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Course Description:

The Senior Business Seminar is the second of two capstone courses designed to give students an opportunity to develop and appreciate conceptual and analytical skills needed by higher level managers in all types of organizations. Emphasis is given to the integration of subject matter from all business courses and other related disciplines in the discussion and analysis of organizational problems. This course should directly follow BUAD 400 and satisfies the Authentic Problems requirement in the Common Curriculum.

Learning Objectives:

1. To be able to think strategically about a specific business or a business related topic.
2. To be able to collect and analyze historical and current information about a business or business related topic.
3. To think critically about a business or business related topic
4. To possess the skills needed to present a persuasive argument for your research conclusions.

Students may also be asked to present their findings using Power Point or other appropriate software and support their rationale to a group of peers and instructors.

Resource Materials:

Text: Textbooks: Strategic Management Theory (same text used in Buad 400)

Supplemental Material: 10 Steps in Writing the Research Paper
Markham, Markham & Waddell
Barrons Educational Series

Grading Rubric for Buad 400/401

“A” - 950-1000

- Exceeds expectations in terms of the research effort
- Conveys mastery of marketing communication and business concepts
- Demonstrates a high level of planning, insight, and attention to detail
- Shows a thorough understanding of strategy
- Displays eloquent and engaging writing
- Contains appropriate citations and is free of grammatical errors

“B” - 850-949

- Meets expectations in terms of the research effort
- Demonstrates above average knowledge of marketing communication and business concepts
- Shows a thorough understanding of strategy
- Demonstrates a significant amount of planning, insight, and attention to detail
- Displays engaging and clear writing
- Contains appropriate citations and few typos and/or grammatical errors

“C” - 750-849

- Meets minimal expectations in terms of the research effort
- Demonstrates average knowledge of marketing communication & business concepts
- Shows a less than adequate understanding of strategy
- Demonstrates a lack of planning, insight, and attention to detail
- Is written in an unclear and/or unsophisticated manner
- Lacks appropriate citations; contains many typos and/or grammatical errors

“D” - 650-749

- Does not meet expectations in terms of the research effort
- Demonstrates inadequate knowledge of marketing communication & business concepts
- Shows a less than adequate understanding of strategy
- Demonstrates a severe lack of planning, insight, and attention to detail

- Is written in an extremely unclear manner; unacceptable as college-level writing
- Lacks appropriate citations; contains many typos and/or grammatical errors

Notes:

- 1) A grade of “F” will be assigned at the discretion of the instructor, if the project is deemed incomplete or grossly inadequate in terms of the above grading criteria.
- 2) “+” and “-” grades will be awarded at the discretion of the instructor, based on perceived variation from the above standard criteria.

Due dates and ET Policy:

The completed written paper is due August 14, 2020. A request for an ET will only be approved if more than 50% of the work for the semester has been submitted at the time of the request.

Basic Requirements and Options for the Business Senior Seminar

Prerequisites:

- at least have a 2.0 GPA in major courses.
- have completed Buad 400L - Strategies in Business

Research Paper:

Each student will define their own project to focus on for the course. The examples that follow are proposed guidelines for the project. The first phase of the project - typically completed during Buad 400L - will consist of the following elements:

1. Select project type.
2. Select organization, company or product on which to focus the project.
3. Provide background on the organization, company project.
4. Determine format or guideline to follow to develop the project.
5. Develop a plan for completion of the selected project.

The project will be developed in segments throughout the semester and will culminate into a complete and comprehensive plan. The deliverable will be a 30-50 page paper, with a required 10-15 minute presentation on the topic. Papers likely will vary in length since some may contain more tables, charts, and graphs than others. Use of the APA format for documentation of sources is expected.

Example Projects

Example 1 - Strategic Plan

You will develop a strategic plan for the small business of your choice, or one initiative for a larger organization, to include:

1. Executive Summary
2. Organizational Description
3. Mission, Vision and Values
4. Strategic Analysis
 - an external analysis
 - an internal analysis
 - strategic goals
 - recommendations
5. Implementation and Action Plan
6. Monitoring and Evaluation of Plan

Example 2 – Business Plan

You can develop a business plan for a local or regional business or a not for profit organization of your choice. It will follow the typical format of:

1. Strategy formulation
2. Market analysis
3. Marketing plan
4. Operational plans
5. Executive summary
6. Nature of the business
7. Financial plans
8. Organization and management
9. Human resource plan
10. Timetables and milestones
11. Action plans

12. Evaluation and control
13. Summary

Example 3 – Sustainability Evaluation of a Company

You would develop a multi-year plan to move a company from their current status quo to that of a more sustainable approach to running their business to include:

1. Executive summary
2. Current state evaluation
3. Develop a desired future state
4. Evaluate improvement options to include costs
5. Select the desired changes
6. Develop a proposed timing plan
7. Provide a final recommendation

Example 4 – Business Research

You would select a topic of interest on which to complete quantitative and/or qualitative research in the business arena to include:

1. Identify a problem
2. Define the purpose of the study
3. Develop a research question or questions
4. Define your hypotheses
5. Show the significance of the research
6. Literature review
7. Research methodology
8. Analysis of the data
9. Discussion of the research results

Example 5 – Corporate Business/Industry Analysis

You would select a large publicly held corporation on which to conduct this analysis to include:

1. **External Analysis:** Prepare an analysis of the environment affecting your firm. What are the demographic, economic, political or regulatory, socio-cultural, technological, and international developments which are likely to impact your firm? Analyze your firm using Porter's five forces model. Who are your firm's key competitors and what is their relative size and strength and what are their objectives?
2. **Internal Analysis:** What are the resources, capabilities and core competencies of your firm? Prepare value chain and SWOT analyses for your firm.
3. **Strategic Recommendation:** Based on the stakeholder, external and internal analyses, make a recommendation for the next major strategic initiative for your firm, compare it to other actions your firm might be taking, and justify why the action you selected is the best alternative for your firm. The financial impact of your proposed change should also be a part of the recommendation.
4. **Strategic Implementation:** Prepare an implementation plan for your recommendation. What actions have to take place in order for your plan to come to fruition?

The content of these options will likely vary some as the course and projects are further defined. Other options may be brought forward for discussion.

