

**DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT, COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY
FALL 2026**

COURSE INFORMATION

Instructor: Hakan Ener, Ph.D.

Course Number & Title: MGT 385 Organizational Strategy

Prerequisites: BIS 270; FIL 185, FIL 190 or FIL 240; MGT 220; MKT 190 or MKT 230 all with grades of C or better. Concurrent registration with MGT 227

Credit Hours: 3

Time and Location:

Section 6: Tuesday and Thursday 9.35 Am – 10.50 Am. Room: SFHB 369 (In-person)

Section 8: Tuesday and Thursday 12.35 Pm – 1.50 Pm. Room: SFHB 370 (In-person)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Welcome to Organizational Strategy! This course will prepare you to make business decisions that you will confront in management roles. We will be dealing with strategic decisions, which simultaneously affect multiple functional areas such as sales, marketing, operations, technology, finance, human resources, and others. You will learn through case studies, which describe real-life business situations and ask you to figure out what you would do. You will learn about what organizations do to attain success, and to stay ahead of the competition. By the end of the course, you will be ready to step into a business and identify what types of strategic issues are important for its managers, and to formulate responses to those issues.

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

E-mail: hener@ilstu.edu (preferred mode – expect a reply Monday through Friday during business hours. Announcements will be made by email and posted on Canvas.)

Office Hours: Wednesday and Friday, 1 pm to 2 pm on Zoom, at: [Zoom Link](#) To ensure the instructor's availability, use Canvas: From the course Home Page, select "View Course Calendar" and then click on "Find Appointment."

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR

Hakan Ener is a faculty member at the Management Department. He holds a Ph.D. in Management with an emphasis on Strategy. Prior to joining ISU, he created and taught courses in Spain, France, Italy, Germany, and Brazil. His experience includes serving as the academic director of a program in which mid-career managers created new businesses within large corporations. That program received the "Excellence in Practice" recognition from the European Foundation for Management Development.

RESOURCES/MATERIALS

There is no textbook for this course. Required readings, which are essential to study before class, are available from Harvard Business Impact for purchase. Please visit this link and sign up for an account with them before purchasing: [Harvard Business Impact Link](#)
See the “Course Calendar” in the syllabus to find out when to use each resource.

COURSE COMPETENCIES:

Students will:

- Identify and compare the different ways in which companies compete with their rivals
- Explain why some firms are more profitable compared to others
- Anticipate key roadblocks to overcome in capturing economic value from products / services
- Evaluate strategic alternatives
- Formulate responses to strategic issues faced by organizations

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Case studies: There is a case study discussion in most sessions. Students should read the case study prior to coming to class (using the preparation questions provided in the class slides during the previous session), complete the pre-class quiz on Canvas, and be prepared to comment on the case study.

Assignments: You will find instructions in the “Assignments” section on Canvas.

Participation: This course requires students to frequently share their analysis of a business situation in class, and to explain how they would respond to the situation.

GRADING POLICIES

The course grade will be based on participation in class, and on completing the following: Quizzes, assignments, and “End-of-session notes.” Please note that simply attending a session is not sufficient to earn participation points. The course grade calculation, for a total of 100 points, involves:

A) Grading based on case study sessions

- **Participation in class:** Each case study mentioned in the “Course Calendar” section of this syllabus provides an opportunity to earn 1 participation point. You earn a point by making at least one substantive (i.e. relevant and informed) comment, or asking one substantive question in class.
- **“End-of-session notes”:** You will write about what you have said in the class discussion about each case study, and learned from that session, in your own words (1.5 points per submission). You must submit the end-of-session note before the deadline to receive your participation point.
- **Quizzes:** Before each case study session, there will be a brief quiz on Canvas that will check for factual understanding of the case study (1 point per quiz).

The course involves more than a dozen case study sessions. By semester’s end, the instructor will drop your two lowest scored quizzes, two end-of-session notes, and four in-class case study participation items.

B) Grading based on fact-finding assignments:

- **Written fact-finding assignment submissions:** Canvas's "Assignments" section provides instructions and the points associated with each assignment. Submissions must be made through Canvas (please do not submit any part of the assignment content in the "comment" section of your submission.)
- **Brief Presentations:** Each "Brief Presentation" session in the Course Calendar is an opportunity to share assignment findings with classmates, and to earn points.

ATTENDANCE

As stated in the [Undergraduate Catalog](#), you are responsible for attending class and completing all academic work. The "**Absence Notification**" policy declared on the [Dean of Students Office website](#) is in effect. Attendance will be taken, but not graded on its own.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU MISS A SESSION OR A DEADLINE?

See the Course Calendar in this syllabus, and figure out what type of session or deadline you have missed. After the session, obtain the class slides from Canvas, available at the end of the same workday.

Missing a case study session:

You need to keep track of how many case study sessions you have missed. If you are absent during one or two case study sessions throughout the semester, your course grade will not be affected due to the "lowest grades drop" policy explained under "Grading Policies" above.

After two absences, written remedial work is available to all students for up to one missed case study session, regardless of the reason for absence. Submit remedial work by emailing the instructor your written answers, justified by the relevant facts, to all questions shown in the class slides on the day of your absence (not the preparation questions provided in advance). You must fill out the file at this link, and attach it to your email, latest by 5:00 pm on the last Friday prior to the Finals week: [Remedial Work Link \(TinyURL\)](#). If you have not received your remedial work grade within one week following submission, please contact the instructor.

Additional remedial work starting with your fourth absence from case study sessions is available only upon presenting a **valid and documented reason**, involving written evidence related to a:

- Medical issue,
- Family bereavement,
- Sanctioned University Activity (including sports teams, career fairs, etc.),
- Military obligation, or
- Religious holiday / obligation near the day(s) of the session(s) / deadlines(s) missed.

Evidence of a valid reason for absence must be turned in, together with the remedial work submission(s), by email before 5:00 pm on the last Friday prior to the Finals week.

Please note that job interviews and jobs generally do not constitute an excused absence, unless you provide evidence that an employer or recruiter declined all other time slots for a job interview.

Missing a written assignment deadline:

For end-of-session notes: There are no deadline extensions on end-of-session note submissions linked to case study discussions, because the instructor needs to recall your in-class participation while grading.

For other written assignments: A submission made after the deadline will receive a 25% point deduction immediately after the deadline, increasing by another 25% for each additional 24 hours of delay (except for delays due to **valid and documented reasons** stated earlier, for which evidence must be submitted together with the assignment on Canvas, latest by 5:00 pm on the last Friday prior to the Finals week.)

Please note that technical problems (short-term outage of a website, wifi connection or of personal devices such as laptops do not constitute a valid reason for late submissions: Students should complete assignments early enough and save up-to-date copies of their assignment files in one of the cloud service providers provided or supported by the university at all times, and be ready to switch to a device at the university's computer labs to complete their assignments on time.

Missing a Brief Presentation:

There is no separate make-up session or remedial work related to Brief Presentations. The main reason we do Brief Presentations is to aggregate and share the information obtained by all students in their assignments and learn from their findings. If you are going to be absent from the classroom, and want to earn Brief Presentation points, you need to prepare in advance, by completing the corresponding assignment in a timely manner, and then doing two things. First, obtain **evidence of a valid reason** (see above) for your absence. Second, create an "unlisted" Youtube video of yourself (i.e. just you speaking into the camera, with your face visible) making the Brief Presentation, to be shown in class during the corresponding session. (Remember to state your full name in the video, along with the facts you are sharing.) Then, email the instructor **evidence of a valid reason** for your absence, along with your course section number, and a link to your "unlisted" Youtube video before 9 AM on the day of the presentation session (do not email the large video file itself.) It is essential to follow these instructions to earn Brief Presentation points.

THE GRADING SCHEME

90 and above	A
From 80 to 89.99	B
From 70 to 79.99	C
From 60 to 69.99	D
59.99 and below	F

GENERATIVE AI CAN BE USED IN THIS COURSE AT SPECIFIED TIMES WITH PROPER ATTRIBUTION.

In this course, students can use generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT or Adobe Firefly) to complete specific assignments, given instructor guidance and permission, so long as the use of generative AI tools is properly disclosed through in-text citations, quotations, and references. Please refer to the style manual that aligns with your discipline for specific guidelines for attribution. Note that any use of generative AI

must be both responsible and ethical. This means that students using generative AI are required to comply with all privacy laws and research requirements to protect data and must have appropriate permissions to enter data into a generative AI tool. Students should clarify any questions on whether data or information may be entered into a generative AI tool with the instructor.

STUDENT ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT

Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability and/or medical/mental health condition should contact Student Access and Accommodation Services at 350 Fell Hall, (309) 438-5853, or visit the website at StudentAccess.IllinoisState.edu

MENTAL HEALTH

Life at college can get complicated. If you're feeling stressed, overwhelmed, lost, anxious, depressed or are struggling with personal issues, please call or visit Student Counseling Services (SCS). These services are free and completely confidential. SCS is located at 320 Student Services Building, 309-438-3655.

RECORDING A CLASS SESSION

Please do not independently record the course without prior authorization from the faculty member or an approved accommodation from [Student Access and Accommodations Services](#) office.

MGT 385 – Dr. Ener - COURSE CALENDAR				
WEEK	MO.	DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
1	Aug.	Tues. 18	What is Strategy? (Course overview)	Read syllabus.
		Thurs. 20	What drives profitability?	Read “Trader Joe’s” before class. Read end-of-session note guidance
2		Tues. 25	How is being successful different from having a competitive advantage?	Read “Spotify: Face the Music (Update 2019)” before class
		Thurs. 27	The “decision tree”	Read “Canonical Decision Problems” case study’s Section 1: “Product Development Sequencing” before class
3	Sept.	Tues. 1	What happens when companies compete fiercely?	Read “Brighter Smiles for the Masses-Colgate vs. P&G” before class
		Thurs. 3	AI for strategy benchmarking	In-class demo of individual written AI assignment
4		Tues. 8	What makes a business opportunity truly attractive?	Read “Performance Indicator” before class
		Thurs. 10	Assignment 1- Description	See in-class demo of individual written assignment
5		Tues. 15	How can offline retail businesses confront online rivals?	Read “Showrooming at Best Buy” before class
		Thurs. 17	Assignment 1 - Brief Presentations	Submit assignment before class

6		Tues. 22	How do you select among available strategic moves?	Read “Tennessee Controls: The Strategic Ranking Problem” before class
		Thurs. 24	How to bid on major business projects?	Read “Canonical Decision Problems” case study’s Section 5: “Bidding Decisions” before class
7		Tues. 29	What is the economic and strategic value of an acquisition target?	Read “\$19B 4 txt app WhatsApp...omg!” before class
	Oct	Thurs. 1	Assignment 2 – Description	See in-class demo of individual written assignment
8		Tues. 6	What do you do if you lose market share?	Read “Altius Golf and the Fighter Brand” before class
		Thurs. 8	Assignment 2 - Brief Presentations	Submit assignment before class
9		Tues. 13	What makes a business model attractive?	Read “Artificial Intelligence: Stitch Fix - A Blue Ocean Retailer in the AI World” before class
		Thurs. 15	How to anticipate price-based competition?	Read “Pricing Games: Sony PlayStation and Microsoft Xbox” before class
10		Tues. 20	How to create a revenue model that works?	Read “The New York Times Paywall” before class
		Thurs. 22	How does the corporate headquarters add value to a business?	Read “Rosewood Hotels and Resorts: Branding to Increase Customer Profitability and Lifetime Value” before class
11		Tues. 27	Should a business own all its operating units?	Read “Porcini's Pronto: "Great Italian cuisine without the wait!"” before class
		Thurs. 29	How to obtain support for a new business project?	“Steve Jobs at Next Computer” case study on video. In-class discussion.
12	Nov.	Tues. 3	What can businesses do to differentiate themselves from rivals?	Read “Commonwealth Bank of Australia: Unbanklike Experimentation” before class
		Thurs. 5	What to do when your sales channel steals your customers?	Read “X Fire Paintball & Airsoft: is Amazon a Friend or Foe? (A)” before class
13		Tues. 10	How to compete in new market space?	Read “Reinventing E-Commerce: Amazon's Bet on Unmanned Vehicle Delivery” before class
		Thurs. 12	Assignment 3 – Description	See in-class demo of individual written assignment
14		Tues. 17	<u>NO CLASS</u>	
		Thurs. 19	<u>NO CLASS</u>	

15		Tues. 24	<u>Thanksgiving Break- No class</u>	
		Thurs. 26		
16	Dec.	Tues. 1	Assignment 3- Brief Presentations	Submit assignment before class
	Dec.	Thurs. 3	<u>Placeholder for a possible make-up session.</u>	<u>If all prior sessions went ahead as planned, then no class today.</u>

Mission, Vision, Core Values, Strategic Goals and Action Steps

Approved by the Coordinating Team, April 22, 2011

Mission: Through our shared commitment to excellence in teaching, research, and service, we prepare students to be skilled and ethical business professionals who will make significant positive contributions to organizations, to communities, and to our larger society.

Vision: The first choice for business education in Illinois

Core Values:

- We value excellence in instruction and enhanced student learning. The College of Business supports the Illinois State University tradition of excellence in teaching. We attempt to provide a holistic approach to learning, relying on excellent classroom teaching but reaching beyond to provide mechanisms for students to engage faculty, industry and each other through experiential learning and individualized attention.
- We value a dedication to knowledge creation. Intellectual contributions and the intellectual discipline required of high quality scholarship are directly related to excellence in the classroom and in our service activities. Most of the efforts of the faculty will fall in the area of discipline-based scholarship as currently defined, but we also value intellectual contributions in the areas of interdisciplinary research, learning and pedagogy, and contributions to practice.
- We value a commitment to citizenship in and service to our institution, state, and nation. Our commitment to a dynamic global business environment demands that we take an active role, both as individuals and as a college of business, in the institutional and public processes related to our disciplines.
- We value a culture of shared governance. We operate in an environment of shared governance and we commit ourselves to an active role in campus shared governance processes.
- We value balanced excellence in the classroom, in research and intellectual contributions, and in service to our institution, our disciplines, and to the local, state, national and international communities.
- We value high ethical standards, as embodied in our Standards of Professional Behavior and Ethical Standards. As a community of scholars and business professionals, we strive to embody the characteristics of responsibility, honesty, trust, respect, and fairness in our professional and personal lives.

Linking the Mission, Vision, Core Values, Strategic Goals and Action Steps

Our mission is who we are, who we serve, and why we exist. We strive to achieve our vision. Our core values are the foundation for determining our strategic goals. Our action steps are measurable and help track progress toward our strategic goals.



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MGT 385 - Dr. Ener - Fall 2026

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Created by: Hakan Ener

Instructor: Hakan Ener

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MAIN CASE

Trader Joe's

By: David L. Ager, Michael A. Roberto

Publication Date: Sep 2013
(Revised April 07, 2014)

Product Number: 714419-PDF-ENG

Degree-granting Price: \$5.10

Language: English

Discipline: STRATEGY

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Supplements ▼



MAIN CASE

Spotify: Face the Music (Update 2019)

By: Govert Vroom, Isaac Sastre Boquet

Publication Date: Jul 2019

(Revised July 29, 2019)

Degree-granting Price: \$5.10

Discipline: STRATEGY

Product Number: IES739-PDF-

ENG

Language: English

Included for
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MAIN CASE

Brighter Smiles for the Masses--Colgate vs. P&G

By: Felix Oberholzer-Gee, Dennis Yao, Filipa Azevedo Jorge

Publication Date: Dec 2005

(Revised February 21, 2019)

Degree-granting Price: \$5.10

Discipline: STRATEGY

Product Number: 706435-PDF-

ENG

Language: English

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EXERCISE

Canonical Decision Problems

By: George Wu, Hans Liebler

Publication Date: Apr 1996

(Revised March 24, 2008)

Degree-granting Price: \$5.10

Discipline: NEGOTIATION

Product Number: 396308-PDF-

ENG

Language: English

Included for
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MAIN CASE

Performance Indicator

By: Kenneth Corts

Publication Date: May 2002

(Revised May 21, 2003)

Product Number: 702480-PDF-

ENG

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Degree-granting Price: \$5.10**Language:** English**Discipline:** STRATEGY**Now available for HBS, HBP, and certain partner****cases:**[AI Case Note Generator](#) ✨ BETA

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[Supplements](#) ✓**MAIN CASE**

Showrooming at Best Buy

By: Thales S. Teixeira, Elizabeth Anne Watkins**Publication Date:** Aug 2014
(Revised December 17, 2015)**Product Number:** 515019-PDF-
ENG**Degree-granting Price:** \$5.10**Language:** English**Discipline:** MARKETING**Included for
Educators Only:**[Teaching Note](#)[Educator Copy](#)**Now available for HBS, HBP, and certain partner****cases:**[AI Case Note Generator](#) ✨ BETA

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**MAIN CASE**

Tennessee Controls: The Strategic Ranking Problem

By: Robert Simons, Dale Geiger**Publication Date:** Feb 1991
(Revised November 29, 2010)**Product Number:** 191083-PDF-
ENG**Degree-granting Price:** \$5.10**Language:** English**Discipline:** ACCOUNTING**Included for
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MAIN CASE

\$19B 4 txt app WhatsApp...omg!

By: David J. Collis, Ashley Hartman

Publication Date: Jan 2015
(Revised May 08, 2018)

Product Number: 715441-PDF-ENG

Degree-granting Price: \$5.10

Language: English

Discipline: STRATEGY

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BRIEF CASE

Altius Golf and the Fighter Brand

By: Robert J. Dolan, Sunru Yong

Publication Date: Jun 2013
(Revised April 30, 2014)

Product Number: 913578-PDF-ENG

Degree-granting Price: \$5.10

Language: English

Discipline: MARKETING

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MAIN CASE

Artificial Intelligence: Stitch Fix - A Blue Ocean Retailer in the AI World

By: W. Chan Kim, Renee Mauborgne, Melanie Pipino

Publication Date: Dec 2019

Product Number: IN1630-PDF-ENG

Degree-granting Price: \$5.10

Language: English

Discipline: STRATEGY

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MAIN CASE

Pricing Games: Sony PlayStation and Microsoft Xbox

By: Valerie Y. Suslow, Francine Lafontaine

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Publication Date: Feb 2011**Product Number:** W88C82-PDF-ENG**Degree-granting Price:** \$5.10**Language:** English**Discipline:** ECONOMICS

MAIN CASE

The New York Times Paywall

By: Vineet Kumar, Bharat N. Anand, Sunil Gupta, Felix Oberholzer-Gee

Publication Date: Feb 2012
(Revised January 30, 2013)**Product Number:** 512077-PDF-ENG**Degree-granting Price:** \$5.10**Language:** English**Discipline:** MARKETINGIncluded for
Educators Only:[Teaching Note](#)[Educator Copy](#)[Audio Sample](#)**Now available for HBS, HBP, and certain partner cases:**[AI Case Note Generator](#) ✨ BETA*If you have created a case note for this case before, you will find it in My Lists.*[Supplements](#) ✓

BRIEF CASE

Rosewood Hotels and Resorts: Branding to Increase Customer Profitability and Lifetime Value

By: Chekitan S. Dev, Laure Mougeot Stroock

Publication Date: Jun 2007**Product Number:** 2087-PDF-ENG**Degree-granting Price:** \$5.10**Language:** English**Discipline:** MARKETINGIncluded for
Educators Only:[Teaching Note](#)[Educator Copy](#)[Audio Sample](#)[Supplements](#) ✓

BRIEF CASE

Porcini's Pronto: "Great Italian cuisine without the wait!"

By: James L. Heskett, Richard Luecke

Publication Date: Apr 2011**Product Number:** 4277-PDF-ENG**Degree-granting Price:** \$5.10**Language:** English**Discipline:** SERVICE MANAGEMENTIncluded for
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[Supplements](#) 

MAIN CASE

Commonwealth Bank of Australia: Unbanklike Experimentation

By: Ryan W. Buell, Leslie K. John

Publication Date: Oct 2018
(Revised February 27, 2020)

Product Number: 619018-PDF-ENG

Degree-granting Price: \$5.10

Language: English

Discipline: OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

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MAIN CASE

Reinventing E-Commerce: Amazon's Bet on Unmanned Vehicle Delivery

By: Russell Walker, Rafique Jiwani

Publication Date: Sep 2015

Product Number: KEL911-PDF-ENG

Degree-granting Price: \$5.10

Language: English

Discipline: STRATEGY

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MAIN CASE

X Fire Paintball & Airsoft: is Amazon a Friend or Foe? (A)

By: Feng Zhu, Angela Acocella

Publication Date: Jan 2017
(Revised August 21, 2019)

Product Number: 617046-PDF-ENG

Included for
Educators Only:

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Degree-granting Price: \$5.10 Language: English

Discipline: OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

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