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Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays: 1:00pm-4:00pm when there are no department and/or college meetings. Also, by appointment – students will typically meet outside class with the Professor at least once every month.


These books will not be directly discussed in class. However, pertinent Chapters from Hooley et al. (2020) and Dall’Olmo Riley, Singh, and Blankson (2016) (eds) will be discussed in class and handouts will be made available to students. Given that we all should be on the same page regarding general strategic issues, concepts, principles and nomenclature, these books are recommended (optional) for students.

“*The beginning of knowledge is the discovery of something that we do not understand.*” – Frank Herbert

“The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically….intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education” – Martin Luther King Jr.
SEMINAR INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Ph.D. seminar in marketing strategy is to help doctoral students understand the role of marketing within the organization, its marketing and/or business strategy, and its success or failure. The seminar will expose students to the main issues in marketing strategy and marketing strategy research. The seminar is designed to help doctoral students critically evaluate both fundamental (i.e., seminal) ideas and more recent developments on the subject matter.

SEMINAR OVERVIEW AND PEDAGOGY

MKTG 6030 is designed to present current and historical insights into several (i.e., selected) streams of marketing research that each relate to various broad aspects of marketing strategy. Moreover, like all Ph.D. seminars, this provides the types of insights, knowledge sets and skills that will enable students to grow into their presumed roles as successful marketing scholars.

The seminar will feature a strong emphasis on discussion and critical deliberation of assigned reading materials in class. Students’ preparation for each class should entail close reading and serious thought about the various topics and readings assigned for each week’s discussion. All students should have read each of the assigned materials prior to each seminar session. Moreover, all students should have thought about what they have read. So, be prepared to discuss each article in-depth and to present ideas about gaps in the literature, contributions to the marketing literature, limitations of the article(s) discussed, and extensions of each paper – future research directions. Extensions can include straight-forward/line extensions and replications or more innovative linkages with other papers or literatures. Professor Christine Moorman of Fuqua School of Business cautions students against three tendencies.

1. Please be very careful about overly negative approach to dealing with other scholars’ research/studies. It is worthwhile to try to understand what the research is trying to accomplish and whether it is interesting and important as opposed to “tearing it apart;” whether it is perfect in every regard. No research is perfect; nobody is perfect.

2. Do not adhere only to extending others’ points made in class and not initiating your own ideas/perspectives. While the former is a safe strategy, it is not particularly interesting in the end. At times, you should take risk(s) – go ahead and put your ideas out there.

3. Make sure you read and think. Reading is the easy part – it takes time, but it is not very hard. Thinking is the critical part of the quest you are on – doctoral education. Think hard about the validity of the ideas and results in the paper as well, as how you could improve the paper. Finally, think about what a paper might mean for your current research and/or dissertation topic.

The three tendencies are culled from Christine Moorman’s (2013) seminar in marketing strategy.

In the midst of in-class discussions, collegial disagreement amongst students or amongst students and the presiding Professor are welcomed and encouraged. Because many of the topics discussed in this course are subjective in nature, group consensus regarding these topics is neither expected nor desired.
What does strategy mean?

The word strategy originated from the Greek word meaning “strategos” – “art of the general.” That many of the early teachings on strategy were couched in military contexts should not surprise us. From von Clausewitz to Sun-Tzu to General Paton, military leaders have espoused differing perspectives of strategy. For example, WW II Andre Beufre described strategy simply “as a method of thought.” The best accepted English definition is “the art of generalship”. It is therefore not surprising that the term is used to describe decisions that companies make when they are engaged in competition in open market environments.

One of the most widely read business primers is Bing Fa or Art of War. Chinese military strategist Sun-Tzu admonished, “Strategy without tactics is the slowest route to victory. Tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat.” The lack of accord between the tactical and the strategic is a compelling issue that may be frequently addressed throughout the semester. Publius Virigilius Maro Vergil questioned: “Who asks whether the enemy was defeated by strategy or valor?” So, is strategy truly a “means to political end,” as Prussian General von Moltke [the Elder] suggested? The adaptation of military strategy to business introduces a different set of challenges. Is the marketplace the same as a battlefield?

About three decades ago, the noted management professor George Steiner authored a seminal text that addressed the conceptualization of organizational strategy. Although he does not define strategy per se, he does reinforce the lack of a reconcilable definition of strategy. Mintzberg introduced the “four Ps” of strategy: plan, pattern, position and perspective. This typology has been widely adapted to several disciplines across the social sciences. Tom Peters has cited this book as one of the most important books written in the last quarter-century. Today, a prevailing definition of strategy is found in Michael Porter’s (1996) Harvard Business Review article, “What is Strategy?”

[Strategy] “means deliberately choosing a different set of activities to deliver a unique mix of value.”

“What’s the use of running if you are not on the right road?”

– German proverb

James Thurber once counseled, “It is better to know some of the questions than all of the answers.” Thurber’s advice functions as an appropriate introduction to any doctoral seminar.

Successful completion of this doctoral seminar – like most others – will not provide you with an accumulation of answers. Instead, it will introduce you to many questions.

The doctoral seminar is designed to motivate critical thinking. Each student will be required to engage in critical thinking. Beyond question however, the majority of our thinking is impacted by distortions or partialities that persist - and likely have persisted for a long time - within our living or working environments.

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Steiner, George (1979), Strategic Planning, Boston, MA: Free Press.
LEARNING GOAL

The overarching goal of this seminar is to deliver a platform that will permit doctoral students to identify and to discuss seminal questions that underlie knowledge development in marketing strategy.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the semester, students must acquire the skills in appreciating the thinking engaged in and methodologies employed by marketing researchers engaged in the development or execution of marketing strategies.

Students should have an in-depth, multidimensional understanding of the role that various critical strategic marketing issues play in the development and execution of marketing theory or practice.

“Critical thinking is self-directed, self-disciplined, self-monitored, and self-corrective thinking. It presupposes assent to rigorous standards of excellence and mindful command of their use. It entails effective communication and problem-solving abilities and a commitment to overcome our native egocentrism and sociocentrism.”¹

Research Paper

Each student will be expected to develop a research paper on a marketing-strategy topic. You could also work on a bibliometric study on any topic/domain within marketing strategy. If you decide to work on a paper that is more modeling in nature, you should present the model and solve it. On the other hand, if you decide to work on a paper that is more behavioral, you could do one of two things.

First, you could write an integrative conceptual paper that offers a new framework for marketing strategy. This paper would be in the tradition of conceptual papers published in journals like Journal of Marketing (see e.g., Rindfleisch and Heide 1997), Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science (see e.g., Cleeren, Dekimpe and van Heerde 2017) and AMS Review (see e.g., Prabhu, Tracey and Hassan 2017; Vargo and Koskela-Huotari, K 2020).

Alternatively, you can develop a bibliometric or systematic review or meta-analyses study published in journals including Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science (see Hulland and Houston 2020), Journal of Business Research (Loureiro, Romero, and Bilro 2019; Nakata and Huang 2005), Industrial Marketing Management (Ferguson and Johnston 2011), Journal of Product Innovation Management (Durisin, Calabretta, and Parmeggiani 2010) and Journal of Product & Brand Management (Parris and Guzman 2021).

¹http://www.criticalthinking.org/aboutCT/
Second, your paper could offer predictions (i.e., propositions) and geared toward the design of a marketing strategy study. This could involve an experiment, quasi-experiment, a survey, a content analysis, a meta-analysis (see Grewal, Puccinelli and Monroe 2018), a field study, or an empirical analysis of secondary brand and/or firm data.

In rare cases, a student who is already well ahead in working on a research project in any area of marketing that is geared for an “A+” or “A” journal can be allowed to pursue/carry-on with that agenda. In other words, a study may not necessarily be within the domain of marketing strategy per se but with the agreement from the instructor, the study may be targeted at any of the top marketing journals – JM, JMR, JCR, MKSC, JAMS, JOM, JPPM, JMK, JIM, JBR, JA, JAR etc.

The purpose in writing the research paper is to acquire the needed skill set that can propel a student to target an “A+” or “A” journal in the first instance. You will be guided by myself and where need-be, by other faculty colleagues here at UNT and other schools. A list of “A+” and “A” marketing journals will be discussed in course of the semester. In all cases, you should follow a targeted journal’s specific submission guidelines in preparing the said paper.

The paper will be submitted/due during the last seminar session of this semester. As well, you will be expected to make up to 30-minute presentation (followed by Q&A) of your manuscript – bound for a named journal. Please develop the paper with a designated journal target in mind. I will provide on-going guidance on this.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
The UNT RCOB complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Reasonable accommodations are made for qualified students with disability. If you have an established disability as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act and would like to request accommodation, please see me as soon as possible.

The Student Perception of Teaching (SPOT) is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. This short survey will be made available to you by the university at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. I am very interested in the feedback I get from students, as I work to continually improve my teaching. I consider the SPOT to be an important part of your participation in this class.

Acceptable Student Behavior
The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.unt.edu/csrr
Academic Integrity:
Each student should be fully aware of the policies and guidelines for academic honesty in the University of North Texas Student Guidebook and on UNT’s web page (www.unt.edu). The Student Code of Conduct and an abbreviated list of other rules, regulations and policies are available from the Dean of Students. Plagiarism is a serious compromise of academic integrity. Please be certain to cite any reference. Materials copied verbatim must be in quotation marks with a correct citation documented within the text. This applies to any and all materials taken from Internet sites.

Timeliness Policy:
Class sessions will begin precisely at 2:00 p.m. on each scheduled Tuesday. That means students are required to be seated and ready to begin work before 2:00 p.m. If you are not present and ready to start by 2:00 p.m., you are late.

In-Class Communication Comportment:
Every student is expected to contribute substantial value to each session’s discussion. Yet no student is expected, nor is any student permitted, to dominate seminar discussions. In fact, no one will be permitted to dominate in-class communications - not even the Professor. This seminar is structured to facilitate a shared and collaborative learning experience. Should your questions, responses or observational commentary be anything other than crisp (succinct), clear and hopefully compelling, the Professor will advise you – in the moment – to do better.

SEMINAR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT
Performance assessment in this seminar will be based on the following:

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<th>Quality of articles’ review and critique in class</th>
<th>Quality of your seminar paper or bibliometric paper</th>
<th>Quality of seminar presentation in class</th>
<th>Total Possible Points</th>
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Articles’ review and critique:
Every student should be well-prepared for each seminar. You should read each assigned reading. However, you should go beyond a cursory reading of assigned materials. Before each seminar session, you are expected to critically evaluate the “body of knowledge” clustered together for each seminar session. A four to six pages summary of the week’s list of articles will be required each week from each student. This will be due at the end of each seminar period.

The intention of this seminar is that you leave this course with several ideas that may form the
foundation of your own research. As Professor Moorman notes, you should read as if on a scouting expedition. Pay attention to what you find interesting in case you find something is missing or inaccurate. Note/jot down alternative explanations for what the research suggests is happening. Question the researcher’s point of view and try to establish what the underlying assumptions are in the research and question them.

Seminar presentation: articles review and critique:
The sessions will involve a discussion of the readings assigned for the day. All students will be designated as discussants for a given week. The discussant will select an article from the reading list, critique and orally present in class the key issues being studied. Only the power-point presentation will be required from the discussant.

Discussants will be assigned from week 3 through 14. You will be informed accordingly. The purpose of these assignments as noted by Professors George S. Day and Christophe Van den Bulte of Wharton Business School is to encourage doctoral students to think generatively while reading.

Occasionally, I will offer “background readings” on key areas involving a topic treated or method to help the appreciation of the subject matter. As well, I will have three or more concepts and/or theory points that I will make at some point during the semester – either at the beginning, during, or getting to the end of the semester. An outside scholar may be invited to present to the class on any marketing strategy research topic of their choice. I reserve the right to change topics and readings during the semester. This may never occur but I would like to have the option if I find a better paper in course of the semester.

ASSIGNED READINGS

**Week 1: Introduction and overview (January 17, 2023):**

*Students should download and then read materials before class and arrive ready to discuss them during the class session.*


Sheth, Jagdish (2021), “New areas of research in marketing strategy, consumer behavior, and marketing analytics: the future is bright,” *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice, 29*(1), 3-12.

Further Reading


**Week 2: Marketing Planning and Marketing Strategy (January 24, 2023)**


Further Reading


Marketing Theory, 2(3, September), 243-271.


Week 3: The Role of Marketing within the Organization, Market Orientation, and Marketing Practices (January 31, 2023)


Further Reading


**Week 4:** Market Definition, Segmentation, Positioning and Product Differentiation (February 7, 2023)


Campagna, C. L., Donthu, N., & Yoo, B. (2021), “Brand authenticity: literature review, comprehensive definition, and an amalgamated scale,” *Journal of Marketing Theory and
Further Reading


Week 5: Competition (February 14, 2023)


Further Reading


Week 6: Making Decisions (February 21, 2023)


Further Reading

Week 7: Product/Service and Industry Life Cycle Dynamics (February 28, 2023)

Further Reading


**Week 8: Marketing Mix and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) (March 7, 2023)**


Further Reading


**Week 9: Channel Design, Coordination and Transaction Cost Theory (March 14, 2023)**


**Further Reading**


Week 10: Alliances and Acquisitions (March 21, 2023)


Further Reading


Week 11: Market Entry and Evolution, Institutionalization and Network Effects (March 28, 2023)


**Further Reading**


**Week 12: New Product Development and Innovation (April 4, 2023)**


Further Reading


Week 13: Strategic Transformations, SD Logic and Resource-based View of the Firm (April 11, 2023)


Further Reading


**Week 14: Branding and Relationship Marketing (April 18, 2023)**


**Further Reading**


**Week 15**: Come to class prepared to present your paper in power-point slides. 30-40 minutes are allocated for each student (April 25, 2023). May 2, 2023 - Final written journal or bibliometric paper due.