



**BUS 450 Business Policy & Strategy
Spring 2023 (7 weeks) | Online**

Professor Palin
Office: 213 Luther Bonney (Portland)
Office Hours: by appointment

Required method to contact the instructor: Via your course assigned MS Teams project in the Posts module (allow 36 hours for a reply Monday thru Friday, 8 am – 5 pm). Set your MS Teams toggles ‘on’ for all communication options. Do not communicate via email.

SYLLABUS

*“Strategy is about making choices, trade-offs; it’s about deliberately choosing to be different.”
–Michael Porter*

School of Business Mission Statement:

We prepare lifelong, entrepreneurial thinkers fluent in business technologies.

Course Prerequisites:

Senior standing; BUS260 (Marketing with a C- or higher) BUS340 (Organizational Behavior with a C or higher) and FIN320 (Basic Financial Management with a C or higher). Students must also fulfill the University Core requirement for Ethical Inquiry, Social Responsibility, and Citizenship prior to enrolling. Please speak to the instructor if you do not meet these course prerequisites.

Text and Resources:

1. Essentials of Strategic Management, 5th Edition, Hunger and Wheelen, Prentice Hall (9780136006695).
2. MikesBikes Advanced Simulation, www.smartsims.com
3. MS Teams, <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-teams/>

Course Technology:

You will need high-speed Internet access for this course. It is recommended that you complete this course on a desktop or laptop. Students attempting to complete the course on a mobile phone will find it difficult to review and complete course materials and assignments. In addition, you will need access to the following technology:

- Brightspace – to access course assignments, materials and information
- MS Teams – to communicate with the instructor
- MikesBikes Business Simulation – to participate in our business strategy simulation
- YouTube – to watch and review course TED Talks and other videos.
- Spotify – to listen and review course assigned podcast episodes.

Course Notes:

This course runs from Tuesday, January 17, 2023 until Friday, March 3, 2023.

This is a self-paced course. It is up to each individual to decide when to complete course work, keeping in mind the various due dates listed throughout our semester. **It is the responsibility of the student to keep track of due dates as reminders will not be sent.**

Please note that learning packets containing various quizzes, assignments and journals will be released at intervals during the semester. Do not assume upon completing the listed quizzes, assignments and journals at the onset of the course that you have completed all requirements. You must log on throughout the semester to see the sequential quizzes, assignments and journals and their corresponding due dates.

The syllabus is the operational document for this course and supersedes any and all information, including due dates, on Brightspace in the event of a conflict of information.

Learning packets will be posted in the learning packet modules section of Brightspace at intervals during the semester.

All late assignments and/or journals will receive a grade penalty that is outlined in the syllabus.

This course is designed sequentially. You must access all learning materials from this course through the modules of Brightspace and view them on the Brightspace platform. **Do not download the files** as the next sequence will not be visible on the Brightspace platform if you download.

Using Brightspace:

Communications of materials in this course (e.g., syllabus, hand-outs, assignments, journals, etc.) will be delivered using the University Course Info System (Brightspace). Be sure you have access to this system.

You can access Brightspace at <https://courses.maine.edu/d2l/home>. Brightspace provides a series of instructional video tutorials that answers the most common questions related to the platform. Visit <https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/learners/learners.htm> to learn more about Brightspace.

When you log into the Brightspace page that accompanies this course, you will see links for the course modules and announcements.

Course Highlights:

Each student will receive an email invitation to your course MS Teams project.

To access the course modules, it is required to take and score 100% on the course introduction quiz. This quiz is derived from information found in the course syllabus and the course introduction and overview video. Carefully and thoroughly review the syllabus and introduction and overview video before taking this quiz. The course introduction quiz is not a component of your course grade.

There are seven learning packets for this course. Learning packets will address main themes from the course and contains tasks, quizzes, assignments and journals.

Each learning packet module contains the main content for each topic and may include links to additional reading and videos. You should review each learning packet thoroughly.

It is highly recommended that you (in this order) 1) review the learning packet 2) complete the textbook readings, 3) review the accompanying videos and study guides, 4) thoroughly and qualitatively complete all quizzes, assignments, journals and tasks by the due dates.

Written assignments must be uploaded in PDF format. Video assignments and journals must be uploaded in MP4 or MOV format. No other format will be accepted and failure to submit the assignment as a PDF for written and MP4 or MOV for video by the due date will receive a grade of 'F'.

Core Requirement:

This course fulfills the USM Core Capstone requirement. The capstone experience engages students with a significant theme, issue, topic, or problem. The capstone requires the development of a substantial oral, written, creative, and/or applied final project that integrates disciplinary learning with general education and the perspectives of other business disciplines. As the concluding experience, the capstone provides opportunities for students to think about how their education at USM, especially in the major, informs their future academic, professional, and personal lives.

Course Objectives:

As the capstone class in the School of Business, the course provides an in-depth examination of the strategic management process in complex organizations. This course uses case study analysis, business simulation, and integrative capstone projects to provide students with opportunities to learn and to apply strategic management theories and concepts. These include market feasibility assessment, customer analysis, competitive analysis, value-chain analysis, generic business strategies, corporate strategy, scenario planning and global strategy.

Students will:

- Develop your capacity to think strategically about a company, its business position, how it can gain a sustainable competitive advantage, and how its strategy can be implemented and executed successfully.
- 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.
- Provide a realistic experience in crafting business strategy, reasoning carefully about strategic options, using what-if analysis to evaluate action alternatives, and making sound strategic decisions.
- Develop your powers of managerial judgement, the ability to assess business risk, and improve your ability to create results-oriented action plans.
- Draw on the specialized knowledge of the major to articulate a significant theme, topic, issue or problem.
- Design and generate a significant oral, written, creative or applied final project.
- Collaborate or consult with others to research, create or discuss solutions or approaches to the project.
- Analyze, apply, and integrate multiple sources of information and specialized perspectives to complete a project.
- Draw on learning in general education and other courses to reflect on and critically interrogate

learning within the capstone and the major.

Expectations and Standards:

BUS 450 integrates the skills and knowledge students have learned (finance, operations, marketing, human resource management, IT, communications, etc.) and apply them to cross-functional business problems from the perspective of C suite executives. The cornerstone of your learning experience will revolve around strategy readings, business cases, experiential learning, reading and research, business simulation, and a course project. With respect to this approach, all students will be expected to think in business terms. Be prepared to deliver.

1. You must find a pace that allows you to complete course work each week, keeping in mind quizzes, assignments, journals and simulation decision due dates. If you miss a simulation due date for example, this can greatly impact your performance in the overall simulation as you will miss an entire year's strategies. ***You should create a schedule to complete course work each week and plan to stick to it.***
2. There is an absolute level, quality and amount of work you will be expected to accomplish in your course work. Please be sure to answer all the questions and thoroughly complete all work.
3. Research and identifying key data points are necessary to achieve a high assessment evaluation. **Defend your positions with data and facts, not your opinions.**
4. All work is expected to be your own original work.
5. Incomplete work receives a grade of "F".

Business Strategy Learning Packets:

Each student will complete seven learning packets over the course of the semester. Each learning packet will contain a series of questions and topics to address, documenting your learning and application of course topics, contents, and readings. Deliverables are labeled as quizzes, assignments and journals in the learning packets. Assignments are **group** deliverables. Quizzes and journals are **individual** deliverables.

You should review each learning packet carefully. Criteria for evaluating the assignments and journals will vary but will be based on an assigned rubric for that assignment or journal. Each late assignment will incur a 20-point grade deduction for each day (or partial day) they are late. Each late journal will incur a 10-point grade deduction for each day (or partial day) they are late.

Criteria for evaluating the quizzes will be based on points assigned per correct answer. Quizzes will be turned off and not accessible past the due date/time. Questions not answered by the due date/time will be graded as a 'zero'. There will be **no quiz resets** in the event the student's internet connection is slow or goes down. It is highly recommended that students do not use a wireless internet connection to take their quizzes and instead take each quiz at a local or university library.

Due dates for the learning packets journals/quizzes:

	Due Date/Time
Learning Packet #1	1/20/2023 11:59 PM (Friday)
Learning Packet #2	1/27/2023 11:59 PM (Friday)
Learning Packet #3	2/3/2023 11:59 PM (Friday)
Learning Packet #4	2/10/2023 11:59 PM (Friday)
Learning Packet #5	2/17/2023 11:59 PM (Friday)
Learning Packet #6	2/24/2023 11:59 PM (Friday)
Learning Packet #7	3/3/2023 11:59 PM (Friday)

Teams/Groups:

The course provides an opportunity to execute assignments with fellow students. Teams will be determined randomly. Each team will prepare a partnership agreement to be uploaded to Brightspace. The partnership agreement will be the operational document determining the terms of interaction of your team and is due by January 23 at 11:59 PM. This document should be given careful consideration and thought. A late submission of the partnership agreement will incur a 100-point grade deduction of your individual course grade for each day (or partial day) it is late. The first 'late day' will begin on January 24 at 12:01 AM.

The agreement should cover the following:

- Name of the partnership
- Purpose of the business (team)
- Domicile of the business (team)
- Duration of the partnership
- Names of the partners and their legal addresses
- Contributions of each partner to the business (team)
- Agreement to how the profits and losses (grades) will be distributed.
- Absence or nonperformance of a partner. How will this be handled?
- How will conflicts be resolved?
- What is the process for dismissal of a student from the group? (A dismissed student becomes a stand-alone team)

The **typed** partnership agreement must be signed by each team member. Upload the signed partnership agreement in pdf format in the partnership agreement assignment in Brightspace. **A font is not a signature and will not be accepted as a valid submission.**

Strategic Audit:

Each student will develop a strategic audit of a New England based (Corporate Headquarters in New England) publicly traded company. Each student will submit a **typed** list in pdf format in Brightspace in ranked order of 5 potential companies, which fit the criteria, along with the company's trading/stock symbol and corporate headquarters' address by 1/20/2023, 11:59 PM Friday. Failure to correctly accomplish this submittal by the due date will result in a 50 point grade deduction for each day (or partial day) it is late for your Strategic Audit grade. Since interaction with company representatives may be a component of this assignment, duplication between assigned companies will not be allowed. Each student will be assigned a different company. The required Strategic Audit format can be found in the course textbook.

A **typed** strategic audit in pdf format uploaded to Brightspace is due on 3/3/2023, 11:59 PM Friday. The development of the strategic audit entails the student working through the process. The development will be self-paced. While many of the issues covered during our course content will assist the development of your strategic audit, students are expected to also pursue assistance, independent of the class, as a means to complete your strategic audit.

Criteria for evaluating the strategic audit will be based on an assigned rubric for this assignment. A late strategic audit will incur a 100-point grade deduction for each day (or partial day) it is late. The first 'late day' will begin at 3/4/2023 at 12:01 AM Saturday.

Business Simulation:

MikesBikes Advanced is a state-of-the-art internet-based, business learning simulation. By simulating a bike industry with market segments, distributors, and firms, MikesBikes Advanced allows students to learn by doing and practice a wide range of business disciplines and skills effectively, in a compelling and responsive simulated environment.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- An understanding of core business functions
- Ability to visualize a business as an interactive system of these components
- Opportunity to analyze company data using highly visual graphics
- Practice of quantitative skills required for management using MS Excel
- Development of the skills for effective team management

You will need to sign-up to participate in this simulation. You will be receiving an email from SmartSims, the company running the MikesBikes simulation, in the first week of the semester containing details about registration. Respond to that email and register for the simulation by Friday, January 20, 11:59 PM. Failure to register on time will result in a 50-point grade deduction for each day (or partial day) the student fails to register for all simulation related grades.

The simulation will assess your business strategy decision-making in ten “rollovers”. The rollover represents moving from one year to the next in the simulation. You must have all decisions that you are making for each year entered before the rollover. It is highly suggested that each firm (student) enter their submissions several hours before the time deadline each period in the event of computer or internet problems. No adjustments will be made in the event of a firm (student) being unable to submit on time. If you miss making a set of decisions, you will fall behind in the marketplace, making success more challenging.

Each student must complete a minimum of 8 rollovers of the single player version of MikesBikes Advanced by Friday, January 20, 11:59 PM. This is a practice round. Failure to complete this requirement will result in a 75-point grade deduction for each day (or partial day) the student fails to complete the requirement for all simulation related grading. Aside from a potential grade deduction from the multiplayer version grade for not completing the single player version by the due date, the single player version is not an aspect of your final course grade.

You will enter your decisions into the strategic management interface that accompanies the simulation. And you will be competing with other students in the course allowing us to evaluate which decisions yield the most success in the marketplace.

You should carefully record all the decisions that you make allowing you to keep track of your actions.

It will be your responsibility to learn the MikesBikes interface and decision-making platform. Please note: the instructor will only be able to provide basic responses to questions to avoid influencing your strategic decision-making.

MikesBikes is a dynamic simulation with the algorithm changing from semester to semester. In other words, a successful strategy in a past semester may result in failure this semester. This represents the ever-changing nature of marketplaces.

Here is a link to MikesBikes website to learn more: <https://www.smartsims.com/business-simulation/mikes-bikes-advanced/>

Below is the schedule of multi-player rollovers for the semester:

	Due Date/Time
Multi-Player turns on	1/22/2022 11:59 PM (Sunday)
Competitive Rollover 1	1/24/2023 6:00 PM (Tuesday)
Competitive Rollover 2	1/27/2023 6:00 PM (Friday)
Competitive Rollover 3	1/31/2023 6:00 PM (Tuesday)
Competitive Rollover 4	2/3/2023 6:00 PM (Friday)
Competitive Rollover 5	2/7/2023 6:00 PM (Tuesday)
Competitive Rollover 6	2/10/2023 6:00 PM (Friday)
Competitive Rollover 7	2/14/2023 6:00 PM (Tuesday)
Competitive Rollover 8	2/17/2023 6:00 PM (Friday)
Competitive Rollover 9	2/21/2023 6:00 PM (Tuesday)
Competitive Rollover 10	2/24/2023 6:00 PM (Friday)

Criteria for evaluating your firm will be as follows:

Results of your firm strategy as compared to your competition (other firms in your world) in the multiplayer simulation. Shareholder Value after last rollover will be compared as a percentage to the top firm in your world.

Final Exam:

The final exam may cover any and all material from the entire semester. Criteria for evaluating the exam will be based on points assigned per correct answer. The exam will be turned off and not accessible past the due date/time. Questions not answered by the due date/time will be graded as a 'zero'. There will be **no exam reset** in the event the student's internet connection is slow or goes down. It is highly recommended that students do not use a wireless internet connection to take their exam and instead take the exam at a local or university library.

A Note About Required Papers and Videos:

Below are some guidelines for course papers and videos:

- Papers are required to be created in PDF format.
- Videos are required to be created in MP4 or MOV format.
- Papers should be double spaced, in font size 12.
- Papers and videos must be your own original work. Plagiarism will not be tolerated.
- Videos utilizing powerpoint with a voice over method will receive a grade of “F”
- Videos submitted as solely an audio file will receive a grade of “F”
- You should perform each assignment in a way that demonstrates your understanding of course material. For example, if you are asked to implement a five force analysis, you must be able to demonstrate that you know what the five forces are as well as how to apply the analysis to ensure business success.
- You must cite any work that you reference in your work. You can decide which citation style to use (e.g., APA, MLA, Chicago, etc.). For more information about citation styles please visit <http://pitt.libguides.com/citationhelp>.

Attendance:

There is no formal attendance policy for this online course. It is up to you to determine when you review course materials and when you will complete assignments (keep various due dates in mind and review the late penalties).

Academic Integrity:

Plagiarism, cheating, and falsification of information are violations of academic integrity that will not be tolerated in this class. For more information, please contact Chief Student Affairs Office at (207) 780-4035.

USM Statement on Academic Integrity and Plagiarism:

Everyone associated with the University of Southern Maine is expected to adhere to the principles of academic integrity central to the academic function of the University. Any breach of academic integrity represents a serious offense. Each student has a responsibility to know the standards of conduct and expectations of academic integrity that apply to academic tasks. Violations of student academic integrity include any actions that attempt to promote or enhance the academic standing of any student by dishonest means. Cheating on an examination, stealing the words or ideas of another (i.e., plagiarism), making statements known to be false or misleading, falsifying the results of one's research, improperly using library materials or computer files, or altering or forging academic records are examples of violations of this policy which are contrary to the academic purposes for which the University exists. Acts that violate academic integrity disrupt the educational process and are not acceptable.

Evidence of a violation of the academic integrity policy will normally result in disciplinary action. A copy of the complete policy may be obtained from the Dean of Students Office, online at <http://www.usm.maine.edu/deanofstudents> or by calling and requesting a copy at (207) 780-5242.

Weather Cancellations or Delays:

In severe weather, classes will follow the USM policy. In most cases, our online class will proceed as scheduled.

Need Assistance:

At any point in the semester, if you encounter difficulty with the course or feel that you could be performing at a higher level, consult with me. Students experience difficulties in courses for a variety of reasons. The following are resources on campus for students.

- For writing skills or time management, you can make an appointment to see a student tutor at the Learning Commons located in both the Portland and Gorham libraries. For more information, visit <http://www.usm.maine.edu/learningcommons>.
- The Writing Center at LAC is also available to all USM students and is a great option for students living in the greater Lewiston/Auburn area. For more information, please visit <http://usm.maine.edu/writingcenter>.
- If you need accommodations due to a disability, please contact the Disability Services Center for confidential assistance and accommodation authorization. Timely notification of accommodations is essential. For more information, visit <http://usm.maine.edu/dsc> or call (207) 780-4706.
- University Health and Counseling Services is a student resource that promotes the health and well-being of the USM community. More information can be found at <http://www.usm.maine.edu/uahcs>.

Adaptations and Accommodations:

The university is committed to providing students with documented disabilities equal access to all university programs and services. If you think you have a disability and would like to request accommodations, you must register with the Disability Services Center. Timely notification is essential. The Disability Services Center can be reached by calling (207) 780-4706 or by email at dsc-usm@maine.edu. If you have already received a faculty accommodation letter from the Disability Services Center, please provide me with that information as soon as possible. Please make a private appointment so that we can review your accommodations.

Withdrawals:

Please contact the Office of the Registrar at (207) 780-5230 for information on withdrawing from this course.

Other Issues:

- Retain copies of all work.
- All grades of an “F” will receive a numerical grade of “zero”.
- All submitted assignments/papers must be typed.
- Do not communicate with the instructor via email. Emails will be deleted and not replied to throughout the semester. MS Teams discussions will be used for communication.
- Grades will only be discussed via a zoom meeting. Phone, email, or other means will not be utilized.
- Grades are discussed only with the student. Request regarding a student’s grade by any other person will not be responded to.
- The syllabus is the operational document for this course and supersedes any and all information, including due dates, on Brightspace in the event of a conflict of information.
- The instructor retains the right to alter the content of this syllabus in order to add to the students’ learning opportunity.

Grading Policy:

	Points	A	930 – 1000	C	730 - 769
Quizzes (50 points each)	300	A-	900 – 929	C-	700- 729
Assignments (50 points each)	250	B+	870 – 899	D+	670 - 699
Journals (20 points each)	60	B	830 – 869	D	630 - 669
Strategic Audit	150	B-	800 – 829	D-	600 - 629
Business Simulation	150	C+	770 – 799	F	0 - 599
Final Exam	90				
Total	1000				