

Professor:	K Srikrishna	Class time:	Mo, Wed 10:15-11:45AM
Office:	042 Fisher Hall	Class room:	Gerlach Hall 275
Email:	srikrishna.6@osu.edu	Office Hours:	By Appointment

Course Overview

While many MBA level business courses offer insight into the basic strategic and organizational concepts, few students leave their MBA education adequately prepared to undertake the tasks associated with rigorous strategic analysis. Often this lack of preparation is due to difficulties students have translating the insights presented in conceptual lectures or pre-packaged case discussions to ill-structured, real world business problems. This course emphasizes analysis of “real-world” firms and industries.

We accomplish this objective by first reviewing the theoretical tools of industry analysis that you learned in the core strategy course. We apply these tools/frameworks to industries using real-time raw data from industry and firm sources. Overall, this course seeks to help students to bridge the gap between evaluating industries from a theoretical perspective via preset case studies and real-world analysis where you must identify the relevant information for evaluating an industry’s profitability growth prospects and the sources of sustainable competitive advantage for firms within that industry.

Ultimately, the course is designed to provide opportunities to link theories from one’s coursework with field data in order to create well-grounded insights about how an industry.

Course Objectives

By the end of the term you will be able to:

- (1) Analyze an industry’s competitive situation and related firm’s strategies in a more realistic setting than is possible using the case method.
- (2) Understand and use many of the terms and business models commonly employed today.
- (3) Efficiently identify relevant information embedded in massive amounts of publicly available data
- (4) how to assess the relationships among key variables highlighted by management theory, and
- (5) how to interpret those relationships to develop educated opinions regarding the value creation opportunities in an industry and the viability of a firm’s strategy in a specific context..

Course Text

What I Didn’t Learn in Business School: How Strategy Works in the Real World, (2010). Jay Barney, Trish Gorman Clifford: Harvard Business Review Press ISBN: 9781422157633

Best Practices & Expectations

Don't think of this as a class in strategy; think of this as a management consulting firm in which you are employees trying to get ahead. When you prepare for class, imagine you are preparing for an important meeting with your manager. Don't miss a chance to advance your career because of poor preparation. Try to be the most informed person in the room.

It is expected we will treat each other with the professionalism and respect required of us in our careers. In other words, make sure your documents show pride in your work (rewrite

them, edit them, proof them, then do it all again); don't expect the "manager" (namely me) to look kindly on absences or under-preparation caused by other commitments.

Inappropriate conduct (i.e., tardiness, stepping out during class, sidebar conversations, and eating food) is frowned upon. Each of these behaviors tends to distract your fellow classmates and thus detract from the learning environment. Your fellow classmates and I will return your consideration by treating you with respect, listening to your opinions and offering as much constructive feedback as possible. Additionally, I will be accessible for questions when you need assistance.

ELECTRONICS-FREE CLASSROOM – ENFORCED Laptop, tablet, and cell phone usage during class is not tolerated. All electronics are to be set in airplane mode in class. Sign the attendance sheet at the beginning of each class. Be sure to send notification to me if you are not going to be in class on a given day. Contact me immediately if a group issue develops – do not wait until group assignment is due.

Grading

Your grade will be based on the following components:

Graded Component	% of Final Grade
1. Individual Assignment	10%
2. Group (team) Assignment	40%
3. Group Peer Feedback	10%
4. In-class & Online Participation	20%
5. Final Individual Paper	20%

The grading scale that will be utilized for the final grade is as follows (**note:** you must reach the minimum of each range to get that grade – ex. an 86.5 would be a B without rounding):

Grade		GPA	Grade		GPA
A	= 93-100 %	4.0	C+	= 77-79.XX %	2.3
A-	= 90-92.XX %	3.7	C	= 73-76.XX %	2.0
B+	= 87-89.XX %	3.3	C-	= 70-72.XX %	1.7
B	= 83-86.XX %	3.0	D+	= 67-69.XX %	1.3
B-	= 80-82.XX %	2.7	D	= 63-66.XX %	1.0

Re-grading requests or grade challenges will be accepted in writing within 1 week of receipt of the grade. After that one week, grades are final and beyond questioning.

1. Individual Assignment – 10% of final grade

Each student will write a 1-page paper summarizing strategy frameworks previously studied and identifying where they are comfortable, or not, in applying them in a real business situation.

2. Group Assignment – 40% of Final Grade Students will be assigned teams of five or six individuals on the first day of class. Each team will be required to conduct a workshop for the course along with one other team. Each workshop will address an assigned industry which is currently experiencing dramatic change (for example, health care, banking, auto/mobility). Teams will be responsible for conducting their own research and analysis using available data & information to develop their insights.

The objective of the workshop is to provide students with an opportunity to examine an industry through the lens of assigned strategy frameworks. Each team assignment should identify the: (a) assumptions and propositions associated with the framework being applied to address this issue, (c) available data to test these propositions and/or the results of your analysis, and (d) recommended managerial actions. The teams assigned to a Workshop will be responsible for the design of the class on their assigned day (Team collaboration is obviously required). While you are welcome to cite data from other sources, you must attribute any information or insight gleaned from analyses performed or published by others (e.g., academic cases, investment analysis reports, etc.). To facilitate data collection, I suggest analyzing public firms. A focus on public firms will ease your data collection efforts by providing access to a number of data sources (e.g., 10-Ks, published articles, corporate websites, etc.).

3. Class Participation – 20% of final grade

Participation is an important part of the learning process and I strongly encourage you to be actively involved. Course contribution does not mean simply showing up to class. Your class participation grade consists of regular attendance and involvement in our class discussions. Given that daily contribution is subjective and because my memory is not perfect, I recommend that you keep a personal log of your own contribution (jot down the date and comments you made). This will be useful if you feel that I have unfairly evaluated your contribution.

Since much of our learning will occur through in class discussion, the grading plan attempts to emphasize the quality of insight you provide through your comments, not just quantity.

Overall participation grades will be based on a combination of in-class and online discussions. Below are the general criteria that will be used to determine the grade:

Excellent	Consistent leader in the classroom. Always prepared and initiates class discussion. Comments are focused and integrative (linking materials to other courses, work experiences, current events, etc.). Provides web links and commentary on topics relevant to the course. Integrates materials and discussions with other courses, experiences. Starts new discussion topics and thoughtfully comments on discussions started by other students. Provides supportive evidence for point of view.
Good	Quality participation. Responds to instructor comments and questions when called on. Provides examples. Provides links to relevant web pages with some personal commentary.
Fair	Occasional contributions to class discussions. Brings in some new material and some new ideas. Rarely starts new discussions. Simply agrees or disagrees with the postings of others. Provides little supportive evidence.
Poor	Answers questions from the instructor. Sometimes responds to other students. Attends class regularly.

4. Group Peer Evaluations – 10% of final grade

Team collaboration and participation is an important element of this class and will affect the quality of final deliverables. Each team member will provide a performance evaluation of the other members (template will be posted on Carmen). Lack of effort and contribution to the project by a team member will be reflected in the individual peer evaluations and will negatively affect that individual's overall grade for the course.

5. Final Individual Paper – 20% of final grade

Each student will write a paper (approximately 4 pages) summarizing their

- Insights regarding two articles dealing with dramatic, high level industry change.
- Key lessons learned in the course
- Suggestions for improvement for the course

University attendance policy first week of class

Fisher College of Business strongly enforces University attendance policies. As per University rule 3335-8-33, any student may be dis-enrolled from a course for failure to attend by the first Friday of the term, or by the 3rd instructional day of the term, or by the second class meeting, whichever occurs first. <http://trustees.osu.edu/rules/university-rules/rules8/ru8-33.html>

Honor Code

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Thus, The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the University's Code of Student Conduct, and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University's Code of Student Conduct and this syllabus may constitute "Academic Misconduct."

The Ohio State University's Code of Student Conduct (Section 3335S23S04) defines academic misconduct as: "Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process." Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University's Code of Student Conduct is never considered an "excuse" for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review the Code of Student Conduct and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct. If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that you have violated the University's Code of Student Conduct (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University.

The Instructor

K Srikrishna is a serial entrepreneur, mentor and former angel investor. He founded his first company Impulsesoft in 1999, which grew from a bootstrapped organization of two people to the global leader in Bluetooth wireless stereo music prior to being acquired by SiRF Technology. Previously, Srikrishna has served in a variety of marketing and management roles in technology firms in Silicon Valley and India. Srikrishna's current focus is on mentoring entrepreneurs and CEOs of companies seeking growth with an emphasis on marketing, leadership and strategy. He's on the board of advisors of several technology startups.

COURSE SCHEDULE

	Date	Topic	Readings / Assignments / Activities
1	8/23 (W)	Syllabus Review, Team Assignment, Frameworks	Read Porter's "What is Strategy", "Understanding Industry Structure" and Magretta's "What executives can learn from revisiting Michael Porter" Assignment Individual Papers
2	8/28 (M)	Framework Level Set Competitive Advantage	Read Ghemavat & Rivkin's Creating Competitive Advantage pg 1-10 and Prologue + Chapter 1 of <i>What I Didn't Learn in Business School</i> (text) Assignment
3	8/30 (W)	Approaching the Challenge, 5 Forces, Net Present Value	Read Chapter 2-4 of our Text Assignment
	9/4 (M)	Labor Day Holiday	
4	9/6 (W)	SWOT, VRIO, Synergies; Mergers & Acquisitions	Read Chapter 5-7 of our Text Assignment
5	9/11 (M)	Value Chain	Read Ghemavat & Rivkin's Creating Competitive Advantage pg 10-19; Read Chap 8-9 of our Text Assignment 2 written questions for the guest speaker on a 3x5 card
6	9/13 (W)	Guest Speaker	Venture Capitalist insights on strategy Assignment 2 written questions for the guest speaker on a 3x5 card
7	9/18 (M)	Guest Speaker	Startup Founder will discuss marketing lessons Assignment 2 written questions for the guest speaker on a 3x5 card
8	9/20 (W)	Guest Speaker	Read Chapter 6 and review Chapter 13 Assignment
9	9/25 (M)	Blue Ocean Strategy	Read Kim & Mauborgne's Blue Ocean Strategy ; Read Chap 10-12 of our Text Assignment Final Individual Paper
10	9/27 (W)	Team Presentation (1 & 2)	
11	10/2 (M)	Team Presentation (3 & 4)	
12	10/4 (W)	Team Presentation (5 & 6)	
13	10/9 (M)	Open Discussion of Team Presentations	Read Colvin, Fortune's "Every aspect of your business is about to change", Dobbs, Koller, and Ramaswamy's "The future and how to survive it", Read Chap 10-12 of our Text
14	10/11 (W)	Overflow	Optional Make Up Class <i>if required</i>