**Course description/rationale**

**INBU-5315-01: International Policy/Strategy**

This course covers the fundamentals of business and corporate strategy in the global context. Competitive Strategy: covers the fundamentals of business and corporate strategy. Strategy involves complex material that spans every business function; the term typically refers to the identification of goals and the elaboration of a plan of action for pursuing those goals.

Your learning is my primary concern in this course, so I may modify the schedule if, for instance, we discover we need to spend time on a certain topic and less on another.

**Course information**

- **Course code:** INBU-5315-01
- **# credits:** 3
- **Location:** PGT 100
- **Class times:** Th 6:00PM to 8:40PM
- **First session:** March 30
- **Last session:** June 8

**Instructor information**

- **Instructor:** David McHardy Reid PhD
- **Phone:** 296 2473
- **Email:** reidd@seattleu.edu
- **Office:** PGT 513
- **Office hours:** Monday and Thursday 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm (or) Please phone or email to arrange appointments outside office hours.

I check my email regularly. You can email me at any time, but you may not receive a response outside regular business hours. It is preferable that you do so via Canvas. That way we will be able to preserve a thread. Generally, emails received before 3 p.m. will receive a response before 5 p.m., and emails received after 3 p.m. will receive a response on the following business day. Business days are Monday–Friday, except for holidays.
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**Learning outcomes**

On successful completion of this course (i.e. by passing this course), you will be able to

A major objective of the course is to sharpen your abilities to “think strategically” and to analyze and evaluate issues from the perspective of a global oriented enterprise. Accomplishing this objective means giving you an appreciation for the importance of
building a sustainable competitive advantage in a global context but not necessarily globally. It means schooling you thoroughly in the tools of industry and competitive analysis. Other objectives of the course are the following:

- To develop your capacity to think strategically about a company, its business position, and how it can gain a sustainable competitive advantage in a global context.
- To build your skills in conducting strategic analysis in a variety of industries and competitive situations; and to provide you with a stronger understanding of the competitive challenges of a global market environment.
- To develop conceptual skills so that you are able to integrate the knowledge gained in earlier core courses in the MBA program.
- To bridge the gap between theory and practice by developing an understanding of when and how to apply the ideas and techniques learned.
- To develop a better understanding of how functional activities support business level strategies.
- To develop a better understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of various corporate level strategies.

**Instructional methods**

A major objective of the course is to sharpen your abilities to “think strategically” and to analyze and evaluate China issues from the perspective of a China lens.

Accomplishing this objective means giving you an appreciation of many factors, some historical both ancient and modern.

This course makes use of the LMS Canvas.

Education research shows that your learning is greatest when you are actively involved in making sense of new concepts (“constructing knowledge”) and when you do this in social settings. This model is technically called “social constructivism.” We will use this model throughout the course, so you can expect to

- be engaged in plenty of classroom activities to build on the readings you have done for each class
- work in small groups during class and for those groups to change on a regular basis
- ask me for clarifications, rather than expecting lectures.

If you find that you haven’t managed to complete a reading before class, you will likely find that particular class frustrating, since we will build on and apply the readings each time (including trouble-shooting the issues you found most perplexing), but class will cover the main materials but not involve exhaustively regurgitating the content of the readings. I hope you find this an engaging and enjoyable approach to learning.

This is both a lecture and case-based course. The analysis and discussion of different industry and company situations is the primary class activity. Your preparation of the cases and participation in the discussions will be critical to your learning and the success of the class as a whole.

**Evaluation: Overview of assignments**

You will be evaluated in four areas: (1) written case analyses, (2) participation (attendance, in-class participation), (3) Group Case Presentations and (4) a final project. The weights of these elements are as follows:
Case Analyses (two done individually or group of 2) 20%
Group Case Presentations and report 20%
Participation (individual) 25%
Discussions 10%
Final Group Project 25%

100%

Course Texts
The required textbook for this course is:

Case book:
Contains five cases.
The Peng book and book of cases are available from the bookstore.
The WSJ is available to you at a discounted rate of $19.95 for a 10-week home or office delivery subscription with full access to wsj.com, a 75%+ discount off of the newsstand price: http://subscribe.wsj.com/quarter.,
The Economist is the best and most cost effective source of Global Business news. I encourage you to purchase a student subscription. It is on offer to you at discount for $1.88 per week or $1.51 for print or digital.: https://subscriptions.economist.com/ODR/index.php. This, apart from provision of the newspaper will buy you searching rights to the website-based archives. ,

Course Structure
International Policy/Strategy is both a lecture and case-based course. The analysis and discussion of different industry and company situations is the primary class activity. Your preparation of the cases and participation in the discussions will be critical to your learning and the success of the class as a whole.
The class sessions are organized into four modules. The first module is introductory and covers the foundations of global strategy. The second module deals with business level strategy, specifically entering foreign markets and establishing strategic alliances. The third module focuses on IP protection in a global context. The final module of the course consists of student group projects and presentations on selected companies.

Case Analyses:
During the quarter you must submit two written analyses of cases: ‘Wanxiang Group’ and ‘Unilever’s New Global Strategy: Competing through Sustainability’. This, and any other written assignments, are due before the start of the class in which the case will be discussed. An electronic version should be put in the drop box provided on Canvas. Those students assigned to present cases 1 and 2 above should analyze the adjacent subsequent or prior case, ‘Nike’ and ‘Blood Bananas’ respectively.
To encourage interactive learning, these case write-ups may be completed in groups of two students (pairs). Please choose a different partner for each of the two case write-ups, and prepare these case write-ups with your partner for this assignment only. If you prefer you can do these assignments on an individual basis.

The guide, typically, for a case analysis is at least two pages (600 word minimum) but if you submit as a pair then that expectation is doubled. Remember to use headings to structure your work and communicate your thinking. Also ensure that you cite authoritative sources to support your thinking.

Grading of your case analysis will be based on:

- The thoroughness and depth of your analysis.
- The extent to which you present clear, logical, consistent arguments.
- The extent to which your analysis reflects the ideas covered in the course and are supported by relevant citations that bolster your authority.
- Your ability to synthesize and generalize.
- The extent to which the various parts of your paper fit together and build on each other.
- The extent to which your conclusions and recommendations are specific and justified.
- The degree to which your report is well written and organized.

**Group Case Presentations and report:**

Groups of 2/3 will present and lead the discussion of the cases each week.

**Group case Reports:**

Each group, of 2/3, will analyze and present one case to the class. Thereafter the presenting groups will submit a substantial (2000 word) analytical report. These are due at the beginning of class time the week after your presentation.

**Participation:**

The essence of strategy is seeing underlying patterns in business situations. The most skillful managers can see patterns that elude others, and the ability to see just a bit more clearly, which is the ability that this course is designed to develop, can make all the difference. In global business this may be about arbitrage, adaptation or some other response to the global environment. This course uses case analyses and in-class case discussions to develop this skill. Its success depends heavily on the quality of class discussion, and so thorough preparation for these discussions is essential.

To prepare for class, please read the case materials, think about the case preparation questions, and discuss your analysis of the case with your study group before class. I will focus primarily on the quality of your contribution in grading class participation, however, it usually takes at least some quantity of participation to make that evaluation.

To help me learn your names quickly, please pick a specific seat for the first few class sessions and complete the data cards I will hand out.

You are expected to attend all classes. You cannot make-up a case discussion that you have missed: there are no outside readings or work you can do that can provide a good substitute for being in class and participating in the discussion. A failure to attend will attract a zero participation score for that week.
Final Group Strategy Project:
The final group project is to be done in the same preselected groups of two or three 
students. The assignment is as follows:

Select a company that you believe has been performing below its potential, due to flaws 
in its global orientation or strategy. Prepare a written report and classroom presentation 
to address three issues: (1) the company’s current strategy, (2) the reasons for 
underperformance, and (3) your recommendations for strategic change. Be sure to 
explain why the change in its global strategy that you propose is likely to improve 
performance. Your report should be around 20 double spaced typewritten pages of text 
(11pt or higher font) with additional exhibits attached.

The last two class sessions (including examination slot) of the course are reserved for 
oral presentations of final projects. Please submit a copy of your slides at the beginning 
of class on the day your presentation is scheduled and submit your report at our last 
session. Please provide a hard copy and an electronic version via the drop box 
provided.

Case Discussion and Class Participation
Participation: Many students come to case discussions with a pre-prepared point they 
wish to make and wait for the opportunity to add it to the class discussion. This is not a 
good strategy. It is unlikely that you will be able to add such a pre-prepared point at just 
the right moment. Adding it at the wrong moment simply distracts and confuses the 
direction of discussion. The better approach is to come to case discussion with a set of 
issues you have explored and are prepared to discuss in a variety of contexts.

Good case discussions take the group farther than any one individual or study group 
was able to go on their own. Instructors will develop grades and scores based on the 
quantity and quality of your classroom contributions. Specifically, my criteria are:

- Are the points made relevant to the discussion?
- Do they go beyond a mere recitation of case facts, and are implications clearly 
drawn?
- Is there evidence of analysis rather than just expression of opinions?
- Are comments linked to those of others?
- Did the contribution further the section’s understanding of the issues?
- Is the participant a good listener?
Appendix: Learning by the Case Method

A mix of old and new business cases has been selected for this course. There are things we can learn from the past as well as the present. These cases cover a range of companies from a variety of industry settings. Each is intended to teach something specific, yet each can teach many things. We will not attempt to exhaust each case of all its learning possibilities. Using a variety of cases over time will build general capacity for strategy analysis and formulation.

There are various reasons for employing the case discussion method of instruction. First, it allows you to develop problem-definition (problem framing) skills besides problem-solving skills. Cases typically do not have an obvious set of tasks whose performance will lead to mastery. They require sifting through a mass of information, some of it irrelevant or contradictory, to identify the important strategic issues. Therefore, identification and framing of analytical questions is an important part of the learning process. Second, the case method gives you a chance to deal with ambiguity. Most cases do not have obvious right answers. Managers must be able to function in situations where the right answer is not known, without falling into the trap of assuming that any answer is as good as another. Some analyses and proposed strategies are clearly wrong, and some are clearly better than others. Case discussion techniques provide a chance to learn the meaning of analytical rigor in situations that do not have clear solutions.

Case Preparation: Good judgment about complex general management situations is developed by studying the judgments of real managers and by practice in making judgments. Accordingly, the course relies heavily on case materials and the analysis and discussion of different case situations. You will get little from this course unless you take considerable responsibility for your own learning. This means devoting time and energy to preparation before class and then, during the class, listening carefully to others and to presenting your point of view.

Key to maximizing learning from a case discussion is excellent preparation of the case before coming to class. This means reading the case, analyzing the central issues raised in it, and developing a well-thought-out position on these issues that you can articulate and explain to others during the class discussion. Careful preparation by all class members also increases the depth and sophistication of the analysis that can be developed during the case discussion thereby enhancing the learning experience for all.

In preparing a case for class discussion, read the case at least twice. The first reading provides a general sense of the “story” and of the types of information available. On the second reading, carefully take notes, sorting information into categories, and asking questions of your own. Formulating questions is among the most important critical skills to develop. You may find it useful to do specific analyses (e.g., timeline of events, personnel profiles, funds-flow patterns, cost analysis, market segment analyses, demand driver analyses, industry structure, etc.) After this work, sit back and try to develop an overall sense of the situation, deciding how you want to frame, define, and answer the issues it poses.

I recommend that you do some of the preparation for class discussion in study groups. Each member of the study group may bring insights and skills that the group can share and build upon. When working with a study group, be sure to share the work equally. If you, for example, always let one member (the one with accounting experience) prepare financial analyses, you will never gain this important skill.
At a minimum, I recommend coming to class with a written outline of your answer to each of the study questions for the case. You should print these notes out to have them available in class. Having a written outline of these answers enables you to draw together the various aspects of your analysis and distill from this a distinct position on the study questions, and writing your responses to the study questions imposes a valuable discipline, as it forces greater specificity and clarity. Having prepared a written outline often also enhances the conciseness, thoroughness, and specificity of the verbal comments you make in class. Finally, having written answers to the study questions allows you to compare the opinions you had before class with your views at the end of class. Some students who do not record their initial viewpoints tend to listen to class discussions, agree with much that is said, and leave class with the opinion that “no one really said that much.” However, when you realize that many views you agree with were also ones that you did not have in mind yourself, you begin to see the gap between your own ability to analyze the case and what the class, as a whole, accomplishes.

Outside Data: Please do not seek information about a company depicted in a case from other sources. You should try to put yourself in the shoes of the key actors and see the situation as it appeared to them then. We are all geniuses in retrospect—searching for information about what happened is not conducive to learning about general management. Sometimes the instructor will tell you something about what happened after the period covered in the case, and sometimes it will be the instructor’s judgment that there is more to be learned by dwelling on the dilemma presented than on the particular resolution that occurred. The fact that a company did one thing rather than another does not imply that it did the right thing. Just because a course of action failed does not mean it wasn’t be best choice then.

What you may and ought to do is to support your argument by drawing on a body of knowledge that you have accumulated or can access.