Introduction to Business (Business 115)
Spring - 2014
Day: Monday and Wednesday
Instructor: Dr. Richard F. Laskowski
Telephone: 632-8558
Office Hours: Tues – Thurs: 1:00 to 3:30; (and by appointment)
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RECOMMENDED READINGS: “The World is Flat” and “Hot, Flat, and Crowded” by Thomas L. Friedman, and, “Winning” by Jack Welch.

MATERIALS: A large notebook will be required for class

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
BUS 115 introduces business majors to critical business thinkers who have influenced today’s business practices. It allows the student to utilize the material learned in the class to demonstrate their research and writing abilities by tracking specific companies throughout the semester. Written and verbal reports will be required weekly to show how companies operate in our contemporary business environment. These activities will prepare the student for advanced business courses.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
The objectives of this course are to introduce the students to the environment of doing business in the 21st century. Specifically it will allow the students to use their knowledge of the business environment, the four major business functions and four management functions, to demonstrate how they are used in a global business community by working with an assigned company.

Specifically the students will:
UNDER BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT:

- become an expert and understand the operations of an individual firm
- learn about both Industrial and Information Age companies in the 21st century
- learn to gather and analyze business information to assist in decision making
- learn to use the World Wide Web and other sources to perform data gathering
- demonstrate individual communication skills representing their views to their colleagues with weekly presentations and a final presentation utilizing Power Point.
- understand, and learn to operate in the team environment found in today’s business environment
- discuss how current economic, political and social environmental issues impact their companies

UNDER BUSINESS FUNCTIONS:

- understand the business functions/disciplines associated with managing a company to help decide on future areas of business studies, major selections and career decisions
- learn the basic elements that make up a business plan
- develop a business plan for their individual companies

UNDER MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS:

- Learn how management functions are integrated into all the business functions

The Computer Lab in room 316 on the third floor of Harriman Hall is open 12 hours a day and available for your use except when the lab is in use for a scheduled class. The lab is available for web research, assignment write-ups and Power Point presentations. A teaching assistant will be available to assist in any of these activities.

Students will be assigned either an Industrial or Information Age company for the semester. Once they have selected a company they are required to gather information about the company that corresponds with the material discussed in class and from the assigned readings. Examples of sources of information include the 10K report, Annual Report, Wall Street Journal and other publications, and web sites such as the company’s own site or Hoovers Pro, Lexus Nexus, Business.com, Britannica.com, EDGAR.com, Fool.com, Justquote.com, Morningstar.com, Powerize.com and Yahoo.com and other search engines.

To assist students in their research activities there will be a required session presented by the Melville Library staff on business research techniques.* Examples of Industrial Age companies are Aetna, Amtrak, ATT, BMW, Caterpillar, Citibank, Coke Cola, Disney, Chrysler, Dow, Exxon-Mobil, Ford, General Electric, GM,
Heinz, Hershey, Hewlett Packard, IBM, Kaiser Permanente, Kellogg, Kimberley Clark, Kodak, Lucent, 3M, Mac (Federated Stores), Merck, Merrill Lynch, P&G, PepsiCo, Sears, Travelers, UPS, USX, Walgreen’s and Weyerhaeuser.

Examples of **Information Age** companies are Amazon, AMD, Time Warner, Apple, Autobytel, Best Buy, Cigna, Cisco Systems, Compaq, CA, Corvis, CNN, Dell, E-Bay, E-Trade, Excite, Gap, Genome Sciences, Genentech, HIP, Home Depot, Humana, Intel, Intuit, Loews, McDonalds, Microsoft, Motorola, Oracle, Palm, Priceline, Starbucks, Sun Micro Systems, QUALCOMM, Travelocity, Verizon, Wal-Mart, WebMD, Yahoo!

**CLASSROOM PHILOSOPHY:**

It is our intent to totally involve the students in the learning process and let them discover the impact of 21st century business practices on domestic and global operations. Student participation in classroom discussions will be paramount in all our activities. Only by open and honest dialog and sharing of ideas can we learn to respect and appreciate each other’s views.

All content discussed in class will be applicable to real life business situations.

The required text is the core upon which the course material is built. It will be used in class and all relevant material will be covered. It is the faculty’s option how to edit the material to best meet the needs of the students and the course objectives. Other sources of information will be used to supplement the text (professional experiences of the instructors, trade journals, business consultant reports, other books, government publications etc.).

**STUDENT GRADES:**

The grades will be determined in the following manner:

- Wiley weekly assignments ........................................30 points
- Power Point presentation.............................................10 points
- BPCs, ESs, and WSJ reports ......................................20 points
- Attendance.....................................................................5 points
- Midterm........................................................................15 points
- Final Exam .................................................................20 points

*You will be required to meet with my TA if indicated on your BPC or ES

TOTAL.................................................................100 points
GRADE DISTRIBUTION IS AS FOLLOWS:

- A………96-100
- A-…….. 92-95
- B+…….. 88-91
- B………. 84-87
- B-……… 80-83
- C+……… 76-79
- C……… 72-75
- C-……….. 68-71
- D+……… 64-67
- D……….. 60-63
- F……….. Below 60

THERE WILL BE NO ASSIGNMENTS FOR EXTRA CREDIT

ATTENDANCE AND LATENESS:

Students are expected to attend class and be on time. Attendance will be taken during classes. You will lose points for each absence, and three absences results in a loss of 5 points. Two late arrivals will equal one absence. IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO INSURE YOUR ATTENDANCE IS RECORDED PROPERLY IF YOU ARRIVE LATE FOR CLASS.

DISABLED STUDENT SERVICES OFFICE:

If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact on your ability to carry out assigned course work, I urge you to contact the staff in the Disability Support Services Office (DSS), Room 128, Educational Communications Center (ECC), Telephone # 632-6748. DSS will review your concerns and determine with you what accommodations are deemed necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation concerning your disability will be kept confidential.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Academic dishonesty includes any act that is designed to obtain fraudulently, either for oneself or for someone else, academic credit, grades, or other recognition that is not properly earned or that adversely affects another’s grade. Examples include:
**Cheating**: on exams or assignments by the use of books, electronic devices, notes, or other aids when these are not permitted, or by copying from another student.

**Plagiarizing**: Copying someone else’s writing or paraphrasing it too closely, even if it constitutes only some of your written assignment.

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**TEXTBOOK READING SCHEDULE: (Assigned Readings from the Text)**

**Part 1 – Environmental Theme**

Week 1  Motivation  Chapters 8,9
Week 2  Business Ethics  Chapters 2
Week 3  Economic Challenges Facing Contemporary Business  Chapters 1,3
Week 4  The Global Environment  Chapter 4
Week 5  Forms of Business Ownership  Chapter 5
Week 6  Starting Your Own Business  Chapter 6

**Part 2, Business Functions/Management Functions**

Week 7  Human Resource Management  Chapter 8,9
Week 8  Planning and Organization  Chapter 7
Week 9  Operations  Chapter 10
Week 10  Midterm/Marketing  Chapters 11,12,13
Week 11  Marketing  Chapters 11,12,13
Week 12  Technology  Chapter 14
Week 13  Planning  Chapter 17
Assignment Schedule:

**Tuesday:** One article from the WSJ (and possibly a second assignment
**Thursday:** Business Plan Component (BPC) and Executive Summary (ES)

**BUSINESS IN THE 21ST CENTURY WITH WRITING REQUIREMENTS FOR BUSINESS MAJORS**
**BUS 115**

**Individual and Team Activity:**

As part of the BUS 115 you will be asked to work both individually and as a participant of a team.

Each of you will be assigned to a team and you will work with the team and support its collective efforts. There will be approximately four or five students to a team. At the conclusion of the semester each of you will have your performance and contribution to the group evaluated by your group members and this will become part of your final grade.

To assist you in understanding the various aspects of working in a team environment you will be assigned to a team by Dr. Laskowski. Each team will consist of various ethnic, gender, racial, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. The diversity of the teams will be a function of the number and characteristics of the students in each class. By assigning you under this premise I hope to duplicate what you will encounter in a diverse global business environment.

As explained in the proceeding pages each of you will be given either an Industrial Age
or **Information Age** company as your project company for the balance of the semester. Each team will have a sampling of both **Industrial** and **Information Age** companies. For example, teams consisting of four students will most likely have two industrial and two information age companies assigned to its members. You will use this company as the benchmark for applying the business principles being discussed in class. Each of you is required to verbally present and submit a weekly type written component of the business plan on your company reflecting the principles being discussed. This weekly individual business plan component will be **no less** than one and a half (1 ½) and **no more** than two pages. In addition, the team is required to present an executive summary highlighting the similarities and contrasts identified in the individual business plan component papers. The team will present this information to the class and submit a written executive summary each week at the breakout session. This weekly team executive summary will be no less than one and a half (1 ½) and no more than two pages. The Executive Summary is not just a duplication of the individual business plan components but an analysis of the data from the components showing the similarities and differences between the industrial and information age companies. Each week the team will rotate the presenter from its own members.

At the conclusion of the semester each team will present a fifteen minute Power Point presentation, using a minimum of 5 slides, to summarize some of the principles discussed in class relative to the individual companies. Basically this presentation will be a review of some of the BPCs researched this semester.

**Writing Requirement Guidelines:**

The following writing guidelines will apply to BUS 115:

All assignments will be typed and submitted on time. Credit will be lost for all late assignments.

After the first two Business Plan Component assignments have been submitted if it is found to be unacceptable, for whatever reason, the individual student will have the option to redo the paper and bring it up to an acceptable level of professionalism. Any paper that is redone must be submitted at, or before, the next class. Whenever this is done the second paper will replace the first relative to the assigned grade. The faculty has selected this option because it is our intent to help you learn and academically develop as you work and progress through the semester. This option applies only to the first two assignments.

Each member of a team should be prepared to present the team’s Executive Summary at some classes (you may be asked to present the summary to the class). Your active participation in all of the classes is critical to the success you and your colleagues will experience.
Both the Business Plan Component and Executive Summary must address the content found in the text, your Internet and professional research, and assigned readings.

In all written papers your sources must be identified.

If you are unable to attend class you should submit your business plan component and executive summary to the instructor by a team member or personally to the instructor before the class meets. Late papers will not be accepted and you will lose full credit for that assignment.

All written assignments will adhere to the following formats:

The individual weekly company specific assignments are called Business Plan Components.

BUSINESS PLAN COMPONENT

To: Dr. Richard F. Laskowski
From: (you)
Section: (01 or 02)
Subject: (BPC for that week)
Company name: (The company that has been assigned to you)
Team name:
Sources: (three minimum)
  http:// etc.
  http:// etc.
  http:// etc.
Weekly Stock Prices:
  Date, Day, Closing Price
  Date, Day, Closing Price
  Date, Day, Closing Price

The text of each Business Plan Component will be double-spaced

The weekly team assignment is called Executive Summary.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To: Dr. Richard F. Laskowski
Subject: (BPC for that week)
Team name:
Section:
Members: (names and companies listed vertically (including your name and company)
Written by:

The text of each Executive Summary will be double-spaced.

________________________________________________________________________

Wall Street Journal Report: In the first class of each week you will submit a review two articles on your company, or a company in the same sector, that you found the previous week in the Wall Street Journal

Name:
Section:
Title and author of the article:
Date of the article:

You are responsible for all of the information contained in this syllabus. Be certain that you read and understand it fully. If you do not, ask questions.

Keep all of your work that is returned to you. If there is a dispute regarding your grade, you are responsible to produce the work (other than exams) that your grade was based on.