Course Description
The capstone course integrates knowledge and discussions from previous classes and culminates in developing skills to formulate and execute strategy. It emphasizes organizational policy, and the dynamics and global interdependence of business that executive decision makers face. Students will fully understand a firm’s operating environment and evolve into “general managers” who learn to make short and long-term decisions that drive competitiveness of a company.

Course Overview
The course is based on the principle of experiential learning (learning by doing). While I will provide some short lectures and workshops, my role is to be more of a coach to help you understand and reflect on what you are experiencing. We celebrate performance mistakes because that is where the real learning comes from. You have become used to working in teams and being supervised by faculty. This course provides the opportunity to be in an organization where there are roles and hierarchy. You will have bosses (a board of directors) that will act like the ones you will work for after graduation. Most importantly, you will learn to develop concise, clear and convincing presentations in order to gain approval for actions you want to take.

There are three distinct learning outcomes with the capstone.

1. Use skills/knowledge learned throughout the program to lead a business enterprise. It is one thing to know how foreign exchange rates work; full understanding comes from applying, discussing and defending this knowledge.
2. Present clear, concise and convincing requests for approval. Knowing the right decision is one thing; convincing your boss or those in authority is essential. Otherwise, you will not be able to employ your desired actions.
3. Learn to become business agile. Preparing to work in an organization successfully. Examples include:
   a. Managing up, down and across
   b. Communicating effectively and in a timely manner
   c. Establishing metrics to measure success
   d. Understanding bonus structure and setting goals
   e. Working in a collaborative
   f. Giving and receiving feedback (effects on salary)
   g. Being adaptable and proactive

- You will apply for positions (President, VP of Finance, VP of Operations, VP of Marketing and VP of Strategy) to form an executive team prior to class beginning on May 10.
• You will be assigned to one of ten companies who will compete in an industry that sells athletic footwear in four international markets to three customer segments (online, wholesale and private label). We will use the Business Strategy Game simulation.

• There will be eight fiscal years of operation beginning at Year 11 (Y11). For each fiscal year (round), executive teams make over 70 finance, operations and marketing decisions for their company and will receive a series of reports and results relative to investor expectations. You will use your knowledge from previous classes to make good decisions and perform proper analysis of results.

• There will be two virtual board meetings during the course. The primary purpose of these meetings is to get high-level strategy support, approvals for certain decisions and to establish a bonus structure for the upcoming four fiscal years.

• At the end of the class, there will be an investor pitch where executive teams will make five-minute pitches to encourage investors to invest all or some of the $100M each investor has.

• Presidents will give two salary increases to their VP’s during the course. HR (me) will approve the increases and establish the increases for the presidents.

• There will be two opportunities where executive team members will provide evaluations of each other. Results will be sent to the presidents and they will conduct one on one performance meetings with their VP’s. I will conduct the performance meetings for the presidents based on team evaluations and my own observations.

Resources
1. Business Strategy Game. Program will pay for this simulation. Simulation contains inputs (decisions), reports, standings, quizzes, final exam and evaluations.
2. OAKS will house examples, grades, forms, tips and data from previous industries.

Grading
While we operate this like a real company, there will be a grade. 55% of the final will be individual assessment (I) and 45% will be team assessment (T).

Final Exam (I) (15%) – The final exam will be taken online and it is in the simulation. While the exam is open book it is important that you do your own work. The simulation provides the instructor many tools to ensure this. The exam includes questions from all functions (marketing, operations...) so while you are assigned a specific role within your executive team, it is important that you understand all the functions.

Final Company Results (T) (15%) – This is the Game to Date Scoreboard published in the simulation at the end of Y18. We will consider the Overall GTD score which includes bonus points.

Board Evaluation (T) (10%) – This is a team evaluation provided by the board at the end of the Y16 board meeting. They will provide feedback after both the Initial and Y13 board meetings.

Bonus Compensation (T) (10%) – Bonuses will be determined at the end of the Y14 and Y18. These will be based on actual results relative to proposed goals approved by your board.

Investor Pitch Competition (T) (10%) – Executive teams will be asked to prepare a pitch and be able to 1) review value created for shareholders and pitch going forward plan. Pitches will be given to investors (faculty, staff and board members).

Annual Salary (I) (15%) - Vice President positions will begin with an annual salary of $200,000 (president salary is $210,000). Executive team members will be eligible for two salary increases (at Y13 and at Y18). These will be
recommended by the president and approved by HR (me). I will determine salary increases for the presidents. Just like in real life salary increases will be determined by available salary pool funds and the individual contributions.

Engagement (I) (15%) – There are a number of ways to demonstrate engagement throughout the class. These include timeliness, quality of peer-peer evaluations, self-assessments and evaluations you complete about your board.

Quiz 1 (I) (5%) – This is an online quiz in the simulation. The quiz is an assessment on your understanding of the simulation. It is important that you come to the first meeting with your team (normally the first day of class) with an understanding of the simulation. The quiz must be completed prior to the first class.

Quiz 2 (I) (5%) - This is an online quiz in the simulation. The quiz is an assessment on your understanding of the operations of the business enterprise. It is similar to the final exam.

Students are expected to complete this eight-year assignment, but can be discharged from their executive team for the same reasons in the workforce (behavior & performance). Students discharged from an executive team will receive an F.

Finally, I reserve the right to alter anyone’s grade who is clearly not contributing.

Course Schedule

As an experiential learning course, the class has minimal lectures. Much of the class will be learning by doing and reflection. In addition, there will be:

- Introductory Class via zoom (May 3 at 9:00am) zoom link
- First Class (Monday, May 10 at 8:30am)
- Executive team meetings. These will be during class time and can be via zoom at other times
- Two board meetings (May 19 and June 2)
- President meetings with me (each Monday at 7:45am)
- Two one-one evaluation meetings (around May 26 and week of June 14)
- Investor Pitch Competition (June 17)
- The schedule below provides highlights of major events (lecture topics are italicized). The schedule in the BSG simulation provides details for quizzes, final exam and inputs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week of</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Weekend</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 10</td>
<td>Getting organized Developing your strategy</td>
<td>Preparing for practice rounds</td>
<td>Practice Round 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Practice Round 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 17</td>
<td>Preparing for 1st board meeting Bonuses &amp; setting goals</td>
<td>1st Board Meeting</td>
<td>Y11</td>
<td>Y12</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 24</td>
<td>Giving/receiving feedback 1st Evaluation due</td>
<td>Y13</td>
<td>Board meeting presentations Second half</td>
<td>Y14</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>May 31</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>Y15</td>
<td>2nd Board Meeting</td>
<td>Y16</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 7</td>
<td>Time to reflect</td>
<td>Y17</td>
<td>Investor pitch comp.</td>
<td>Y18</td>
<td>2nd Evaluation due</td>
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<td>June 14</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Investor Pitch Competition</td>
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Email Etiquette

Most organizations are dependent on email for internal and external communications. The way you present yourself in emails says a lot about your professionalism and priorities. Start practicing email etiquette now so that it will be second-nature when you enter the workforce.

- When using email to correspond during the course, please:
  - be timely
  - have an appropriate subject
  - include a respectful greeting (e.g., “Hi Jessica” or “Dear Dr. Smith”)
  - sign w/your name, title, company (you may want to develop a signature)
  - use complete sentences
  - proofread your email
  - be concise and eliminate unnecessary words

Behavior

As stated on page 75 of the Student Handbook: “a college classroom requires a higher level of courtesy than many people exercise in ordinary public space. Everyone in a classroom is there for the purpose of learning, and no one should be able to deprive another person of the chance to learn. Expressions of rudeness and even carelessness degrade the high purpose of learning that should be paramount in a college classroom.” These kinds of statements and codes apply to every business and it certainly will apply to this course. Harassment, creating a hostile environment and disrespect will not be tolerated. Inappropriate behavior may lead to discharge (failing the class).

I will treat you like you work in an organization; not like a student. Therefore, I expect the same type of behavior you would use in the workplace.