



MKTG 4890. APPLIED MARKETING PROBLEMS 2016 SUMMER II (5W2)

SYLLABUS

(Version 1.0: July 8, 2016)

PROFESSOR OF RECORD

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

In the University of North Texas course catalog, this course is characterized as a "capstone course." A capstone course has several important components. It requires that each student is able to critically integrate, logically develop and clearly articulate how marketing tactics can be deployed effectively:

- To use marketing mix variables and market intelligence gleaned from your academic courses to date,
- To identify marketing challenges and opportunities,
- To develop marketing solutions to address marketing problems and opportunities (in team settings), and
- To assess performance outcomes (metrics) that may support your marketing planning.



Throughout the semester, you will be challenged to integrate a portfolio of knowledge, skills and experiences that you have encountered during your degree plan. Course assignments are designed to provide learning to demonstrate your ability to "put the pieces together," much like solving strategic marketing puzzles that relate to real-world and relevant markets and marketing decision scenarios. One learning platform involves the preparation of a "*Personal Positioning Portfolio*" that will require (1) the preparation, revision and final submission of your resume; (2) a personal positioning essay; and (3) participation in an "Aspirational Self" survey. The verbatim course description states that "Students work in team settings to analyze cases and to develop a comprehensive marketing plan, requiring integration of a wide range of marketing principles and practices. The cases, as well as the integrated marketing plan, require students to identify market opportunities and challenges, formulate actionable plans to address organizational strengths and weaknesses, and execute a marketing mix strategy."



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The following courses are listed as prerequisites for enrollment in the course: MKTG 3650, MKTG 3700, MKTG 3710 and graduating senior status. If you do not meet one or more of these criteria, please consult with the Chair of the Department of Marketing and Logistics (Dr. Jeffrey K. Sager) to seek enrollment permission. I do not have the authority to nor the responsibility for making enrollment decisions.

COURSE PERSPECTIVE: MARKETPLACE REALITIES



You surely recount from your marketing courses that the marketing concept posits that the customer is the core or nucleus of all marketing mix decisions (e.g., product, pricing, promotion and placement). Hopefully, you have garnered an appreciation for marked shifts in business and consumer markets, especially as it relates to developing and delivering "value" in marketing exchange relationships.

Consider the market dynamism (enduring and unpredictable changes) that occur in a technology-enabled, globally-connected marketplace. Do you realize that Internet-connectivity via computers, tablets, mobile phones and hand-held devices is *less than 20 years-old*? The U.S. Federal Networking Council (FNC) was only chartered in October 1995, and it marked the first definition of the Internet as a global information system connected by a globally unique address space termed Internet Protocol (IP). In less than 20 years, the Internet has spawned "virtual" connections between buyers and sellers in global space. The acronym B2C has displaced the conventional notion of retailing, and it reflects an unprecedented shift in the marketing of products and services. You may recall that marketing practice (and as a course of study) focused on the physical distribution of commodities (products with no brand identification). The historical roots of marketing date back to population shifts that coincided with the "production era" and the matching of supply and demand. Much has changed in your lifetime:

- Functions such as sourcing, procurement and purchasing are increasingly facilitated through virtual connectivity of buyers and sellers. The nature and scope of the buyer-seller exchange process in marketing channels are technology-enabled to accommodate e-commerce, virtual transactions and seamless, parallel information transfer.
- The business-to-business (B2B), business-to-consumer (B2C) and consumer-to-consumer (C2C) channels initiated new channel players such as *alibaba.com*, *amazon.com*, and *ebay.com*. The increased access, coverage and technological capabilities afforded by the Internet transformed traditional marketing roles and functions. (Ansari et al. 2008; Avery et al. 2012; Kim, Park and Pookulangara 2005; Weon and Eunkyu 2011).
- We now "expect" virtualization in transactions, communications and customer relationship management resulting in a "death of distance."
- Brick 'n mortar retailers are trying to survive amidst new *e-tailers* as well as reconfigured *brick 'n click* retail channels.

Now on the brink of collapse, *Sears* was the long-standing retail mammoth that had diversified into the consumer financial services sector. Having divested one-time retail icons (that you likely have never heard of) *Kresge* and *Jupiter* stores, *Kmart* was a viable retailer -- but, the "Blue Light" is now hardly flickering relative to customer retail patronage. How about Plano, Texas-based *J.C. Penney*? What does its future hold? Wal-Mart has become the nation's largest retailer and globally. The independent clothiers, hardware stores, office supply stores, pet shops, and pharmacies are finding it difficult to co-exist with the onset of the emerging "Big Box" and "Category Killers." One such Category Killer - *Circuit City* - was the leading consumer electronics retailer in the U.S., and Office Depot and *Staples* were on a path to massive retail expansion in the U.S. You know the decline of Circuit City, and the impending downfall of retailers like *Best Buy* and *Radio Shack*. Did you know that *Radio Shack* sold the first consumer computers in the U.S.? Consolidation of department stores, grocery chains and specialty stores began a significant shift in the marketplace.



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By the end of the 21st-century, about 50% of all U.S. retailers had been displaced by "Big Box" and "Category Killers." Retail icons vanished from the retail landscape: most notably, the death of distance paralleled the demise of *Ames*, *Bradlees*, *Caldor*, *Montgomery Ward* and thousands of regional and local independent retailers. Wal-Mart has become the world's largest retailer, not only encroaching on traditional general merchandise stores, department stores and specialty stores. Wal-Mart's diversification includes the grocery sector. In what was once called "combination stores" and has evolved into *Wal-Mart Supercenters* and *Super Targets*, the fastest-growing grocery stores offer niche merchandising, gourmet-to-go and culturally-targeted shopping experiences (i.e. *H-mart*, *Fiesta's*, *Mi Tienda*, *Ranch 99*).

The unprecedented expansion of wholesale clubs (e.g., *B.J.'s*, *Costco* and *Sam's*), expeditious growth in domestic and international retail franchise units, and retail penetration of Big Boxes and Category Killers has had a profound impact on the retailing sector in the U.S. and abroad. Town squares and non-traditional shopping venues have left many long-standing shopping malls with high vacancies and low retail patronage. **More U.S. shopping malls have been demolished than developed in the 21st-century.**

Now, consider the changes in consumer demographics, VALs [values, attitudes and lifestyles] and overall "value" expectations. In this course, you are expected to have considered issues such as:

- **Speed-to-Market.** The "speed-to-market" trend as evidenced most significantly in the fashion apparel and accessories sector. The aspiration for greater turns in retail merchandise known as "fast fashion" is a significant movement championed by global retail fashion trend-setters such as *Zara*, *H&M* and *Forever 21*. But, were you aware that all of these retailers are facing enormous challenges that threaten their market viability?
- **Fickle Consumers and "Brand Switching."** It becomes more difficult to "win back" lost customers, and the cost of customer reacquisition is often indeterminate. Accordingly, there is a trade-off between the cost of acquiring a customer (CAC) and the even higher investment in trying to reacquire customers.
- **Unprecedented Demographic and Psychographic Shifts.** In the U.S. and many markets abroad, there are significant changes in population (demography) of consumers, the nature and scope of organizations and the emergence of "micro-segmentation."

In this course, we will examine the transformative issues that underlie marketing concepts, tactics and strategies, while attempting to dispel many of the myths or fallacies that currently undermine successful marketing planning. For example, one might "assume" that the Internet would avail buyers and sellers to more market choices. The reality is that U.S. e-commerce sales revenues are highly concentrated among the top ten on-line retailers (see <http://www.ecommerce-platforms.com>). Furthermore, total overall electronic commerce is largely dominated by *brick 'n click* (both physical and online) retailers. In B2B, there is even higher concentration of sales revenues across industrial sectors.



Marketing practice itself may be in a state of flux. The most cited definition of marketing was adopted more than 70 years ago by the National Association of Marketing Teachers, an association later to become the American Marketing Association (AMA). This definition was adopted by the AMA in 1948, and again in 1960 when the AMA revisited the definition and decided not to change it. This original definition stood for more than one-half century. In 2004, a new marketing definition was adopted by the American Marketing Association:

"Marketing is an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders."



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Professor Robert Dolan summarizes, asserting that marketing is simply the “process via which the firm creates value for its chosen customers.” Consider the marketing mantra of Amazon.com founder Jeff Bezos. “Our vision,” he said, “is to be the world's most customer-centric company. The place where people come to find and discover anything they might want to buy online.” The updated definition of marketing illuminates the increased focus on a transition from a product-centric to a customer-centric approach to marketing strategy.

Philip Kotler, one of the world’s leading marketing scholars, is S.C. Johnson & Son Distinguished Professor of International Marketing at the Northwestern University Kellogg Graduate School of Management. Kotler articulates this transition in marketing practice:

“The economic landscape has been fundamentally altered by technology and globalization. Companies anywhere can now compete anywhere, thanks to the Internet and more free trade. The major economic force is hyper-competition, namely companies are able to produce more goods than can be sold, putting a lot of pressure on price. This also drives companies to build in more differentiation. However, a lot of the differentiation is psychological, not real. Even then, a company’s current advantage doesn’t last very long in an economy where any advantage can be copied rapidly. Companies must pay attention to the fact that customers are getting more educated and have better tools such as the Internet at their disposal to buy with more discrimination. Power has been passing from the manufacturer to the distributor, and now is passing to the customer. The customer is King.”

Now, consider Kotler’s assertion cast against the backdrop of struggling sectors. For example, the airlines industry has systematically reduced consumer services, increased prices and “merged for survival.” An overarching question that challenges today’s marketers is *“How can marketing concurrently maximize customer satisfaction and stakeholder value?”*

TEACHING APPROACH

This course is designed to be student-centric, empowering you to take an active role in your learning outcomes through experiential exercises (some in the form of case studies) and in-class participation. This requires an active, rather than passive, engagement in each scheduled class session. It has been said that “Knowledge is a process of piling up facts; wisdom lies in their simplification.” In the spirit of Fischer’s assertion, this course will attempt to simplify your understanding of marketing management, harnessing your collective experiences to build enduring learning outcomes. Often contrasted with didactic learning, experiential learning is not just an agglomeration of facts. Often referred to as “auto-didacticism,” experiential learning challenges you to actively reflect on your everyday experiences. After all, you are continually engaged in the marketing system. All of you are consumers, and many of you are already involved in product, pricing, promotions and/or distribution decisions. This course will provide learning platforms for you to critically evaluate marketing principles and practices in the domain of your own experiences. One of the overarching challenges of experiential learning is separating marketing myths from marketing realities in an ever-changing global marketplace. Advertising executive David Ogilvy asserts:

“I notice increasing reluctance on the part of marketing executives to use judgment; they are coming to rely too much on research, and they use it as a drunkard uses a lamp post for support, rather than for illumination.”

PROFESSOR ACCESS

Access & Office Hours Policy. The University of North Texas Faculty Handbook mandates that each faculty member is required to list and maintain office hours within their department... so that students can have access to their professors. In the interest of serving your academic needs, I have designed a tripartite communications system.



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Face-to-Face Meetings. I am available to meet with you at most times. I will hold formal office hours on **Mondays (12:00 noon. - 1:00 p.m.)** I can also meet at other times, *but I encourage you to make an appointment* to ensure that you have my undivided attention. You are welcome to stop by my office at any time; however, other professional obligations may preempt unscheduled meetings.

Email Communications. I am available via email at jhinuk.chowdhury@unt.edu. All of the email communications in this course will be sent to your official University of North Texas email address. If you do not receive a response within 24 hours, I recommend that you call me on my mobile telephone at 940.395.1503 (see section below).

Telephone Access. I may be reached on my mobile (940.395.1503) between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. In the event that I am unavailable, a voice mail system will instruct you on the procedures for leaving a message. Please speak slowly and clearly, and leave your name, course abbreviation and section number (i.e., MKTG 5890.001). Please remember to leave a number where I can reach you. I will make every effort to return telephone calls within 24-hours of the message recording. There is also great opportunities for conference calls that engage all of your team members. To schedule a conference call, please allow 24 hours' notice.

Academic Integrity. Each course participant should be fully aware of the policies and guidelines for academic honesty in the University of North Texas Student Guidebook and on UNT 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. Please be sure to visit in the event that you have any questions about these issues.

Plagiarism is a serious compromise of academic integrity. Please be certain to cite any and all references used in written assignments. 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.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The College of Business Administration and UNT comply with all policies and regulations accordant with the ADA. We make every effort to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a special need in accordance with ADA guidelines, please inform me immediately. Every effort will be made to accommodate your special needs. The Office of Disability Accommodations (ODA) assists faculty members and students in addressing special needs.

Classroom Behavior. Each course participant is responsible for classroom behavior that is conducive to the teaching-learning process. Each course participant should be fully aware of the policies and guidelines for academic honesty and classroom behavior discussed in the University of North Texas Student Guidebook and on UNT 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. Anyone compromising the integrity of the learning process will receive a failing grade in this course and be referred to the Dean of Student Affairs for disciplinary action

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

"The highest reward for a person toil is not what they get for it, but what they become by it."
-John Ruskin

I think Ruskin is correct in his assessment of the highest reward for performance. Hopefully, your greatest reward from this course will be the learning experience. Nevertheless, I have a responsibility to assign each student a grade for her/his course performance.



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Tentative grading scheme (*subject to alteration*):

Please understand that following grading scheme is preliminary and tentative. Shortly, you will be apprised of the final grading scheme. Until then, the following may be used as a guideline. In class, you will be told in more details about this.

In this course, your grade will be based on your total accumulated points on graded assignments and attendance/participation. Final course grades will be determined by dividing your total number of accumulated points over 1,000 possible points. The following table summarizes course grade assignments:

Team Assessment			Individual Assessment	
Marketing Plan (Written)	Marketing Plan (Oral)	Experiential Exercises (3)	Personal Positioning Portfolio	Attendance and Participation
200	200	300	200	100

Performance assessment in this course will be based on the following graded assignments. There is a grading rubric that informs you of the criteria for evaluation on each assignment:

Marketing Plan Project [40%]. You will receive a separate hand-out for this intensive project designed for you to collectively – in a team setting – develop a marketing plan. We will discuss this in greater length during our scheduled class session. However, there will be two components to the team grade (written presentation: 20%; oral presentation: 20%).

Experiential Exercises [30%]. There will be three Experiential Exercises that will require you to critically engage in a marketing experience and address related discussion platforms. Each of these experiential exercises will be graded based on both the depth of critical thinking and your written communication skills. All experiential exercises will be submitted as a Word document (.doc or .docx) attachment to the *Assignment Tool* in Blackboard Learn on/before the designated due date/time.

Personal Positioning Portfolio [20%]. You will be required to prepare, revise and submit a résumé and personal positioning statement. This assignment will also require your completion of an on-line, self-administered survey that assesses your Aspirational Self relative to academic and professional goals.

Attendance and Participation [10%]. Your willingness to share relevant experiences during scheduled class sessions will enrich the lecture and text materials. Attendance is required, and participation is encouraged and expected. Attendance includes both mental and physical attentiveness. Your preparedness is a significant determination of your participation grade. Please recount that attendance includes both scheduled in-class and team meetings.

Final grades are based on the total points out of a possible 1000 points, and letter grades are assigned as follows:

F	D	C	B	A
≤599	600 - 699	700 - 799	800 - 899	≥ 900

IMPORTANT NOTE

The instructor reserves the right to change any aspect of the course, syllabus, and/or schedule, as and when needed, at his sole discretion.