



**Kuwait University**  
**College of Business Administration**  
**Management and Marketing Department**



**Latifa A. Albader, Ph.D.**  
**MGT 450 – Strategic Management**  
**Spring 2024**

**Lecture Time and Location:**

**MGT 450 / 01A** : Sun, Tues, & Thurs 10:00 AM – 10:50 AM

Room DG-1009

**Office Hours:** Tuesday 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM or by appointment

**E-mail:** [L.albader@ku.edu.kw](mailto:L.albader@ku.edu.kw)

**Course Description:**

*“Strategy is about setting yourself apart from the competition. It’s not a matter of being better at what you do, it’s a matter of being different at what you do.” – Michael Porter*

Strategic management takes the view of the CEO or general manager and addresses the question of why some firms outperform others. Firm performance therefore lies at the core of strategic management as firms use their resources and adapt to their environments to help them win against rivals in the marketplace. To help understand what it takes for firms to succeed in today’s marketplace, we will learn how to assess the firm’s internal and external situation, recognize the elements of a successful strategy, and understand the challenges of implementing such strategies under conditions of uncertainty. This course has been designed to match this perspective and will explore **strategy analysis** (internal and external analysis), **strategy formulation** (business-level, corporate-level and international strategies), and **strategy implementation** (corporate governance, firm structure and control).

**Course Learning Outcomes (CLO):**

Upon successful completion of this course, will be able to:

1. Perform analysis of key strategic issues and generate insights that lead to strategic recommendations. Specific analyses include the following:
  1. External environment analysis (general and industry)
  2. Internal organization analysis
  3. Competitor analysis
2. Evaluate a firm’s business unit, corporate, and international strategies
3. Describe the relationships between a firm’s external and internal environment and its corporate and business unit strategies
4. Integrate knowledge gained in previous and parallel courses.
5. Communicate strategic recommendations in a clear, concise, and compelling manner

<b>Strategic Management:</b> My goal with this course is that you will:	
<b>1</b>	Demonstrate an understanding of the central concepts in strategy
<b>2</b>	Demonstrate an understanding of what a successful strategy looks like
<b>3</b>	Demonstrate judgement and balance in assessing, choosing, and implementing strategies under conditions of imperfect information
<b>4</b>	Develop your ability to think critically and to communicate your ideas

**CLO Mapping to CBA Skill-Based Competency Goals**

CLO	Competency Goal				
	Analytical (LG5)	Communication (LG4)	Information Technology (LG3)	Decision-Making Skills (LG2)	Business Ethics (LG1)
1	A				
2	A			A	R
3	A			A	R
4	A			A	
5		A			

**Type of Emphases:**

- **(I)ntroduce:** Students will be introduced to the skill and their grasp of it assessed in the course.
- **(A)pply:** The course will not cover the skill. Students should have a high-level grasp of the skill and are required to apply it in the course.
- **(R)einforce:** Students should have an introductory-level grasp of the skill and the course will improve their mastery to a higher level.

**Teaching Approach**

This course depends heavily on your ability and willingness to participate and discuss topics in class. **For example, this course will utilize many case discussions, rather than lectures.** The quality of your learning experience depends greatly on your ability to come to class prepared to discuss all topics. Students are expected to lead the class discussion and I (as the instructor) will provide guidance and structure to the discussion.

For you to develop a managerial way of thinking, the focus in this course will be on critical thinking, analysis, and discussion. This means your **grades will NOT be based** on how well you can **recite** and **memorize** course materials and definitions. Rather, your grades will be based on how well you can **apply** course materials through critical thinking and analysis of different topics. To achieve this goal, we will utilize different learning methods including case discussions, lectures, and practical reasoning (integrating course topics to try and solve real problems in real organizations).

## Course Communication

Throughout the semester, I will be sending you regular emails and announcements (on Teams). Please ensure that your email account is active and that you check it regularly or set your account so that it forwards emails to your regular email account. **This is a very dynamic course, and you are responsible for keeping track of the communications and changes as we go through the semester.**

## Textbook and Course Materials

- *Strategic Management, 5th Edition*, by Frank T. Rothaermel (McGraw-Hill).
- Harvard Business School (HBS) case studies.
- Other materials will be provided on Microsoft Teams.

## Grading and Course Requirements

Assignment	Weight
<b>Individual Assignments</b>	
1. Syllabus Consent Form	0%
2. Preparation and Participation (collective learning, attendance, and class discussions)	15%
3. Quizzes	10%
4. Midterm Exam	15%
5. Final Exam	40%
<b>Team Assignments</b>	
6. AFI Presentation	20%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

Final grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

Grade	Percent Range	
	Low	High
A	95.00	100.00
A-	90.00	94.99
B+	87.00	89.99
B	83.00	86.99
B-	80.00	82.99
C+	77.00	79.99
C	73.00	76.99
C-	70.00	72.99
D+	65.00	69.99
D	60.00	64.99
F	0	59.00

## Assignments

### 1. Syllabus Consent Form (0%)

A syllabus serves as a contract between students and the instructor. For the course to run smoothly and for me to be as fair as possible to everyone in class, it crucial that both parties adhere to the information contained in the syllabus. Each student will be required to submit a consent form acknowledging that they have read, understood, and agree to adhere to the information and policies contained in the syllabus. Though the consent form itself is not weighted in the course grading structure, I will not grade any assignments for a student until his or her form is submitted.

### 2. Preparation and Participation (15%)

*“By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail.”* — Benjamin Franklin

**Collective learning and attendance** will be determined based on roll calls conducted in class. In case method pedagogy, class attendance is critical to individual and collective learning. ***My expectation is that every student arrives on time and attends every class.*** Absenteeism and lateness to class count heavily against the participation grade since it adversely impacts the learning experience of the section as a whole. Anyone who cannot attend class should email me in advance if at all possible. **You are allowed ONLY ONE free absence for case discussion or guest speaker classes. If the case discussion spans two class sessions, missing both sessions counts as if you missed two case classes.**

Every student in this course must abide by the Kuwait University Policy on Attendance (published in the Student Guide, Chapter 3, Section 13). A copy of the student guide can be accessed online on: [http://www.kuniv.edu/cs/groups/ku/documents/ku\\_content/kuw055940.pdf](http://www.kuniv.edu/cs/groups/ku/documents/ku_content/kuw055940.pdf)

**Class discussions:** Class discussions will be assessed on the basis of your contributions to class discussion and listening. Of course, the underlying condition for class participation is attendance. I expect you to attend all sessions. Prior to class, you should thoroughly read and prepare the materials and/or case for that day, including answering the study questions. Please ensure that you have used the frameworks, tools, and ideas from the readings in your analysis as appropriate. In grading class participation, I look at both the quantity and quality of contribution. With regards to quality, some of the criteria I shall apply include:

- 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 expressions of opinions?
- Are the comments linked to those of others?
- Did the contribution further the class understanding of the issues?
- Is the participant a good listener?
- Do comments raise interesting questions?
- In discussion, do the comments fit in the class context?
- Does the analysis make use of models and techniques from the readings or lectures?
- Are comments made in a respectful, professional, and constructive manner?

Students should not expect to receive full points for participation. Simply being present does not warrant full credit, nor does frequent participation that does not advance the learning of the class. I will use “**cold calling**” occasionally so you need to be prepared for each class. **If students fail to come to class prepared,**

**I will start giving out pop quizzes on the assigned material and will require that you submit case write-ups.** Cell phones must be turned off or set to the “silent” mode during classes.

### **3. Quizzes (10%)**

We will have quizzes on all chapters that we will cover this semester. Specific details about quiz policies, contents and dates will be discussed in the class. At the end of the semester, the lowest quiz grade will be dropped. Missed quizzes may not be made up without prior permissions, no exceptions.

### **4. Midterm Exam (15%)**

We will have a short exam in the middle of the semester (i.e., midterm) that will be administered in-person during class. The exam is open book, open notes, and will be on all course material covered up to that point in the semester, including lectures, discussions, and readings. Further details about exam policies, contents, time, and location will be discussed in the class. Missed examinations may not be made up without prior permissions, no exceptions.

### **5. Final Exam (40%)**

The Final Exam for this class is a cumulative multiple-choice and/or short answers exam that will account for 40% of your final grade. Like the midterm, the final exam is also open book and open notes. The exam will be administered in-person during the allocated time set by the college. The exam will cover all course material including lectures, discussions, and readings. Details about exam contents, time, and location will be discussed in the class. Missed examinations may not, under any circumstances, be made up without prior permission.

### **6. AFI Presentation (20%)**

You will be assigned into groups of 4-6 students (preferably of different business majors) to conduct an in-depth strategic analysis of a local Kuwaiti firm. Each team will analyze a different company, and the companies will be assigned on a first come, first served basis. You will apply the concepts, theories, and frameworks discussed during the course to analyze the firm’s internal and external environments, identify and analyze strategic challenges the firm faces, and present specific recommendations to overcome challenges and to maximize the firm’s long-term performance. The last week of the semester will be dedicated to oral (PowerPoint) presentations of your AFI project. The presentation will allow you to present your analysis and recommendations to the class. Your analysis and recommendations should be specific, supported by actual data, executable, and logically sound. The citation and source of the data should be clearly stated so that readers can go the source if need be. Since this is a group project, you will be required to fill out a peer evaluation for each member of your team. Not all team members will necessarily receive the same grade. Your score on the peer evaluation will be reflected in your individual grade. For instance, if the collective grade for the team is 90% and your score on the peer evaluation is 80%, you will receive 80% of 90% (which is 72%). I will provide you with more details on the structure of the AFI project as the semester unfolds.

***Note:** The instructor reserves the right to change assignments and cases as necessary to facilitate an improved learning experience.*

## **Course Policies:**

### **External Intermediation**

Only registered students are allowed to talk to me about their course grades. Your hard work is your only way of doing well in my class. I do not, under any circumstances, deal with external intermediaries that try to influence or interfere with my policies and grading. This applies to everyone including parents, relatives, political figures, other students, and so on. Asking me to compromise my morals and standards is, in my opinion, rude and offensive (to say the least). Expecting me to actually respond and/or sway from my policies due to external pressures is even worse. ***External intermediation will automatically result in a final grade reduction of 10%.***

### **Missed Assignments**

There will be no allowance for missed/late assignments. If you wait until the last hour to work on an assignment and you have problems, then that is the risk you chose to hazard by procrastinating.

### **Cheating and Plagiarism**

Every student in this course must abide by the Kuwait University Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism (published in the Student Guide, Chapter 3, Section 2). A copy of the student guide can be accessed online on:

[http://www.kuniv.edu/cs/groups/ku/documents/ku\\_content/kuw055940.pdf](http://www.kuniv.edu/cs/groups/ku/documents/ku_content/kuw055940.pdf)

Please carefully note all sources and assistance when you turn in your work. Under no circumstances should you take credit for work that is not yours. You should neither receive nor give any unauthorized assistance on any deliverable. If you have any questions about what constitutes “unauthorized assistance” please email me before the deliverable is submitted.

Please note that acts of academic dishonesty during the course will be prosecuted and harsh penalties may be sought for such acts. Students are responsible for knowing what acts constitute academic dishonesty.

### **Office Hours**

Office hours are Tuesdays from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. If you have a time conflict, please contact me to schedule an appointment for another time. You may contact me any time via email. In general, this syllabus is your first source of information on questions pertaining to the class. I will not answer a question for which the answer is in the syllabus or my announcements to the class. When sending me an email, always send it from your KU email, and include the course number, section, and your first and last name in the email title. For example, “MGT 450-02A Flan Alflani”.

### **Classroom Etiquette**

The following professional behaviors are expected of students:

- Come to class on time, ready to actively participate. Attendance will be taken as soon as class

starts. If you show up to class after I have taken the attendance, you will be marked as absent from class.

- Always be professional and respectful towards everyone in class. No talking during class, no sleeping, no working on other assignments.
- No voice recording or video recording is allowed. Remove headphones and silence cell phones and all other electronic devices during class. This class is designed to be highly interactive which means you need to pay attention to discussions and participate or it will greatly affect your class participation score.
- No eating in class.
- Professional delivery of assignments including proper formatting, organizing, font, grammar, spelling. Professionalism is like a performance appraisal that you will routinely receive throughout your career. Everything you do (or don't) creates an impression.

### Course Topics & Tentative Schedule:

<b>Weeks (Tentative)</b>	<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Topics Covered</b>
1	1	<b>What is Strategy?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Competitive Advantage</li> <li>○ Value Creation</li> <li>○ Stakeholder Strategy</li> <li>○ Analysis, Formulation, Implementation (AFI) Framework</li> </ul>
2	2	<b>Strategic Leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Role of Strategic Leaders</li> <li>○ Vision, Mission, and Values</li> <li>○ Strategic Management Process</li> <li>○ Strategic Decision Making</li> </ul>
2-3	5	<b>Competitive Advantage, Firm Performance, and Business Models</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Measuring Firm Performance</li> <li>○ Assessing Firm Performance</li> <li>○ Popular Business Models</li> </ul>
4	3	<b>External Analysis: Industry Structure, Competitive Forces, and Strategic Groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ PESTEL Framework</li> <li>○ Five Forces Model</li> <li>○ Entry Choices &amp; Industry Dynamics</li> <li>○ Strategic Groups</li> </ul>
5	4	<b>Internal Analysis: Resources, Capabilities, and Core Competencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Core Competencies</li> <li>○ The Resource-Based View</li> <li>○ VRIO Framework</li> <li>○ Dynamic Capabilities</li> <li>○ SWOT Analysis</li> </ul>
6-7	6 & 7	<b>Business Strategy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Differentiation</li> <li>○ Cost Leadership</li> <li>○ Blue Oceans</li> <li>○ Innovation</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Entrepreneurship</li> <li>○ Platforms</li> </ul>
<b>6-7</b>	N/A	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>	<b>Chapters 1-6 (tentative)</b>
8-10	8 & 9	<b>Corporate Strategy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Boundaries of the Firm</li> <li>○ Vertical Integration</li> <li>○ Diversification</li> <li>○ Strategic Alliances</li> <li>○ Mergers &amp; Acquisitions</li> </ul>
11	11	<b>Organizational Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Organizational Structure</li> <li>○ Organizational Culture</li> <li>○ Strategic Control and Reward Systems</li> </ul>
12	12	<b>Corporate Governance &amp; Business Ethics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Agency Theory</li> <li>○ Board of Directors &amp; TMTs</li> <li>○ Governance Mechanisms</li> <li>○ Business Ethics</li> </ul>
13	<b>SLACK</b>		
14	N/A	<b>AFI Presentations</b>	<b>May 5-9</b>

**Special dates of note for Fall 2023:**

February 4, 2024	Classes Begin
March 16, 2024	Course Withdrawal Deadline
May 13, 2024	Last day of classes
May 18, 2024 8:00 AM – 10:00 AM	Final Exam for Section 01A

*The instructor reserves the right to make modifications to this syllabus. This may happen in response to either changes in the student or the instructor's schedule. Although these changes are not expected, if they occur, you will be notified as soon as possible.*