Customer Strategy  
Spring 2017

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Office Hours: T 2-3:30PM or by appointment

Course Description

Today, businesses have recognized the power of deep, creative understanding of customers, and the financial benefits of creating systematic responses to customer needs throughout the enterprise and beyond. The purpose of this course is to prepare students for this emerging competitive game by exploring the most current challenges faced by benchmark businesses as they develop their customer strategies.

The course is structured around “living” case discussions. Each class session (except for introductory and wrap-up sessions) will center around speakers from companies which represent key, cutting edge topics in today’s marketing world as identified by the instructor and you, the Fellows. In most sessions, the representative will be a top level executive who will lead a discussion about compelling problems and issues s/he faces in understanding and responding to customers. The goal of these sessions is to give you an opportunity to address ‘real world’ problems and to engage in dialogue regarding ‘real’ cases with the actual decision-maker.

The underlying goals for the course format are:

- to be real – based on actual business action – with both the positive and negative outcomes of that action
- to be current – exploring what is happening NOW .. not the more dated info from books and articles…as valuable as they might be – but what businesses are facing today as they strive to respond to customers and business dynamics
- to be interactive – to involve you in the process and help you discover/explore what works and what doesn’t

Your role: You are expected to come prepared to contribute meaningfully to the case analyses and class discussion. For each session, the class will be divided into Discussion Groups. At the beginning of class, the presenter will lay out the background and issues/questions for the case. Each group will then have one hour to analyze the case. Subsequently, each group will have the opportunity to present their ideas to the whole group. This will be followed by a general discussion and feedback.

Readings

The readings for each session will be posted electronically on Canvas. These readings are designed to provide background information for each of the case analyses. It is important to read these materials prior to class.
Grading

100% of your grade in the course is based on class participation. Every class counts and will be graded. The grade will be based on the quality of the presentations for each case as well as individual class discussion. I realize that Spring is a busy time and there are always conflicts, so each student can ‘make up’ one class with no penalty by writing a summary of your responses to the discussion questions for that week. (3 page, single-spaced limit).

Class Schedule

Most classes will be held in CBA 5.328 (except for two onsite visits). Meeting time will typically be: 3:30 – 6:30PM on Tuesdays. The class schedule will be as follows:

Class Schedule:

3:30- 4:15  Background and lay out issues
4:15- 5:15  Break into Discussion Groups
5:15- 6:15  Presentations and General Discussion
6:15- 6:30  Wrap Up

Class Norms ("Norms" = polite term for RULES)
These rules are designed to further Marketing Fellows and MBA brand equity and provide the best possible experience for everyone.

- No laptops in class except for use in presentations
- Appropriate attire is business casual
- Class will start PROMPTLY, both at the outset and after breaks
- Please do not leave for the rest room during a speaker session unless absolutely necessary- This is disruptive to the speakers and we have several breaks
Course Schedule

Tuesday, January 17  

Course Overview

Tuesday, January 24  

Customer Insights Research  

Speaker: Dr. Hoyer

Tuesday, January 31  

Marketing Frameworks

Speaker: Rob Malcomb (Executive in Residence - CCIMS)

Tuesday, February 7  

Design Thinking I

Discussion Leader: 

Frog Design: Sarah Weinstein, Program Manager

Tuesday, February 14  

Design Thinking II

Discussion Leader: 

Frog Design: Sarah Weinstein, Program Manager

Tuesday, February 21  

Consumer Package Goods/ Customer Insights -

Discussion Leader:

Dr. Pepper/Snapple Group: Jim Trebilcock, Senior Vice President Marketing and Commercial Officer

Tuesday, February 28  

Agency Case Part I (at GSD&M)

Discussion Leader: 

GSD&M: J.B. Raftus, SVP/Chief Marketing Officer

Client: Popeye's
Tuesday, March 21 - **TBD**

Discussion Leader:

Tuesday, March 28 - **Fashion/Retailing**

Discussion Leader: Theresa Palermo, EVP/CMO Vera Bradley

Tuesday, April 4 - **TBD**

Discussion Leader:

Tuesday, April 11 - **Agency Case Part II**

Student Presentations to GSD&M & Popeye's

Tuesday, April 18 - **Travel Technology**

Discussion Leader:

Home Away: Tom Beagles, Product Marketing Manager

Tuesday, April 25 - **Purpose Driven Business Strategy**

Discussion Leaders:

Seventh Generation: Joey Bergstein, CMO

Tuesday, May 2 - **Administrative Session: Summary and Feedback**

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259.