
STR 428: Strategy Beyond Markets
Course Syllabus – Fall A 2021
This Version: September 21, 2021

Course Logistics

Day and Time: Tuesday 5:40 – 9:00 PM

Location: Schlegel 103

Course Blackboard Link: <https://learn.rochester.edu> (The Zoom link for class will be found there)

Instructor

Professor David Primo

Harkness Hall 318

david.primo@rochester.edu

Office Hours (Zoom): Wed. 11:15 AM – 12:15 PM and 1:45 – 2:45 PM. Please email me if you would like to meet outside of these times, and I will arrange a time ASAP. The Zoom meeting link (not the same as the class Zoom link) is <https://rochester.zoom.us/j/948872840>.

Course Information

1. Course Description and Learning Objectives

Consider this real-world scenario: You are the CEO of a major corporation, and a new US president takes office who has pledged to implement new government rules that would hurt your industry. How do you respond? You may think this scenario refers to President Donald Trump, but he was hardly the first president to attack corporations (although his tactics were certainly unorthodox). For instance, in 2008, presidential candidate Barack Obama promised to enact a windfall profits tax on oil companies if elected, and in 2021, President Joe Biden laid out an agenda to take on “Big Tech.” The lesson? Regardless of who is control of government, managers must incorporate factors outside of markets—including government, public opinion, activists, and the mass media—into decision making and strategy building. Simple? Yes. Obvious? No. In fact, we repeatedly observe top executives caught off-guard when faced with “nonmarket” threats such as proposed government regulations or activist pressure. But the concept of *strategy beyond markets* extends further than reactively responding to threats. Managers also have the opportunity to shape the nonmarket environment in ways that advantage their firm. In this course, we will develop a framework for constructing nonmarket strategies and integrating them with market strategies. We will cover a broad range of topics, including the legislative process, regulation, activism, corporate social responsibility, and crisis management. We will also study the special challenges facing global firms and innovative firms. Class sessions will be highly interactive and will emphasize the real-world applicability of the frameworks and theories we discuss in class.

By taking this course, *strategy beyond markets* will become part of your managerial tool kit. Specifically, you will strengthen your ability to do the following:

- Identify nonmarket opportunities and threats and analyze how they may affect your business or organization
- Formulate nonmarket strategies for managing nonmarket issues
- Integrate market and nonmarket strategies
- Understand the techniques available to implement nonmarket strategies
- Connect the frameworks and theories from class to current affairs.

2. Relation to Other Courses at Simon Business School

This course is part of the Strategy and Organizations track within the Competitive and Organizational Strategy concentration. The course relates to STR 421: Competitive Strategy, also part of this track. This course also addresses some of the topics discussed in GBA 441: Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility.

3. Learning Modules

To match the mode of instruction in Fall A, STR 428 is structured as a set of learning modules. Each week, there will be a topic or set of topics with associated preparation materials such as an online pre-class video lecture and readings. Within each learning module, you will find all of the readings, assignments, and expectations for the week. My goal in designing the course this way is that you have a structure for each week's workload that is linear, logical, and user-friendly, and that the result will be productive class sessions and a positive overall course experience.

4. Textbooks and Required Material

The required textbook for the course is *Business and Its Environment*, 7th ed., by David P. Baron, ISBN 978-0132620550. The textbook is available for rental on Amazon.com and other vendors online, and inexpensive used copies are also readily available. The textbook reading for the Aug. 31 class is available on Blackboard for students who are not able to acquire a textbook immediately. Additional readings for each learning module will be available via pdfs or links. You will be required to purchase at least one and possibly more cases from Harvard Business School Publishing. Details will be provided during the term.

5. Class Participation Guidelines

My pledge to you is that I will make every effort to create an environment where you will want to participate in class because you find the course material and discussions engaging, not because it is part of your grade. In return, *you are expected to attend every class in person* (subject to exceptions as specified in the Zoom policy under Professionalism below) and be an active participant in class. *You should let me know in advance if you will need to miss class.* In the event that you do need to miss class, videos of class sessions will be posted on the course's Blackboard page within 24 hours after each class ends. Videos of class sessions are copyrighted material and may not be stored, reproduced, or redistributed in any way.

Should a student display a consistent lack of engagement with the course (e.g., regularly miss class, consistently show up late or leave early), I reserve the right to reduce a student's final course grade by up to one letter grade, provided the student is notified in advance of my concerns.

6. Quizzes

Class meetings in weeks 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7 will begin with a brief 15-minute open-book quiz asking about the preparation materials for the week. These quizzes are designed to encourage you to stay up-to-date with class material and help prepare you for class discussions. You must be take the quiz when it is given to complete it. However, I do not want students who are feeling ill to attend class because of the quiz. Therefore, if you need to miss class, *you may still take the quiz and receive full credit for it if you take it when it is given.* Quizzes will go "live" on Blackboard at 5:40 PM ET each week. You will enter your answers directly into Blackboard, so be sure to bring laptops to class and be logged to Blackboard by 5:40 PM. (I have a back-up plan if Blackboard is down or you are not able to bring a laptop.) Because I understand you may not be able to take all quizzes for personal or professional reasons, I will only count your best 4 of 5 quiz grades toward your course grade. If you anticipate being late to or missing more than 1 quiz during the 7-week course, you should contact me immediately.

7. Weekly Team Assignments

Prior to the first day of class, you will select into teams of 5-6 students. (Details are on Blackboard in the Pre-Course Activities Module). Starting after the first class, each team will meet to discuss a set of questions related to the readings and videos. Students should have completed all of the preparation work in the learning module prior to this team meeting. Each week, a different team member should be designated as a note taker, and this student will submit a write-up via email by 10 AM on the day class meets, beginning with week 2, for a total of 6 assignments.

Expectations:

- I view synchronous team discussions about the course material to be an important part of the course experience, and I encourage you to meet synchronously to prepare your answers. However, I understand that schedules are particularly complicated right now. Therefore, I am open to other arrangements your team may come up with, provided that each write-up is based on discussions your team has had. For instance, a Slack channel, where you discuss the assignment asynchronously, may work well for your team and constitutes a "meeting."
- Team members contributing to the assignment will receive the same team grade for the associated team assignment. Assignments, which count toward 20% of your course grade, will be graded based on accuracy and the quality of explanations provided. Each team member can opt-out of participation in one assignment, provided they let their team know in advance.
- Team members will receive the same grade for team assignments. Please review the Team Expectations section of the Simon School Student Handbook, which specifies team expectations and conflict resolution.

8. In the News Assignments

My experience is that the students who get the most out of this course are the ones who are able to connect its frameworks and theories to the nonmarket issues firms currently face. To that end, all students should read the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, or similar publications on a regular basis throughout Fall A. (All Simon students have free access to the *Wall Street Journal* online. See here for details: <https://wsj.com/rochester>.)

You will be asked to complete two mini-assignments related to this independent work:

- On or after August 31 and no later than Sept. 21 at 8 AM, you should create a thread with a link to an article related to the course material from the Aug. 31, Sept. 7, Sept. 14, or Sept. 21 classes in the In the News Part 1 discussion forum on Blackboard and explain its relevance to the course material in a paragraph.
- After Sept. 21 at 8 AM and no later than Oct. 12 at 8 AM, you should create a thread with a link to article related to the course material from the Sept. 21, Sept. 28, Oct. 5, or Oct. 12 classes in the In the News Part 2 discussion forum on Blackboard and explain its relevance to the course material in a paragraph.

Expectations:

- Each of these posts will be graded 0, .5, 1.5, or 2.5, for a total of 5 possible points across both posts. Simply posting a relevant article link with no explanation is worth .5 point. Posting a relevant article link with an explanation containing a weak connection to the course or substantive errors (e.g., you discuss a concept incorrectly) is worth 1.5 points. Posting a relevant article link with an accurate explanation and a strong connection to the course is worth 2.5 points.
- Articles should be recent (published/posted on or after August 31, 2021).
- I encourage you to post articles as soon as you find them, as you will then be able to view what others have posted.
- I encourage you to offer constructive comments and feedback on other posts.

9. Final Exam

Students must complete a comprehensive final examination at the time set by the Simon Business School. This exam will be administered remotely *for all students*. Details about the final exam will be provided during the term.

10. Evaluation and Grading

Course grades are determined as follows:

Weekly Team Assignments (Team grade)	20%
In the News Assignments (Individual)	5%
Quizzes (Individual)	25%
Final Exam (Individual)	50%
Total	100%

All grades, as well as the grade distribution and other pertinent statistics, will be put in the Blackboard Gradebook for the course. The distribution of final course grades will meet the Simon Business School's Fall A 2021 standard of a 3.6 average GPA.

Here are my policies on late submissions/make-up exams:

- Students will receive *one* extension—no explanation required—on Weekly Team Assignments throughout the term without penalty, provided that the assignment is turned in prior to class time. No additional late team assignments will be accepted except in unusual circumstances.
- Because students have several weeks to complete them, no extensions will be given on In the News Assignments.
- Because students are able to miss one quiz without penalty, no make-up quizzes will be administered.
- No make-up final exams will be administered. Exceptions will be made only in the event of extreme circumstances (e.g., severe illness).

11. Accommodations and Accessibility

Both Simon and the University of Rochester respect and welcome students of all backgrounds and abilities. In the event you encounter any barrier(s) to full participation in this course due to the impact of a disability, please contact both your instructor and the Access Coordinator for Simon (in OSE), during the first two weeks of the course or sooner.

Additionally, you can contact the University's Office of Disability Resources. The access coordinators in the Office of Disability Resources can meet with you to discuss the barriers you are experiencing and explain the eligibility process for establishing academic accommodations. You can reach the Office of Disability Resources at disability@rochester.edu.

12. Professionalism

Please review the Professional Standards Policy in the Simon School Student Handbook. **Students are expected to demonstrate the same professional behavior in class as they would in a business setting.**

Specifically...

- Make every effort to attend each class in person. Students who do not have a "Zoom Exemption" (i.e., explicit approval to attend via Zoom instead of in person) are permitted to attend via Zoom once per term for courses that meet once per week and twice for courses that meet twice per week. Attending via Zoom more often than these limits permit may result in a reduction in your course letter grade.
- Display your printed name tent in every class. If on Zoom ensure your Zoom name matches your course roster name, with your nickname in parentheses, if desired.
- Share video when on Zoom, unless circumstances don't permit it.
- You are expected to be in your seat and ready for class at the beginning of each class. Should extenuating circumstances require you to leave early, please inform me before the start of class and sit near the back of the classroom so you can leave with as little disruption as possible.
- You are allowed to use laptops, tablets, and mobile phones during class, but they should only be used for coursework-related activities and not for email, social media, or other activities not directly related to the course. Please silence all electronic devices during class.
- No photography or recording of any kind is allowed, without express consent from me.

Unprofessional behavior will have a negative impact on your grade. Specifically, should a student display a consistent lack of professionalism in class, I reserve the right to reduce a student's final course grade by up to one letter grade, provided the student is notified in advance of my concerns.

13. Academic Integrity

Simon's Code of Academic Integrity (see the section Academic Integrity Policy in the [Simon School Student Handbook](#)) states: "Every Simon student is expected to be completely honest in all academic matters. Simon students will not in any way misrepresent their academic work or attempt to advance their academic position through fraudulent or unauthorized means. No Simon student will be involved knowingly, or unknowingly yet passively within a team, with another student's violation of this standard of honest behavior."

In addition to refraining from obvious forms of cheating and plagiarism:

- On assignments, do not copy or paraphrase work from each other, from students who have taken the class previously, from materials of mine distributed in a previous class, or from outside sources. Any written work should be entirely your own (or your team's, as applicable).
- Exams or assignments that include an Academic Integrity/Honesty Pledge must have the pledge signed. Submissions without the pledge signed will receive a score of zero.
- Do not obtain advice, notes, solutions, or other material from students who took the class previously in ways that would give you an unfair advantage or would undermine the learning experience for you and the class (such as, notes from past case discussions). Similarly, do not use others' case analyses posted on-line.
- Use quotation marks when quoting any text directly. Changing a few words of a sentence or longer section does not make the work your own. Independently written texts rarely have even five consecutive words in common.
- Students may not audio or video record class lectures or other classroom or laboratory activities without the instructor's permission.
- Students may not publish, distribute, or sell-electronically or otherwise-any course materials that the instructor has developed in any course of instruction in the University (e.g., presentation slides, lecture aids, video or audio recordings of lectures, and exams) without the explicit permission of the instructor.

Most forms of disallowed shortcuts are easy to detect and will be referred to the school's Academic Integrity Committee. To help prevent other students from violating academic integrity, do not pass on notes or give advice on assignments to any students who are taking the course in a later term or are taking it at the same time in a different section. Please refer to the Student Handbook for any questions regarding the Code of Academic Integrity.

If a situation in your professional or personal life prevents you from finishing assigned work in a timely manner, please contact me before the deadline to discuss how to proceed. You should also contact your OSE advisors, if appropriate. Do not violate the Academic Integrity Code in an attempt to manage a difficult situation.

14. Credit-Hour Policy Adherence

This course follows the Simon credit hour policy for 2.5-credit courses. This course meets once weekly for 3 hours per week. In addition to these 3 hours of synchronous class sessions per week (in person or via Zoom), students are required to complete approximately 1 hour per week on average of asynchronous learning activities, (e.g., videos and simulations). Please consult the course schedule below and the learning modules on Blackboard for the details related to asynchronous activities and any related assignments or assessments.

Students are also expected to supplement each hour of class or asynchronous learning activities with two hours of supplemental work (e.g., class readings, assignments, and project work). Students should expect to devote 37.5 hours per credit hour earned across the term and across all activities in the course.

Course Outline and Schedule

Date	Learning Modules	Team assignment due at 10 AM on the day of class	Blackboard Quiz at 5:40 PM on the day of class
1. August 31	Foundations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Nonmarket Environment - Integrated Strategy 	No	No
2. September 7	Integrated Strategy in American Politics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Supply Side and Demand Side of Nonmarket Action - Types of Nonmarket Strategies - Institutions and Strategy (Pivotal Politics) 	Yes	Yes
3. September 14	Integrated Strategy in a Global Context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategies for the Cross-Border Enterprise - The CAGE Framework - Political Risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corruption - Trade Policy 	Yes	Yes
4. September 21	Integrated Strategy for Innovative Firms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Applying Course Frameworks to Innovative Firms - Antitrust (M&A), Integrated Strategy, and Innovation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Guest Speaker</u>: Dave Carey, former Executive Vice President, T-Mobile - The Antitrust-Innovation Tension 	Yes	No
5. September 28	Activism and Corporate Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Private Politics - Managing Amidst Activism 	Yes	Yes
6. October 5	Corporate Social Responsibility and Brand Activism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brand Activism vs. CSR - Employee Activism - Motivations for CSR - Competing Conceptions of the Corporation - Quantifying and Assessing CSR Initiatives 	Yes	Yes
7. October 12	Managing Crises and Reputational Risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Guest Speaker</u>: Richard Keil, Managing Director for Global Issues Management, Accenture 	Yes	Yes
October 19, 6 PM	Cumulative Final Exam (Open Book, Remote for All Students)		

Note: Modules are subject to change, but plenty of advance notice will be provided in the event of a change.