

**DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS, ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY**

COURSE INFORMATION

Course No: MGT – 385
Course Title: Organizational Strategy
Credit Hours: 3.0

Duration, Time, and Location:

Section 08: M/W: 11:00 AM through 12:15 PM (Room SFHB 149)
Section 09: M/W: 12:35 PM through 1:50 PM (Room SFHB 370)

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Professor: Dr. Avimanyu (Avi) Datta, Ph.D. Professor of Strategy & Entrepreneurship, and
Director of Means Center for Entrepreneurial Studies
Phone: 309-438-7991 (Office)
Email: adatta@ilstu.edu
Office Location: SFHB 214A (Director's suite at Means Center of Entrepreneurship)
Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:00 PM through 3:00PM (or send me an email)
Website: <https://about.illinoisstate.edu/adatta/profile/> (Professional)
<https://avi-datta.com/> (**Author**)

Other Information:

1. Indian Born American
2. Undergraduate Degree in Computer Science from the University of London, UK.
3. Master's in Information Systems from Hawaii Pacific University, USA.
4. Doctorate in Business Administration (Technology, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship) from Washington State University, USA.
5. Rank with University – Full Professor;
 - a. Director of the Means Center for Entrepreneurial Studies
 - b. 2023-2024 Gemberling Scholar in Business
6. Visiting Scholar at Hitotsubashi University, Tokyo, Japan.
7. Senior Fellow with Peter Drucker and Masatoshi Ito Graduate School of Business, at the Claremont Graduate University, CA, USA
8. Global authority in the areas of Breakthrough Innovation, Management of Innovation, Radical Innovation,
9. Hobbies—Artist, Watch collector, Fountain pen collector, Coffee Brewing
10. Amazon bestselling Sci-Fi Author for The Time Corrector Series (<https://www.amazon.com/stores/Avi-Datta/author/B09MWMCGFZ>)

RESOURCES / MATERIALS

Required Textbook: *Strategic Management Theory* (12th ed.) by CWL Hill, M. Schilling, and G.R. Jones (Publisher: South-Western).

Note: You can access the PowerPoint of all the lectures on CANVAS under MODULES

Case Studies

There are three case studies: Intel, SAP-America, and LinkedIn

Note: You can find them on CANVAS under MODULES

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Organizational strategy is the capstone course in the business curriculum and consists of material generally referred to as strategic management and business policy. Corporate strategy is intricately linked with the firm's mission and goals, resources and capabilities, competitive positioning, structures, control systems, and the ability to sustain competitive advantage. This course exposes you to the concepts, skills, information, and tools relevant

to a business's strategic management. By the end of the semester, you should be reasonably conversant with the following:

- (a) Analyzing a firm's internal and external business environments.
- (b) How firms formulate and implement corporate, business, and functional strategies.
- (c) Understanding how firms use various strategies to compete within their chosen industries and sustain competitive advantage.

I will primarily follow the PowerPoint slide-aided lecturing teaching mode and allow sufficient scope for student-professor and student-student interaction. I will highlight and discuss current business and personal work experiences wherever possible. I expect you to share your experiences in the interest of lively class discussion and mutual learning. Certain aspects of interaction may be delimited under the ZOOM environment.

COURSE COMPETENCIES

As a participant in this course, you will develop competencies in the following:

- (a) Using prior knowledge to understand and integrate various concepts/examples relating to an organizational strategy, we will discuss throughout the semester.
- (b) Appreciating and learning from different (and often conflicting!) ways of viewing the business world.
- (c) Relating textbook concepts/class discussions with real-life business events.
- (d) Expressing your views and point-counterpoints (verbal and written) with clarity.

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

	Assignments	Points	Percentage	Mode of Submission
Individual	Exam: Multiple Choice (50 each)	150	21.43%	Canvas
	Exam: Essay Type (50 each)	150	21.43%	Canvas
	Exam (Final: Cumulative Multiple Choice)	100	14.29%	Canvas
	Case Forum	60	8.57%	Canvas
	Class Participation	70	10.00%	Class
Group	Semester Long Group Project Presentation 60 points (Slide Deck 20, Presentation 20, Q&A 20)	60	8.57%	PPT in class
	Semester-Long Project Paper	60	8.57%	Email Word Doc to adatta@ilstu.edu
	Peer Evaluations	50	7.14%	Hard copy
Total		700	100%	

INDIVIDUAL POINTS

Exams (multiple choice): 150 points (50 each)

There will be **three closed-book and closed-note exams** (covering text, lectures, readings, and cases) over the semester to evaluate your understanding of the material and give you feedback about where you may need to focus more attention. There are about 50 multiple-choice questions in each exam.

NOTE: Exams (Multiple Choice) links will be found in CANVAS under MODULES (See Class Schedule) and under SYLLABUS

Exam (Essay type): 150 points (50 each)

There will be **three closed-book and closed-note exams** (covering text, lectures, readings, and cases) over the semester to evaluate your understanding of the material and give you feedback about where you may need to focus more attention. Each exam will have two questions.

Please note: You are all seniors and expected to write professionally.

1. You are all seniors, and it is expected that you will write professionally
2. Write in complete sentences.
3. Omit using words like “you” when referring to a firm, etc.
4. Avoid hyperbolic statements like, “Apple is awesome.”
5. Avoid all kinds of clichés. For example, “The marketing strategy will take XYZ to the next level.”

NOTE: Exams (Essay type) links will be found in CANVAS under MODULES (See Class Schedule) and under SYLLABUS

Final Exam (Multiple Choice): 100 points

A cumulative Final Exam of 100 points (all multiple choice)

NOTE: Exam links will be found in CANVAS under MODULES (See Class Schedule) and under SYLLABUS

NOTE: All Exams will be live on the first day of class and disappear on the exam day at 11:55 PM. If you are traveling on the day of the exam, this will give you the flexibility to attempt it earlier. Generally, there is a 20% penalty for each day late in turning in an assignment or delaying an exam. If you know you will miss an EXAM, you can always take it earlier.

Discussion Forum Cases (60 points, 20 for each case study)

There will be 4-5 discussion forum questions on the case studies you have been assigned to read. I expect you to answer each of the posts. You will be graded based on the quality of your answers.

NOTE: Forum will be found in CANVAS under MODULES (See Class Schedule) and under SYLLABUS

Class Attendance and Participation (70 Points)

I expect you to attend and contribute to every class session in civil, constructive, and value-adding ways. Be prepared for each session by reading the assigned chapters or cases, offering your answers when called on in class, and at appropriate times raising your hand and offering keen insights, probing questions, valuable summaries, and so on. There will be 60 points for class participation. **While attendance is necessary, it is not sufficient.** Students must go beyond being present to get high points and in-class participation. For instance

1. I expect you to answer questions correctly when asked.
2. I expect you to volunteer and answer when I don't direct a question to a specific student.

GROUP POINTS (the class is broken into five groups for a Semester-long Group Project)

Semester-long group project. Typical projects will focus on a public company or its division/business unit and a critical innovation issue it faces. You will identify and analyze your chosen topic (though topics must be approved by me and deal with innovation by a large corporation and the management of that process). You should gather enough information on your company/division to analyze every aspect of our course. You must be able to explore both the content and process of innovation. You also must provide specific and well-reasoned recommendations that integrate well with your analysis.

NOTE: You may not select a company from the cases discussed. **Also, I prefer you to choose a company that is not headquartered in the US. And two groups should not present the same FIRM in a section.**

PowerPoint (60 Points)

Your team will give a **PowerPoint presentation** of your analysis (providing enough detail about your case to make it coherent) in class. You will have 25 minutes to present, plus 10 minutes for questions. Please bring me a copy of the slides (4 per page is acceptable); handouts for the rest of the class are appreciated but not required. The PowerPoint is worth 60 points (Slide Deck: 20; Delivery: 20; Q&A:20).

- Contents
 - Executive Summary
 - Milestones (briefly describe what the case is about and the problems incurred)
 - Organization and Industry Analysis

- Industry Analysis: Porter's Five Forces
 - Distinctive Competencies of the Firm
 - Resources and Capabilities
 - Organization Structure
- Current Challenges: What are some of the current challenges with the company? Are they related to products, processes, services, mergers, or industries?
 - Recommendations: How do you propose the problems be solved? What are your future directions?

Final Paper (60 Points)

You will write a final paper on your analysis. **Check the Due date in the Schedule (last page of the Syllabus).** A hard copy is not required; an email with an attachment to adatta@ilstu.edu. This is worth 60 points.

- **Not to exceed 41 pages: Excluding TOC and References (Check Schedule for due date)**

- Contents
 - Executive Summary
 - Milestones (Some critical developments/ launching of essential products, expansion, etc.)
 - Organization and Industry Analysis
 - Industry Analysis: Porter's Five Forces
 - Distinctive Competencies of the Firm
 - Resources and Capabilities
 - Organization Structure
 - Current Challenges: What are some of the current challenges with the company? Are they related to products, processes, services, mergers, or industries?
 - Recommendations: How do you propose the problems be solved? What are your future directions?
- **Generally, there is a 20% dock-off point for each day late in turning in the Paper.**
- **NOTE: Please name your Final Submission as FINAL-PAPER-SECTION X-TEAM Y.DOC. Where X is your Section, and Y is the team number assigned to you, your Paper references must be in AMR Style. You can download the style CANVAS under MODULES (See Class Schedule) by navigating to the last day of class.**

NOTE: While writing (Group paper or exam), do the following

1. Write in complete sentences.
2. Omit using words like "you" when referring to a firm, etc.
3. Avoid hyperbolic statements like, "Apple is awesome."
4. Avoid all kinds of clichés. For example, "The marketing strategy will take XYZ to the next level."

You are all seniors, and you will be expected to write professionally. These rules apply to everything you submit—papers, exams, etc.

Peer Evaluation (50 Points)

Fifty points are reserved for peer Evaluations. **Check the Schedule for the Due Date.** You can download that from here. **Please print and bring it to class on the due date. (Check CAVNAS under MODULES (See Class Schedule) for the due date)**

NOTE: While writing (Group paper or exam), do the following

5. Write in complete sentences.
6. Omit using words like "you" when referring to a firm, etc.
7. Avoid hyperbolic statements like, "Apple is awesome."
8. Avoid all kinds of clichés. For example, "The marketing strategy will take XYZ to the next level."

You are all seniors, and you will be expected to write professionally. These rules apply to everything you submit—papers, exams, etc.

Semester Long Group Project Rubric:

Categories	Final Paper (overall length 21-41 pages, Excluding References and TOC)	Presentation		Questions and Answers	Peer Evals
		Slide Deck	Presentation		
1. Executive Summary	Overall Summary (5 Points) 1page	2 Slides on the overall agenda and summary of the Presentation (2 points)	How do you deliver it (2 points)		
2. Milestones	(10 points) 5-10 pages on major milestones	2-4 slides on major milestones (2 points)	How do you deliver it (2 points)		
3. Organization Industry Analysis Distinctive competencies. Org Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Industry Analysis: Porter's Five Forces ▪ Distinctive Competencies of the Firm ▪ Resources and Capabilities ▪ Value Chain Activities ▪ Organization Structure 5-10 pages (15 Points)	2-4 slides (5 points)	How do you deliver it (5 points)		
4. Current Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What are some of the current challenges with the company? Are they related to products, processes, services, mergers, industry, etc (10 points) 5-10 pages	2-4 slides on Current Challenges (6 points)	How do you deliver it (6 points)		
5. Looking ahead	Directions for future recommendations (10 Points) 5-10 pages	2-4 Slides Reco (5 points)	How do you deliver it (5 points)		
6. Organization/ references/ Cover Sheet/ TOC/ FILE NAME	10 points. References should conform to AMR standards http://mqm385.weebly.com/uploads/8/4/9/1/8491662/amrstyleguide.pdf	N/A	N/A		
TOTAL	60	20	20	20	50
Group Project Total					170

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

We build a “world-class” business school with high standards and expectations. As such, this course will be rigorous, and grading will be demanding. The table below shows how the percentage scores on each assignment correspond to letter grades. There will typically be no “curving” of the grade distribution.

Letter Grade	Point Score
A	≥ 90%
B	≥ 80%
C	≥ 70%
D	≥ 60%
F	< 60%

Disabilities. All accommodations must be approved through the Disability Resource Center (DRC), which can be contacted at 309-438-5853. The student must complete an accommodation form with the DRC staff with enough lead time to make accommodations.

Grade Appeals. Appeals on test questions will only be considered within one week after the answers are posted on the web. Requests should be made in writing (email will suffice), explaining the rationale for the incorrect grade.

Email. Provide your full name and class number. I don't respond to anonymous emails.

POLICIES

I expect each student to attend and contribute to every class session in civil, constructive, and value-adding ways. Be prepared for each session by reading the assigned chapters or cases, offering your answers when called on in class, and at appropriate times raising your hand and offering keen insights, probing questions, valuable summaries, and so on. Students will also be evaluated based on their level of professionalism in class and class-related activities outside of class.

Note: You are responsible for getting the messages and checking the class website for announcements if you miss a class.

Make-Ups: Only legitimate, instructor-approved absences will be accepted for make-up exams. No late work is acceptable unless an extreme emergency occurs, and I have approved an extension. Failure to complete all parts of the course by the assigned dates will result in zero points for the assignment. **Generally, there is a 20% penalty for each day late in turning in an assignment or delaying an exam. If you know you will miss an EXAM, you must contact me (by email, phone, or in-office) before the Exam time.**

Cheating and plagiarism. Anyone who cheats (e.g., using unfair means during tests) more than once will receive an F for the entire course. Examples of Plagiarism in this class are, yet not restricted to (a) using other people's work and ideas without giving them credit for it, (b) using past exams on course Hero, StudyBlue, etc.¹, (c) cheating/copying during exams, (d) copying from class PowerPoint slides, etc. Cheating or plagiarism of any kind is not acceptable. This applies to all class assignments. The course aims to learn; *you do not learn by copying someone else's work*. The first offense results in a zero for the student's plagiarized assignment. A second offense results in an F for the entire course.

Other Policies: You are responsible for all information presented in the class, for all interpretation requirements of applications for all handouts distributed (in class or course website), and practicing as many exercises as necessary to learn the material. There should not be any disturbances from cellular phones or other devices during lectures and exams.

Incomplete Grade: A request for a grade of "I" (incomplete) will be granted only if unavoidable circumstances beyond the student's control prevent them from completing the scheduled course. The student has achieved an average grade of "C" or better on all examinations scheduled before the time (which should be immediately before the request's final exam). The student should see the ISU catalog for the incomplete grade "I."

Professionalism. Inappropriate behavior, such as rudeness, verbal or written malicious and defamatory comments, cursing, yelling, or other threatening and intimidating behavior, either during lectures or outside of lectures, to either the Professor or office personnel, will result in an F in the class and additional academic, administrative, or legal penalties as permitted under University policies and procedures and Illinois State law.

Withdrawal Policy: Each student is expected to know the University **Withdrawal policy**; see Academic Policies and Practices at <http://www.arr.ilstu.edu/registrar/common/selectedpolicies8.stml>

"Firing" of Team Members: If you have problems within your group, please let me know as soon as possible. Although it is a rare occurrence, a few students may try doing the least amount of work on team projects. This will force other group members to pick up the slack. Teams are authorized to "fire" unproductive members up to 30 days before their final report is due. Prior to doing so, teams considering this option must speak with me and provide evidence of non-contribution. A student who was fired from a team must complete all group work individually; the assignment requirements remain the same as they are for teams.

¹ Note: Copies of past exams are not legally supposed to be available online, unless a student have take a photograph and have posted it. Using such materials will constitute plagiarism.

Professional Standards: I expect all students to be familiar with the “College of Business Standards of Professional Behavior and Ethical Conduct” (<http://www.cob.ilstu.edu/professionalstandards>). Please note that **only bottled water** may be consumed in the College of Business Building’s classroom wing and that all **cell phones** and other electronic devices should be **turned off** and stored away during classes unless otherwise permitted by the instructor. At Illinois State University, we are firmly committed to campus safety for everyone here. To be prepared in case of an emergency, please visit this link on campus safety: <http://admissions.illinoisstate.edu/community/safety.shtml>

Exceptional Circumstances: The University may grant special requests for students to be absent for university business or trips. You may also be required to attend a job interview during class, or you may be unable to do any school work due to a medical condition. If any of these circumstances apply, I will work with you as long as you provide appropriate documentation in advance of the absence (for disabling illness, please notify me via email as soon as possible). You must consult with me about such exceptional circumstances at the time they become known; allowances cannot be made for such events after they have occurred. If you have to miss class due to a **bereavement or extended illness** (3 or more consecutive class days), the **Dean of Students’ Office** can help. It is located in Room 387, Student Services Building (Campus Box 3090) and can be reached via phone: (309) 438-2008 and email: deanofstudents@illinoisstate.edu

A FINAL NOTE: If you find that you are having some trouble in class (e.g., with contributions, assignments, or team members), please inform me as soon as possible. I will do my best to help students who, despite their genuine efforts, are experiencing difficulty. Please do not raise such problems at the end of the semester or after you have received your final grades. I sincerely want you to succeed in this class, and to do so, we must work together to improve your performance during the semester.

SCHEDULE

Date	Discussions	Class Activities	Readings	Others	Graded Activity
1/12/2026	Introductions, Syllabus, expectations				
1/14/2026	Strategic Leadership	Lecture	Chapter 1		
1/19/2026	MLK JR. DAY (No Class)				

1/21/2026	External Analysis	Lecture and Video	Chapter 2	Class Videos: Mike Porter (Five Forces)	
1/26/2026	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	
1/28/2026	Internal Analysis	Lecture	Chapter 3		
2/2/2026	Building Competitive Advantage through functional strategy	Lecture and Videos	Chapter 4	Class Videos: Tesla 1 and Tesla 2	
2/4/2026	PREP AND EXAM DAY	Read the Intel Case Study	Prep for Exam 1		
2/9/2026	PREP AND EXAM DAY	EXAM 1	Intel Discussion		
2/11/2026	Building Competitive Advantage through Business Strategy	Lecture	Chapter 5		
2/16/2026	Business Level Strategy and the Industry Environment	Lecture	Chapter 6		
2/18/2026	Strategy and Technology	Lecture and Videos	Chapter 7	Class Video: Race against Machine (Andrew McAfee)	
2/23/2026	Strategy and Global Environment	Lecture and Videos	Chapter 8	Class Video: Vijay Govindarajan (Reverse Innovation)	
2/25/2026	PREP AND EXAM DAY	Read SAP Case Study	Prep for Exam 2		
3/2/2026	PREP AND EXAM DAY	EXAM 2	SAP Discussion		
3/4/2026	Corporate Level Strategy, Intel	Lecture and Videos	Chapter 9	Management of Innovation: Gary Hamel	
3/9/2026	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK	
3/11/2026	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK	
3/16/2026	Corporate Level Strategy, SAP Case	Lecture and Videos	Chapter 10	Rethinking Management: Gary Hamel	
3/18/2026	Corporate Performance Governance and Ethics	Lecture and Videos	Chapter 11		
3/23/2026	Implementing Strategies in Companies	Lecture and Videos	Chapter 12	Class Video (Fighting Poverty With Innovation: Nishant Lalwani)	
3/25/2026	PREP AND EXAM DAY	READ the LinkedIn Case	Prep for Exam 2		
3/30/2026	PREP AND EXAM DAY	EXAM 3	LinkedIn Discussion		
4/1/2026	No class (Group Project Preparation)				
4/6/2026	Group Presentation				
4/8/2026	Group Presentation				
4/13/2026	Group Presentation				
4/15/2026	Group Presentation				
4/20/2026	Group Presentation				
4/22/2026	No Class (Prepare for Exam)				
4/27/2026	Final Exam (Online)			Exam 4	
4/29/2026	Final Group paper Due			Email me at adatta@ilstu.edu by 5:30 PM	