

# MGT 3659: Foundations of Strategy

## Fall 2026 Syllabus

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<b>Email</b>	saqibm@gatech.edu
<b>Office Hours</b>	By appointment
<b>Course Homepage</b>	Canvas (canvas.gatech.edu)
<b>Teaching Assistants</b>	To Be Announced

Section	Days & Time	Location
Section A	TBD	TBD
Section B	TBD	TBD
Section C	TBD	TBD

**Course Mode:** Traditional, residential, on-campus instruction    **Credits:** 3

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## Course Scope and Mission

This course covers the basic concepts and analytical frameworks of strategic management. Our objective is to help you develop the ability to think strategically about a company, its present business position, its long-term direction, its resources and competitive capabilities, the caliber of its strategy, and its opportunities for gaining sustainable competitive advantage.

**Part I** (Weeks 1–12) consists of lectures, case study discussions, and individual/team evaluations. **Part II** (Weeks 13–16) involves a team-based analysis of a real company's strategic challenges, culminating in a written report and class presentation.

## Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- 1. Understand the fundamental concepts of strategic management, including industry analysis, strategy identification and evaluation, competitor analysis, firm and industry evolution, and strategic responses to external changes
  - 2. Integrate knowledge gained from coursework and readings with practical business issues from a general management perspective
  - 3. Develop an awareness of the dynamic impact of strategic actions by the firm and its rivals on business and corporate strategy
  - 4. Develop effective business communication skills, including the ability to write and summarize concisely and to use GenAI tools effectively
  - 5. Understand the implications of important business events, both current and past, and link them to the concepts of strategic management learned in class
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## Required Materials

## Textbook

**Strategic Management, 7th Edition** by Frank T. Rothaermel, McGraw-Hill. Available through McGraw-Hill Connect at [connect.mheducation.com](https://connect.mheducation.com).

## McGraw-Hill Connect (Mandatory)

This is an **all-digital** course. Signing up for McGraw-Hill Connect is **mandatory** to remain in the class. Connect provides:

- eBook (PDF + Smartbook interactive learning)
- Smartbook chapter exercises
- Chapter quizzes and assignments
- Minicases

All chapter quizzes and individual case quizzes are administered through Connect.

## Harvard Business School Cases

Case packets will be available through Harvard Business School Publishing. Links and instructions will be posted on Canvas.

## Course Website

All announcements, materials, and submissions will be managed through Canvas ([canvas.gatech.edu](https://canvas.gatech.edu)). Check Canvas regularly for updates.

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## Grade Components

**Total: 1000 points**

Component	Weight	Points
Midterm Exams (2 × 20%)	40%	400
Case Class Attendance	5%	50
Case Class Participation	5%	50
Individual Chapter Quizzes (Connect/Smartbook)	15%	150
Individual Case Quizzes (Connect)	5%	50
Team Case Write-ups (2 × 5%, choose 2 of 4)	10%	100
Final Team Project	20%	200
— Problem Selection	5%	50
— Strategy Analysis & Formulation	10%	100
— Presentation & Discussion	5%	50
Total	100%	1000

## Extra Credit

Extra credit opportunities may be offered at the instructor's discretion. Extra credit points are added to your total but do not change the 1000-point denominator.

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## Detailed Grade Component Descriptions

### A. Case Class Attendance (5% — 50 points)

Attendance is **mandatory for all case discussion sessions** and team presentation days. Attendance at lecture sessions is optional but strongly encouraged.

- Class starts 5 minutes past the scheduled hour.
- Walking out of a case session before class ends counts as an absence.
- No make-up for missed case sessions without a legitimate, pre-discussed schedule conflict.

### B. Case Class Participation (5% — 50 points)

Active engagement during **case discussion sessions** is expected and graded. Students should come prepared, having completed the assigned case readings and Connect case quiz before class. Students may be cold-called to contribute. Participation is assessed on quality and consistency of contributions, demonstrated preparation, proper classroom etiquette, and professionalism.

Participation during lecture sessions is welcomed and encouraged but is not formally graded.

### C. Individual Chapter Quizzes — Connect/Smartbook (15% — 150 points)

Chapter quizzes are completed individually through McGraw-Hill Connect's Smartbook platform:

Chapter	Topic
Ch. 2	Strategy, Strategy Process, Mission and Vision
Ch. 3	Industry Analysis
Ch. 4	Resources and Capabilities
Ch. 6	Differentiation and Cost Leadership
Ch. 7	Industry Life Cycle & Technological Innovation
Ch. 8	Generic and Competitive Strategies
Ch. 9	Corporate Strategy
Ch. 10	Mergers and Acquisitions
Ch. 11	Strategic Alliances and Networks

- All quizzes are **due by the start of class** on the assigned date.
- No make-up quizzes without a legitimate, pre-discussed schedule conflict.

### D. Individual Case Quizzes — Connect (5% — 50 points)

Four individual, **open-book** case quizzes administered through Connect. Each quiz is worth approximately 12.5 points.

Quiz	Case Company
Case Quiz 1	Apple
Case Quiz 2	Tesla
Case Quiz 3	Netflix

- Due by the **start of class** on the day of case discussion.
- No make-up quizzes without a legitimate, pre-discussed schedule conflict.

### E. Team Case Write-ups (10% — 100 points)

Teams will choose **2 of the following 4 cases** to submit written analyses (5% / 50 points each):

- 1. Samsung Electronics
- 2. EMI
- 3. Nucleon
- 4. Case 4 — TBD

**Format:** Maximum 2 pages, 11-point Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, double-spaced. Submitted via Canvas by one team member. Due by 11:59 PM the day before the scheduled case discussion.

Each write-up should address the assigned case questions, demonstrate application of strategic frameworks covered in class, and maintain internal consistency across answers.

### F. Midterm Exams (40% — 400 points)

Two closed-book midterm exams (20% / 200 points each) consisting of multiple-choice and short-answer questions. Exams cover material from lectures, readings, cases, and class discussions.

- See the course schedule for exam dates.
- No make-up exams without a legitimate, pre-discussed schedule conflict.

### G. Final Team Project (20% — 200 points)

Teams will select and analyze a **currently-operating innovative company** facing strategic challenges.

**Problem Selection (5% — 50 pts):** Identify and justify the company and strategic issue your team will analyze.

**Strategy Analysis & Formulation (10% — 100 pts):** Written report (max 6 pages) applying course concepts. Format: 11-pt Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, double-spaced.

**Presentation & Discussion (5% — 50 pts):** Team presentation followed by Q&A.

### Peer Reviews

Two peer evaluation opportunities: (1) after team case write-ups, and (2) after final presentations. Team members rate each other's contributions. Scores are averaged and factored into individual grades.

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## Team Formation

Students will self-select into teams of **4–5 members**. Team rosters are due by **Week 5**. All team members are expected to contribute equitably. Free-riding will be monitored through peer evaluations and penalized accordingly.

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## Course Schedule

*Specific dates will be updated once the Fall 2026 academic calendar is finalized.*

Wk	Topics	Readings	Key Deliverables
1	Introduction: What Is Strategy?	Ch. 1–2	Smartbook Ch. 2
2	External Analysis: Industry Structure	Ch. 3	Smartbook Ch. 3
3	External Analysis (cont.)	Ch. 3	
4	Internal Analysis: Resources & Cap.	Ch. 4	Smartbook Ch. 4
5	Competitive Advantage	Ch. 5	Team rosters due
6	Midterm Exam 1	Wks 1–5	
7	Business Strategy: Differentiation	Ch. 6	Smartbook Ch. 6
8	Business Strategy: Cost Leadership	Ch. 6	Case: Samsung
9	Innovation & Technology Strategy	Ch. 7	Smartbook Ch. 7; Case: EMI
10	Corporate Strategy	Ch. 8–9	Smartbook Ch. 8, 9
11	Mergers, Acquisitions & Alliances	Ch. 10–11	Smartbook Ch. 10, 11; Case: Nucleon
12	Case Discussion: TBD		Midterm Exam 2
13	Team Project Work		Problem Selection due
14	Team Project Work		Strategy Analysis due
15	Team Presentations		Presentations
16	Team Presentations (cont.)		Final Write-up; Peer Review 2

**Connect Quiz Schedule:** Individual case quizzes (Apple, Tesla, Netflix, Alphabet) are due by the start of class on their respective case discussion days. Specific dates posted on Canvas.

**Academic Calendar:** Refer to the GT Registrar's Academic Calendar for holidays, breaks, and important dates. No exams or major assignments on recognized holidays.

**Outside-of-Class Work:** Expect approximately **4–6 hours per week** on readings, Connect quizzes, case preparation, and project work.

## Course Policies

### Attendance and Participation

Attendance is **mandatory for case discussion sessions and team presentation days**, and optional for lecture sessions. Active, respectful participation during case sessions is graded.

### Mobile Devices

Laptops and tablets are permitted for note-taking and accessing course materials. Cell phones should be silenced and stored away during class. Use of devices for non-course purposes will negatively affect your participation grade.

# Required Institutional Statements

## Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense. Georgia Tech has established a clear Honor Code that can be viewed at [osi.gatech.edu](https://osi.gatech.edu). It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with it. Examples include possessing or exchanging improperly acquired information, unauthorized collaboration, plagiarism, falsification of statements, and forgery or misuse of Institute documents. Suspected dishonesty will be referred to the Office of the Dean of Students.

*Resources: Office of Student Integrity ([osi.gatech.edu](https://osi.gatech.edu)) · OSI Syllabus Checklist · Academic Honor Code ([policylibrary.gatech.edu](https://policylibrary.gatech.edu))*

## Artificial Intelligence / GenAI Policy

Students are permitted to use AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, etc.) in this course. However, you are ultimately responsible for all work you submit. Any errors, inaccuracies, or shortcomings in AI-generated content will be treated as your own and will reflect in your scores. Use these tools to support your learning — not as a substitute for it.

## Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities

Georgia Institute of Technology is committed to creating a learning environment that meets the needs of its diverse student body. If you anticipate or experience any barriers to learning in this course, please discuss your concerns with me. If you have a disability, or think you may have a disability, contact the Office of Disability Services at [disabilityservices.gatech.edu](https://disabilityservices.gatech.edu), 404.894.2563, or Smithgall Student Services Building, 353 Ferst Drive, Suite 221.

## Statement of Well-being

Your well-being matters. Georgia Tech can be demanding, and I encourage you to take care of yourself throughout the semester. If you are struggling — whether academically, personally, or emotionally — please reach out. The Center for Mental Health Care & Resources (404.894.2575, Smithgall Student Services Bldg, Suite 238) provides free, confidential counseling and crisis support for all enrolled students.

*Resources: Learning Well Initiative ([ctl.gatech.edu/learning-well](https://ctl.gatech.edu/learning-well)) · Mental Health ([mentalhealth.gatech.edu](https://mentalhealth.gatech.edu)) · Well-Being ([students.gatech.edu](https://students.gatech.edu))*

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## Campus Resources

- **Center for Mental Health Care & Resources:** Free, confidential counseling. 404.894.2575, Smithgall Student Services Bldg, Suite 238.
- **CARE Center:** Initial point of entry for mental health support and off-campus referrals.
- **Office of Disability Services:** 404.894.2563, Smithgall Student Services Bldg, Suite 221.
- **Office of the Dean of Students:** General student support and advocacy.
- **Uwill Virtual Counseling:** Four free virtual counseling sessions without referral.
- **Student Engagement & Well-Being:** [students.gatech.edu](https://students.gatech.edu)