

GBUS 600: Analysis of Contemporary Organizations

Fall 2015 Syllabus

GBUS 600 is an interdisciplinary course that introduces new graduate students to the field of business. The course focuses on the nature of organizations and the interrelatedness of the functional areas of business. The intellectual and historic roots of organizational and management theories are explored through readings of primary source materials. Students will develop communication and research skills through individual and group projects that focus on organizations and their environment.

Mission

The MBA program prepares students for professional growth by integrating current business theory and practices with their own career experiences. Designed to be accessible to the fully employed student, the interdisciplinary program emphasizes analytical thinking, clear communication, effective teamwork, a global perspective, and ethical practices. A spirit of collegiality among the students, faculty and business community is fostered through social and professional activities.

Instructor

This course is jointly taught by:

Name	Office	Email	Office Hours
Melanie Williams	JH 3121	melanie.williams@csun.edu	Tuesday, 6:00 – 7:00 p.m., Thursdays 11:00 – noon, with many additional hours routinely scheduled by appointment. Call x2905 for appointments.
Glen Whitman	JH 4236	glen.whitman@gmail.com	Tuesday 6:00 – 7:00 p.m., or by appointment. Email for appointments.

No appointment is needed to meet with a professor during scheduled office hours.

Course Website

This class uses Moodle as a learning management systems. Login at <http://moodle.csun.edu/>. Use your CSUN username and password. Check this website frequently for grades, updates and information, as well as readings and online discussion boards. Many assignments are due uploaded to turnitin, which is accessed through the course Moodle site.

Readings

- Available from Harvard Business School Publishing online (download fee required): https://hbr.org/store/articles/?cm_sp=Store-_-Links-_-Articles
 - Corts, K. & Rivkin, J. (1999). A note on microeconomics for strategists. *Harvard Business Review*.
 - Herzberg, F. (1968). One more time: How do you motivate employees? *Harvard Business Review*. May also be available through CSUN library using 2003 publishing year.¹
 - Levitt, T. (1960/2004), Marketing myopia, *Harvard Business Review*. May also be available through CSUN library using 2004 publishing year.
 - Mintzberg, H. (1990). The manager's job: Folklore and fact. *Harvard Business Review*. May also available through CSUN library, March/April issue.
 - Porter, Michael E. (2008). The five competitive forces that shape strategy. *Harvard Business Review*. May also be available through CSUN library.

- Available elsewhere online. (See links on Moodle.)
 - Bennis, W. (1999). The leadership advantage. *Leader to Leader*, 12 (Spring), 18-23.
 - Coase, R. (1937). The nature of the firm. *Economica*, 4(16), 386-405.
 - Kerr, S. (1975). On the folly of rewarding A, while hoping for B. *Academy of Management Journal*, 18, 769-783.
 - Klein, B., et al. (1978). Vertical integration, appropriable rents, and the competitive contracting process. *The Journal of Law & Economics*, 21(2), 297-326.
 - Taylor, F. (1911). *The principles of scientific management*.

Assignments & Grading

Assignments that are credit/no credit must be satisfactorily completed to pass the course. Other assignments earn a letter grade. Each graded assignment is worth a certain percent of the course grade. The weighted average of grades, using the University's GPA equivalencies, will result in the course grade. We use the plus/minus grading scale.

Assignment	Weight in Final Grade	Due Date
Introductions assignment	Required	9/1
Myers-Briggs instrument	Required	9/4
Referencing assignment	Required	9/8
Economics paper	20%	9/15
Management paper	20%	9/29
<u>Industry Project</u>		
Industry homesteading	Required	10/3
Industry proposal	Required	10/13
Company report	20%	11/3
Industry paper	20%	12/1

¹ Library resources are available online at library.csun.edu. You may need to take your student ID to Oviatt library to have it authenticated before you can access materials from off-campus.

Industry presentation	10%	11/24 or 12/1
Class participation	10%	throughout

Requirements for all assignments:

All hardcopy assignments that are due on a class night are due at 7 pm. Otherwise, the due date and time are noted in the course schedule or on Moodle. Note that electronic deadlines may differ.

All written assignments must be submitted both hardcopy and to turnitin.com by the due date and time unless indicated otherwise.

All written assignments should be typed, double-spaced, and consistent with the APA system of citation unless indicated otherwise. Choose a 12-point serif font (such as Times New Roman). Page limits refer to maximum page limits; there is no minimum number of pages for any assignment. At the end of every paper (and not included in the page limits), you must write and sign the following statement: “I verify that the work contained in this paper is my own, with the exception of sources that have been properly cited” (for individual papers) or “We verify that the work contained in this paper is entirely our own, with the exception of sources that have been properly cited” (for group papers).

Assignment descriptions:

1. Introductions: Credit/no credit.

Objective: To help students and faculty make connections.

Assignment: Post an introduction to the class on the Moodle Course Discussion Board titled “Introduction.” (Credit for the assignment requires placing the posting in the correct discussion board.) Include in your introduction an overview of your educational and occupational background and a highlight of your goals in the MBA program. Include some interesting experiences, facts, or hobbies to help us know the real you. Be professional in tone, content, and writing style.

2. Team Building – Myers-Briggs Personality instrument: Credit/no credit.

Objectives: To assess personal preferences in behavior and to consider how these differences play out in organizational settings.

Assignment: Complete and score the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, available online (follow the link from Moodle). Read *Introduction to Type and Teams*, including the overview of all types and the detailed discussion of your profile.

3. Referencing Assignment: Credit/no credit.

Objectives: To make sure that all students understand the need and appropriate format for referencing research materials. To learn an acceptable method of referencing.

Assignment: On the course Moodle page, we will post a passage from a book. Use that passage to complete the following tasks, being sure to use appropriate citations as per APA style.

1. Write a complete reference for the text.
2. Make a direct quotation from the text.
3. Paraphrase something from the passage.
4. Cite a fact (without quotations) from the passage.
5. Make a statement that requires no reference to the passage.
6. Type, date and sign the following statement: "I have read and understood the CSUN policy on academic dishonesty, printed in the schedule of classes and in this syllabus. I verify that all of the work I submit in the program will be my own (in the case of individual assignments) or of my group (in the case of group assignments) and that all references to other sources will be properly cited. I understand that this assignment will become part of my student file here in the College."

These resources may prove helpful:

- The Purdue Online Writing Lab: APA Style, available at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/>.
- American Psychological Association: The Basics of APA Style, available at <http://www.apastyle.org/learn/tutorials/basics-tutorial.aspx>.
- University of Wisconsin . Quoting and Paraphrasing, available at <http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QuotingSources.html>.

Note: You will be expected to redo this assignment until you've gotten it 100% correct.

Warning: Here are the two most common errors on this assignment. (1) Failing to use citation in step 3 or 4. Paraphrases and facts taken from a source do require citation. Some APA sources say that facts don't require citation; ignore those sources. Cite facts in the same manner as a paraphrase. (2) Failing to give a page number for each citation. Page numbers can be omitted only for a reference to the entire work; they are necessary for any more specific citation.

4. Economics Paper: Graded.

Objective: To apply economic thinking to make better business decisions, to enhance critical thinking and analytical skills, and to develop a clear and concise writing style appropriate to business.

Assignment: Analyze a decision or phenomenon in your workplace (or, with permission, a previous workplace or situation) using the transaction-cost theory of the firm, especially as it relates to the make-or-buy decision.

Your paper should be no longer than five double-spaced pages.

5. Management Paper: Graded.

Objective: To enhance critical thinking and analytical skills, to integrate and apply readings on management, and to develop a clear concise writing style appropriate to business.

Assignment: Use the assigned readings on management to reflect upon a situation in that occurred in your workplace where an understanding of the principles and theories in the readings could improve management and its outcomes. Be specific in connecting and applying the theories to actual behavior in the specific situations. Use your new understanding of management theory to make recommendations for improved management of human behavior in organizations.

Your paper should be no longer than five double-spaced pages.

6. Industry Project: Both graded and credit/no credit.

Objective: To integrate concepts from the course while making an in-depth study of an important industry. To develop research, writing, presentation, and teamwork skills.

Assignment Summary: Each team will analyze a selected industry. Each student in the team will select a specific company within that industry and analyze it using, among other methods of analysis, a SWOT analysis. Then the team will write a joint paper on the industry as a whole using, among other methods of analysis, Porter's Five-Forces method.

Assignment Process:

- **Industry Homesteading** (credit/no credit)
On the day noted in the Course Calendar, your team may declare its intent to study a particular industry on the “Homesteading” Discussion Board. You may not choose an industry that has already been “homesteaded.” Faculty will reply on the discussion board to notify you if your choice has been approved. Select an industry for which you can obtain data. The best method is to find out how industries define themselves, for example through industry groups, SIC and NAICS codes, etc.
- **Industry Proposal and Pitch** (credit/no credit)
Once the team receives approval from the faculty on the industry choice, each team will develop a brief (limit 3 pages) proposal based on the outline provided and informally present it to the faculty. The proposal will include: a meaningful data-driven definition of the industry, viable sources for industry and company information, tentative assignments of team members to specific duties, and a timeline for completing the project.
- **Company Paper** (individual paper – graded)
Each team member will write a six-page report on an individual company within the industry. The heart of the report will be a SWOT analysis, but other forms of analysis should also be included. The report should also discuss how industry issues and trends affect the company and the strategies that company uses to deal with these issues. You may not write your individual report on a company for which you work.
- **Industry paper** (team paper – graded)
Together, the team will prepare a fifteen-page report analyzing the industry as a whole. The heart of the report will be a Porter's Five-Forces analysis, but other forms of analysis should also be included. The report should also address the industry's structure and history, as well as how the industry is affected by regulation, international issues, and technological change.

- **Industry oral presentation** (team presentation – graded)
Each group will give a 20-minute oral presentation of their research. All group members must participate.

9. Participation: Credit/no credit/partial credit.

Objective: To practice and demonstrate critical thinking, analytical ability, informal public speaking, and professional behavior.

Assignment: Most class periods will offer an opportunity to participate in discussion. Students are expected to be prepared to contribute. It is not necessary for every student to make a comment during every class, but each student should be contributing on a regular basis. Students' participation will be tracked using an online participation form, which should be completed within a week after the comment was made. Participation comments are evaluated for their quality. Quality contributions include those that seek clarification likely needed by many in the class, that offer an extension or application of the discussion content, or that present a challenge or alternative to the theory at hand.