Levin Chair Seminar: Spring 2017
Public Policy and Business Strategy
UST 494/594

Thursdays, 6:00 to 8:50 pm
Urban Affairs Building, Room 247

Instructor: Bob Gleeson, Ph.D.
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Office hours: Thursdays, 3-5 pm. And by appointment.

Course Description

Government officials, non-profit executives, and community leaders who seek to improve social and economic outcomes for citizens often need to understand how private businesses make strategic choices. Many public policies and/or community initiatives are designed to leverage the power, resources, and behavior of private firms to help achieve public goals. They need to have a framework for understanding how these policies and initiatives can – and cannot – influence the behavior of private companies.

This course is designed to teach the analytical skills of strategic industry analysis to advanced undergraduates (juniors and seniors) graduate students so that they can better understand the motives that underlie the behavior of companies, and so they can develop informed assessments of how private companies can be expected to behave in response to proposed changes in policy. The instructor invites students who are interested in public administration, non-profit management, urban planning, technology, business and law.

The first third of the class will focus on developing specific analytical skills for industry analysis. The last two-thirds of the class will apply those skills to a wide variety of policy arenas through the use of student-driven case studies.

Students will be graded on two written assignments (which will test core analytical skills), two oral presentations (interim and final), and on a semester paper that applies the analytical skills to a specific policy setting to be agreed on between the instructor and each student. Group projects (no more than three students) are also welcomed.

A Note About Readings

Some class sessions will be based on multiple readings. Students are expected to read all assigned materials PRIOR to class, so that class-time can be devoted to discussion and integration of the ideas and the research methods presented in the readings. All assigned readings will be available on the Blackboard site.
Assignments and Grading

Grading for the course will be based on short written assignments, the quality of class participation, a series of interim presentations, a final presentation, and a final written paper. Semester grades will use the “+” and “-“ approach.

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment One</td>
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<td>Assignment Two</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interim Presentation</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td>Final Presentation</td>
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<td>Final Written Paper</td>
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Outline of Class Sessions, Required Readings, and Due Dates:

Jan 19th: Introduction to Course
The Structure-Conduct-Performance Paradigm I
Lecture Notes on Blackboard

Jan 26th: The Structure-Conduct-Performance Paradigm II
Reading: Michael Porter, “Understanding Industry Structure”
Reading: F. M. Scherer, “Introduction”
In-class discussion of Assignment One

Feb 2nd: The Structure-Conduct-Performance Paradigm III
Hand-In Assignment One
In-class quiz on market structure (ungraded)

Feb 9th: Mapping A Market: Analyzing the Pharmaceutical Industry
Reading: Issue Brief – Medicare Drug Negotiation and Rebates
Reading: Medicare Part D Negotiation of Prescription Drug Prices
Reading: Danzon & Keuffel

Feb 16th: Discussion of semester research topics and research methods
Finalize topics and groups
In-class discussion of Assignment Two

Feb 23rd: Hand-In Assignment Two
Discuss initial data issues related to projects

March 2nd: Topic: TBD based on selected projects
Mar 9th: Review progress on semester research topics
         Initial presentations of findings and research challenges

Mar 16th: No Class: Spring Break

Mar 23rd: Topic: TBD based on selected projects

Mar 30th: Topic: TBD based on selected projects

Apr 6th: Review progress on semester research topics

Apr 13th: Topic: TBD based on selected projects

Apr 20th: Topic: TBD based on selected projects

Apr 27th: Final Presentations

May 4th: Final Presentations

Monday, May 8th: All final papers and final Powerpoint presentations due via email by 3pm.

**Attendance Policy**

This is a small seminar course that meets only once per week. And students are likely to be conducting work in small groups. Regular attendance is extremely important. With prior notice to the instructor via email – AND CONFIRMATION – each student may miss one class without penalty. Any additional absences must result from extraordinary circumstances, and must be approved by the instructor either prior to the class or as soon afterwards as possible.

**Plagiarism**

The submission of work done by another with the intent that it be viewed and evaluated as your own. Copying on an examination, turning in a writing assignment done by someone else, intentionally using or presenting false data, and/or making use of sources without acknowledging them are all examples of plagiarism. Acts of plagiarism will be dealt with according to university policies. Penalties can range from a reduced grade, to course failure, to expulsion from the university.