Syllabus

**Marketing Practicum - MGT 4803**

Instructor: Michael Buchanan

Email: [michael.buchanan@scheller.gatech.edu](mailto:michael.buchanan@scheller.gatech.edu)

Phone: 404-983-5039

Office: 431 (4213) – Scheller College of Business

Office hours: M/W/F 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and by appointment

Class time: Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 12:20 p.m. – 1:10 p.m.

Class location: SCOB – Room 221

Course Overview

The design of the marketing practicum course is to help students gain experience in solving marketing problems faced by real-world companies. Student teams will pick a project from the companies that have agreed to participate in the course. Student teams will work on this project for the entire semester. Thus, this course will expose participants to marketing and business problems faced by organizations and develop the relevant skills for critically analyzing these problems and providing a tractable solution.

Course objectives

The objectives of this course are to:

1. Expose you to current, real-world marketing problems faced by companies
2. Equip you with the conceptual frameworks and tools for solving practical marketing problems

Student Expectations

1. Treat the project as a client project rather than a class project – you should work with the project sponsor in a similar manner to a professional services firm
2. Participants are expected to liaison with company project sponsor ***every week*** – set up weekly meeting time, ask clarifying questions and keep sponsor informed
3. Meet with professor every week to consult on frameworks and obtain project guidance
4. Develop a plan for all the information you need from the project sponsor and communicate it to them
5. Students must make a presentation and/or prepare a marketing plan. The deliverables will be determined jointly by the instructor and company executives.

Meeting with instructor

Each team must meet with the instructor every week to provide an update and seek direction/guidance. Although it's recommended to do so during the allotted course hours in class, we can schedule alternate times throughout the semester including phone calls as opposed to face to face meetings if this helps ensure the full team's attendance. Given the limited number of sessions over the course of the semester, your attendance and full participation is essential to both your success/learning as well as for the benefit of your team members.

Group Project

Project presentation/report: 85% (including peer evaluation)

The final deliverables will be determined by the client and project team (e.g. presentation highlighting insights and recommendations). The project deliverable will be assembled on a group basis. Teams will be determined once the course begins and the number of team members will be a function of overall class size (most likely 4-5 people per team).

* Group Project: 85%
  + Instructor-based: 65%
  + Peer-based: 20%

The team-based portion of the grade will be determined via an anonymous survey process where each team member will assign a score to each other team member. The score will be on a scale from 60-100 and based on variables such as effort, quality, attendance, innovativeness, and creativity. An average of each team member's score will be used to compute the corresponding grade.

The presentation/report will be graded jointly by the instructor and company executives. However, primary emphasis will be placed on the evaluation by the client company.

Class Attendance

Attendance accounts for 15% of the final grade as determined by the sign-in sheets. You are expected to be on time for each class. If you are coming from a location across campus or have another conflict that will prohibit you from being on time consistently, notify me within the first week of classes. If you are aware you need to be late for a specific class during the semester you can email me to let me know.

Unexcused Absences Attendance Grade

0-2 100

3 75

4 50

5 or more 0

**Note**: Unexcused absences on all Group Project days count as two (2) absences. Each unexcused absence beyond 5 will reduce your overall grade by an additional 2 points.

Participation in official Institute activities as an athletic event as a member of the team or staff, or representing the Institute as part at a competition or conference, or a mandatory military deployment, or hospitalization, or attending the funeral of an immediate family member are excused.

If you will miss class due to participation in approved institute activities (such as field trips and athletic events; see <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/4/#> for the institute absence policy), you must contact the instructor beforehand in order to be excused from attending.

Students who are absent because of participation in a particular religious observance will be permitted to make up the work missed during their absence with no late penalty, provided the student informs the course instructor of the upcoming absence, in writing, within the first two weeks of class, and provided the student makes up the missed material within the time frame established by the course instructor. Exercising one’s rights under this policy is subject to the Georgia Tech Honor Code. <http://www.policylibrary.gatech.edu/student-affairs/academic-honor-code>.

Academic Integrity

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. For information on Georgia Tech's Academic Honor Code, please visit [http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code/](http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code/%20) or <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/>.

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services at (404)894-2563 or http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/, as soon as possible, to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

Other Comments

To maintain a professional environment, please limit personal social media requests to LinkedIn. I am happy to connect on LinkedIn and support your networking and career-related goals. My LinkedIn profile can be found at: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/michaeltbuchanan>

Most students have a goal of finding a job in the open market after graduation. Some of you, however, will move on to be entrepreneurs or work for a family business. I am happy to help in your career pursuits presuming your class attendance, participation, and effort is in line with the request.

Academic Honor Code

Georgia Tech has an Honor Code that engages both faculty and students in a pact that they will maintain and uphold the integrity of the academic process. Students in this class are expected to adhere to the Georgia Tech Honor Code.

Georgia Tech Honor Code requires that every instance of academic misconduct be reported to the Office of Student Integrity (OSI). This reporting is required even if a resolution or sanction has been agreed upon by the professor and student without a hearing with OSI. Please keep this reporting requirement in mind at all times.

Support Services and Resources

In your time at Georgia Tech, you may find yourself in need of support. Below you will find some resources to support you both as a student and as a person.

***Academic support***

* Center for Academic Success <http://success.gatech.edu>
  + 1-to-1 tutoring <http://success.gatech.edu/1-1-tutoring>
  + Peer-Led Undergraduate Study (PLUS) <http://success.gatech.edu/tutoring/plus>
  + Academic coaching <http://success.gatech.edu/coaching>
* Residence Life's Learning Assistance Program

<https://housing.gatech.edu/learning-assistance-program>

* + Drop-in tutoring for many 1000 level courses
* OMED: Educational Services (<http://omed.gatech.edu/programs/academic-support>)
  + Group study sessions and tutoring programs
* Communication Center (<http://www.communicationcenter.gatech.edu>)
  + Individualized help with writing and multimedia projects

***Personal Support***

Georgia Tech Resources:

* The Office of the Dean of Students:  <http://studentlife.gatech.edu/content/services>; **404-894-6367**; Smithgall Student Services Building 2nd floor
  + You also may request assistance at <https://gatech-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report/index.php/pid383662?>
* Counseling Center:  <http://counseling.gatech.edu>; **404-894-2575**; Smithgall Student Services Building 2nd floor
  + Services include short-term individual counseling, group counseling, couples counseling, testing and assessment, referral services, and crisis intervention.  Their website also includes links to state and national resources.
  + *Students in crisis may walk in during business hours (8am-5pm, Monday through Friday) or contact the counselor on call after hours at* ***404-894-2204****.*
* Students’ Temporary Assistance and Resources (STAR): <http://studentlife.gatech.edu/content/need-help>
  + Can assist with interview, clothing, food, and housing needs.
* Stamps Health Services: <https://health.gatech.edu>; **404-894-1420**
  + Primary care, pharmacy, women’s health, psychiatry, immunization and allergy, health promotion, and nutrition
* OMED: Educational Services:  <http://www.omed.gatech.edu>
* Women’s Resource Center:  <http://www.womenscenter.gatech.edu>; **404-385-0230**
* LGBTQIA Resource Center:  <http://lgbtqia.gatech.edu/>; **404-385-2679**
* Veteran’s Resource Center:  <http://veterans.gatech.edu/>; **404-385-2067**
* Georgia Tech Police: **404-894-2500**

Timelines (tentative)

* Week 1: Present project overview. Finalize team members and project assignment.
* Week 1: Identify a project leader – this individual must manage all communication with the company
* Week 2: Assign internal roles
* Week 2: Team meeting with project sponsor to understand project objective, scope, and deliverables (in-person or via phone)
* Week 3: Develop a project plan – please be specific about deadlines (*general rule: Share all information that you are sending to the company with me*)
* Week 3: Develop an information plan – what information will you need from the project sponsor and submit it to the company?
* Week 2 – Week 15: Project execution
* April 9: Provide project slides/report to me for feedback
* Week of April 16 and April 23: Project presentations with sponsor and me
* **April 25st: Please submit final deliverable to me by 5:00 p.m.**

Notes

* Please have interim project debriefs with the sponsor to make sure the project is meeting expectations (I leave it to your team to coordinate with the project sponsor)
* I will have a project debrief every month with the project sponsor

Marketing Plan Outline (example)

*Executive Summary*

*Product/Service Description*

Include a clear description of the product or service. Too many plans skip this section and assume that the reader will be familiar with the product or service.

*Opportunity Analysis*

1. What is the unmet or poorly met need in the market?
   1. What is the reason for the poorly met or unmet need (e.g., is there a change in the STEEP factors?).
2. What is the size of this opportunity?
3. What are your business goals?

State precisely the marketing goals and objectives for this product/service – what is the company trying to achieve? This may be stated in terms of sales volume, market share, return on investment, brand awareness, or other objectives.

*Target Segments*

1. What are the target segments? What is the potential opportunity in the target segments? Will focusing on these target segments enable us to achieve our business goals? What are their decision dynamics (buyer journey, influences, value analysis)?

*How will you win? (Positioning, Differentiation, and Value Proposition)*

1. What is your product’s overall positioning? How do you want to be known to your customers?
2. What is your differentiation relative to competition?
3. What is your value proposition for your target segment? (i.e. what are the key benefits that you will provide to your target segments?)
   1. Write a clear value proposition statement.
4. How will you price the offering based on the value to the target segments? Provide a justification for the price.

*How will you reach customers?*

1. How will you deliver your offering to the target segments (i.e., channels)? Why is this channel structure appropriate for the product offering and for your target segments?

*How will you communicate with customers?*

1. How will you promote your message to target customers? Be very specific on how you intend to identify, reach, deliver your message, and persuade customers.

*Marketing Budget and Return on Marketing Investment*

1. Include your estimated marketing cost (i.e., the cost of your marketing tactics) and the anticipated return.