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MBA 600.01: The Contemporary Organization

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**THE CONTEMPORARY
ORGANIZATION**

MBA 600 Syllabus 2003 Section # 1

**SYLLABUS
(Section #1: Fall 2003)**

COURSE INFORMATION:

Instructors:	Dr. Clyde W. Neu	Dr. Gerald Evans
Office:	GBB 361	GBB 358
Office Phones:	243-2097 & 800 252-3581	243-6531 & 800 252-3581
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Class Meetings:

September 2 – December 18

Bldg. Room

Tuesdays & Thursdays 9:40 AM – 11:00 AM

GBB L14

Note: Thursdays Nov. 20, Dec. 4, 11 & 18 2:10 PM – 3:30 PM

GBB 201

Continues: Thursdays, January 29 – February 26, 9:40 AM – 11:00 AM, Thursdays Only

COURSE SUMMARY:

MBA 600 explores the role of business strategy and information systems as integrating themes for the functional areas of business. A resource-based view of strategy is studied in contrast to a market view with illustrations of successful strategy implementation drawn from a variety of emerging, American and global companies. At the same time, the role of information within organizations is studied and compared to the role that organizations themselves play in defining the need for information systems.

The strategy aspect of MBA 600 is designed to introduce students to some of the more significant research and writings on *Business Strategy*. A new text, ***Strategy: A View From the Top*** by Cornelis DeKluyver and John Pearce, Prentice Hall, © 2003 will be used in part of the course. In addition, selected articles and cases from ***The Harvard Business Review*** will be assigned to provide students with insights to *Strategy Formulation*.

The information systems aspect of MBA 600 focuses on how information technology impacts business strategy. Reading two articles from Harvard Business Review on the topic of how a networked economy impacts the various forces that determine competitive advantage and strategic position within an industry will address this goal. Additionally, we will read Peter F. Drucker's book: ***Managing in the Next Society***, St. Martins Press, © 2002 which addresses how technological and societal changes impact how businesses compete.

Several business cases will be used throughout the semester in an "experiential" setting to allow students to apply the concepts covered in the readings. The cases will progress from analyzing a start-up organization to assessing the strategy of a large, well-established company approaching maturity. Several cases will allow students to explore the nature and structure of information systems used to support the chosen business strategy. Finally, the difference between a "Business Model" and the underlying, dynamic nature of a changing "Business Strategy" will be explored.

MBA 600 is one of two "integrated" courses in the MBA curriculum at UM. As such, the course requires completion of an independent research paper representing an "integrated project." Students must select a company for which ample research data are available (most likely a public company) and must develop their paper around: (1) an analysis of the "business strategy" that characterizes the company and (2) a description of the structure and role of an "information system" or "systems" used in support of that strategy. The strategy and systems employed by Dell Computer Corporation will be covered in detail during the semester as an illustration of these "integration" issues.

MBA 600 is a four credit-hour course. Thus, five weeks of class sessions are scheduled in the first part of Spring Semester for 1-½ hours per week. At the end of this five-week period, students' integrated projects will be due.

CLASS PARTICIPATION:

MBA 600 is intended to be a highly *interactive* class. Students are expected to learn from one another as well as from the instructors and the assigned reading material. Enrollment in UM's MBA program is characterized by a diverse audience of individuals, many with several years of work experience from which unique viewpoints can emerge. Students should use this to their advantage and question other students as well as the instructor.

EVALUATION:

Students' final grades in MBA 600 will be based on scores recorded for two midterm examinations, eight written case assignments, class participation, and the Integrated Project assignment. The following weights will apply:

Integrated Project:	20%
Midterm One:	15%
Midterm Two:	15%
Class Participation:	10%
Four Cases on Strategy	10% each with two lowest discarded
Four Cases on Systems	10% each with two lowest discarded

At the end of the semester, letter grades will be assigned based on the *weighted value* of the evaluation measures outlined above:

A	90% and above
B	80% to 89%
C	70% to 79%
F	Below 70%

WRITING SKILLS:

This course contains several short written assignments and a more extensive "Integrated Project" assignment. These will be graded not only for *content*, but also for *writing style*. The Instructors will provide students with a document titled *Comments on Writing Style* with guidelines for preparing written assignments. Writing skills "worthy of publication" are expected of MBA students at The University of Montana; students will not receive "A" grades if these skills are not evident.

MBA 600
Class Schedule

(Day Section # 01, Fall Semester 2003)

Class Meetings Topic and Additional Readings Assigned Before Class

Sep. 02-04: What is Strategy? (Chapter 1, De Kluyver)

- *Competition & Business Strategy in Historical Perspective (HBR Note)*
- *What is Strategy (HBR Reprint)*

Sep. 09-11: Change & Uncertainty / External Environment (Chapter 2, De Kluyver)

- *How Competitive Forces Shape Strategy (HBR Reprint)*
- *How We Built a Strong Company in a Weak Industry (HBR Reprint)*

Written Assignment # 1 Due on Sep. 11 (*Bright Horizons Strategy*)

Sep. 16-18: Managing in the Next Society: Part I

- *Beyond the Information Revolution*
- *Exploring the World of the Internet*
- *Computer Literacy/Information Literacy*
- *E-Commerce*
- *The New Economy*

Sep. 23-26: HBR Articles

- *Getting Real About Virtual Commerce (HBR OnPoint Reprint)*
- *Strategy and the New Economics of Information (HBR OnPoint Reprint)*

9/30-10/02: Leveraging Internal Resources and Change Drivers for Strategic Advantage
(Chapter 3, De Kluyver)

- *Competing on Resources: Strategy for the 1990s (HBR Reprint)*
- *Robert Mondavi (HBR Case)*

Written Assignment #2 Due on Oct. 2 (*Robert Mondavi Case*)

Oct. 07-09: Case: e-Bay: The Customer Marketplace

- Using Technology to do Entirely New Things
- The Advent of C2C business

Written Assignment #3 Due on Oct. 9 (*e-Bay Case*)

Oct. 14. **Mid-Term Exam #1:** (Covers all material presented from September 4 through October 9. Exam will include take-home essay questions assigned on October 7 plus in-class objective examination)
Integrated Case -Introduction: • Matching Dell (Computer) (HBR Case)

Oct. 17: Integrated Case – Introduction:

- Matching Dell (Computer) (HBR Case)

Oct. 20-23: Integrated Case Discussion:

- *The Power of Virtual Integration (HBR OnPoint Article)*
- *Why Business Models Matter*

Written Assignment #4 Due on Oct. 23 Matching Dell (computer) HBR Case

Oct. 28-30: Formulating Business Unit Strategy: (Chapter 4, De Kluyver)

- *Value Innovation: The Strategic Logic of High Growth (HBR Reprint)*
- *Customer Intimacy & Other Value Disciplines (HBR Reprint)*

Nov. 04-06: Business Unit Strategy: Context & Special Dimensions (Chapter 5, De Kluyver)

- *Disruptive Technologies: Catching the Wave (HBR Reprint)*
- *The Myth of Excellence (Power Point Presentation)*
- *Internet Threaded Discussion of Home Depot and Lowe's Initiated*

Nov. 11-13: Holiday (Fall Break)

Nov. 16-20: Managing the Next Society: Part II

- *Entrepreneurs and Innovation*
- *Beyond Capitalism*
- *The Global Economy*
- *The Next Society*

Nov. 27: Thanksgiving Holiday

Dec. 02-04: Case: Monster.com

- *The Internet Changing a Business Function*
- *A Market Place of People*

Written Assignment #5 Due Dec. 4 – Monster.com Case

Dec: 09-11: The Dynamics of Corporate Strategy (Chapter 6, De Kluyver)

- *From Competitive Advantage to Corporate Strategy (HBR Reprint)*
- *Corporate Strategy: A Conceptual Framework (HBR Reprint)*
- *Home Depot, Inc. in the New Millennium (HBR Case)*

Written Assignment #6 Due on Dec. 11 (Home Depot Case)

Dec. 16: Mid-Term Exam #2: (Covers all material presented from October 22 through December 11. Exam will include take-home essay questions assigned on December 9 plus in-class objective examination)

Dec.18: (illegible on copy provided)

Jan 20: Illegible on copy provided)

Feb 5: Shakeouts in Digital Markets: Lessons from B2B Exchanges (California Management Review, January 1, 2003).

Feb. 12: Judo Strategies: Small Firms Challenging Large Firms

- *Judo in Action (HBR Case)*

Written Assignment #7 Due on Feb. 12 (Selected Judo Case)

Feb. 19: Case: Palm Computing

Written Assignment #8 Due on Feb 19 (Palm Computing Case)