"I began to see the potential benefits that reflection could bring to many aspect of my life, e.g. more efficient studying, time management, planning etc. I therefore got a learning diary. Although I did not reflect after every lecture, at the end of each week I took some time to identify what had gone well, what had not gone well and how I could improve it in the future, and any interesting pieces of information I had picked up. This exercise became and enjoyable routine and the information that resulted came in useful on more than one occasion e.g. it was used to identify my distinguishing characteristics while trying to find a job. I have noticed the benefit of the exercise and will continue this routine into my working life, where I feel the benefits will become even more profound."

DDDSHA001 Shaun Duddy

"The Wal-Mart case study in our June exam was excellent and is exactly the sort of real world scenario that I think allows us to apply everything we have learnt over the last four years and really extend ourselves. Unfortunately I think it is exactly the sort of thing that the UCT business science degree severely lacks. I think Business Strategy made the right steps to try and fill this void but I think there is vast room for improvement.

"In an ideal world, and I realise we don’t live in one, I think it would be more beneficial to break the class into 4 smaller groups and assign each group a day of the week from Monday to Thursday for their lecture period. I think smaller groups are far more conducive to encourage interaction and involvement than a massive lecture hall such as the NSLT filled with students. Furthermore I think smaller groups within that, perhaps even our project groups, should be required to complete a hand in on the case study for that week or maybe just once every two weeks as it would force groups to actively partake in the lecture and avoid just cruising through without paying much attention like I think a lot of people did with the New Balance case for example."

DFRGUY001 Guy de Freitas

"Where exactly is all this taking me? That is the question that was running through my head as I started my final year of Business Science. The previous three years had been filled with endless amounts of theory, the most intricate details of which were largely forgotten within the first five minutes of finishing the final exam. As far as I was concerned, this theory was what business strategy was all about and the fact that I couldn’t remember a lot of it nor be inspired by it made me wonder how I was ever supposed to get a job let alone keep it. The way I was feeling was summed up perfectly in one of our first lectures of the year when Sir Ken Robinson spoke about how he believes education, while still important, often kills the creativity within many individuals. Having focused so much of my attention on the short-term goal of learning all of the necessary theory so as to get the best possible marks in exams, I realised that I had rarely given myself the opportunity to
exercise my creativity and think about business and my career outside of those constraints.”

DLMSEB002 Sebastien De Lame

“On aspect of the course that I thoroughly enjoyed was the various guest lectures. Unfortunately, at the beginning of the year, still under the impression that Business Strategy was of little importance, I unknowingly placed one of my tutorials in the period when most of these great lectures occurred. Regrettably I was therefore unable to attend a few. The lectures that I did manage to attend offered valuable insight into real–life situations.”

DNLIMR002 Imrah Daniels

“I was surprised to learn how many of the Investec Conference delegates and speakers keep journals to monitor their progress towards their life goals. It mirrored the instruction Dale had given us at the beginning of the year to keep a learning diary for Business Strategy.”

DRCJEN003 Jenna de Reuck

“The beginning of 2009 was just another ‘Once upon a time’. It was a time when I viewed Business Strategy to be something very much outside my personal philosophy of life. I imaged Business Strategy to be just another course where regurgitating material would certify me the skills to improve a business situation, mainly for the pursuit of profits.”

DTLMAR002 Mark Dutlow

“A few years ago, the course project involved each group being assigned to a small company, struggling with real problems. They then had to work with the company, to find solutions. I wish that we had had this challenge too. I had been really looking forward to that and would suggest that it is implemented again. An opportunity to create a strategy for a small company would have deepened my understanding of what is needed in a successful business and as an entrepreneur.”

DYRLAU001 Laura Dyer

“In studying Business Strategy this year, I feel as though I have undergone a process of development. Not only have I been enriched with knowledge that has challenged my regular thought processes, but I also feel as if I am now better equipped to
embark upon tough decisions that will ultimately determine the success of my career.

“I was relieved that for three lectures per week I would be able to tap into a part of my mind that had been closed in surrender to the numerically challenging subjects I had studied over the past three years.”

HRWROB002 Robynne Hurwitz

“Although I have learnt a lot of concrete material during the course of this year I feel that the most invaluable asset I have gained as a mindset and not more theory. Whilst it is important to stress that the theory and content of this course has been insightful and I believe it will serve me well not only in the future, but already has had a relevance as I mentioned previously, the real value of what I have learnt isn’t quite as tangible. The importance of learning how to formulate business plans, the key factors that go into a successful strategy are very necessary tools but the way of thinking in order to about this I believe has more significance.”

LCHBEN001 Ben Leach

“I started this year with a very specific idea as to what the Business Strategy course would offer me, however, I was way off the mark. I expected a set of guidelines that I would be able to apply to any scenario I would be presented with in the future, a straightforward do’s and don’ts list. However in the very first lecture we were asked to look into our personal strategies, and I was stumped. What was my strategy? And how was this supposed to be teaching me about business strategy? It didn’t happen overnight, but I soon realised that if I didn’t know where I was going and what my strategy was, I wouldn’t be able to build a strategy, or understand a strategy, for a business.”

LDBTER001 Terri Ladbrooke

“The structure of Dale’s lectures, with case studies, was more insightful and relevant than had he given us the ‘recipe’ to a good strategy.”

LDWRAI002 Raisibe Ledwaba

“Business Strategy is a ‘waste of time’. It is ‘just a bunch of marketing and TAB’ and therefore is ‘Bull@*#%’. That was the sentiment I had heard over the years. I had never really connected with the subject material in marketing; however as a tutor of TAB (Evidence-Based Management) I knew that there was something
incorrect about the supposition. It bemuses and amuses to see the number of students who hate the one course that taught them a systematic approach to critical thinking and argument. These very students are unable to comprehend the complexity of the social problems around them, nagging and complaining, instead of understanding and solving. I knew that Bus Strat would be useful, but to be honest I had a somewhat presumptuous outlook – I thought Bus Strat was merely going to confirm all the ‘unique’ insights I felt I had."

LNGDAV007 David Lunga

“In my personal strategy at the beginning of the year my goal was a career in investment banking but from what I have learnt about the world and myself over the past year, in no small part due to business strategy, I ended up choosing between two consulting firms for my first job and chose the smaller, “foxier”, more entrepreneurial firm. Hopefully one day in the near future I’ll be giving a guest lecture to business strategy students who are as excited about entering the world of business as I am now.”

LNGDOM002 Dominic Leong

“As a commerce student, I have felt that there has been a certain diminishing nature in the level of my own creative juices as the years have gone by. Due to the highly technical nature of this degree there have been very few opportunities through which I could express and test that creativity; it is a loss I regret most intensely. The skill of scenario planning has helped me tremendously in allaying my fears about my immediate future subsequent to graduation. If I plan to do what I love I’m going to need some time to figure that out instead of throwing myself into a job I have no passion for. Being able to sketch the different potential scenarios for the path my life is to take reduced the stress of my decision making process; it also helped me rationalise my options in a methodical and calm manner.”

MCHSEN001 Sentlenyana Machaba

“...I certainly had not imagined that it would have as much to do with improving myself and the way in which I view various aspects of my life. I feel it is remarkable that BUS4050W has not only been a lesson in enterprise improvement but also quite substantially, an exercise in self improvement.”

MDSLES006 Lesedi Modise
“I have learned that my courses should no longer be looked at as separate courses, but rather integrated parts of the whole. Proper controls and systems in my future business will be important to its growth.”

**MGNPET001 Peter Magner**

“In my naiveté I had assumed that this course would be like countless ones before it, where we would be taught the procedures to apply to make business a success. Yet there was one overriding rule I learnt during the year, from all guest lecturers, it was this: There is no formula for success, just a vague idea, and we as leaders would not be able to simply use the model of someone who came before us, but instead approach an issue with an open mind, and think about it and view it from many different perspectives. And this year allowed me the chance to experience those perspectives for myself.”

**MHBHAR002 Harshad Mahabir**

“This was when my first AHA! Moment happened as you put it. It was a rather innocuous lecture to be honest and I doubt anyone else in the course actually remembers it. It was the lecture when we were shown a presentation that a group of students from New Zealand had put on for the Los Angeles Times. It was good. Very good. No, it was brilliant. Suddenly, I came to the realization that I was no longer ahead of the curve. Here were a group of guys who were the same age as me putting on a presentation for one of the biggest publications in America while I was sitting around getting average marks at university having fun with friends.”

**WHTBEN001 Ben Whitelaw**

“The core of establishing both a personal strategy and a business strategy is understanding where I am now, and where I want to be in the future. But where am I now? Over the last four years at University I have learnt how to become an efficient and effective, dispassionate and emotionless machine, collecting an arsenal of information intended to defeat my competitors. Sadly, only when I started the Business Strategy course was I afforded the opportunity to really define and comprehend my own strengths and passions, and flesh out the potential paths for personal growth.”

**WDSALA001 Alistair Woods**

“This again differs from the message conveyed by most other courses, which promote a standard way of thinking in order to achieve the desired objectives. Business Strategy has provided me with the insight that is important to use diversity
to your advantage in a competitive business environment rather than attempting to suppress it, as it can often work in your favour.”

**VYSLOU001 Narayan Vyas**

“I have gained more knowledge and encouragement from this course than what I expected entering the first lecture in February. My confidence in my own abilities has improved substantially and I have become motivated to start my own business sooner than planned. Mark Bernberg’s success with Poker Room which was created from his love of poker has inspired me to start my own business combining my love for alternative healing and my skills learned from my Business Science degree. I am ready to make mistakes and to learn from them in order to create a wellness centre that people feel comfortable to go to and that provides simple and affordable alternative health care to those that need it. It takes a good concept, confidence in your own abilities, good people management skills and a passion for your business to make it a great success.”

**VZJNIC001 Nicola Van Zijl**

“In terms of diversity, this course has helped significantly. I found that working in a group with varying business science streams forced me to try to understand other viewpoints and joining them with mine to create a creative and flowing idea. This was particularly challenging as my entire group was made up of individuals majoring in finance. This lead to large issues agreeing on what was important and what was not. This, in addition to working in a group with varying personalities, challenged me.

“In terms of Business Strategy, I can’t honestly say that my view on it has changed dramatically as a result of BUS4050W. I feel like my views in my personal goals and strategy has changed dramatically and this learning has led me to better situations in a work sense. As mentioned the 7 habits of highly effective people has lead to change in thought process that will no doubt help me in business one day. But, in terms of thinking about business as a whole, I don’t feel anymore equipped.”

**VRDGER001 Geraint Van der Rede**

“One of the most intriguing aspects of Business Strategy was that the lectures were largely based on exposure, ideas, personal learning and means of understanding business on a systemic level, instead of focusing on theoretical business strategies. This process of stimulating idea, vision and pragmatism was invaluable for me, as it gave me the space to develop my own opinions and read around topics and views that I thought were interesting or relevant. I think the opportunity to learn for
oneself is far more enriching than learning the work and views of other people.
Moreover, I believe the process helped me create more balanced and complete view
of business strategy

“The concept of reflection that the course has tried to integrate within our learning
experience was another concept that was very new to me and truthfully speaking I
had lots of reservations. I never thought that conscious reflection on the learning
process could play such a large role in the formulation and merger of key
concepts.”

VLLJHU001 Jhulan Vallabh

“Topics discussed in class were often from a completely different point of view
compared to what we were used to. We were offered the chance to get to meet and
speak to individuals, who themselves involved in business ventures and strategic
thinking. However, most importantly, more than any other course completed at the
university thus far, we were exposed to the real world of corporate strategy. I have
long felt that too few business science courses at UCT offer the student real world
experience and practical application. Business Strategy was, in my opinion, the first
course to do so. As a result of this, I thoroughly enjoyed the course and found it
extremely valuable in my quest to become a successful businessman.”

VHGAND001 Andrew van Haght

“In Business Strategy, I was learning not a set of rules and guidelines with how to
approach a problem, but instead a level of thinking that would allow me to solve
that problem based on my own rules and guidelines.”

STVMIC004 Michael Stevens

“I think the course was presented in such a way that when I was in a lecture, I was
there to form an opinion on what I was being told. I went to lectures not to write
down notes, but to think about the relevance of the concepts being presented to my
everyday experiences.

“Clearly, I could not implement the concept of diversified backgrounds in my group
because of the lack of diversified relationships. As a result of my learning about
relationships I have decided to build relationships based on first time interactions
with people.”

STLKAB001 Kabelo Sethlomo
“It enabled me to understand how businesses and people focused themselves on what they want to become, but what I will remember the course for will be how it allowed me to determine where I am going, and how I am going to get there.

“The course made available plenty of inputs that would prove to be beneficial. But the greatest facet of it was the collection of guest lecturers. They inspired me to believe in anything that I wanted to. As a student, your life experiences are limited due to the fact that we are young and naive in terms of the business worlds. These guests enabled me to take a glimpse into this future territory, and enabled me to see that not everything is as clear-cut as I had thought. These lectures, combined with a post reflective look at them by myself, enabled me to create and adapt a business strategy that would suit my own needs. They set me on a strategic path where targets and goals were paramount.”

OLDJAM002 James Oldham

“... I am currently busy with interviews trying to get a job in this crisis-hit economy; I have been able to improve from one interview to another simply applying the adult learning style method.”

NLXSIY001 Siyabongo Nala

“David Priilaid’s lectures on Habits of Entrepreneurial Effectiveness in particular played a great role in my learning process.”

NNDROW001 Rowan Nandlall

“I have studies the fundamentals of business operations, accounting and economics over the past four years, but for the first time, a particular course has offered me a whole new perspective on the concept of business. Over this year, it has helped to shift my idea from one that saw business as a means to make a profit, to one that sees it as a means to change the world and make a difference; as a challenge to overcome; and as an engine of innovation.”

NDXKAR014 Karmen Naidoo

“My initial strategy for this course was to go to lectures, take notes and keep up to date with additional prescribed reading. I learnt mainly through imitation. I
realised soon after that I wanted to do more. I grew hungry for more knowledge and started to spend my spare time reading more about developing better strategies and trying to apply for internship programmes where I could learn based on experiences.”

NDXDIV004 Divaksha Naidoo

“When I considered Business Strategy at the start of the year I would never have thought to include the labour laws as part of my strategy in order to be successful. This is one of the many things that this course has taught me, to consider all factors before you make an informed decision.”

NDXANR001 Anresha Naidoo

“I had first learnt about adult learning in lectures. The idea of taking responsibility for my own learning was honestly something I did not come to university for! But adult learning is a reality – it is the only way that I will continue to learn in the working world. My boss of the CEO will not come to me and give me a user manual or survival kit. I need to be well equipped to take my learning into my own hands, be creative with my learning process and use it in the working world to survive and excel in all that I do. This course made me realise this.”

MXXZEE001 Zeenat Mia

“Overall, this course has taught me different ways to think about the world. It has opened my mind to topics and issues that may not have seemed relevant to me at the time, but will definitely become vital to my strategy for the future. I now see the value in reflective learning and systematic thinking, and I realise that the main reason why I was so sceptical about reflective learning was that I didn’t trust in my ability to learn for myself. My understanding of business strategy now is that there is no guaranteed formula for success and what works for one company may not work for another. Furthermore, a business (or personal) strategy has to be challenged and reviewed constantly; you need to be able to look at a situation from numerous perspectives or else you may miss discovering a really lucrative opportunity. In future, I won’t stick to the “status quo” and will craft my own path. I will speak my mind and voice my ideas, and strive to make myself and the organisation that I work for or own, remarkable.”

MWBKAM001 Kambe Mwaba

“The first day I came to BUS4050W course was like any other course that you attend, pass it and proceed with studies. It never came to my mind that you can actually
learn something out of this course. Life in UCT is so hard that when one studies a course, the only thing that first comes to mind is that if I can just get a fifty and do away with the course. I found something different with this course though, it all began the day I was asked to write the strategy of my life.

“When I began to do the strategy of my life, I began to realise that there are so many things in my life that I have not been paying attention to, especially in my future and it helped me to start thinking ahead, not just taking everyday as it is.”

MTSKAB006 Kabelo Moalosi

“A month into the lectures, I was clueless as to why we covered the material we did as I could not see any direct correlation between the material covered in lectures and what was expected of us in the exam. I had been so deeply conditioned by my previous schooling to perceive the appropriate role of learner to be that of a dependent, more or less passive recipient of transmitted content, that even though I maybe to some extent had been self-directing in all other aspects of my life as adults are expected to, the minute I entered into any activity labelled ‘education’, I sat back, folded my arms and said, ‘Teach me’. My main goal in studying or learning before I had registered for the Business Strategy course had always been to get good grades for a course, test or exam.”

MTHMUW001 Muwanwa Muthuli

“..the first valuable contribution to my life the course had was making me think about the strategy to my career, and putting that strategy down on paper.”

MTLKAN001 Kanyane Matlou

“Walking into the first business strategy lecture of the year, I was pretty confident that I knew it all; after all I was a fourth year. I was to be proved very wrong. The initial thought that this was an ordinary UCT course where all you needed to do was the absolute minimum and you would pass – rote learn the past tests, regurgitate your lecturer’s view point, have no opinion and just ensure that you obtained the mandatory 50%. No real effort, no real challenge, no real learning.

“For the first time in four years, I had to think for myself, I had to formulate my own opinion; I had to actually learn something. This course has proved to be a learning experience – one where I have not only learnt about the real world, but I have learnt about myself. It has caused me to challenge the norm, recognize opportunity and how to reflect consciously about everything I do.
“My view point of what Business Strategy is has done a complete 180 degrees since that first lecture. Business Strategy is actually far more than just a marketing plan with a few figures and artistic words such as strategic and integrated thrown in for good measure. It is not about overpaid consultants pretending to increase profits ten-fold by moving the water cooler to a more Feng Shui-conforming position.

“Business Strategy is far more than that.

It is based on a holistic, integrated approach to everything about business, which includes yourself – you cannot separate the individual from their job. Business Strategy is about strategizing your life, in order to strategize your business. It is about strategizing your goals, your learning, reflecting and learn from your experiences, analysing your strengths, improving upon your weaknesses.”

MTCLIN003 Lindi Mitchell

“I soon realised that this course was not there to add an extra burden, but that it would have a significant impact in my life as a student and going forward. It turned out to be one course with the most relevant contribution to my personal life.”

MSHVAN002 Vangile Mashinini

The term “business “ and “strategy” both appear quite scientific in nature– actually, quite defined one could say. Yet the course fits under neither adjective's definition, which initially disappointed me. You see, as a Business Science Finance CA student, I was after numbers, statistics and account– not marketing plans, nor strategies. If I was inclined to the latter, I would have enrolled in a Business Science Marketing or Organisational Psychology course. I now realise how close minded this way of thinking is. However it has taken me a good part of the year to broaden my systematic view of business and to adopt a style of adult learning. Assumptions can be detrimental in many ways. However, in my case, initial assumptions regarding the unimportance of Business Strategy (BUS4050W) could have led to a disadvantageous stunted in the growth of my learning.”

BRWVIC002 Victoria Brown

“Thanks to this course, I am more self-assured as to my life strategy and will continue with decisiveness as to where I am heading “

BRTJES001 Jessica Britt
“Reflecting back on this year and what have gained from this course, I think that Business Strategy is a modest name of the course. Several of my friends whom had graduated last year and who completed Business Strategy said that it was a waste of time, According to them, it was possible to not attend lectures and pass because what was taught in lectures was irrelevant to the exam questions. Now that I have finished the course, I see their ignorance as they have not grasped what the lectures have taught. If they did, they would have thought the course was as much an inspirational as it was an academic course and could have uses it for personal growth and academic enrichment as I uniquely have.”

CHBKEY001 Keyuri Chibba

“My idea of success was, and to a certain extent still is, very institutional. Throughout the course however, the certainty in my opinion has been challenged. My clear logical lines of what works and doesn’t have become blurred. The course had a lot of real life exposure and input and through this, what has become evident to me is the need to understand things from a variety of perspectives and look at situations differently in order to find new solutions to old problems.”

CCREMM001 Emma Coucourakis

“It was mentioned in lectures at the beginning of the year that business strategy is not something you can just attend lectures and then be a master at. It is something you acquire from experience and reflection. I believe this was done as effectively as possible in this course. Guest lecturers and video presentations brought us knowledge and real life situations and the opportunities to reflect during the project and this essay have allowed me to see where I was and where I am.”

BRDMAT004 Matthew Broadley

“Four years of technical skills have finally found relevance and correlation beneath the broad umbrella of the term “business”–which, like a new word heard regularly in differing contexts, has taken on meaning for e that supersedes anything that I could have gleaned from a theoretic definition.”

BRCMAT003 Matthew Birch
“The course is one that I can honestly say has a meaningful impact on me and my actions and will leave an everlasting impression”

BRJLAR001 Larissa Brijlal

“This way of thinking has thankfully changed and this course has contributed to me learning about myself, others, the business world and life. If I could do it again, I would have been a more active participant in class, thereby enhancing my learning process even further, but nonetheless I have grown immensely. By listening and absorbing a variety of insights from guest lecturers, I have come to understand the business world through many lenses.”

HRXGAR001 Gareth Hüer

“Nick Badmington left me awe. Before us stood a guy, with no tertiary education that started as a shelf packer in Pick ‘n Pay and worked his way up to the CEO of this retail phenomenon. Most impressively, this amazing experience has not left him with a chip on his shoulder. One of the things that stood out from his talk was that qualifications do not deem you the most suitable for the job. He then referred to an MBA graduate currently employed in a senior position at Pick ‘n Pay that constantly messed up. What I took away from his talk that employees need to have s sense of ‘street smart’, whether it’s industry insight or skills in relating to people of all diversities, along with being ‘book smart’ in order to be successful”

JFTALE002 Aletha Valentina Jeftha

“In due time we received our first simple assignment for determining what our personal strategy is, however I quickly realised not only how much harder this exercise was but also the impact it would have for me in the coming year. This exercise made me aware of the fact that I had a lot of goals and ideals and goals would be integrated with one another to form my personal brand. After determining what goals and ideals were feasible and worked well together I wrote them down and told my immediate family and my girlfriend so that they were are of what I perceived my personal brand to be”

JVNPRA001 Pravir Jeaven

“Since the beginning of this year, my long term goal to be successful entrepreneur has not changed but the means which to achieve this goal has changed considerably. My learning in business strategy classes as well as external influences has changed my short-term strategy and the means which I will achieve my long-term goal.”
HTZGE001 George Hetzmann

“I had done well in marketing I in my second year and as a result I mistakenly believed that business strategy was simply more the same and I could therefore afford to coast along. However, I soon realised that business strategy was an entirely new approach to thinking for me—one that I had always endeavoured to develop but yet sadly one that had never been actively approached in any of my other university course thus far.”

HWTSHA003 Shaun Hewitson

“Finally the idea of reflection that Business Strategy course is based around has helped me in all y courses over the year. I have found that the real benefit of learning often comes about on reflection and considering how I can use the new piece of learning in my own life.”

HYWCLA002 Claire Hayworth

“What I found out about business strategy is that it is a course that brings a new dimension of learning to individuals. The course comprises of a structure that requires me to have a properly laid out strategy in order to successfully pass. It is different from other courses where learning is routine and is entirely at the discretion of the lecturer. In order to do well in business strategy I needed some form of creative thinking.”

“I have a big dream. One that for a long time I thought as far-fetched, unattainable and to put it simply, a “someone like me” would not be able to achieve. Even today, after a year of actively reflecting on my life, my passion and my strategy I envision my future to be the Governor of the Bank of Zambia. That’s it. That’s my big dream. It seems far-fetched because I have always considered myself as shy, quiet and reserved; and those to me, are not the traits of a powerful, influential and purpose-driven leader. However, my experience this year, in life, in relationships, and more pertinently, in my encounter with Business Strategy Course, has made me realise that I have been hiding in my shyness—suppressing my inner voice and belittling my ambitions. And further, I have realised that as much as a having dream, a goal or a vision is important, the path I take to reach that dream is just as important, if not more.”

KDMONK001 Onkabetse Kedumetse
“Many of the courses that I completed in my undergraduate years gave me a fantastic theoretical grounding. What I only realised after finishing this year is that many of those courses, although very interesting, did not in any way prepare me for the 'real world'. I think this one of the major differences between Business Strategy and typical undergrad courses. Business Strategy gives you a realistic outlook on the world and how it works, and has showed me what I should expect and hence how I can adequately prepare myself for the future. “

KLNANE001 Anesh Kalan

“I began the year somewhat disgruntled with what I had learned from my academic career up to that point in time. The three years of my actuarial science degree that I had come through were highly theoretical, very technical in nature, with very little application to the real world. Much of my time was spent lost in theorems and formulas Mathematics and Statistics. Thankfully the situation began to change at the beginning of this year. The change was brought about largely due to two subjects I was taking, namely “Business Strategy”, and “Assets and Liabilities”, our major 4th year Actuarial Course. The change brought by each of these subjects was, however, fundamentally different.”

KLSMAT002 Matthew Kloos

“I have always been of the opinion that students at educational institutes do not get the required amount of exposure to fully excel and develop in the business world. Working with case studies, both in Business Strategy and Finance, has afforded me the opportunity to observe how decisions are made and what factors need to be considered, given real-life situations. “

KPLRYA001 Ryan Kaplan

“This style of learning makes education your own personal responsibility and you need to remember to stop and think about what's working and what could be better. This forces one to stop and evaluate oneself instead of just going through the motions and producing and end result to get a mark.”

KVYSIM001 Simon Keevy

“I began this year with the belief that Business Strategy would turn out to be like other management studies courses I have completed at UCT: consisting mostly of shallow management –speak that sounds big but contains few concrete insights. To be honest I was pleasantly surprised by how thought-provoking, philosophical and relevant the Business Strategy lectures were throughout the year. Sometimes this course felt more like something from philosophy or psychology department rather
than the commerce faculty; it often dealt with new ways of seeing things, and involved a great deal of thinking about self-awareness and human relationships.”

LRXJUL001 Julian Le Roux

“Coming into fourth year and this course, I remember having this sense that the only options available to me as a career were to enter the corporate world when I finished varsity, or to enter the corporate world when I finished varsity at some point, start my own business. In retrospect, this seems myopic, perhaps even silly. Where I stand now, there are so many options available to me. For me, this broadened horizon is the most important realisation I have had this year.”

LSHDUN001 Duncan Lishamn

“This course was the first of its kind I have taken at UCT- a course about education ad not about Graduation.”

LSKSEA001 Sean Laskey

“The reason for this being such a revolutionary experience to me, is that I did not have this perception prior to my fourth year at UCT, and I have been empowered to better understand the term strategy, and how it can be better applied to myself, business and life in general.”

LTZJAN002 Jan Lutzeyer

“In the powerful word of a Chinese philosopher, Han Fei Tzu,” the secret of effective persuasion comes in knowing the heart of the person you wish to persuade and ordering your words to fit”. Business strategy provided the stage that enabled me to discover this, and through applying this principle of strategic persuasion to my interview process, I have been successful were others have been not.”

LVNDAN003 Danielle Lavan

“A definition of strategy by Peter Drucker: “Strategy is about knowing where your company is today, where you want to take it, and how you are going to get there”.
In the business strategy course offered by the School of Management Studies, I developed an appreciation for strategy, not only in the business world, but in my personal life as well. “

LWXERN001 Ernest Louw

“Business strategy helped me to stimulate my thinking on practical issues in the business world as the majority of the courses I had taken had predominantly focused on theory.”

LWXNIC015 Nicholas Wicks

“Surprisingly, I grew to enjoy the lectures and found the real world memoirs of many successful businessmen relevant and riveting. This is distinctly different to all the other courses I have completed over my university career, which were typically theory and text book based.”

LXXYUH005 Yu-Hsiang Lu

“I sought to join a business strategy group with random people using the chat facility on vula hoping to link up with diverse personalities. This decision turned out to be a masterstroke as the group did fit much better than my previous experience with group project work with enjoyable, thorough brainstorming sessions and effective specialisation when it came to the different project sections such as Finance, Marketing and Economic Environment Analysis”

MBRJOE001 Joel Maboreke

“It was the first time that a course was able to demonstrate that we what we discussed weekly in lectures was being applied in business on a day-to-day basis. The case studies gave me opportunity of being able to apply myself to a real life situation in the business world.”

SNGSER002 Serika Singh SNGSER002

“The business strategy course delivered a lot more than I bargained for and I am grateful for the opportunity to have taken part in it.”

SMSTAF001 Tafadzwa Samushonga

“From the review of the June test, I found that a major factor in my poor result was because my initial expectation of Business Strategy took over: I thought that the
course would be an extension of marketing, thus answered the case from a one-dimensional, solely marketing point of view, and failed to see any other perspective.”

SMRNAW001 Nawaal Semaar

“If I had to study my degree in retrospect, there are a few things that I would do differently thanks to Business Strategy. Firstly, I would have attended all guest lecturers religiously. Secondly, I would have asked unnecessary questions, read unnecessary readings and looked harder for things that interested me among theoretical outer layer of so many courses. Business Strategy took a unique approach for providing us with these additional interesting perspectives and insights in the form of guest lectures, and it made me realise how much it can add to a subject.”

SMPROB006 Robert Simpson

“I felt this way, because I thought I was at an advantage having studied the Marketing discipline more extensively than some of my fellow students. I felt that marketing was more focused around strategy than any other discipline. However, I soon learnt that Business Strategy is more about amalgamation of all the studied disciplines rather than a single discipline dominating my transition from this mediaval viewpoint to one of a more holistic approach to strategy, reflecting particularly on my journey taken from the beginning to the end of the Business Strategy course.”

With the dawn of my final year at UCT fast approaching, so too came the prerequisite of having to complete Business Strategy in order to complete my degree. I immediately looked down on the course and that it was merely the same viewpoint as offered by a course which I was doing concurrently named Strategy Marketing. This proved not to be in the case as I was given a rude awakening after the June examination. With the onset of the course, I adopted a view of strategy in the marketing context, i.e. conducting market research all the way through to strategy implementation. I felt that no risks need be taken in terms of deviating from the marketing perspective of dealing with strategy. I later learnt that this was not the correct way of viewing business strategy.”

SFDZAH001 Zahir Safeda

“The BUS4050W has taught me a lot but it is not without its flaws I felt Unilever project in no way varied from the countless marketing projects I have done to date and my approach to it in no way varied from how I have done projects in the past. In insight I probably would have learnt more had I opted to do the project with a group of people I didn't know rather than choosing to do the project with a close group of friends.”

SCHGRE010 Greg Schneider
“During the course of the year I also came to realise just how valuable all I have learned over the past four years is and how it amalgams in the business environment at the end of the day. This course certainly helped in proving that to me principally during the June exam case study. It was one of the first times I have encountered a question that required the input from economics to marketing. It was a lesson in employing existing knowledge and incorporating it into strategy no matter what industry or business you are dealing with. This illuminated what had previously been cloudy views on the usefulness of a lot of course work from the previous few years.”

RFFROR001 Rory Raff

“Thinking back to the first strategy class my expectation was of a course very similar to strategic marketing—focussing on specific models to apply in business strategies, and pages of textbook to parrot for the exam. After the first week of lectures and Dale’s launch into systemic thinking and Vida’s brilliant strategy, I realised that this was a course, aimed rather at challenging not only the way I think but my way of experiencing and learning in the context of strategy for business and for life.”

RDXNA001 Nadia Read

“With this mind I have recognised that what I learned in Organisational Psychology is in fact very applicable to situations aside from writing theoretical assignments on the topic, and this includes being applicable for business strategy.”

RDXELI001 Elizabeth Reid

“Coming into the fourth year of my Business Strategy Science Degree, having had three years on the Dean’s Merit list, a class medal for my first year mathematics course and an overall sound footing in all my subjects; I thought that Business Strategy was nothing more than a necessary course to get my degree. Not for a second did I expect the course that is known for being an ‘easy pass’ to be a severe wake up call to my outlook on life.”

PTTJAC003 Jacqueline Pott

“I have been told by my finance lecturer that once I start working, everything will be based on assumptions and uncertainties. The formulas I was taught for the past
three years will hardly be used in practice. This was definitely unexpected since I had always thought what I was taught would be in good use once I start working.”

PNGWEN002 Wendy Peng

“The world is becoming a smaller and smaller place, with competition among graduates from generic Business Science programme on its own and be confident of a shot at a successful career. Rather, there is a need to personalise that programme and take ownership of it; to take advantage of all the real world, long term advantages that it can offer its students if they engage deeper than the grading requirements of the respective courses.”

PMRAR002 Mark Pomroy

“Almost all the guest speakers were influential in my changing perceptions; however certain lectures had a more profound impact on me than others. In particular, David Priilaid's lectures concerning entrepreneurship inspired me to think differently about business and the ability to create new ideas and methods.”

OVRKIM002 Kim Overton

“The experience of the course as a whole is teaching me skills I will continue to use throughout my life. I have also gained an understanding of the importance of reflecting on these experiences, in order to gain the greatest possible benefit from them both in the business environment, and in life”

OSBAMB001 Amber Osborn

“I realised by the end of the second lecture that most people get where they are by accident. These people lack a strategy. Successful people don't. They know their destination. Sure, they might go off course sometimes but because they know exactly where they're going, they're able to adjust their flight path to get back on track. (I realised that this insight extends to organisations, too.)

Later that same day, I went home and started with my personal strategy immediately. Luckily, upon reflection, I realised that law was what I actually wanted to be doing but, instead of continuing my flight into the unknown, I chartered a specific course for myself that day. A few weeks later, in March I had to buy a replacement battery for my MacBook Pro. I headed down to project 3, and Apple authorised re-seller in Claremont. They send me weekly email updates which are addressed to me by name and incidentally treat customers free Vida Coffee if they need to wait a while for a repair to be completed. I still get to swipe my Vida loyalty card when the coffee’s on Apple! After a few weeks of Business Strategy, I was now
able to realise that these were all elements of business strategy. Further, I realised
that good strategies seemingly become great through collaboration. I was helped by
the same solution consultant who had sold me my iPhone last September. On that
iPhone day, he had offered me a student discount on OS X upgrade and had very
willingly split the cost of the purchase over a few different cards. I remembered this
as he informed me that he would have to order the battery, and that it could take a
while before it arrived. He apologised sincerely. “That’s right”, I replied. My
willingness to accept this inconvenience surprised even myself for a moment.”

ODNEDW001 Edward Odendaal