Marketing 430 Syllabus
Professor Aparna A. Labroo

Spring 2020
Section – Tuesday 6:00 pm – 9 pm
Note: This course has mandatory first class attendance

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This course will introduce you to the essentials of marketing: how firms and consumers behave and what strategies and methods marketers can use to successfully operate profitably in today's dynamic environment. The course goals are:

- To define the strategic role of marketing in the firm.
- To introduce the key elements of marketing analysis.
- To provide a sound conceptual “tool kit” for analyzing marketing problems.
- To advance understanding of marketing process as a framework of looking at the world.

Readings: All key readings are provided in the course packet. There also are some quantitative videos on P&L and Break-even analysis that are posted on canvas. Please review all required materials for the class they are assigned prior to our meeting.

The course also includes an optional textbook: Strategic Marketing Management (SMM) by Alex Chernev – 9th edition. While this textbook reinforces several important concepts that will be discussed in class, our class discussions will draw on several textbooks, current happenings, and original examples developed by me. The class is therefore much richer at a strategic level than the textbook and there is no substitute for the classroom experience.

Occasionally the frameworks in the textbook appear more extended than those we discuss in class because of its executional focus. For example, the text proposes a G-STIC model to analyze marketing problems but for the purpose of our class, I only focus on G (goal), S (strategy), and T (tactics). The GST refers to high level decisions. Instead, the “I” refers to implementation of tactics – usually logistical details pertaining to timelines and people who will deliver on the tactics. While these executions are appropriate when you design a marketing plan for your organization, in a class or case discussion these issues verge on the hypothetical and are not useful. Similarly, “C” refers to controls on implementation – and as we do not delve in the nitty gritty of implementation scheduling, we also do not focus in this class on controls for ensuring timelines and responsibilities are delivered. In another instance, you will find that the textbook lists tactical decisions relating to product, price, place (distribution), communication, incentive, brand, and service. I consolidate several of these concepts by referring to product, brand, and service tactics as “product” and to incentive and communication tactics as “promotion.” Thus, for me tactics are the 4 Ps – product, price, place, and promotion – and this approach is more common among firms. But the textbook does a great job of defining and listing key marketing concepts and framework and providing workbooks that convert strategic thinking to execution.
**Grading:** The course grade is based upon the following:

- Class contribution (individual): 10%
- Three case memos (group): 10% each
- Three quant memos (individual): 5% each
- Final exam (individual): 45%

**Class contribution:** Grading is based on quality of in-class contribution. Please feel free to ask any questions you want, in or outside of class, to maximize your understanding of the material.

**Group case memos:** Groups should be formed at the end of the first class/before start of the second class. Each group should comprise 4-6 members. Copies of group case memos should be uploaded to canvas before the **start of class** on the day that the assignment is due. Write-ups will be graded from 1 to 10, as follows:

- 1 – 4: Problems, probably structural
- 5 – 6: Some good insights, but needs more
- 7 – 8: Satisfactory: Some excellent work but some lapses
- 9: Sustained excellent work, no lapses
- 10: Inspired. Scores in this category will be rare.

After the group memos are completed team members will evaluate each other's performance using the Team Evaluation Form. This form is to be submitted with the final exam.

I offer all groups the **option** of inviting me to join in any one of your group case discussions, for up to one hour. The call in could be for a case that is an assigned write-up (Gap, Nano, Nike) or for one that is not an assigned write-up (Accor, Chase Sapphire, Red Lobster, Royal Reels, Unilever). Typically, I would call in and join the group discussion as an observer, asking questions, making suggestions, and directing attention to decision neglect spots as necessary. I could also answer any questions you have. Scheduling will be on a first come first served basis.

**Final exam:** The final exam is an **individual** take-home case analysis. This case must **not** be discussed with your group members or anyone else until after you have submitted your solution memo. The case will be distributed on the last day of class and the solution is due within the next 3 days. There is a 10% penalty for each hour the exam is submitted late (no exceptions), so please plan accordingly. Early submissions are welcome. The case analysis format and grading criteria will be the same as for group case memos.