MARKETING CHANNELS AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS
FALL 2025

Course Description.   *Examination of strategic issues involved in managing marketing channels. Topics include channel design, supply chain management and the external channels environment. Marketing channel strategy is extended to the use of strategic alliances and other collaborative distribution relationships for global competitive advantage. Special attention is directed to resource and technology interdependencies, exchange governance and relationship benchmarking. MKTG 3650 or approval of the department chair is a prerequisite for this course (3 credit hours).*

Course Instructor

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Course Introduction. Many consumers and business practitioners underestimate the importance of marketing channels. Marketing originated from the need to distribute goods from production to consumption. While this may seem outdated, early marketing courses focused on matching supply and demand as goods moved from rural areas to cities during the U.S. Industrial Revolution. This distribution was crucial in the development of marketing channels.

Retail pioneer John Wanamaker, who opened a department store in Philadelphia in 1896, famously said, *"When a customer enters my store, forget me. The customer is king."* Likewise, Target's origins can be traced back to J.L. Hudson's first department store in 1893. The principle that "the customer is king" underscores the importance of customer relationships in marketing channels. You may enjoy reading Who Made America? | Innovators | John Wanamaker (pbs.org)

The role of the customer goes beyond consumers. Various buyer-seller relationships create value in the movement of goods and services. Channel intermediaries – *organizations that facilitate the movement of goods and services* – are vital in the marketing process. Disintermediation, or the absence of intermediaries, is also prevalent in today's tech-connected global marketplace.

This course will explore how individuals and organizations use resources to maximize value delivery in marketing channels. In the 21st century, a technology-enabled, globally connected marketplace requires marketers to rethink strategies to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of market offerings.
One major challenge is the multitude of options for sourcing goods and services from both physical and virtual channels, known as multi-channel or omni-channel distribution. Reflecting on your own buying and returning habits might change your perception of marketing channels. Often overlooked are the "back-end" transaction costs impacting the entire supply chain.

This course will examine the flows of goods and services between buyers and sellers, including business- to-business (B2B), business-to-consumer (B2C), and consumer-to-consumer (C2C) transactions. To gain great insights into the challenge of developing and executing customer-centric supply chains, please read the following McKinsey Reports: https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/retail/our-insights/where- the-transformation-begins-creating-a-consumer-centric-supply-chain-strategy You will garner an appreciation for the importance of balancing marketing channels strategy with customer experience

throughout the course.

Course Perspective. In this course, we see marketing channels as essential networks that enable the movement of goods, services, information, and value between producers and consumers. This view highlights the strategic and relational aspects of these channels, emphasizing the need for cooperation, coordination, and trust among channel members to gain a competitive advantage. We will also examine how power and conflict operate within channels, the impact of technology on changing channel structures, and the importance of adaptive strategies in response to market shifts. Our approach stresses that effective channel management requires a thorough understanding of both the external environment and the internal relationships within the channel. The link between marketing and distribution is central to many topics you have studied so far.

Please enjoy these insights from PepsiCo's Ricardo Arias-Nath
https://youtu.be/qessJu7p9Ew?si=fYyQTbSRdkm2RV0Y

Course Learning Objectives. After completing this course, you should be able to attain each of the following learning objectives. These are general learning outcomes that will be tested on your assessments (quizzes and experiential exercises):

- o To define marketing channels.
- o To discuss the evolving role of marketing channels in the marketing mix strategy.
- o To understand the role of marketing channels in creating value for buyers and sellers.
- o To relate marketing channels to the marketing concept.
- o To provide examples of technologies that impact value chain creation.
- o To explain the role of cooperation, collaboration, and commitment in building channel relationships.
- o To articulate the various channel role sets, and the dynamics that relate to these role sets in the global marketplace.
- o To explain the difference between intermediation and disintermediation in marketing channels.
- o To describe how the channel's environment impacts organizational and individual decision-making.
- o To discuss the various types of marketing channel structures that have emerged in the 21st century.
- o To explain the dynamic role of transportation and logistics in creating value chain relationships.
- o To understand the mechanisms for evaluating value chain management (VCM) performance outcomes.

 Course Relevance.
At some time in your life, you have likely purchased a pair of jeans. This seemingly innocuous purchase truly involved a set of complex marketing channel issues.

Supply chain for Denim Jeans
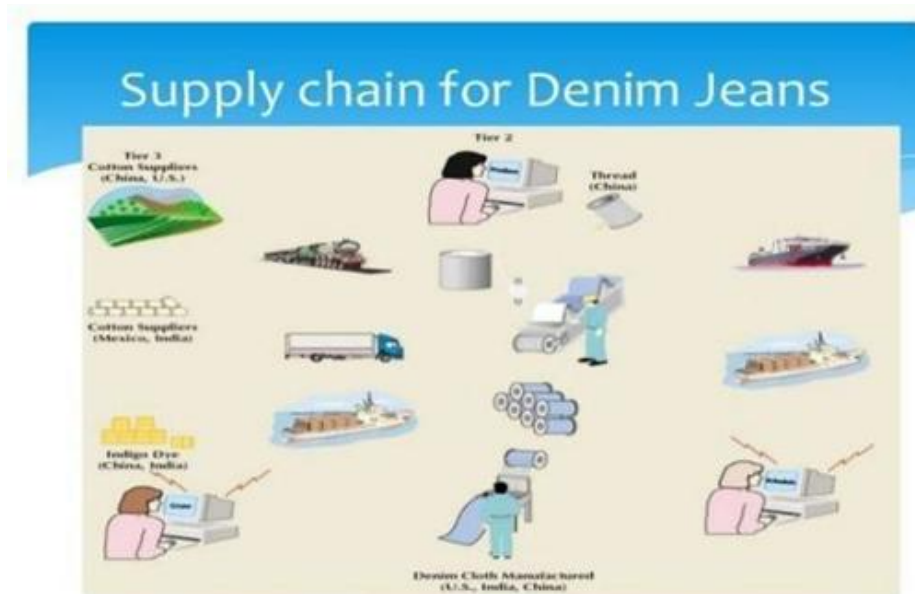
Now, let's consider the complexities of the global marketing channel from initial stages to final sale for this fashion apparel. Cotton denim starts from the fields and is processed into ginned cotton and cotton yarn. Packed in tightly condensed bales, the incoming raw material is cleaned, disentangled, straightened and gathered after inspection. This is just the start of those favorite pair of blue jeans. Then the material has to be sewn in factories into many shapes, styles and sizes. Jeans are usually packaged according to the customers' requirements (often "rack ready") along with affixed price tags. Then, they are shipped from factories on pallets into large containers and shipped to wholesalers, retailers, and other intermediaries. The entire process is long and arduous, and far more complex than window-shopping or channel surfing for the best fit, style and price that matches your individual preferences.

Jeans are products that we all wear, but we do not likely consider the global sourcing, production and distribution that delivers assortment (choice), convenience, pricing and other factors that ultimately impact our purchase decision and customer satisfaction. Throughout the course, you will garner an appreciation for how marketing channels create value for buyers and sellers in the flow of goods and services.

Course Support Materials. **There is no required textbook in this course.** Most of the course content comes from the textbook Pelton, L.E., M. Cooper, D. Strutton, and J.R. Lumpkin, *Marketing Channels: Managing Supply Chain Relationships*, Burr Ridge, IL: McGraw Hill Irwin. I don't assign this book or my other textbooks because you can access all the content for FREE on the Canvas course website. There are articles, videos, and other supplemental materials released according to the Course Calendar. You are responsible for all materials in the "Modules" section of the course.

Course Delivery. **This course is 100% asynchronous online delivery.** This requires a great deal of personal time management and self-discipline to ensure you keep up with the course content, graded assignments, and team projects. Although there are no virtual class meetings, please feel free to reach out if you or your team want to meet in a virtual or face-to-face meeting.

Graded Assignments. In this course, there will be several opportunities for you to demonstrate your learning outcomes:

Experiential Exercises. These are real-world, relevant and timely living cases that ask you to discuss questions about a marketing channels decision scenario. The platforms afford you an opportunity to evaluate a scenario, apply marketing channels principles and construct a well-developed, thoughtful discussion. The grading rubric for this assignment is provided on the CANVAS course web site. Your grade for the Experiential Exercise will be posted to CANVAS. The Experiential Exercise is worth 400 points or a total of

25% of your course grade. The due dates and assignment directions are available on the posted assignment. The experiential exercise is a group assignment. Each group has four or five team members. You need to collaborate well to finish these assignments. Team members of each group will be posted on Canvas by the first day the course opens. To make sure that all students make the contribution to the assignment, peer evaluation form will be posted on Canvas.

Concept Checks. Throughout the modules there will be small concept checks covering the content that preceded it. This is a learning tool to help you check for understanding and reinforce learnings. You have unlimited attempts on the concept checks and they comprise about 8% of your total grade.

Quizzes. There will be three, online multiple-choice or T/F quizzes that test all materials in each of the modules of course content (Module I, II and II). **Any materials on this syllabus may be on a quiz, and any materials posted on CANVAS may also be included on a quiz!**

Discussion posts. There will be weekly discussion questions posted during the session. You are required to post a thoughtful reply to the original discussion question and then post a thoughtful (and respectful) perspective or viewpoint to a peer's reply to the post.

Late Submission Policy.
All assignments are expected to be submitted by the stated deadlines in Canvas.

- Assignments submitted **within 24 hours after the deadline** will receive a **10% deduction** from the total possible points.

- Assignments submitted **more than 24 hours and up to 72 hours late** will receive a **20% deduction**.

- Assignments submitted **more than 72 hours late** will not be accepted and will receive a grade of zero, unless the delay is due to a university-approved excuse.

Course Grades. One of the most difficult tasks as a professor is to assign grades. The idea of a "chasm" between course grades and learning outcomes is a subject of debate in educational theory and practice. Your grade in this course reflects your performance on assessments such as quizzes and experiential exercises. Learning outcomes can be broader and more holistic, aiming to show your deeper understanding and ability to apply knowledge in different situations. Please take responsibility for your performance results. I will be responsible for assigning your course grade based on the following rubric:

Assignment	#	Points for each	Total Points	% of Grade
Experiential Exercise	2	200	400	40%
Quiz	3	110	330	33%
Discussion Posts	10	20	200	20%
Concept Checks	10	4	40	4%
Peer	2	15	30	3%

Evaluations				

E	D	C	B	A
‹ 599 points	600 – 699	700-799	800-899	900 ›

Syllabus Change Policy
The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this course schedule. It is the student's responsibility to make note of these changes as announced in class or to be aware of these changes as they are posted in Canvas.

UNT Policies
Acceptable Student Behavior
Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct the online class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to meet with the Chair of the Department and myself. We may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. 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. The UNT COB 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.

Academic Integrity
The G. Brint Ryan College of Business takes academic honesty seriously. Ethics and integrity are important business values, essential to building trust and adhering to both professional and legal standards. Academic dishonesty destroys trust, damages the reputation and the value of the degree and is unacceptable. According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions from admonition (a warning) to expulsion from the University.
Some of the most common examples of academic integrity violations include plagiarism or cheating, such as unauthorized assistance on examinations, Quiz, research papers or case analyses. Your work must be entirely your own. When working on assignments, you should not discuss your work with others unless lapproved by the course instructor. Group assignments should only be discussed with members assigned to your group, and all group members may be held accountable in some way for known academic integrity violations in a group assignment. Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

(1) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking exams;
(2) dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, or carrying out other assignments; or
(3) the use of unauthorized notes for use in exams, looking at another student's exam answers, allowing another student to look at your own exam answers, or requesting or passing of information during the exam. 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 all materials taken from Internet sites. Another example of academic dishonesty relates to improper attribution. When preparing your assignments, you must cite all outside sources in the manner requested by your instructor. Copying or using material from any source prepared by or previously submitted by others, at UNT or other institutions, or downloaded from the Internet, is plagiarism. Unless directed otherwise in an assignment, large scale "cutting and pasting" from other sources, even if properly footnoted, is not appropriate. You should synthesize this material in your own words and provide a footnote. Your instructor will specify what materials, if any, may be used on the tests and exams. Using materials

other than those permitted, talking with other individuals during the exam, individuals exchanging information about an exam when one has taken the exam and the other has not, or copying or using material from another individual's exam is academic dishonesty and will result in a meeting to discuss academic integrity violations and potentially issue sanctions mentioned above, and may result in ineligibility for academic scholarships. The use of online assistance, such as sites commonly used for finding Quiz solutions, group chat, cell phones, smart watches, and similar tools during exams is not allowed for any reason unless specifically permitted. No portion of an exam may be copied or photographed without permission. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the University's status as an institution of higher education. A student is responsible for responding to a request to discuss suspected academic dishonesty when issued by an instructor or other University official. If a student fails to respond after a proper attempt at notification has been made, the University may take appropriate academic actions in the absence of the student's participation. Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (Policy 16.004) The University of North Texas (UNT) prohibits discrimination and harassment because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law in its application and admission processes; educational programs and activities; employment policies, procedures, and processes; and university facilities. The University takes active measures to prevent such conduct and investigates and takes remedial action when appropriate.

Attendance and Participation. You are expected to remain highly engaged in all CANVAS course activities. All CANVAS participation is recorded automatically. The instructor is fully aware of the frequency and duration of each CANVAS engagement throughout the semester.

CANVAS course platform. It is the student's responsibility to learn how to use the University of North Texas CANVAS course platform available at http://canvas.unt.edu/. In the event that you have difficulty with the course web site, please contact the CANVAS Help Desk first!
 In the event that any interruption occurs during a quiz or an assignment, please contact the Help Desk and obtain a "record number" BEFORE contacting the professor!

ODA Policy
UNT makes reasonable academic accommodations for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website (https://disability.unt.edu/).

Use of Generative Articial Intelligence (Gen AI) Tools
In this course, the use of Generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, DALL·E, Copilot, Gemini, Midjourney) must comply with the University of North Texas Policy 06.003, *Student Academic Integrity*. Under this policy, using unauthorized assistance, submitting AI-generated content as your own work, or failing to properly attribute sources—including AI tools—may constitute academic misconduct, which can result in penalties ranging from a warning to course failure, probation, suspension, or expulsion.
Course-specific expectations:
- **Individual assignments and exams**: Unless explicitly authorized by the instructor, use of GenAI tools to generate content, solve problems, or provide answers is not permitted.
- **Group projects and experiential exercises**: If AI tools are used, this must be pre-approved by the instructor, and their role in generating or assisting with content must be clearly disclosed in the submission (e.g., "Portions of the background research were generated with ChatGPT and verified by the authors").

- **Citation**: If authorized, AI-generated material must be cited in accordance with course guidelines, noting the tool name, version (if available), date of use, and the exact prompt(s) provided.
- **Responsibility**: Students remain fully responsible for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of all submitted work, regardless of whether AI tools are used.

Unauthorized or undisclosed use of GenAI tools will be treated as a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy.

Course Schedule

Week	Dates	Module	Chapter	Deliverables (Due Dates)
1	Aug 18 to Aug 24	Module 1	Ch 1- 21st Century Marketing Channels	Concept Check (Ch 1 - 21st Century Marketing Channels) - Due Aug 24; Discussion Post Reply and Peer reply- Deadline Aug 24th
2	Aug 25 to Aug 31	Module 1	Ch 2- Channel Roles & Relationships	Concept Check (Ch 2 - Channel Roles & Relationships)- Due Aug 31; Discussion Post Reply and Peer reply- Deadline Aug 31st
3	Sep 1 to Sep 7	Module 1	Ch 3 - Channel Resource Advantage & SD-Logic	Concept Check (Ch 3- Channel Resource Advantage & SD-Logic) - Due Sep 7; Discussion Post Reply and Peer reply- Deadline Sep 7th
4	Sep 8 to Sep 14	Module 1	Ch 4 - Global Markets & Political Economy	Concept Check (Ch 4- Global Markets & Political Economy) - Due Sep 14th; Discussion Post Reply and Peer reply- Deadline Sep 14th
5	Sep 15 to Sep 21		No new Chapters- Prepare for Quiz 1	Quiz 1 (Module 1) Due on September 21st
6	Sep 22 to Sep 28		Experiential Exercise 1 (Submission Week)	Experiential Exercise Due Sep 28th
7	Sep 29 to Oct 5	Module 2	Ch 5 - Creating Value Chains (Structure & Stricture)	Concept Check (Ch 5 - Creating Value Chains (Structure & Stricture)- Due Oct 5th ; Discussion Post Reply and Peer reply- Deadline Oct 5th
8	Oct 6 to Oct 12	Module 2	Ch 6 - Navigating the Turbulent Cs	Concept Check (Ch 6- Navigating the Turbulent Cs) - Due Oct 12th; Discussion Post Reply and Peer reply- Deadline Oct 12th
9	Oct 13 to Oct 19	Module 2	Ch 7 - Conflict Resolution in Marketing Channels	Concept Check (Ch 7 - Conflict Resolution in Marketing Channels)- Due Oct 19th; Discussion Post Reply and Peer reply- Deadline Oct 19th
10	Oct 20 to Oct 26	Module 2	Ch 8- Global Transportation & Logistics	Concept Check (Ch 8 - Global Transportation & Logistics)- Due Oct 26th; Discussion Post Reply and Peer reply- Deadline Oct 26th
11	Oct 27 to Nov 2		No new Chapters- Prepare for Quiz 2	Quiz 2 (Module 2)deadline-Nov 2nd
12	Nov 3 to Nov 9		Experiential Exercise 2 (Submission Week)	Experiential Exercise Due Nov 9th
13	Nov 10 to Nov 16	Module 3	Ch 9 - Value Chain Management	Concept Check (Ch 9 - Value Chain Management) - Due Nov 16th; Discussion Post Reply and Peer reply- Deadline Nov 16th

14	Nov 17 to Nov 23	Module 3	Ch 10 - Measuring Channel Performance	Concept Check (Ch 10 - Measuring Channel Performance) - Due Nov 23rd; Discussion Post Reply and Peer reply- Deadline Nov 23rd
15	Nov 24 to Nov 30		THANKSGIVING BREAK	
16	Dec 1 to Dec 7		Quiz 3	Quiz 3 (Module 3)- Due Dec 7th