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**Required Text:** *Strategic Management and Competitive Advantage* Concepts Second Edition  
Jay B. Barney and William S. Hesterly  
Pearson Prentice Hall  
ISBN # 0-13-613520-X

**Required Literature:** Kindly self subscribe: The Wall Street Journal ([www.wsj.com/student](http://www.wsj.com/student)) In addition, Students should purchase the assigned Harvard Business Review articles. .

**Course Description:** A 3-credit interdisciplinary capstone approach to understanding business strategy and planning including; the importance of the mission statement, tools to complete an external and internal environmental scan, business level strategies, corporate strategies and how to prepare and present a comprehensive business plan. This course will explore the separate business functions and how they interrelate for business success and will draw heavily on the student's cumulative knowledge in the Cedar Crest business curriculum.

**Objectives:** The overall goal is to develop the student's holistic understanding of business by writing and presenting a comprehensive business plan. Specific objectives are:

- View the firm holistically with the purpose of analyzing its past, present and future states
- Discriminate among the types of data that general managers and leaders need to evaluate business scenarios
- Develop and apply persuasive logic to business problems and outcomes
- Provide a conceptual framework for identifying, evaluating and formulating strategies
- Convey a solid understanding of the formal Business Plan and the Strategic Management Process
- Collaborate as a team utilizing advisors and other expert external sources

**Methods:** Lecture/In- depth discussion of text, readings/small group assignments and discussions, Presentation of Business Plan. **Students must prepare thoroughly for every class as we will look to include a rich diversity of thought to bear on our assignments.** Using the library as a resource will be necessary to stay abreast of recent publications and add value to your Business Plan. On-line web site review is required for discussion regarding companies and brands. Each student will be subscribed to the Wall Street Journal (WSJ) and come prepared to discuss articles relevant to your industry, company and general strategic learning. Each Business Plan Team will have 1 to 2 advisors to serve as expert consultants. Occasionally, there will be in-class sessions to meet with your group or advisors to progress your plan.

**Attendance:** Attendance is critical to your success in this course. Students are expected to attend and fully participate in class. In the event that you miss a lecture, it is the student's responsibility to make up work. If an assignment is due the day of the absence, the due date does not change. If you miss more than two classes, you may fail the class. Excused absences are only those that have a submitted doctor's note. Excused absences count as half an absence. Appropriate classroom behavior is implicit in the Cedar Crest College Honor Code (Cedar Crest College Catalog, page 29). Kindly turn to vibrator- all cell phones, beepers and pagers prior to the start of class.

### **Honor Philosophy**

"The Cedar Crest Honor Philosophy states that students uphold community standards for academic and social behavior in order to preserve a learning environment dedicated to personal and academic excellence. Individuals who accept the honor of membership in the Cedar Crest College community of scholars pledge to accept responsibility for their actions and the effect their actions may have on other members of the College Community." (Cedar Crest College Catalog, p 28). Plagiarism is not tolerated. Plagiarism will result in a zero on the assignment and a report to the Provost.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

Whether "deliberate or accidental, academic dishonesty is a serious academic offense and a violation of the spirit of the Cedar Crest Honor Code." (Cedar Crest College Catalog, p 28)

### **Students with Documented Disabilities**

Students with documented disabilities who may need academic accommodations should discuss these needs with the professor during the first two weeks of class. Students with disabilities who wish to request accommodations should contact the Advising Center.

### **Late submissions of assignments**

Students are expected to submit all assignments on the assigned due date. Students who are absent from class are still responsible for timely submission of assignments. Late submissions will earn half credit if submitted within a week of the assignment, beyond that, assignments earn 0 credit.

### **Team Presentations and Peer Review**

Each student is expected to make team presentations. Presentation aids may be used and these aids may be technological or conventional (hand outs, posters, etc.) Peer review involves reviewing the work and contributions of those in your assigned group as well as your classmates as a whole.

**Evaluation:** Grades will be determined based on the following:

Grade Distribution

Discussion Preparedness/Caliber of Contribution*	20%
Mid Term	15%
Final	15%
WSJ/ HBR Discussions	20%
The Business Plan**	30%

\*Details on Discussion Preparedness appear below the Class Schedule

\*\*Outline of the Business Plan appears below Discussion Preparedness.

### **Grade Assignment**

93%- 100%+	A
90%-92%	A-
87%- 89%	B+
83%-86%	B
80%-82%	B-
77%-79%	C+
73%-76%	C

70%-72%	C-
67%-69%	D+
60%- 66%	D
Below 60%	F

**Assignments:** Senior Seminar will be divided into teams that will work together for the entirety of the semester. By the end of Class 1 (1/21/09), each team will have chosen a company for their Business Plan. The Business Plan will follow a structure provided in this syllabus. As we progress, portions of your Business Plan will be discussed with your advisors. Advisors are invaluable resources to help assure a solid progress in senior seminar. Your advisors will sign your business plan directly before the presentation and evaluate you and your team at the end of the course. The advisors along with Business Department Faculty will be invited to the final Presentation of the Plan. See Student/Advisor Value/Interaction which appears at the end of this document. Five Harvard Business Review (HBR) readings are required to supplement the text and focus learning. Teams will informally discuss WSJ/HBR articles in class on a regular basis. Two exams are scheduled.

### **Class Schedule**

#### **Date**

<b>Jan 21</b>	Introductions/ Course Objectives Course Assignments and Expectations Class Participation- Caliber of Comments Wall Street Journal (WSJ) Review Library Resources beyond Google Lecture Chapter 1: "What is Strategy and The Strategic Management Process?" Virtuoso Teams Group Membership Determination Group Business Determination Ice breakers- "Personal Qualities, Personal Influences"
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#### **Assignment/Reading**

Chapter 1: "What is Strategy and the Strategic Management Process?"  
 HBR article; "How to write a Great Business Plan"  
 WSJ article summary  
 Mail, phone or email request published financials for your company  
 Begin a comprehensive research study of your company

<b>Jan 28</b>	Chapter 2: "External Environment" Group discussion "How to write a Great Business Plan" New Business Mentor WSJ article team discussion Library Visitation Business Plan Timeline
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#### **Assignment/Reading**

Contact Advisors; Invite them to your presentation in April  
 Chapter 2:"External Environment"  
 HBR article; "Building a Business Model and Strategy; How they work Together"  
 Interview or study a manager at your Company (CEO, CMO, Director of Sales etc.)  
 Outline the external environment for your company

<b>Feb 4</b>	Chapter 3: "Internal Capabilities" Group Discussion "Building a Business Model"
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New Business Mentor  
WSJ Team Presentation  
Group Project check point

**Assignment/Reading**

Chapter 3 Internal Capabilities  
WSJ article summary  
HBR article "Marketing Strategy: How it Fits with Business Strategy"  
Review the advertising and/or PR at your Company- request advisor feedback for work to date  
Determine their advertising and or PR agency  
Meet with or e-mail advisors to review Business Plan Outline and timeline

**Feb 11** Chapter 4 "Cost Leadership"  
Sample Business Plans from Former Students  
Discussion of HBR "Marketing Strategy"  
WSJ article team discussion  
In-class collaboration

**Assignment/Reading**

Chapter 4 "Cost Leadership"

**Feb 18** Chapter 5 "Product Differentiation"  
Exam Expectations  
Group Project Check Point-10 minute updates to Professor

**Assignment/Reading**

Chapter 5 Product Differentiation  
Study Chapters 1-5, Review articles

**Feb 25** Chapter 6 "Vertical Integration"  
Exam One 90 minutes Chapters 1-5

**Assignment/Reading**

Chapter 6 Vertical Integration  
WSJ article summary  
HBR article "Core Competencies of the Corporation"  
Outline the Core Competency of your company- publish to advisors

**Mar 4** Exam One Review  
Chapter 7 "Corporate Diversification"  
WSJ team discussion  
HBR "Core Competencies" discussion  
Group Project In class collaboration

**Assignment/Reading**

Chapter 7 Corporate Diversification  
Outline the Core Competency and Marketing Strategy at your Company, Publish to advisors

**Mar 11** **NO CLASS Spring Break**

**Mar 18** Chapter 8 "Organizing to Implement Corporate  
Diversification"  
WSJ Team Presentation  
Group Collaboration Time

**Assignments/Readings**

Chapter 8 Corporate Diversification  
WSJ article summary  
Outline the Financials of your Company-publish to advisors

**Mar 25** Possible **BREAK**- Self Study Chapter 9 “Strategic Alliances”  
Read HBR “Writing a Business Plan; The Basics

**Assignment/Readings**

Chapter 9 and 10  
Review Chapters 6-10, articles  
Outline the Executive Summary of your Company- publish to advisors

**Apr 1** Chapter 10 Mergers and Acquisitions  
WSJ articles- last presentations  
Plan on a Page  
Appendix A: Understanding Financial Statements  
Team Evaluation Forms Distributed  
Group Project Check Point  
Exam Two Expectations

**Assignments/Readings**

Final preparation Business Plan, Publish Final Plan to advisors, meet with advisors for signatures  
WSJ article summary

**Apr 8** Exam 2  
No resources, no books open

**Apr 15** Plan Finalization/ Team Rehearsals

**Apr 22** **Business Plan Presentations**

**Apr 29** **Business Plan Presentations**

***Discussion Preparedness***

Grade	Criteria
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Demonstrates excellent preparation; shows evidence of having identified, analyzed, and responded to the key issues raised in the readings.</li> <li>☐ Volunteers contributions to discussions which reflect a systematic effort to utilize the ideas, interpretations and information presented in the readings as an opportunity to raise ideas and questions that go beyond those found in the readings.</li> <li>☐ Demonstrates an active level of engagement.</li> <li>• ☐ 2 absence max</li> </ul>
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Demonstrates good preparation; shows evidence of having identified and analyzed the key issues raised in the readings.</li> <li>☐ Volunteers contributions to discussions which reflect a systematic effort to draw upon and apply the ideas, interpretations, and information presented in the readings.</li> <li>☐ Demonstrates a conscientious level of engagement.</li> <li>• ☐ 4 absence max</li> </ul>
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Demonstrates adequate preparation; shows familiarity with the key issues raised in the readings.</li> </ul>

	<p>☒ Typically does not volunteer contributions to discussions, but will contribute when called upon; contributions do not consistently draw upon or reference the ideas, interpretations and information presented in the readings.</p> <p>☒ Demonstrates a sporadic level of engagement.</p>
D	<p>☒ Demonstrates minimal preparation; shows familiarity with few of the key issues raised in the readings.</p> <p>☒ Does not volunteer contributions to discussion and has little to say when called on; contributions do not reference the ideas, interpretations or information presented in the readings.</p> <p>☒ Demonstrates a superficial level of engagement.</p>
F	<p>☒ Demonstrates little preparation; shows no evidence of having read the material</p> <p>☒ Does not volunteer contributions to discussion, does not respond when called on.</p> <p>☒ Demonstrates virtually no level of engagement, frequently absent from class.</p>

### **Business Plan Presentation**

Each team will present their business plan to the class. Presentations should be 30 minutes in length. Presentation should cover all of the functional areas of the business plan. The presentation should conclude with the team making a persuasive argument for implementing their recommendations based on the company's competitive advantage.

You must site your sources using APA and include at least 3 industry or popular sources and 3 scholarly sources. You may refer to "easybib" for format. You must include at least two quotes from company management (either sourced from a phone interview or an external published source.) The written plans are due electronically to instructor the day before your presentation. The written plan is due the day of the presentation. Written Plans must have a "Works Sited" section.

### ***Business Plan Outline***

- Executive Summary
  - Key Messages, a one page summary of your key points
- Company Description
  - Mission
  - Strategic Focus and Plan – Core Competency, Sustainable Competitive Advantage, Goals, Global Perspective
  - The Team: Top Management, Leadership Style & Culture
- Situation Analysis
  - Company Analysis- Operations, Production, Technology, Customers
  - External Scan, Trends
  - SWOT
  - Competitive Set Diagram
- Marketing Strategy
  - Target Market
  - Competitive Advantage
  - Positioning vis a vie the Competitive Set
  - Products: Innovation Potential
  - Promotions
  - Distribution
  - Pricing
- Financials
  - Financial Information; Historical and Three Year Proforma (Common Size)

- Income Statement
  - Balance Sheet, Ratios
  - Cash Flow
  - Narrative explaining the trends and issues
- Recommendations
  - Specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time bound recommendations
  - Implementation timeline
  - Projected impact of implementation
    - Financial
    - Operational
- Exhibits
  - Plan on a Page
  - Detail information in chart format
  - Works Cited

### ***Student/Advisors Value and Interaction***

You will have two advisors; one outside expert and one faculty member. Develop a good working relationship with them. USE this resource by leveraging their knowledge to help you problem solve. You will be evaluated by them at the end of the semester. You will need their signatures on the business plan before you submit it to the instructor.

Each student will introduce themselves to the advisors by e-mail or phone by Jan 28. You will define your tenure at Cedar Crest, identify this course as the reason you are contacting them and unfold the name of the company you are working on. You will provide them any summary information you have on the company at that point. It is at this point that the students will provide the advisors of the timeline of business plan submissions (see syllabus). Throughout the semester, students will ask the advisors to review a specific written portion of the business plan along with supporting information to add value on specific points the team is having trouble with. Advisors will not do the work. They will simply point you in the right direction to find your answers and stimulate your thinking. They will add their perspective. If they are able, they will meet with you face to face. You will invite them to the final presentation of the Business Plan. Your team will send a follow up Thank You note on Cedar Crest stationery for the time they devoted to this project. This is a clear indication of Leadership. Your senior seminar advisors may end up as references, networking partners and friends!

The plans will be graded on the following factors (approximately 10% per factor):

- The level of analysis apparent
- Use and depth of research
- Ability to relate strategic theory to your company's real situation
- Incorporation of current events and business issues into the plan
- Clarity of the competitive advantage
- Quality and feasibility of your recommendations
- Evidence of group cohesiveness/Peer Feedback
- Ability to communicate clearly
- Strength of the Overall Strategic Plan
- Advisor feedback

