

**COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS
MIA AND MPA PROGRAMS**

U6006 – STRATEGIC THINKING AND PLANNING FOR GENERAL MANAGERS

Instructor: Paul W. Thurman **Fall 2010**
Paul.Thurman@Columbia.edu
Lectures: Mondays, 11:00am-12:50pm **IAB 411**

Teaching Assistant: Amireh Horriyat
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Review Sessions: Wednesdays, 9:00am-10:50am **IAB 413**

Course Objectives

The Strategic Thinking and Planning course has two primary objectives: (1) to introduce and apply analytic frameworks used in formulating and implementing strategies at the general manager level, and (2) to integrate managerial skills acquired in other courses and through personal job experiences. Specifically, as a result of the course, participants should be able to:

- Analyze complex industry and organizational situations from an executive or general management point of view, utilizing a comprehensive strategic framework;
- Develop and/or identify potential alternative strategies for pursuing organizational mission and vision;
- Assess the implications of strategic options, including potential for achieving competitive advantage and for effective implementation;
- Prepare plans for executing strategies successfully within realistic economic, market, and temporal parameters, and;
- Make, support analytically, and communicate clearly strategic decisions from an executive leadership perspective.

Over the semester, the course considers questions of Mission and Vision ("What areas, activities, or business(es) should we be in?") and questions of Strategy and Operations ("How can we perform or compete effectively in this area?"). It covers both strategy formulation ("What should our strategy be?") as well as strategy implementation ("What do we need to do to make this strategy work?"). The course also addresses several additional issues that are critical to the strategic management "process" (e.g., designing planning systems, managing contention). The course emphasizes the multiple, related requirements of the leader/manager's job: analysis, creativity, and action.

Course Structure and Grading

During this semester, the course will utilize a combination of cases, readings, lectures, discussions, and reports. Everyone is expected to attend all classes and recitation sections—or notify the instructor in advance via email if this is not possible—and to take an active role in each session. The level of class participation will have a substantial effect on the quality of the course.

Grades for the course will be determined as follows:

<i>Individual case analysis (you choose):</i>	20%	(Due on scheduled day of coverage)
<i>Individual case analysis (all students):</i>	20%	(<i>Marketing NYC</i> ; due on Nov. 8)
<i>Group project</i>	60%	
- <i>Proposal</i>	10%	(Due October 25 at beginning of class)
- <i>Analysis paper and pres.</i>	50%	(Due Dec. 6 – Paper and Presentation)

Course Textbook and Readings

A textbook and reading packet are required for the course. The text is:

Ference, Thomas P., and Paul W. Thurman, *MBA Fundamentals: Strategy*, Kaplan Publishing, 2009

In addition, you will need to purchase the course reading packet from me (check or cash to Paul Thurman) for \$30 on the first day of class. The reading packet will be posted on Courseworks as a .zip file for download. This fee covers copyright and licensing fees for the content, including all case materials, readings, etc. save for some periodic in-class handouts and Courseworks postings. All files are in .pdf format, so be sure you have the Adobe Acrobat reader loaded on your PC. The reader is available for free at www.adobe.com.

Assigned readings and lecture notes for all class sessions will be available in the course packet online via Courseworks (<https://courseworks.columbia.edu>). Courseworks will also be used for periodic article distributions (between classes) as well as for the class grade book (so you can view your progress through the course as assignments are graded). You are encouraged to also use Courseworks for the class email list so you can share items of interest with your classmates.

Individual Case Assignments

The case write-up should utilize the assigned readings as well as information from your own experiences, insights, etc. Case write-ups/solutions should be no more than 10 pages long (double-spaced, 12-point font, etc.) not including any exhibits needed.

One case is chosen entirely by you; however, you must work on these individually and submit write-ups by the date the case is scheduled to be discussed in class (except for the *Amanco* case, which can be submitted via email by 11am on the University Holiday, if desired). A second case

(*Marketing NYC*) will be chosen by the instructor, and all students must complete this case (individually) by the assigned due date (**November 8**). No collaboration with colleagues is allowed for these two case assignments; please save that for the group case assignment (see below).

A word of caution: do not let this assignment pass you by. If you wait until the end of the term to choose an individual case, you will end up working not only on this assignment but also on the group case assignment. Thus, please plan ahead!

Further, no extensions will be granted for any assignment. Failure to submit an individual case assignment by the last in-class case discussion or the group case assignment (see below) by the end of the semester will result in a failing grade for the course. No exceptions to this policy will be granted.

You should plan to use the assigned readings up-to and including those assigned with your cases of interest and to utilize the principles from those readings—as well as from our in-class discussions of prior cases, analytical frameworks, etc.—to complete your analyses. Make explicit references when using these concepts/readings. The more you link your case analyses, conclusions, recommendations, and plans to the course frameworks, readings, and principles, the better off you will be (and the better your group case assignment is likely to proceed, as well).

Also be sure to include both *qualitative* and *quantitative* analyses. Submitting a case analysis with little or no numerical, analytical, and/or graphical support will not reflect sufficient strategic insight so as to receive a good evaluation of your work. Keep opinions and “gut reactions” to a minimum; stay objective, fact-based, and hypothesis-driven in your write-ups.

This individual assignments are worth 40% of your final grade, and this grade will be based on your ability to clearly and in a cogent fashion present a reasonable analysis, conclusion, and actionable set of recommendations given the context of the case (and questions posed by key players in it, etc.) Note that for each case, I have prepared some general questions for you to consider—and for us to discuss during in-class coverage of the case—and these are available in the course reading packet.

Your ability to link your findings and recommendations to course tools and readings—as well as your ability to demonstrate both qualitative and quantitative analytical skills—will factor heavily into your grade for the individual case, also.

Final Assignment – “Proposal” and “Analysis” (With Presentation Slides)

Our final session will be devoted to presenting your group case analyses.

The group case assignment/presentation has three purposes: to enable you to seek counsel and advice on a current problem facing your team or your team’s institution; to provide tangible evidence of your grasp of course materials in lieu of a final exam; and to practice valuable consulting skills.

Groups should contain *at most* five people. No individual projects may be submitted to fulfill this course requirement. Teams should be formed in the first 1-2 class sessions, if possible, and

team formation is entirely at your discretion; i.e., no “assigned teams” will be formed or enforced.

If doing an analysis for your (past or present) institution, you may disguise the institution’s name and location, financial data, and program characteristics if you like¹. However, financial data should be in proportion to reality so as not to bias or distort the situation described. Similarly, programs described should be comparable and have like characteristics to the real ones.

Given the outline of the course, your Proposal should focus on issues revolving around mission and values, strategies, and implementation, with attention to relevant financial, marketing, operations, personnel, and political concerns. It should be structured around a clearly identified situation and should be thoroughly documented. It should include all relevant facts and figures, environmental conditions and trends, organizational structure and relationships, management commitments and attitudes, economic/financial and personnel availabilities/limitations.

With these purposes in mind, proposals should accurately portray real, not imagined, scenarios. Proposals should be submitted to me via hardcopy no later than the due date noted in the syllabus, and I will review/comment on them via email within one week. (Earlier or draft submissions are certainly allowed and encouraged; I am happy to review your thoughts prior to “formal” submission/grading.) These should have the rough “look and feel” of the case synopses we have been reviewing as part of our in-class discussions; e.g., Harvard Business School ones. They should be no more than 3-4 pages plus any supporting exhibits, if applicable (double-spaced, 12 point font, etc.).

The Subject of Your Group Case

Obviously, you will derive the greatest benefit from the assignment if the Case focuses on an unresolved problem facing your team, a boss, or a boss’ boss, rather than on a problem that has already been solved.

As an example, your strategic situation may involve one or more of the following subject areas: program operation, enhancement, diversification, or divestiture; revenue and funding strategies; organizational design and operating systems; authority, information-management, and decision-making systems; institutional ventures, acquisitions, or mergers; performance management and reward systems; individual and team dynamics, and institutional policies, power, and politics.

Whatever the area, the issue should be one requiring decision and action by an individual or team with general management responsibilities.

¹ In addition, if any confidentiality agreements are required, please see me. Such agreements are often standard when using “inside” company materials and research, and these are welcome any time

The Group Case Analysis Paper

A separate Analysis Paper is also required and is due on our final class meeting. Your analysis paper should contain a full analysis of the situation presented in the Proposal in conceptual terms and should also present realistic, workable, time-phased recommendations for resolving the situation presented. Risks should be fully assessed. Managerial responsibilities, yours and others, should be identified. Analysis papers should be written as vertical reports (double-spaced, etc.) and should be 15-20 pages in length plus exhibits. Tie-ins to course materials—readings, guest lecturer remarks, similar case situations—are a must. Teams must also prepare a PowerPoint presentation for the final class meeting (see below).

Note, again, that these analysis papers should contain significant *qualitative* and *quantitative* analyses. They should not read like opinion papers or “gut instinct” position papers. They should be objective in nature with analyses supported by qualitative and quantitative facts backed up by analyses tied to our course tools and readings (with explicit references to them).

The Group Case Presentation

Finally, a brief (1-2 page) summary presentation (preferably in PowerPoint on a USB key to facilitate in-class projection) should also be prepared for presentation to the class on the last day. (You need not make paper copies for everyone.) This five-minute presentation should simply be a summary of your detailed Proposal and Analysis Papers, and should lay out the pertinent points including the problem to address, the strategic context, your conclusions, and your recommendations.

Think of this as a consulting presentation back to your client; focus on being brief but specific, and help your client address the concerns brought up in your Proposal. All team members should plan to participate in the final presentation as well as with subsequent Q&A from classmates and the instructor; thus, be sure to practice!

Grading Criteria

Your two papers, Proposal and Analysis, will be worth 10% and 50% of your total score, respectively. The quality of your final, in-class presentation may enhance (but will not hurt) your score. The Proposal will be evaluated for clarity of presentation and completeness of documentation of information relevant to the needed analyses of the central issues.

The Analysis Paper will be evaluated by the criteria normally applied to case analyses in class: thoroughness of analysis, logical connections with case facts and interpretations, internal consistency of recommendations, and feasibility of implementation. Tie-ins with course readings and learnings are obviously essential as are the aforementioned qualitative and quantitative analyses to support your conclusions.

Session Outline: Readings and Cases

<u>Date</u>	<u>Session</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
9/13	1	<u>The General Management Task</u> See course reading packet for readings and handouts. Text: None Case: None Readings: Course syllabus and case questions
9/20	2	<u>The Concept of Strategy</u> Text: Ference and Thurman, Chapters 1-3 Case: <i>Taking Charge at Dogus Holdings (A)</i> Read: Articles 1-4; see course reading packet
09/27	3	<u>The Concept of Strategy (cont.)</u> Text: Ference and Thurman, Chapter 4 Case: <i>St. John's Hospital</i> Read: Articles 5-7; see course reading packet
10/04	4	<u>Developing a Strategic Perspective</u> Text: Ference and Thurman, Chapter 5 Case: <i>Fundacion Comunitaria Oaxaca (FCO)</i> Read: Articles 8-12; see course reading packet
10/11	5	<u>Strategy Formulation: Evolving Institutions</u> Text: Ference and Thurman, Chapter 6 Case: <i>Sun Life Financial</i> Read: Articles 13-17; see course reading packet

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Strategy Formulation: Emerging Institutions

Text: Ference and Thurman, Chapter 7

Case: *Celtel International B. V.*

Read: Articles 18-22; see course reading packet

10/25 7

Strategy Formulation: Balancing Strategy and Operations

PROJECT PROPOSALS DUE!

Text: Ference and Thurman, Chapter 8

Case: *Amanco: Sustainability Scorecard* (**NOTE: case can be submitted via email no later than 11am, on November 1, 2010, given the holiday next week.**)

Read: Articles 23-26 (plus one optional reading); see course packet

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NO CLASS (UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY)

Case: *Amanco* case write-up can be submitted by 11am, today, if you choose to write up this case. Please email to Paul.

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Strategy Implementation: Managing Change

Text: Ference and Thurman, Chapter 9

Case: *Marketing New York City* – **NOTE: ALL STUDENTS MUST SUBMIT INDIVIDUAL CASE WRITE-UPS OF THIS CASE, TODAY, AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS!**

Read: Articles 27-29; see course reading packet

11/15 10

Strategy Implementation: Managing Growth

Text: None

Case: *Hero Honda India*

Read: Articles 30-34; see course reading packet

11/22 11

Strategy Implementation: Managing Strategic Evolution

Text: Ference and Thurman; Chapter 10

Case: *World Vision International's AIDS Initiative: Challenging a Global Partnership*

Read: Articles 35-38; see course reading packet

11/29 12

Course Wrap-Up and Team Mentoring

Case: None; class time will be devoted to team working sessions and meetings with the instructor and TA to assess progress, give final direction, etc.

Read: None

12/06 13

Team Project Presentations (FINAL CLASS MEETING)

Be sure to submit your written case analysis paper at the beginning of class. PowerPoint presentations do not have to be submitted, but you should bring them to class on USB keys (and email it to yourself and to your team just in case your USB drive cannot be read).

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NO CLASS

Instructor



Paul W. Thurman August 2010
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Executive Director, Columbia Alliance for Healthcare Management
Columbia University
School of International and Public Affairs
Joseph L. Mailman School of Public Health
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Professor Thurman, a Columbia MBA valedictorian, service award winner, and multiple teaching award recipient, has extensive management consulting and line management experience helping a variety of Fortune 500 firms realize value from innovative and coordinated business, operations, and technology strategies. He has held senior positions at Booz Allen Hamilton and American Express and has served public and private sector clients on five continents.

Paul has consulted to several global financial services, health care, retail, and consumer products firms across a broad set of business disciplines. His consulting work has focused mostly on analytical modeling to support strategic planning and decision-making, corporate cost management, and technology and business integration. He has also developed solutions around customer segmentation, demand modeling, profitability, and experience mapping. He currently runs his own general management and executive education consultancy and is a frequent conference presenter.

Paul currently teaches strategic management and data analysis courses at Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs and at its Joseph L. Mailman School of Public Health. He also serves as Executive Director of the Columbia University Alliance for Healthcare Management, coordinating research, academic, and industry programs among Columbia's graduate schools of Public Health, Medicine, and Business. Paul has also taught courses in decision, risk, and operations in the full-time and Executive MBA Programs at the Columbia, London, and University of California, Berkeley business schools, and is a Senior Research Fellow and Permanent Visiting Professor at the Moscow School of Management SKOLKOVO, in Moscow, Russia.

In addition to his faculty appointments, Paul serves as a clinical professor and affiliated researcher at the National Cancer Institute's Center for Cancer Research at the National Institutes of Health. His recent peer-reviewed research has focused on scientific collaboration and its effect on research quality, and also on cancer drug patents, FDA approvals, and market pricing. He is the author of *MBA Fundamentals of Statistics*, (Kaplan, 2008), *Pocket Guide to Data Analysis* (Kaplan, 2009), and co-author (with Thomas P. Ference) of *MBA Fundamentals of Business Strategy* (Kaplan, 2009). He is also editor, with colleagues from Greece, of *Female Immigrant Entrepreneurs*, and *Father-Daughter Succession in Family Businesses*, two research compendia, to be published in late 2010 and in early 2011, respectively, by Gower (UK). He is also author of a forthcoming book on international business and strategic management, focused on "BRIC" countries/economies, due to be released in 2012.

Finally, Paul is on the board of the Greenburgh (New York) Nature Center, the Scarsdale (New York) Teen Center, and sits on the advisory boards of a number of entrepreneurial ventures. Paul received his BS in mathematics (honors) from Stanford University and his MBA (highest honors) from Columbia. He is currently completing his doctorate in public health policy and management at the State University of New York (Brooklyn).