
MDSE 4002 Dallas Study Tour for Merchandising and Digital Business and eCommerce – Syllabus Fall 2025



DEPARTMENT OF MERCHANDISING
& DIGITAL RETAILING
College of Merchandising,
Hospitality & Tourism

Description: The Dallas Study Tour is a semester long for-credit course, designed to provide real-world exposure in the areas of merchandising, home furnishings, digital retailing, and consumer experience. Students will understand the broad scope encompassing retail including retail operations, distribution, sourcing, off-price cosmetics, furniture, and apparel. This course empathizes effective communication, ethical and professional leadership, collaboration, and the ability to understand the industry from global and national perspectives.

Objectives:

1. Identify current merchandising trends within home furnishings, merchandising, consumer experiences, and digital retailing
2. Discuss major trends impacting the retail industry with industry executives
3. Discuss and identify how merchandising processes and standards impact the overall consumer experience
4. Identify and learn about career opportunities available in the retail industry and the skills needed for each
5. Understand the key difference and similarities among the various disciplines within retail

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Office: Chilton Hall 342F

Office Hours: Tuesday 10-11am, Wednesday 1-2pm, or by appointment

Enrollment Reminder:

It is imperative that students have paid for all enrolled classes. Please check your online schedule daily through the 12th class day to make sure you have not been dropped for non-payment. Students unknowingly have been dropped from classes for various reasons such as financial aid, schedule change fees, etc. **Students cannot be reinstated for any reason after the 12th class day regardless of the situation.** It is the student's responsibility to ensure all payments have been made.

Attendance:

1. Students are expected to attend all industry appointments. Most appointments will be in-person and will require travel to various companies and organizations in the DFW area. A shuttle bus will be provided. The shuttle bus will pick up students behind Chilton Hall and will depart promptly at the time listed on the schedule available on Canvas.
2. Students may opt to drive themselves to appointments. The address for appointments is listed within the Canvas assignment for each appointment. If a student drives themselves, let the instructor know and plan to meet with the rest of the group outside of the place of business. We will enter as a group. If a student opts to drive themselves and they are late, they will be asked not to interrupt the appointment.
3. A few appointments may be via Zoom and students are expected to give these virtual appointments the same level of professionalism and attention as in-person appointments. Arrive to the Zoom meeting on time and remain engaged, with webcams on.
4. Students will earn points for participation and engagement at each appointment. If students miss an appointment, there is no makeup for the participation points. See Assessment section for more details.

Course Structure:

1. The format of this course will include a combination of in-person site visits, Zoom appointments, company summaries and questions, and a final reflections paper.

2. It is important to prepare for site visits, like how one prepares for a job interview. Students should be prepared to ask questions, as this provides clarity and a deeper understanding of current trends in the industry, career specifics, and more. Asking questions allows you the opportunity to engage with professionals in the industry. Utilize this time to talk with alumni and others with a wealth of knowledge and experience.
 3. Although I will provide company hosts with our class resume book, students are encouraged to bring business cards and resumes. There could be an opportunity to pass on your resume for potential job or internship openings.
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Canvas:

1. Canvas can be accessed via the following link: <https://unt.instructure.com/login/canvas>. In order to log in, you must know your EUID and password. If you have technological issues, please contact the help desk at (940) 565-2324, helpdesk@unt.edu, or <http://helpdesk.unt.edu>. If you have pages missing or items are not retrievable, please contact the instructor.
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Assignment Policies:

1. All assignments will be submitted online via Canvas. Assignments due online will not be accepted via email. **Students should always take the time to ensure that their assignment is uploaded correctly.** If you are having trouble uploading your assignment, you must contact CLEAR using the information provided above. **Each student is responsible for ensuring that 1) their file is uploaded correctly, 2) their file is compatible with the system, and 3) their file is within file size restrictions.**
 2. Assignment due dates will be available on the course calendar. Late assignments are downgraded by 30%. After one calendar day (24 hours) assignments are no longer accepted for credit. There will be no exceptions. This includes assignments that did not upload correctly to Canvas, as it is ultimately the student's responsibility to make sure submissions were successful. Students are encouraged to view their assignment after submission to confirm successful submission.
 3. Students have one week from the date assignment grades are released to follow-up on grades. After one week, assignment grades stand, and appeals will not be considered.
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AI Policy:

1. Submitting an assignment that uses Generative AI without proper citation or indication of its use is plagiarism. It is a substitute for your own thought and effort. Instructors will monitor AI use and will check student work for ethical use according to their policies.
 2. Every instructor has consequences stated for plagiarism in their policies. A range of disciplinary actions may result from any finding of academic dishonesty (for example, admonition, class failure, expulsion) depending upon the severity of the misconduct. In this course, the policy is that students will receive a grade of 0 for assignments found to be completed using AI, and plagiarism will be reported to the UNT Academic Integrity Officer.
 3. Policies may differ between instructors and courses. Read the syllabus and course policies, especially for the consequences. If you are allowed by your instructor to use any Generative AI in a course, you must disclose and cite its use by including citations in APA style. If you are allowed by your instructor to use any Generative AI in a course, you must also carefully check for errors. AI often suffers from "hallucinations" or fictitious information, being wrong, and oversimplified, low quality, or generic results. It also tends to replicate and amplify any biases or inaccuracies that exist in the training sources or the Internet.
 4. To protect student data privacy, students are prohibited from the submission of personally identifying information to Generative AI systems.
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Assessment:

1. **Course Orientation Meeting (20 pts.)** – Students will attend an in-person meeting on Friday, August 23, from 9-11:30am in Chilton 349. The meeting will cover details about the course policies, grades, etc. Plan to attend the entire meeting time.
2. **Resume for Resume Book (10 pts.)** – Resumes will be collected and put into a resume book that will be shared with company hosts prior to appointments. If for some reason you do not want your resume shared with our hosts, let the instructor know so they can remove it from the resume book.

3. **Pre-Appointment Summary and Questions (15 pts. each)** – Conduct research on the company being visited for the week. The assignment will consist of both a summary and industry/company appointment questions. More specific guidelines are on Canvas. Assignments are always due on Wednesday of the appointment week.
4. **Appointment Attendance (30 pts. each)** – Students earn points for attending professional appointments. Appear awake, interested, and engaged. Interact politely and professionally with everyone we meet. Students are expected to be dressed at minimum in smart casual. Points may be downgraded for not adhering to the dress guidelines. No distressed jeans, t-shirts, athletic/athleisure apparel, or casual shoes like athletic sneakers or flip-flops. There are no make-ups for appointments. Instead, students will drop one appointment attendance grade. *Students will be downgraded a letter grade for each missed appointment beyond one appointment. A letter grade deduction will be made if a student is late more than three times to appointments.*
5. **Appointment Engagement and Required Questions (20 pts. each)** –Students will be assigned specific appointments at which they are required to ask questions for credit. *If you miss the appointment which was assigned for you, there is no make-up opportunity for these points.* Students may ask questions at all appointments, but they must ask questions at the assigned appointments for credit. A calendar will be available on Canvas. If you attend the appointment but do not pose your required question, you will earn your attendance points but not the required question points.
6. **Final Reflections Paper (60 pts.)** – Describe and explain your biggest takeaway from the Dallas Study Tour. Share your expectations that were met as well as those that were not met. Talk about connections that were made and knowledge you acquired. Specific guidelines will be available online.
7. **Survey and Feedback (20 Pts.)** – Students will be asked to share their feedback on the appointments. The survey will become available after our last industry visit.
8. The final semester grade will be determined as follows: A = 90-100%, B = 80-89%, C = 70-79%, D = 60-69%, F = below 60%.

Assignment	Points
Course Orientation Meeting	20
Resume for Resume Book	10
Pre-Appointment Summary and Questions (15 pts. each x estimated 11 appointments; ability to drop one grade)	150
Appointment Attendance (30 pts. each x estimated 11 appointments; ability to drop one grade)	300
Appointment Required Questions and Engagement (20 pts. each x 3)	60
Final Reflections	60
Survey and Feedback	20
TOTAL	620