

Sample Course Syllabus

Oregon State University College of Business BA 482/5X82 – Small Business Management

Instructor: Todd W. Moss, Ph.D.
Office: BX 413
Phone: 541-737-3016
E-mail: todd.moss@bus.oregonstate.edu
Office Hours: [days and times] or by appointment.

Course Credits: 4.0
Prerequisites: BA 260 and Junior standing or higher; or instructor permission

Email is the preferred form of communication for online courses.

Required Text: Byrd, MJ & Megginson, LC. (2009) *Small Business Management: An Entrepreneur's Guidebook* (6th Edition), McGraw-Hill Irwin, Boston.

Textbook Information: *NOTE:* For textbook accuracy, please check the textbook list at the OSU Bookstore website (<http://www.osubeaverstore.com/>). Sample syllabi may not have the most up to date textbook information!

In addition, the graduate BA 582 course will also include a number of practitioner articles available from OSU library databases.

General Class Schedule

Each week's course materials (with the exception of examinations) will be available no later than 9AM on Mondays and will close at 5PM on Fridays. All assignments, quizzes, and other student responsibilities should be completed and turned in by 5PM each Friday.

Course Content

This course is about the management and building of small to mid-sized businesses. By joining this class, I assume that you plan to become a key contributor to the further development of an existing, operating small to mid-sized company. It could be a company you start or help start, take over from a family member, join as a key employee, join as a top manager, consult to, or purchase. But, in any case, the assumption is that the company is past the initial start-up phase. We will therefore spend the bulk of our time on issues of building the company, and substantially less time on the formation of new ventures (which is covered in the BA 260, BA 460, and BA 560 courses). You'll be exposed to some of the practical realities, transition points, issues, and dilemmas that are particularly relevant to smaller companies. Additionally, you'll probably find the study of small to mid-sized companies to be an excellent way to practice most or all the business core skills encountered in any business program.

Student Learning Outcomes

A student who successfully completes this course will be able to:

1. Understand the world of small business management and development.
2. Describe the influence that political, social, legal/regulatory, environmental, and technological issues have on small business success.
3. Identify and apply small business marketing techniques to explain consumer behavior, identify product and service marketing strategies and evaluate competitive challenges.
4. Describe and apply the need for sound financial management and planning of small businesses, and apply spreadsheet programs to develop and analyze financial projections.
5. Identify and apply operations principles with regard to small businesses, including integrated production and distribution of goods, services, and information as a means to achieve competitive advantage.
6. Produce a research project for a small business which draws on the above knowledge and skills.

In addition, students who successfully complete the graduate BA 582 course will also be able to do the following:

7. Acquire current practitioner knowledge of small business management and apply this knowledge to a working small business.
8. Produce a research paper for a small business (as in #6 above) *which also* analyzes and evaluates the business and generates recommendations for improvement

Academic and Professional Integrity

The highest standards of academic honor and integrity will be expected of all class members. Dishonorable, disrespectful, dishonest, disruptive, vulgar and/or otherwise unprofessional behavior is strictly prohibited. Student conduct is governed by the university's policies, as explained in the [Statement of Expectations for Student Conduct](#).

Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities:

Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty and Disability Access Services (DAS). Students with accommodations approved through DAS are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098.

Missed Exams / Assignments

In the event that an examination is missed due to illness, religious observance, or approved activity, either a makeup exam or an early exam may be arranged with the instructor in accordance with university policy if:

- Notice is provided early enough in advance of the event, or
- Proof of illness is promptly provided

Please note that no late assignments will be accepted unless pre-arranged with the instructor.

Expectations for Student Conduct:

Student conduct is governed by the university’s policies, as explained in the [Office of Student Conduct: information and regulations](#).

Student Performance Evaluation

Your grade will be determined by your performance on the following learning assessments. I will post grades to Blackboard during the week after the assignments are due.

Assessment	Percent
Exams (2 total)	30%
Quizzes (8 total)	30%
Research Assignments (4 total)	40%
TOTAL	100%

PERFORMANCE COMPONENTS

Exams (30%)

There are two examinations in this course. Exams cover materials from the text, online materials, cases and any other materials pertinent to the course. The exams will not be cumulative, but some overlap may be inevitable. Each exam will be worth 15% of your final grade. In general, exams consist of 50-75 multiple choice questions similar in format and content to the weekly quizzes. So, doing well on the quizzes is an indication of preparedness for the exams.

During the weeks scheduled for the Mid-term and Final exams, there are no other assignments for students to complete. In order to accommodate a variety of schedules among eCampus students, I typically open a window of 24-48 hours from Tuesday to Thursday of the respective week during which students can access the exam when convenient for them. However, the exam can only be accessed once per student, so make sure you are ready before opening it!

Proctors are not required for exams in this course. Questions have been randomized and will be presented in formats that discourage academic dishonesty. Please stay honest, or future students will be required to endure proctored exams!

I recommend that you use Firefox or Chrome as your browser as you take exams. IE and Safari often have problems with Blackboard, and those problems may cause you to get kicked out of the exam. While I can and will reset your exam for you without penalty in these cases, I’m sure you don’t want to go through any unnecessary anxiety during your tests.

No matter what browser you choose, be sure you don’t use any other tabs or windows while taking the exam. Blackboard can recognize external browsing and may shut you out of the exam in order

to prevent academic dishonesty. So, even if all you want to do is respond to an email from your Grandma, don't do it. Just set aside time to take the exam, and don't get tempted to do anything else; treat it just like a classroom examination.

Quizzes (30%)

Each unit of this course includes a short quiz to be taken when you complete the rest of the unit's material. There are 8 units, for a total of 30% of your final grade. These quizzes are intended to help you review and to check your understanding of the material, not as difficult challenges.

Research Project: Adopt a Company (40%)

All of this material will be more meaningful to you if you can apply it to an actual existing company. Through your own entrepreneurial resources, OSU's Austin Entrepreneurship Program (AEP), and/or the Austin Family Business Program (AFBP) you are expected to familiarize yourself with an existing small or family business. You will follow that company throughout the term, interviewing the owners, visiting the site, and generally obtaining as much information as possible about the company. Students who are fortunate enough to be associated with their own small or family business will have an opportunity to share particular insights. If you do not have an immediate connection to a small or family business, you could offer to share your report with the owner(s) in exchange for their time and access. I am happy to verify enrollment in the course or otherwise speak with the small business owners if they have any questions about the project.

Students in the graduate BA 582 course are also expected to actively contribute to the success of the focal firm through an in-depth analysis of company challenges. At the conclusion of each Assignment, provide 2 - 3 recommendations for how that business could address any issues or challenges you uncovered through your work on the assignment. Each recommendation should contain the following: 1) describe the issue and why it is important to resolve; 2) what should be done to address the issue, specifically and clearly integrating ideas (with citations in footnotes) from the text and practitioner readings; 3) how that recommendation could realistically be implemented; and 4) what negative side effects may arise if implemented. This portion of the assignment is expected to show considerable thought, rigor, and depth to receive full credit.

Your overall project will be broken down into 4 smaller assignments, corresponding to the 4 main sections of the text that we will be covering:

Assignment 1: The Dynamic Role of Small Business

1. Describe the nature of your focal business. Briefly provide its history and background of the owner(s).
2. Why did the owner start the business, i.e., what opportunity did they exploit?
3. What were the largest problems the owner had with starting the business?
4. If your focus business is a family business, how do the relationships affect the business?
5. Explain how the business is preparing for succession in its leadership.
6. What key laws and regulations affect your focal business?
7. In what ways is your business being socially responsible?
8. Describe the key ethical challenges facing your focal company.

9. *BA 582 students:* Challenges and recommendations as noted above.

Assignment 2: How to Market Goods and Services

1. Describe your focal company's key customers.
2. How does your focal firm conduct or acquire market research?
3. Describe your focal business's marketing strategy.
4. Explain how your company sets and administers prices for its customers.
5. List the various forms of advertising your focal business uses.
6. What intermediaries does your focal business use to aid in distribution? How do they add value?
7. *BA 582 students:* Challenges and recommendations as noted above.

Assignment 3: How to Organize, Manage, and Operate the Business

1. Explain how your focal business recruits and develops its human capital.
2. What process does it use to determine employee compensation and benefits?
3. Obtain copies of the employee appraisal documents your firm uses and evaluate their effectiveness.
4. Describe the factors that drove the choice of retail and/or manufacturing location(s).
5. Describe a number of performance standards used by your focal business and how they are measured.
6. List your focal company's key suppliers and explain how they were chosen.
7. Describe the types of inventory and operations controls your focal firm uses.
8. *BA 582 students:* Challenges and recommendations as noted above.

Assignment 4: Basic Financial Planning and Control

1. Go through the profit planning process for your focal business.
2. Describe the budgeting process in your focal firm.
3. Explain how it uses information technology to improve its effectiveness.
4. Discuss how your firm manages risk through insurance, crime prevention, and employee safety.
5. *BA 582 students:* Challenges and recommendations as noted above.

Course Content and Schedule

This syllabus provides a general plan for the course. The instructor reserves the right to make changes/additions to it as necessary. Changes will be posted on Blackboard.

WEEK	TOPIC	CHAPTER READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS / PROJECTS DUE
1	Starting Your Small Business Family-Owned Businesses	1, 2	Quiz #1
2	Forms of Ownership of Small Business Maintaining Good Government Relations and Business Ethics	3, 4	Quiz #2 Assignment #1
3	Developing Marketing Strategies Promoting and Distributing	8, 9	Quiz #3
4	How to Obtain and Manage Human Resources and Diversity in Small Companies How to Maintain Good Relationships with Your Employees and Their Representatives	10, 11	Quiz #4 Assignment #2
5	<i>Mid-term Exam</i>		
6	Obtaining and Laying Out Operating Facilities	12	Quiz #5
7	Purchasing, Inventory, and Quality Control	13	Quiz #6 Assignment #3
8	Basic Financial Planning Budgeting and Controlling Operations and Taxes	14, 15	Quiz #7
9	Using Computer Technology in Small Businesses Risk Management, Insurance, and Crime Prevention	16, 17	Quiz #8 Assignment #4
10	<i>Final Exam</i>		

Student Evaluation of Teaching

We encourage you to engage in the course evaluation process each term – online, of course. The evaluation form will be available toward the end of each term, and you will be sent instructions through ONID. You will login to “Student Online Services” to respond to the online questionnaire. The results on the form are anonymous and are not tabulated until after grades are posted.