COURSE OVERVIEW

This course focuses on the strategic management and understanding of multi-product, multi-location and multi-business firms. We examine the following topics:

1. Why do we have firms?
2. What determines firm boundaries?
3. Why do we have multi-business firms?
4. How do multi-business firms create or destroy value?
5. How are multi-business firms managed?

Whereas Business Strategy Analysis focuses on strategically managing individual businesses, Corporate Strategy Analysis focuses on the strategic management of issues specific to the multi-business firm. For example, corporate strategy issues for Disney might include whether or not Disney should own a range of businesses (including theme parks, restaurants, television networks, etc.), how those businesses should be entered (e.g., internal development, joint ventures, acquisitions, etc.), and how they can be synergistically combined to create value. Business strategy for Disney would include issues such as how the ABC network should be positioned vis-à-vis its competitors, or how the competitive advantage of Disney’s theme parks should be maintained.

COURSE STANDARDS

The greatest value from graduate education is seldom realized immediately upon graduation. Such value is realized over a lifetime, and comes not from having a “bag of tricks” but rather from developing analytical, and problem-solving, skills. One of the most valuable abilities that you can develop and sharpen in graduate school is the ability to think critically and strategically, and to speak and write in a logical and compelling manner.

Accordingly, you are responsible for a large portion of your own development. You are required not only to attend classes, but also to carefully prepare for each class and contribute actively to class discussion. The compressed nature of the course makes it crucial that you prepare the assigned material for every class.
COURSE GRADING

Grading will be based on the following:

- Participation (and in-class activities) 25%
- Individual Case Analysis 40%
- Group Presentation 35%

**Participation.** I will use a number of in-class activities to explore concepts and tools used in the course. Your effort and contribution on these activities will determine your participation grade. I will cold-call students frequently, and at random.

**Individual Assignments.** You are required to complete one (1) individual assignment. The individual assignment should be typed double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman Font, with one-inch margins all around. Your assignment should be no longer than 3 pages – excluding title page, references, and exhibits. Exhibits should be on their own pages, following the references. All exhibits should be referred to in the text of the analysis. You do not need to repeat information from the case in your analysis – you should write your analysis assuming its reader has read the case, so no paraphrase, analysis only.

The individual assignment must be handed in to the instructor in hard copy at the beginning of class on the date it is due. I will not accept electronic copies of the individual assignment.

**Group Assignments.** You will work in groups of 3-5 to submit one or two case preparations. The group assignment should be no more than 15 slides – excluding title page, references, and appendix. Guidelines for presentations:

- Presentations should be 15 slides maximum with no fonts smaller than 24pt.
- Quantitative analysis can be inserted in the slides (as needed) and backed up in a spreadsheet.
- Include your names and group number in file name of the presentation

All of your work must be original. You should analyze the case you are given; this means you should not use material that is beyond the scope or time frame of the case. To avoid any confusion over the originality of your work, your team should work alone, and should not utilize any analysis found on the web, performed for previous classes, or from any other source. Failure to properly reference any external source constitutes plagiarism.

An electronic copy of the group assignment must be submitted via e-mail the day before class.

***PLEASE NOTE: At the end of this course you will be asked to evaluate your contributions, and those of your colleagues, to the group assignments. You will also be asked to evaluate class participation. These evaluations will be used to scale individual grades.

**Honor Code:** Please remember that you are governed the MBA Honor Code. Moreover, every student is obligated to report any suspected violation of that code. You can find more information on the MBA Honor Code at http://w4.stern.nyu.edu/scorp/committee.cfm?doc_id=4797.
## COURSE SCHEDULE

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<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Topics and Reading Assignments</th>
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| 1     | **Boundary of the Firm & Level of Strategic Analysis**  
Introduction and in-class discussion  
| 2     | **Resources and Rents – Stretching Scale and Scope Economies**  
| 3     | **Market Diversification**  
| 4     | **Alliances**  

**ASSIGNMENT. SHURGARD CASE.**

**ASSIGNMENT. RVG CASE.**
<table>
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<th><strong>Mergers and Acquisitions</strong></th>
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**ASSIGNMENT. GBS CASE.**

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<tr>
<th>6</th>
<th><strong>Mergers and Acquisitions: changing world(s) of business</strong></th>
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**ASSIGNMENT. MONDAVI CASE.**

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***This schedule is a guideline only. I reserve the right to change the schedule as necessary.***