

**Cases in Competitive Strategy**

**Class:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> periods, HGS 150

**Office Hours:** Wednesdays 10:00 am – 12:00 noon. For other times, please make an appointment.

**Office:** MAT 328

**Phone:** 392-2999

**Email:** [hamilton@ufl.edu](mailto:hamilton@ufl.edu)

**Prerequisites:** ECO 6409 (If you have not taken this course, please discuss this with me no later than immediately after the first meeting.)

**Requirements:**

1) *Case written assignment* (20% of final grade)

For one case (see below), you will be asked to submit a 4-7 page (double-spaced) analysis of the case. After I read and grade them, we will devote some class time to discussing your analyses. It will be due on **Tuesday January 26**.

2) *Group project presentation in class* (30% of final grade)

There will be as many as six groups with size depending on class enrollment (the maximum difference in group size will be one). After consultation with me on the choice of topic, each group will present a case study in class of a business problem involving the tools of game theory as used in the first part of the course. Each group must notify me of their topic by **Thursday January 28**.

3) *Individual written assignment* (30% of final grade)

This can be a 8-12 page (double-spaced) paper of a case study. I prefer that you identify your own topic, but I am happy to consult with you about it. I will distribute a list of ideas to inspire you in finding a topic. You must inform me of your choice of topic in writing by the beginning of class on **Tuesday February 2**. I will comment on your choice by 5 February (earlier if you turn in your topic earlier). The assignment is due **Friday February 19** at 4:00 pm.

4) *Class participation* (20% of final grade)

Attendance at all class sessions is expected. Please inform me in advance if you will miss class for interviews or similar professional obligations. Please inform me if you miss class due to illness. Anyone who misses more than one class will be required to do a brief written assignment on the cases discussed in those sessions. This grade is based not simply on attendance, but on the quality of your participation in the case discussions. Reading the material in advance is crucial.

*I post copies of the slides used in class on Canvas after each session. To facilitate student discussion, DO NOT use your laptop computer during class time. Failure to comply with this policy will affect your grade for class participation (and I am not obliged to warn you again).*

**Texts:** Case material will be available at Target Copy in a single packet. For each case or set of cases, I will distribute an information sheet listing the readings and some questions to consider before class. Any additional readings will be handed out in class, distributed by email or on Canvas, or be available on the Web.

*You must purchase the course pack in order to bring each day's case to class for the discussion. Harvard cases and the other materials are copyrighted and are not to be Xeroxed from a classmate's packet.*

**Other Recommended Books** (on overnight reserve in Smathers Library West):

Dixit and Nalebuff, *Thinking Strategically* or *The Art of Strategy*

Dixit and Skeath, *Games of Strategy*

## **Syllabus** **(subject to change)**

January 5	Introduction; Explanation of Course Objectives and Approach
January 7	<i>Case 1:</i> Dairil (Bristol-Myers) and Tylenol (Johnson and Johnson) in the acetaminophen market in the mid-1970s
January 12	<i>Case 2:</i> Virgin Mobile USA pricing strategies at entry <i>Case 3:</i> REI (homework case handed out)
January 14	<i>Case 4:</i> Commerce Bank
January 19	<i>Case 5:</i> CEMEX
January 21	<i>Case 6:</i> CSX, Norfolk Southern and GRU
January 26	<i>Case 7:</i> Maersk and Sustainability
January 28	<i>Case 8:</i> Aldi in USA Discussion of homework case Auction problem distributed
February 2-4	Auction problem due <i>Case 9:</i> Auctions (including bidding problems)
February 9-16	Student Group Presentations

February 18                      Continuation of Case 9  
    *Case 10: Using Auction Models in Strategic Situations*

February 25                      We will meet at the scheduled exam time to discuss both  
    the presentations and written projects.

Enrollment in this course constitutes acknowledgement of the following:

- 1)        I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all of their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from the University.
- 2)        I will adhere to university copyright policies as found at  
    <http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/admin/Copyright.htm>.
- 3)        Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.