FIN 321
Corporate Risk Management

Instructor: Dr. Paul Thistle
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Course web site: http://faculty.unlv.edu/pthistle/courses.html

Additional readings may be assigned.

Prerequisite: Junior standing, FIN 301 or MAT 170 or MAT 320.

Course Description: This course is an introduction to the corporate risk management function and the associated financing tools. Emphasizes the corporate risk management function from a financial perspective and provides a conceptual framework for making risk management decisions that maximize firm value. Covers pure (insurable), financial and credit risk management.

Expected Learning Outcomes: Students are expected to understand and be able to apply risk management concepts to problems in corporate risk management.

Grades: Your grade for the course depends solely on your grades on the exams, homework and on the paper and presentation. There will be two midterm exams and a final exam. Each midterm will count as 22.5% of the course grade, the final will count as 35% of the course grade. The homework will count to 5% of the course grade. The final examination will be comprehensive. The paper will count for 10% of the course grade and the presentation will count for 5% of the course grade.

The first midterm is tentatively scheduled for September 28, the second midterm is tentatively schedule for November 4; the exact dates will announced in class in advance. Papers are due Monday, November 23, in class. Presentations will be made during the last week of class, November 30 and December 2. The final examination will be given during the scheduled examination period Monday, December 7, 10:10-12:10 am.

Grades will be assigned as 90 percent or better = A, 80 percent or better = B, 70 percent or better = C, 60 percent or better = D, less than 60 percent = F. Plus/minus (+/-) grades will be used.

A grade of Incomplete (I) will be given only in exceptional circumstances, see p. 68 of the Catalog. Poor class performance is not a reason to give an incomplete. Individual extra credit assignments will not be given. Course grades will be distributed through the University’s Web Grading system.

Withdrawal: October 30 is the last day to drop the class. Please see me if you are considering dropping the class.

Missed Exams: A grade of zero (0) will be assigned for missed exams until a makeup is taken. The final exam will serve as the makeup exam for any missed midterm. A makeup exam for missed final exams will be given during the first two week of the Spring 2016 semester; you are responsible for arranging to take the makeup.

Attendance: Regular class attendance is strongly recommended. Please notify me of any anticipated absences for religious holidays or official extracurricular activities. You are responsible for all material presented in class and for all reading assignments. Attendance at the presentations is mandatory.
Academic Misconduct: Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. Students enrolling in UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV’s function as an educational institution.

An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism: “Using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources.” See the “Student Academic Misconduct Policy” (approved December 9, 2005) located at: http://studentlife.unlv.edu/judicial/misconductPolicy.html.

The financial calculators approved for use during examination are the TI BA II Plus and HP 10BII. Use of any electronic device, other than an approved financial calculator, (e.g., cell phone, PDA) during an examination is strictly prohibited and will be treated as an instance of academic dishonesty/misconduct. Academic dishonesty and academic misconduct will not be tolerated, and the Department of Finance Academic Dishonesty/Misconduct Policy will be strictly enforced.

Copyright: The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The university will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. To familiarize yourself with copyright and fair use policies, you are encouraged to visit the following website: http://www.unlv.edu/committees/copyright/.

Disability Resource Center (DRC): The Disability Resource Center (DRC) coordinates all academic accommodations for students with documented disabilities. The DRC is the official office to review and house disability documentation for students, and to provide them with an official Academic Accommodation Plan to present to the faculty if an accommodation is warranted. Consistent with University policy, accommodations will not be provided without an approved plan. The DRC is located in the Student Services Complex (SSC), Room 137, and the contact numbers are: Voice (702) 895-0866, TDD (702) 895-0652, fax (702) 895-0651. For additional information, please visit: http://studentlife.unlv.edu/disability/.

Tutoring: The Academic Success Center (ASC) provides tutoring and academic assistance for all UNLV students taking UNLV courses. Students are encouraged to stop by the ASC to learn more about subjects offered, tutoring times and other academic resources. The ASC is located across from the Student Services Complex, #22 on the current UNLV map. Students may learn more about tutoring services by calling (702) 895-3177 or visiting the tutoring web site at: http://academicsuccess.unlv.edu/tutoring/.

UNLV Writing Center: One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-3-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 895-3908. The student’s Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment (if possible), and two copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. More information can be found at: http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/

The right to modify the syllabus to meet the educational requirements and objectives of the course is reserved.
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All chapter references are to Dorfman and Cather. You are expected to read the assignment *before* class.
Instructions for Term Paper and Presentation

Each student is required to write a short term paper and make an oral presentation in class. The paper will count for 10 percent of the course grade and the presentation will count for 5 percent of the course grade. The paper should address a topic in corporate risk management (broadly interpreted). The topic of the paper is at your discretion, but must be approved.

1. The paper should be seven to ten pages long, excluding title page, graphs, tables and references. The paper should be long enough to carry out the analysis of the issue and/or discussion of the topic, but not longer than is necessary to accomplish this. The quality of the work is far more important than the quantity.

2. The proposal and the paper must be typed on 8.5x11 inch plain white paper, double-spaced, using 10 or 12-point font, with margins not exceeding 1 inch. I strongly prefer that any mathematical notation should be typed, however, legibly handwritten mathematical notation is acceptable.

3. You may work in groups of up to three students. All students in the same group will receive the same grade for the paper and presentation.

4. No two groups of students may work on the same topic.

5. The proposal and outline may be turned in using either printed or electronic form (preferred).

6. The final version of the paper must be in both printed and electronic form. The electronic copy must be in a single Microsoft Word or Adobe pdf file and should be submitted as an email attachment. Use your last name as the file name, e.g., thistle.doc.

7. Failure to meet the proposal deadline will result in the paper grade being lowered one-half letter grade per day. Failure to meet the paper deadline will result in the paper grade being lowered one letter grade per day. Failure to properly name the electronic copy of the paper will result in the paper grade being lowered one-half letter grade.

Proposal: The proposal is due 10:00 am, Monday, September 28. The proposal should be a narrative that covers two points. First, and most importantly, the proposal should clearly state the issue that you intend to discuss in the paper. Second, you should explain why the issue is important.

Change in Paper Topic/Group Composition: It is strongly recommended that you research potential topics prior to submitting a proposal. You will not be allowed to change your paper topic or the composition of your group once your proposal has been approved.

References: The paper should reference at least three distinct sources.

Outline: The outline is due 10:00 am Wednesday October 21. The outline should indicate the main points of our paper. The outline should contain at least three main sections. The first section is the Introduction, and explains the issue that you are going to discuss and why it is important. The second section is the main section of the paper and contains the analysis and/or discussion. The third section contains the references. The outline must be in proper outline form.

Final Draft: The printed final draft and electronic versions of the paper are due 10:00 am Monday, November 23. The final draft should contain at least four sections. The first section is the Introduction, and explains the issue that you are going to discuss and why it is important. The second section is the main section of the paper and contains the analysis and/or discussion. The third section of the paper provides a brief summary of your paper. The fourth section contains the references.

Presentation: Each student or group of students will make an oral presentation, no longer than 5 minutes, of their paper. Presentations will take place at the end of the semester; the exact dates will depend on the number of students/groups. The order of presentations will be determined randomly; students/groups may be called to present at any time.

Grading: Papers will be evaluated based on the quality and depth of the research and analysis, the organization of the paper, whether the conclusions are supported by facts and logic, and the quality of the writing. Presentations will be evaluated on the clear and concise communication of the main ideas of the paper.

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