# 

# **MKT 382.37** **(Unique #06590)**

# **STRATEGIC BRANDING**

# Fall Semester 2022

# MW 11:00am – 12:15pm

# RRH 3.310

Class meetings will be conducted entirely in-person, except when the university advises online-only courses due to current health conditions or inclement weather, or when needed to facilitate an off-site guest speaker.

Students who cannot attend multiple in-person class sessions should proactively communicate and collaborate with the instructor, teaching assistant and classmates to ensure they are able to achieve the course’s learning objectives, engage with their brand audit project teams, and complete all required assignments.

**Instructor**

Prof. Steven M. Brister (“Prof. Brister”) Pronouns: he/him/his

Office: CBA 6.432D (south side of CBA near the Kelleher Entrepreneurship Center)

Office Hours: Thursday 1:00-2:00pm (RRH 5.416 Faculty Lounge), and by appointment

UT Email: steven.brister@mccombs.utexas.edu

Professor’s Mobile/Text (For emergencies only, please): 213-804-4676

**Teaching Assistant**

Nidhi Shah, Graduate Student (School of Information) Pronouns: she/her/hers

UT Email: NidhiShah@utexas.edu

TA’s Mobile/Text (Emergencies only): 502-203-6174

**CONTACT**

The Canvas website for this class is the main source for important course information and communications including updates to the course schedule, assigned readings, and key slides for the lectures. Please enable Canvas notifications so you will be aware of important announcements, discussions, and grade posts.

**Canvas messages are the best way to contact the professor and TA outside of class or office hours.** We will respond to Canvas messages daily (on weekdays).

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The most valuable asset many firms have is their brand. In our global economy, product and service offerings can be replicated by competing firms, while the knowledge and attitudes consumers have about brands is not easily duplicated. Therefore, many companies recognize that the investment they make in the creation and communication of their brand will become a strategic differentiator in the future.

This course will focus on the art and science of branding as a fundamental element of marketing strategy.  Students will get hands-on experience with strategies, frameworks, and specific tactics for building, leveraging, and defending strong brands in any industry.  All aspects covered will be in the context of actual applications of brand concepts to real-world challenges.  Discussions will focus on current opportunities and challenges facing brand managers in a variety of industries and markets.

**COURSE OVERVIEW**

In order to focus the class experience on deeper understanding of the core concepts and real-world applications, **students are expected to complete the assigned readings in advance**.

Class sessions will typically consist of brief class lectures reinforcing key points from the readings, followed by interactive case discussions and individual/team exercises that apply the concepts to real-world situations. Lecture Slidesfor each class session will be posted on Canvas prior to class, and you are encouraged to download and preview them prior to class. However, these slides will not contain the depth of information conveyed in class.

Each student will be asked to participate actively in class sessions, and to not just be a passive observer. Case preparation homework assignments will encourage students to form their opinions and questions about the case material in advance. If I call upon you directly in a class discussion, it is not an attempt to embarrass you. Knowing that you come from various backgrounds and experiences, I simply hope that each of you will contribute to the depth of knowledge shared in this class.

Guest speakers will connect course topics to their experience in the real world at a few points during the semester.

**REQUIRED READING MATERIALS**

**Kellogg on Branding in a Hyper-Connected World**(~$25)edited by Alice M. Tybout and Tim Calkins, available through Amazon and other online retailers. (Note: The prior version of this book was published in 2003, and although it is available at no charge as an e-book through the UT Libraries website, it is significantly outdated.)

The **Strategic Branding Readings** (~$30) and **Strategic Branding** **Cases** (~$30) packets are available online from Harvard Business Press. You can access this resource through the links provided on Canvas. Each student must purchase their own copy of the HBP reading and case packets. Please do not share copies of these materials, as this is a violation of copyright.

The specific required and supplemental readings for each class session will be specified within the

Canvas module for each class, and may include PDFs or URL links to **Additional Business Press Articles** (from The Wall Street Journal, NY Times, Adweek, etc.).

**ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING**

Your grade in the course will be determined by your performance on a team-oriented multi-phase brand audit project, case-based homework assignments, and your contributions to class discussions.

Brand Audit Project Multiple Due Dates 60%

Case-Based Homework Assignments Multiple Due Dates 20%

Class Discussion Contributions Throughout Semester 20%

100%

Final grades will follow the plus/minus system with these ranges: A: 100-93, A-: 92-90, B+: 89-87, B: 86-83, B-: 82-80 = B-, C+: 79-77, C: 76-73, C-: 72-70, D+: 69-67, D: 66-63, D-: 62-60, F: 59 or lower. To ensure fairness, all numbers are absolute, and will NOT be rounded up or down. Consequently, an 89.9 average will earn a B+, not an A-.

Please note that late work will not be accepted, except as made necessary by illness or a significant emergency. Any requests for late submission of work should be made directly to Prof. Brister, preferably well in advance of the due date.

Brand Audit Team Project & Presentation (60% of Final Grade)

Each student will participate in the development of a multi-phase brand audit project as part of a team. In order to maximize the diversity of backgrounds on each team, Prof. Brister and the TA will manage the team assignments. Each team will choose a different brand to study, and at the end of the semester each team present their insights and recommendations to the entire class.

The purpose of this assignment is to help develop your brand research and analysis skills, and to allow students to apply multiple branding concepts to a real world business case. More detailed information on this project will be distributed early in the semester and posted on Canvas.

Brand Audit Project Components:

1. Brand Challenge Identification (Team) **Thursday 9/8** For Review & Approval Only

* Each team will identify 2-3 brands with significant branding challenges for possible audit, based on the team’s interests and preliminary research.
  + Format: 1-2 page Word document (apx. ½ page per brand)

1. Brand Meaning Report (Individual) **Wednesday 9/21** 5% of Final Grade

* Each team member will conduct 2 one-on-one in-depth interviews with target market consumers to identify brand associations and assess their strength, favorability and uniqueness.
  + Format: Word document with summary of consumer-based brand equity components based on analysis of your interviews, along with full interview notes. Ideal length: 2 page summary, plus interview notes.

1. Brand Audit Report (Team) **Monday 10/3** 15% of Final Grade

* Based on extensive research, analysis and collaboration, each team will complete a comprehensive Brand Audit report that details your team’s analysis and findings regarding the brand’s current situation.
  + Format: Apx. 15 page professional document that summarizes (in key graphics) and describes (in text narrative) your team’s findings for each major aspect of the brand. You may choose to submit in a variety of formats (PowerPoint presentation in notes view, Word document with graphics, magazine-style publication, etc.), but you must include both visual summaries and text narrative.

1. Brand Audit Presentation (Team) **Mon 10/3 & Wed 10/5** 5% of Final Grade

* Teams will present an executive summary (PowerPoint or other presentation software) of their Brand Audit and key challenges faced by the brand.
  + Format: A 10-12 minute in-class presentation (supported by presentation slides) that highlights key elements of your brand audit and introduces your brand’s challenges to the class.

1. Brand Recommendations Research Results (Team) **Friday 11/11** 5% of Final Grade

* Each team will develop, field and analyze a survey that probes your brand challenges, and elements of the team’s brand development recommendations.
  + Format: Document with an overview of your survey objectives and audience, you team’s full survey tool (including branching for different respondents and responses), and an Excel workbook with all survey data, well formatted for ease-of-review by the instructor.

1. Brand Recommendations Report (Team) **Friday 11/18** 15% of Final Grade

* Each team will develop 3-4 specific brand development strategies (with supporting tactics) that address the brand’s challenges.
  + Format: Apx. 5-6 page professional document that details the team’s recommendations concerning how the brand should address its challenges over the next few years.

1. Recommendations Presentation (Team) **Mon 11/28 & Wed 11/30** 5% of Final Grade

* Teams will present an executive summary (PowerPoint or other presentation software) of their brand development recommendations.
  + Format: A 10-12 minute in-class presentation (supported by presentation slides) that explains your team’s recommended strategic solutions for the brand’s challenges.

1. Individual Contribution to Team  **Friday 12/2** 10% of Final Grade

* Each student will receive an individual contribution grade based on self-evaluation, peer evaluations, and professor/TA observations.

Case-Based Homework Assignments (20% of Final Grade)

For each of the 9 assigned cases, a set of homework questions will be provided on Canvas. You will need to draft your answers to these questions, and submit a 1-2 page Word document prior to class. These are not full/formal case briefings. For some cases you will answer a few specific questions, and for others you will write a brief decision analysis memo.

To receive credit for each assignment, you must submit your responses online through Canvas prior to the start of class. These homework assignments will receive points based on the following criteria:

* 3 points = Excellent level of completion
* 2 points = Average level of completion
* 1 point = Minimum level of completion
* 0 points = Insufficient level of completion/Missing

Late assignments will not be accepted; however, you will receive credit for all homework submitted prior to class even if you are unable to attend. Your lowest homework assignment score will be dropped, for example if you were unable to complete the case homework prior to class.

Students should be aware that these assignments will be submitted to a plagiarism detection tool such as Turnitin.com. Turnitin is a software resource intended to address plagiarism and improper citation. The software works by cross-referencing submitted materials with an archived database of journals, essay, newspaper articles, books, and other published work. In addition, other methods may be used to determine the originality of the paper. This software is not intended to replace or substitute for the faculty member's judgment regarding detection of plagiarism.

The final homework grade for each student will be calculated based on their total points as a percentage of the potential homework points. For example, if a student earns 3 points on each of six assignments, 2 points on each of two assignments, and does not complete one assignment, they have earned 22 points out of a maximum of 24, and will receive a grade of 91.7

Class Discussion Contributions (20% of Final Grade)

Each student’s contributions to class discussions will be evaluated based on quality, i.e., how it adds to the learning experience of the course. Quality is not necessarily a function of quantity.

The following guidelines will be used in evaluating a student’s contribution to each class:

*Outstanding (3 points):* Contributions provided important insights and well as fruitful direction for the class. Arguments were well-supported and persuasively presented. If this student had not participated, the quality of the class discussion would have been significantly diminished.

*Good (2):* Contributions were on-target, fairly well-supported and persuasive. If this student had participated, the quality of the class discussion would have been slightly diminished.

*Observing Non-Participant (1):* Contributed nothing to the class discussion, i.e., a student is present (in-class or online) but is silent.

*Repetitive/Obvious (0):* Student’s comments were obvious and repetitive, and did not add value to the discussion. (Note this means there is a penalty for taking up “airtime” without value.)

*Absent (0):* Learning is enhanced through in-class discussions, so consistent attendance (in class or online) is required to get the most out of the course. Students who are unable to attend specific class sessions will be able to the recording by request.

Note that class contribution points may be deducted at the discretion of the professor and TA for inappropriate behavior in class or online.

The final class discussion contributions grades will be determined by a curve with the median class points earning a 90, and the remaining grades typically distributed between 80 and 100. An update on your participation points and the class average will be provided at the mid-point of the semester.

**COURSE ENVIRONMENT**

Each student should take personal responsibility for helping create a positive, productive class environment. This includes common courtesies such as arriving on time, silencing your cell phone, and refraining from texting, eating and having personal conversations during class. Please do your best to get the most out of each class session by avoiding multi-tasking, checking email, messaging, etc.

Use of personal digital devices (i.e., laptops, tablets, smartphones, etc.) will be allowed in class. However, use should be limited to activities that support the course’s learning objectives – taking notes, researching/providing information relevant to class discussions (assuming it does not take time and attention away from class activities), and accessing class material on Canvas.

Due to interactive nature of this course, it is critical that all students make an effort to get to know all of their classmates, and that they help the instructor build a learning community that is fully inclusive and that respects the perspectives and input of all students.

In order to promote academic integrity and provide a fair environment for all students, all exam and project requirements will be strictly enforced. Any infractions will be reported to Student Judicial Services.

**INSTRUCTOR BIO**

I grew up in Waco, TX and earned an MBA in Marketing from the University of Texas after completing a BA degree in Economics and History at Duke University. A few years ago, I returned to UT in order to share marketing insights from my professional experience with the next generation of marketing and business leaders.

I began my marketing career by working at several advertising, direct marketing and branding agencies, including Leo Burnett (Chicago) and Landor Associates (San Francisco). My first “client-side” experience was at DirecTV (Los Angeles), where I led the customer acquisition and e-business marketing teams. Later, I served as a Regional VP of Marketing for Time Warner Cable (Los Angeles), with responsibility for marketing functions including brand development, product marketing, customer acquisition and retention, and revenue development.

I keep busy outside of class with administrative responsibilities (as Asst. Chair of the Marketing Department) and with consulting engagements. For example, prior to the COVID pandemic, I completed a yearlong engagement serving as the interim Chief Marketing Officer for Andrew Harper’s Hideaway Report. And a few years before that, I launched my own entrepreneurial venture, GayFamilyTrips.com.

My personal interests include travel, outdoor fitness (running, hiking, bicycling, paddling and swimming), cooking, reading, and listening to music.

**PRELIMINARY Course Schedule**

A roadmap for course content is outlined below, but is subject to change.

Students should refer the course’s Canvas website for detailed, up-to-date information and the assigned readings for each class period. Students are responsible for monitoring announcements made in class and on Canvas for specific changes in the schedule.



**Important Notifications**

**Statement on Learning Success**

Your success in this class is important to me. We will all need accommodations because we all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we’ll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. I also encourage you to reach out to the student resources available through UT.

**Academic Integrity**

Each student in the course is expected to abide by the University of Texas Honor Code: “As a student of The University of Texas at Austin, I shall abide by the core values of the University and uphold academic integrity.” **Plagiarism is taken very seriously at UT**. Therefore, if you use words or ideas that are not your own (or that you have used in previous class), you must cite your sources. Otherwise you will be guilty of plagiarism and subject to academic disciplinary action, including failure of the course. You are responsible for understanding UT’s Academic Honesty and the University Honor Code which can be found at the following web address: [deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/).

**Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited**

No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class without explicit, written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University’s Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. The University is well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found on such sites that are associated with a specific student, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to [Student Conduct and Academic Integrity](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct) in the [Office of the Dean of Students](https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/). These reports can result in sanctions, including failure of the course.

**McCombs Classroom Professionalism Policy**

The highest professional standards are expected of all members of the McCombs community. The collective class reputation and the value of the Texas MBA experience hinges on this. You should treat the Texas MBA classroom as you would a professional corporate environment.

Faculty are expected to be professional and prepared to deliver value for each and every class session. Students are expected to be professional in all respects. The Texas BBA classroom experience is enhanced when:

* Students arrive on time. On time arrival ensures that classes are able to start and finish at the scheduled time. On time arrival shows respect for both fellow students and faculty and it enhances learning by reducing avoidable distractions.
* Students display their name cards. This permits fellow students and faculty to learn names, enhancing opportunities for community building and evaluation of in-class contributions.
* Students are fully prepared for each class. Much of the learning in the Texas BBA program takes place during classroom discussions. When students are not prepared, they cannot contribute to the overall learning process. This affects not only the individual, but their peers who count on them, as well.
* Students respect the views and opinions of their colleagues. Disagreement and debate are encouraged. Intolerance for the views of others is unacceptable.
* Students attend the class section to which they are registered. Learning is enhanced when class sizes are optimized. Limits are set to ensure a quality experience and safety.
* Technology is used to enhance the class experience. When students are surfing the web, responding to e-mail, instant messaging each other, and otherwise not devoting their full attention to the topic at hand they are doing themselves and their peers a major disservice. Those around them face additional distraction. Fellow students cannot benefit from the insights of the students who are not engaged. Faculty office hours are spent going over class material with students who chose not to pay attention, rather than truly adding value by helping students who want a better understanding of the material or want to explore the issues in more depth. Students with real needs may not be able to obtain adequate help if faculty time is spent repeating what was said in class. There are often cases where learning is enhanced by the use of technology in class. Faculty will let you know when it is appropriate.
* Phones and wireless devices are turned off. We’ve all heard the annoying ringing in the middle of a meeting. Not only is it not professional, it cuts off the flow of discussion when the search for the offender begins. When a true need to communicate with someone outside of class exists (e.g., for some medical need) please inform the professor prior to class.

**Diversity and Inclusion**

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, that students’ learning needs be addressed and that the diversity that students bring to this class can be comfortably expressed and be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit to all students. Please come to me at any time with any concerns.

**Personal Pronoun Preference**

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student’s legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by a name different than what appears on the roster, and by the gender pronouns you use. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

**Student Rights & Responsibilities**

* You have a right to a learning environment that supports mental and physical wellness.
* You have a right to respect.
* You have a right to be assessed and graded fairly.
* You have a right to freedom of opinion and expression.
* You have a right to privacy and confidentiality.
* You have a right to meaningful and equal participation, to self-organize groups to improve your learning environment.
* You have a right to learn in an environment that is welcoming to all people. No student shall be isolated, excluded or diminished in any way.

With these rights come responsibilities:

* You are responsible for taking care of yourself, managing your time, and communicating with the teaching team and with others if things start to feel out of control or overwhelming.
* You are responsible for acting in a way that is worthy of respect and always respectful of others.
* Your experience with this course is directly related to the quality of the energy that you bring to it, and your energy shapes the quality of your peers’ experiences.
* You are responsible for creating an inclusive environment and for speaking up when someone is excluded.
* You are responsible for holding yourself accountable to these standards, holding each other to these standards, and holding the teaching team accountable as well.

**Religious Holy Days**

By [UT Austin policy](https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/academic-policies-and-procedures/attendance/), you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

**University Resources For Students**

Your success in this class is important to me. We will all need accommodations because we all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we’ll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. There is also a range of resources on campus:

**Services for Students with Disabilities**

This class respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds, identities, and abilities. If there are circumstances that make our learning environment and activities difficult, if you have medical information that you need to share with me, or if you need specific arrangements in case the building needs to be evacuated, please let me know. I am committed to creating an effective learning environment for all students, but I can only do so if you discuss your needs with me as early as possible. I promise to maintain the confidentiality of these discussions. If appropriate, also contact [Services for Students with Disabilities](https://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/about/), 512-471-6259 (voice) or (512) 410-6644 (video phone).

**Counseling and Mental Health Center**

Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone. There are many helpful [resources](https://www.utexas.edu/campus-life/health-and-wellness) available on campus and an important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Asking for support sooner rather than later is often helpful. If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings like anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support. A [Counselors in Academic Residence (CARE) Program](https://cmhc.utexas.edu/CARE_leblanc.html) is available in each college from the [Counseling and Mental Health Center](https://cmhc.utexas.edu/individualcounseling.html).

**Student Emergency Services**

UT’s [Student Emergency Services](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/) provides assistance, intervention, and referrals to support students navigating challenging or unexpected issues that impact their well-being and academic success. If you need to be absent from class due to a family emergency, medical or mental health concern, or academic difficulty due to crisis or an emergency situation, please register with [Student Emergency Services](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/). SES will verify your situation and notify your professors.

**Important Safety Information**

If you have concerns about the safety or behavior of fellow students, TAs or Professors, call BCCAL (the [Behavior Concerns and COVID-19 Advice Line](https://safety.utexas.edu/behavior-concerns-advice-line)): 512-232-5050. Your call can be anonymous. If something doesn’t feel right – it probably isn’t. Trust your instincts and share your concerns.

**Classroom Safety And COVID-19**

To help preserve our in-person learning environment, the university recommends the following.

* Adhere to university [mask guidance](https://t.e2ma.net/click/fuzy1f/7f70iib/3gdvdxc).
* [Vaccinations are widely available](https://t.e2ma.net/click/fuzy1f/7f70iib/j9dvdxc), free and not billed to health insurance. The vaccine will help protect against the transmission of the virus to others and reduce serious symptoms in those who are vaccinated.
* [Proactive Community Testing](https://t.e2ma.net/click/fuzy1f/7f70iib/z1evdxc) remains an important part of the university’s efforts to protect our community. Tests are fast and free.
* Visit [protect.utexas.edu](https://t.e2ma.net/click/fuzy1f/7f70iib/fufvdxc) for more information.

**Title IX Reporting**

Title IX is a federal law that protects against sex and gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual misconduct, dating/domestic violence and stalking at federally funded educational institutions. UT Austin is committed to fostering a learning and working environment free from discrimination in all its forms. When sexual misconduct occurs in our community, the university can:

1. Intervene to prevent harmful behavior from continuing or escalating.
2. Provide support and remedies to students and employees who have experienced harm or have become involved in a Title IX investigation.
3. Investigate and discipline violations of the university’s [relevant policies](https://titleix.utexas.edu/policies).

Faculty members and certain staff members are considered “Responsible Employees” or “Mandatory Reporters,” which means that they are required to report violations of Title IX to the Title IX Coordinator. **I am a Responsible Employee and must report any Title IX-related incidents** that are disclosed in writing, discussion, or one-on-one. Before talking with me or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX-related incident, be sure to ask whether they are a responsible employee. If you want to speak with someone for support or remedies without making an official report to the university, email [advocate@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:advocate@austin.utexas.edu) For more information about reporting options and resources, visit the [Title IX Office](https://titleix.utexas.edu) or email [titleix@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:titleix@austin.utexas.edu).

**Campus Safety**

The following are recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the [Office of Campus Safety and Security](https://financials.utexas.edu/about/leadership/avp-campus-safety), 512-471-5767,

* Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus must evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.
* Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
* Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.
* In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.
* For more information, please visit [emergency preparedness](https://preparedness.utexas.edu/).