraduate and graduates courses at UNCG focusing on the areas of business strategy, leadership and entrepreneurship. During his tenure, he has developed a number of new programs and courses at UNCG, including “Campus Entrepreneurs” which offers students the opportunity to start their own for-profit ventures on campus. His on-going work with the Target Corporation has led to the formation of the “Target Case Challenge” on campus, now in its sixth year of operation. His service work includes active participation with the UNCG International Programs Committee, serving as faculty advisor and mentor to incoming international students as well as sponsoring and participating in study abroad programs.

Mr. Erba is actively involved with numerous local, regional and national organizations to support and align their interests in UNCG and our students.

Through his teaching, Joe has earned multiple nominations and was the recipient of the Bryan School’s Non-tenured Faculty Teaching Excellence Award in Spring 2011.

Mr. Erba earned a bachelor’s (BSBA) and Master’s degree (MBA) from Babson College of Wellesley, Massachusetts. During his 30+ years in industry prior to joining UNCG, he gained experience in a variety of fields including financial services (for which he earned the Chartered Life Underwriter and the Chartered Financial Consultant designations) sales, marketing, operations, distribution, supply-chain management and executive leadership. Among others, he has held the executive leadership position of Vice-President of Order Fulfillment and Supply Chain Management for Steelcase, Inc. the world’s largest office furniture manufacturer, as well as President and CEO of two organizations; Revest, Inc. of Atlanta, GA and Brayton International of High Point, N.C.

Retiring from general industry activities in early 2005, Mr. Erba maintains a boutique business consulting practice specializing in strategy development, implementation and leadership development for small to moderate-sized businesses.

Ms. Dianne Garrett teaches full-time in the Bryan School of Business and Economics at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Her teaching focuses on Business Communication with foci on business writing and persuasive presentations. In the 2012-2013 academic year, Ms. Garrett was awarded the Bryan School Teaching Excellence Award. She holds an undergraduate degree in Business Administration with a Minor in Information Systems from Elon University and a Masters of Arts in Strategic Communication and Leadership from Seton Hall University. In 2007, she graduated from a personal and business coach training program. Additionally, Ms. Garrett completed a post-graduate certificate in the Neuroscience of Leadership at the Middlesex University in the United Kingdom. Prior to teaching, Ms. Garrett led software implementations teams and did corporate training in the higher-education industry. For a multi-organizational software conversion project, she led teams in their learning and business practice decision-making relative to student data.

Exhibit 1

PEER EVALUATION FORM

YOUR NAME: _____

Client company name: _____

Assign a number between **1**(low quality) and **5** (high quality) for the **quality and quantity** of each member's contribution (see explanations below).

Quality:

- Helps the team proceed by articulating ideas and proposals for consideration.
- Engages in all team assignments and motivates team members to participate
- Provides assistance when asked, treats all members respectfully
- Helps to address conflict constructively in support of team cohesiveness
- Quality of work meets the expectations of the group

Quantity:

- Attended all scheduled meetings/discussions
- Completes all assigned tasks by deadlines established
- Completes his/her “fair share” of the overall assignment/project

<i>Name: List yourself first</i>	<i>Quality Score (1-5)</i>	<i>Quantity Score (1-5)</i>	<i>Total Score</i>
1. YOU			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

After completing this form, write a few sentences on the reverse side describing your perception of each member's involvement, commitment and contribution to the TOTAL team effort. Do this carefully and thoughtfully. The person's grade will depend in part, on your overall evaluation of their performance. Specifically, compare the tasks assigned by the group to each person and his or her execution of these tasks.

You will not receive a grade for this course until this form is submitted to me. I will not share this evaluation with ANYONE. Write your name on the form, fold it and turn it in at class.

