MGMT 4710 - 004/350

Strategic Management

Fall 2020

3 credit hours

Instructor

Kelly Mollica, Ph.D.

E-mail: kmollica@memphis.edu

• NOTE: I do not use eCourseware email.

Office Phone: (901) 678-3885

Office Location: 247 FCBE

Office Hours: By appointment in-person, phone, or via videoconference

IMPORTANT CLASS MEETING INFORMATION

This is a fully online course until further notice, pending an announcement by the university regarding a return to on-campus classes.

• The university's COVID policies and updates can be found here: U of M Coronavirus Updates.

Course Overview

This capstone course, required of all senior business majors, builds on and integrates concepts in various functional areas of business. The overall focus of this course is on strategic planning and execution—the key ingredients of company success and the most reliable signs of good management. You will explore why effective strategic management leads to good business performance, learn the methods of crafting a well-conceived strategy and executing it competently, and apply the tools and concepts of strategic analysis. Strategic management addresses three questions critical to any organization: (1) Where are we now? (2) Where do we want to go? and (3) How are we going to get there? (You may also be asking yourself these same questions with respect to your personal and career goals!)

Prerequisites

MGMT 3110, MGMT 3510, and senior standing in the Fogelman College of Business.

Required Course Materials


• Airline Simulation from Interpretive.com. You will receive an email sent to your official U of M email (e.g., joe.tiger@memphis.edu) from Interpretive.com with a user ID and password so that you can register for and purchase access. Price is $44.95.
Course Methodology & Location of Online Course Content

All course content is located on the eCourseware and Interpretive websites. You are responsible for maintaining access to these websites and meeting minimum technology requirements so that you can successfully complete the course.

- eCourseware technical support: UM Technical Support or (901) 678-8888.
- Interpretive Technical Support: email support@interpretive.com or request support using the 'Help' tab on your dashboard when logged in to the Interpretive website.

Course Goals

By successfully completing this course, you will:

1. develop your capacity to think strategically about a company, its present business position, its long-term direction, its resources and competitive capabilities, the caliber of its strategy, and its opportunities for gaining sustainable competitive advantage;
2. build your skills in conducting strategic analysis in a variety of industries and competitive situations using relevant strategic analysis tools and concepts;
3. further your understanding of the challenges of competing in a global market;
4. become acquainted with the managerial tasks associated with planning, implementing, and executing company strategies;
5. integrate the knowledge gained in earlier core courses in the business school curriculum;
6. heighten your awareness of why ethical principles and socially responsible management practices matter greatly in the conduct of a company’s business; and
7. enhance your team collaboration skills.

Fogelman College of Business Learning Outcomes for the BBA Degree

The Fogelman College has established the following learning goals for students completing the BBA degree: (See Fogelman Assurance of Learning).

- Graduates will be effective communicators.
- Graduates will demonstrate critical thinking skills.
- Graduates will be knowledgeable about ethical factors in the business environment.
- Graduates will be knowledgeable about the global business environment.
- Graduates will be proficient users of business presentation and analysis technology.

Learning Activities

- Students registered for the Honors section: See "Honors Project for MGMT 4710-350" on the Content page in eCourseware for information on honors project and grading.

Airline Team Simulation (Interpretive.com)

Registration and payment for the Airline simulation is required for this class. You will receive an email from Interpretive Simulations, sent to your official U of M email (__@memphis.edu), with a unique user ID and password along with instructions on how to register and pay for the simulation. You should register and pay on August 17 or as soon as possible the first week of class. If you do not receive the email from Interpretive by August 17 let me know. Once you register and log in, you will have access to the simulation and accompanying materials.

- The login page for Interpretive.com can be found here.

You will be randomly assigned to a team with several other students in the class. You and your team members will play the role of executives in the top management team at a small airline company, competing directly against other teams in the class. Your team will meet virtually to formulate your company's strategy and make a series of decisions concerning critical issues facing the firm. Your decisions and the decisions of the other teams will be processed throughout the semester to provide ongoing feedback on how each company is performing in the competitive struggle. A major reason I assign the simulation is because it drives home what real management is like--there are no clear answers, you have to make decisions without complete information, and there's no guarantee how your decisions will turn out!
Decisions are due on the Airline site on a weekly basis by 11:59 pm CT on a Sunday night and the results will be available Monday morning. There are no deadline extensions for team decisions; failure to submit a decision by the deadline represents managerial negligence on the part of your entire executive team and will have severe market consequences for your firm’s performance.

On the Interpretive website you’ll be provided with detailed instructions on the simulation procedures and each team has two practice rounds to become familiar with the simulation before starting it for “real.” Do not be concerned about being an expert right away. You'll probably feel a bit overwhelmed at first, as there is a lot of information to take in as you familiarize yourself with the program. You and your team will get more proficient as you progress through the simulation. Have fun with it and learn!

Simulation Grading:

Grading for the Airline simulation is based on your level of participation with your team and several individual assignments related to the simulation.

The simulation grading breakdown is as follows:

- Your team participation = 70 pts
- Case quiz = 5 pts
- Concepts quiz = 5 pts
- Simulation Learning Summary = 10 pts
- Total possible points = 90

As an added incentive, at the end of the simulation the students in the top three highest-performing teams based on actual results of the simulation will receive bonus points: 1st place team=5 pts, 2nd place team=4 pts, 3rd place team=3 pts. (Students who do not earn the full 70 participation points are disqualified from bonus point eligibility).

**Overall, your level of team participation will be THE MOST significant part of your grade on the simulation.** Participation is assessed by team peer evaluations as well as instructor observation. Note the following:

1. Each team will have their own private discussion forum set up on the eCourseware Discussions page. This is where your management team will communicate with each other; the instructor can view your team's posts but other teams cannot. It's critical that you stay on top of this and communicate frequently with team members.

2. There are two required team peer evaluations, one mid-semester and one at the end of the semester. If you do not submit your team peer evaluations by the deadlines, you will be penalized on the participation portion of the simulation grade. For each team peer evaluation that you don't submit by the deadline, 20 pts will be deducted from your participation score. This means 40 points deducted from your participation score if you don't submit either team peer evaluation by the deadline.

3. If your participation is evaluated as unsatisfactory based on feedback from your team and/or instructor observation, you will be penalized on the participation portion of your simulation grade. The number of points deducted is completely at the instructor's discretion.

4. At any time during the semester, if your team decides collectively that you are not carrying your share of the teamwork load, they may consult with me and fire you from the airline management team. If you are fired, you will receive a ‘0’ on the entire simulation.

**Bottom line:** If you are not willing to participate 100% in a team, you should drop the class. I am quite serious about this. I absolutely do not tolerate “free riders” and I am extremely unforgiving to students who do not regularly communicate with their team and who do not cooperative fully.

- [Airline Teams List](#) (Link to Content page in eCourseware)
- [Airline Team Communication FAQs can be found here](#) (Link to Content page in eCourseware)

**Company Strategic Analyses (upload to eCourseware Dropbox)**

You will select a U.S.-headquartered publicly traded company (within certain restrictions that I will provide), research currently available information on that company, and present a detailed written analysis of the company's strategic situation and a set of specific and actionable recommendations. As there is no final, comprehensive exam in this course, you should think of this project as your 'final exam.'

Information on the company you select is due near the beginning of the semester. The completed analysis is due near the end of the
semester. This project will require a great deal of research and work, and you should plan on starting early in the semester. It is not a last minute assignment! Submissions are not accepted via email. The date uploaded to the Dropbox is the date of submission.

- Instructions for the Company Strategic Analysis can be found here (Link to Content page in eCourseware)

Chapter Quizzes (eCourseware Quizzes page)

Each week, you’ll take a short quiz to assess your comprehension of concepts in the assigned chapter. You may take the quiz anytime during a 7-day window, Monday through Sunday. The quizzes are auto-graded and you'll immediately see your score upon submission. You have two attempts on the quizzes; if you do both attempts, your grade is the average of the two attempts.

Case Discussions (eCourseware Discussions page)

The online discussion forums provide opportunities for you to interact with classmates on applied cases relevant to the course. The discussions are based on cases found in the textbook. There are five case discussions during the semester, each staying open for two weeks (see course schedule for dates). You must post at least three comments per discussion topic as follows: During the 1st week the discussion is open, no later than Sunday you must start a new thread and post your initial response to the case questions. During the 2nd week the discussion is open, no later than Sunday you must post responses to at least two classmates’ threads.

Be sure to carefully read the case before participating. Your responses will be graded on how well you demonstrate an in-depth understanding and analysis of the case data and information. Superficial, poorly written discussion posts that reflect a lack of preparation or that is based mostly on your personal opinion, rather than an informed analysis, will receive a poor grade.

Discussion deadlines cannot be extended. I will not reopen a discussion if you miss the deadline.

- Guidelines & Grading for Case Discussions (Link to Content page in eCourseware).

Exams (eCourseware Quizzes page)

There are two exams, mid-semester and end of semester, each covering one-half of the course material. The exams are open for a 7-day window.

Grading

Points for graded activities are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graded Activity</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Airline Team Simulation</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company Strategic Analysis</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Quizzes (10 @ 5 pts ea)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Discussions (5 @ 10 pts ea)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams (2 @ 25 pts ea)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points</strong></td>
<td><strong>300</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Final course grades are earned as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Point Range Final Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>270 - 300</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>240 - 269</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>210 - 239</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>180 - 209</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 180</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you think I may have made a mistake on any of your posted assignment grades during the semester or on your final grade,
contact me immediately via email. I understand that grades are important and I will gladly confirm the accuracy of a grade or correct any unintentional mistakes.

Course Policies & Additional Information

Deadlines and Late Submissions - READ THIS VERY CAREFULLY!

This is not a self-paced course in which you can submit work on your own timeline. Deadlines will be enforced. There is no university policy that obligates faculty to accept late work, regardless of reason.

Although I hope this won’t happen, if you experience a severe medical issue or family emergency that prevents you from completing work by a deadline, it is your responsibility to contact me IMMEDIATELY. Appropriate documentation in writing (e.g., from a health care provider) must be provided. It is entirely my discretion how to respond, including assessing a late grade penalty or rejecting your documentation if deemed to be insufficient or unwarranted. Reminder: Discussion deadlines will not be extended. I will not reopen a discussion if you miss the deadline.

The best strategy in this course is to manage your time carefully, start early on assignments, submit assignments well before deadlines, and communicate regularly with your simulation team. If you choose to wait until the last minute to start an assignment and experience a technical problem or other issue that prevents you from submitting on time, this does not excuse you from meeting a deadline. I will, of course, adjust deadlines if there are technical glitches in eCourseware or in the Interpretive simulation that affect everyone in the class.

Final Grade, Extra Credit, and Make-Up Work

Your final letter grade will be calculated as shown in the ‘Grading’ section of this syllabus. I do not offer extra credit unless it is made available to everyone in the class. I do not negotiate make-up work for students who are unhappy with their grade at the end of the semester. All students are held to the same standards and course requirements.

Attendance

Attendance in an online course means logging in regularly and actively participating. I have access to data on your login activity and frequency in eCourseware and in the Airline simulation. If/when the class meets on campus, attendance will not be required but I will keep a record of attendance. I am required to report lack of attendance to the university. For students receiving federal student loans, non-attendance can impact student loan eligibility.

Course Communication and Email Guidelines

Each Monday morning, usually by 8 a.m., I post announcements on the eCourseware home page. I also expect you to check your U of M email regularly. If I send information via email, it will be to your U of M email address, NOT via eCourseware email. If you fail to read announcements or email, resulting in your missing important information that affects your grade, that is your responsibility.

Email is the best way to contact me and I usually respond quickly. Email me at kmollica@memphis.edu. Do not email me from within the eCourseware system. I REQUIRE that you follow ALL of these guidelines when sending me an email:

- Include the course name, number, and section in the subject line (MGMT 4710 M50).
- Begin with a proper salutation: “Dear Dr. Mollica” or “Dear Professor Mollica.” (Not “Hey professor.”)
- Be specific. I teach multiple classes with multiple assignments, cases, quizzes, exams, and discussions. Don’t make me guess what you are asking about; e.g., state “The Chapter 2 quiz,” not “The quiz.”
- Ensure that your email is well-written with correct spelling, grammar, word usage, and punctuation, and is courteous and professional in tone. No "text-speak."
- Include your full name at the end of your email message.

If you send me an email that does not meet all the above guidelines, I will respond by asking you to revise your email and send it again. This will delay your getting your question answered in a timely manner as well as create extra work for me, so make sure you get it right the first time. Please understand that the purpose of these guidelines is to help you develop and practice communication skills needed in a professional work context.
Professionalism

I expect you to behave just as you would in a professional business setting. To provide guidance in adhering to this expectation, ask yourself the following questions about what you would do in a professional business setting.

- Would I fail to complete my job duties or wait until the last minute to begin an assigned task, then make excuses for why I didn’t get things done or why I performed poorly?
- Would I “free load” off my team members and expect them to do my work and cover for me? Would I fail to communicate with team members or ignore their attempts to communicate with me?
- Would I expect special treatment because I’m ‘busy,’ even though my co-workers are equally as busy?
- Would I neglect to carefully read information and instructions given to me in writing?
- Would I refrain from asking legitimate questions when I truly need more clarification to help me do my job better, later blaming my boss because I didn’t understand what I was supposed to do?
- Would I send an informally worded, poorly written email to my boss or co-worker that looks like a text message sent from a 13-year-old? (Re-read the email guidelines above!)
- (For virtual class meetings and classes meeting physically on campus): Would I habitually arrive late and/or leave early?

If You Need Help or Have Questions, Ask!

I want you to be successful in this course. If you are experiencing a course-related problem, I encourage you to contact me immediately. Do not hesitate to speak up if there’s something you don’t understand, or you are struggling and need help. Anytime during the semester, I welcome criticism and feedback offered to me in a respectful and constructive manner, and so should you.

Academic Integrity & Plagiarism

I do not tolerate cheating or plagiarism, and I will accept no excuses for dishonest behavior. You are responsible for reviewing the information available at these links:

- U of M Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities
- Fogelman College of Business Standards for Academic Integrity
- Fogelman College of Business Information on Plagiarism

By taking this course, you agree that your written assignments may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method for the purposes of detecting plagiarism. Plagiarism on any part of an assignment will result in a ‘0’ on the entire assignment, there will be no opportunity to revise or edit the assignment, and at my discretion I may report you to the University’s Office of Student Conduct for further action.

Accommodations for Disabilities

Appropriate accommodations are provided to students with a memo from Disability Resources for Students.

Course Schedule

For the purposes of graded activities submitted online, each "week" begins on a Monday and ends on a Sunday.
- Deadlines for EVERYTHING (except the Company Strategic Analysis final project) are ALWAYS on a Sunday night.
- The cut-off time for ALL deadlines is 11:59 p.m. Central Time.
- All assigned cases for discussion can be found in the textbook - see the textbook table of contents.
- I reserve the right to make changes to the course schedule with advance notice.

Date          Readings & Activities

Week 1

Aug 17 - Aug 23

Required readings:
Read syllabus

Required activities:
Syllabus quiz (eCourseware Quizzes page - open through Aug 30)
→ You must score 100% on the Syllabus Quiz before you can take the weekly chapter quizzes

Participate in Introduction Discussion - “Me in a Hundred Words” (eCourseware Discussions page - open through Aug 30)

**Airline Simulation:**
Register & pay for simulation on Aug 17 or ASAP this week
Contact simulation team members via eCourseware Discussion to select team name and establish initial communication
Start reading the Student Manual and Simulation Case. Watch the Airline Case Video (Interpretive website).

- Company Strategic Analysis Information due Aug 30

**Required readings:**
Read Ch. 1 Strategy, Business Models, & Competitive Advantage

**Week 2**
*Aug 24 - Aug 30*

**Required activities:**
Take the Ch. 1 quiz (eCourseware Quizzes page)
Participate in Case 1 Discussion - Post your initial thread

**Airline Simulation:**
Finish reading Student Manual and Simulation Case. Watch the Case video if you haven't yet (Interpretive website)
Take the Case quiz (Interpretive website)

**Required readings:**
Read Ch. 2 Strategy Formulation, Execution, & Governance

**Week 3**
*Aug 31 - Sep 6*

**Required activities:**
Take the Ch. 2 quiz
Participate in Case 1 discussion - Post replies in 2 classmates' threads

**Airline Simulation:**
Team Practice Competition Round 1 (due Sunday @ 11:59 pm)

**Required readings:**
Read Ch. 3 Evaluating a Company’s External Environment

**Week 4**
*Sep 7 - Sep 13*

**Required activities:**
Take the Ch. 3 quiz
Participate in Case 2 Discussion - Post your initial thread

**Airline Simulation:**
Team Practice Competition Round 2 (due Sunday @ 11:59 pm)

**Required readings:**
Read Ch. 4 Evaluating a Company’s Resources, Capabilities, & Competitiveness

**Week 5**
*Sep 14 - Sep 20*

**Required activities:**
Take the Ch. 4 quiz
Participate in Case 2 discussion - Post replies in 2 classmates' threads

**Airline Simulation:**
Team Competition Round 1 (due Sunday @ 11:59 pm)
**Week 6**
**Sep 21 - Sep 27**

**Required readings:**
Read Ch. 5 The Five Generic Competitive Strategies

**Required activities:**
Take the Ch. 5 quiz
Participate in Case 3 Discussion - Post your initial thread

**Airline Simulation:**
Team Competition Round 2 (due Sunday @ 11:59 pm)
Submit Peer Evaluation 1 (individual activity; Airline simulation site)

**Week 7**
**Sep 28 - Oct 4**

**Required readings:**
Read Ch. 6 Strengthening a Company's Competitive Advantage: Strategic Moves, Timing, & Scope of Operations

**Required activities:**
Take the Ch. 6 quiz
Participate in Case 3 Discussion - Post replies in 2 classmates' threads

**Airline Simulation:**
Team Competition Round 3 (due Sunday @ 11:59 pm)

**Week 8**
**Oct 5 - Oct 11**

- **Exam 1 (Chapters 1 - 5)**

**Airline Simulation:**
Team Competition Round 4 (due Sunday @ 11:59 pm)

**Week 9**
**Oct 12 - Oct 18**

**Required readings:**
Read Ch. 7 Strategies for Competing in International Markets

**Required activities:**
Take the Ch. 7 quiz
Participate in Case 4 Discussion - Post your initial thread

**Airline Simulation:**
Team Competition Round 5 (due Sunday @ 11:59 pm)

**Week 10**
**Oct 19 - Oct 25**

**Required readings:**
Read Ch. 8 Corporate Strategy: Diversification & the Multi-Business Company

**Required activities:**
Take the Ch. 8 quiz
Participate in Case 4 Discussion - Post replies in 2 classmates' threads

**Airline Simulation:**
Team Competition Round 6 (due Sunday @ 11:59 pm)

**Week 11**
**Oct 26 - Nov 1**

**Required readings:**
Read Ch. 9 Ethics, Corporate Social Responsibility, Environmental Sustainability, & Strategy

**Required activities:**
Take the Ch. 9 quiz
Participate in Case 5 Discussion - Post your initial thread

**Airline Simulation:**
Team Competition Round 7 (due Sunday @ 11:59 pm)
**Required readings:**
Read Ch. 10 Superior Strategy Execution—Another Path to Competitive Advantage

**Week 12**

**Required activities:**
Take the Ch. 10 quiz

**Nov 2 - Nov 8**
Participate in Case 5 Discussion - Post replies in 2 classmates' threads

**Airline Simulation:**
Team Competition Round 8 (due Sunday @ 11:59 pm)

**Week 13**

**Airline Simulation:**
Take the Concepts Quiz (individual activity; Airline simulation site)
Submit Peer Evaluation 2 (individual activity; Airline simulation site)
Submit Simulation Learning Summary (individual activity; eCourseware dropbox)

**Week 14**

- Exam 2 (Chapters 6 - 10)

**Nov 16 - Nov 22**

**Nov 24**
- Company Strategic Analysis due