

COURSE: AP/ADMS 4250. 3.0 – Marketing Strategy

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:

- 1) For students in an Honours program, 78 credits, including AK/ADMS 2200 3.00 (formerly AK/ADMS 3200 3.00);
- 2) For other students, a grade of C+ or better in AK/ADMS 2200 3.00 (formerly AK/ADMS 3200 3.00).

It will be highly beneficial to take this course after taking at least two upper-level business classes. For students who just begin their studies the course might be too challenging.

REQUIRED COURSE TEXT / READINGS:

Markstrat. Participant's Handbook,
Jean-Claude Larréché, Hubert Gatignon and Rémi Triolet, StratX International, copyright 2012

The book is available for download in the PDF format after you purchase a Markstrat Participant Activation Key (PAK) online at <http://estore.stratxsimulations.com>.

Course ID for the Winter 2013 is **A21653**.

WEIGHTING OF COURSE:

The final grade for the course will be based on the following items weighted as indicated:

Exam #1 (individual)	25%
Exam #2 (individual)	19%
In-class exercises (case quizzes, individual)	12%
Numerical quiz #1 (individual)	5%
Numerical quiz #2 (individual)	5%
Final competitive outcome (team)	5%
Executive memos (7 rounds; team)	16%
Final project (team)	13%

No additional assignments will be offered.

COURSE INSTRUCTOR / CONTACT:

Alexander Rusetski, PhD
Assistant Professor in Marketing
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Course consultation hours: Mondays, 3:00 PM – 6:00 PM, Thursdays 3 PM – 5 PM

EXPANDED COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is built around the Markstrat online simulation that is widely used around the world for

executive, MBA, and undergraduate education. In this online game your team will manage a hi-tech firm competing with other groups of students in your class. To be successful, the team will have to monitor the environment using tools provided in the game and make decisions regarding development, positioning, distribution, and promotion of products. Unlike other marketing courses that culminate with development of marketing plans, in this class you will be able not only to propose strategies but to see the outcomes of your decisions.

You will have to purchase a Participant Activation Key (PAK) before the second meeting of the class. Failure to do so will result in the loss of marks.

There will be 7 decision periods. For each, the team will have to submit a brief (3 pages max) executive memo explaining rationale for decisions. At the end of the semester each team will prepare a project comparing marketing strategies of two competing firm and present the results in the class.

The simulation is supplemented with lectures, readings, and case studies. Each student is expected to come to class prepared and ready to discuss the assigned case. The emphasis of case studies in this class is on the situation analysis, problem determination, and consistency of suggested solutions.

The course is aimed at bringing together marketing concepts studied in other marketing classes. Students will be able to identify major marketing challenges that may face a firm and apply recent frameworks to find solutions – both in case studies and in a simulation game.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COURSE:

Detailed course schedule will be provided at the beginning of classes. The general structure is as follows, and can be changed:

- Week 1: Intro. Situation Analysis 1
- Week 2: Situation Analysis 2
- Week 3: Market Segmentation Approaches
- Week 4: Targeting strategies, Positioning, and New Products
- Week 5: **EXAM 1**
- Week 6: Brand Strategies
- Week 7: Pricing Strategies
- Week 8: Marketing Communication Channels
- Week 9: Strategy Implementation and Control
- Week 10: **EXAM 2**
- Week 11: Final Presentations
- Week 12: Final Presentations

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of the course are:

- Integration of the knowledge obtained in previous marketing and management classes and applying it to strategic choices;
- Developing a systemic and disciplined approach to the analysis of market situation and presenting its results;

- Understanding and learning to deal with time pressures and uncertainties that marketing managers face in their work;
- Obtaining hands on experience in making marketing decisions in competitive environment and defending them;
- Developing written and verbal communication skills;
- Personal development including group work, teamwork, analytical and presentation skills.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION / NOTES:

Markstrat Simulation:

To participate in the simulation you will have to 1) purchase the Participant Activation Key (PAK); and 2) download the Participant's Handbook. When purchasing the PAK you only need to specify your course ID. Leave "Industry" and "Firm" fields blank. Make sure to specify correct course ID. You will absolutely have to purchase a PAK before the second week of classes otherwise you will lose marks.

Assignments:

Executive memos should be e-mailed to the instructor no later than 1 hr before the class.

For the **competitive outcome**, a winning team gets 5 marks, the team with the lowest performance gets 1 mark. The rest of the teams will be graded based upon their relative position between the first and the last teams. Note: teams that finish below the starting point will receive 0 marks for the outcome.

Team-based components are subject to **peer evaluation** adjustment. At the end of the course each student can submit a confidential peer evaluation. Score each team mate on a 10-point scale. Grades for all group assignments will be adjusted to reflect the lack of contribution on the basis of these evaluations. If a student's average peer evaluation is 7 out of 10, then his/her team-based score will be weighted by 0.7 (e.g. team score = 80, average peer evaluation = 0.7, then $80 * 0.7 = 56$). Grades will not be adjusted up based on peer evaluations.

Exam 1 focuses on the concepts studied in the first half of the class and includes multiple-choice questions and a case analysis. Neither multiple-choice nor case parts will be returned to you, but they will be available for viewing at my office.

Exam 2 is a case analysis and focuses on student's skills in assessing the situation, correctly determining what information is relevant to a particular strategic decision, and on using this information in making strategic choices. Exam is cumulative with the emphasis on the second half of the course.

Numerical Quizzes 1 and 2 deal with the most basic calculations involved in business analysis: market shares, growth rates, basic forecasting etc. Numerical Quiz 1 is based on readings "Percentages, Shares and Future Sales" and "Analyzing Profitability". Numerical Quiz 2 is based on the reading "Prices, Revenues, Costs and Profits". Readings and practice quizzes will be provided to prepare for numerical quizzes. Numerical Quizzes are closed books, closed notes.

Case quizzes are based strictly on a case assigned for the day and are 3 questions each. 1 correct answer receives 60% mark, 2 – 75% and 3 – 100% mark. Case quizzes are open book.

Final group project consists of a presentation and a written report. Detailed outline is posted on the course web site.

Final course grades may be adjusted to conform to Program or Faculty grades distribution profiles.

Communication

Group e-mails will be sent using the course website to students' e-mail accounts that York University keeps on file. Instructor cannot change or update students' e-mails in this database. Therefore, it is students' responsibility to ensure that their e-mails on file are up to date so that all messages are received.

Grading, Assignment Submission, Lateness Penalties and Missed Tests

Grading: The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g., A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ = 7, C+ = 5, etc.). Assignments and tests will bear either a letter grade designation or a corresponding number grade (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100, A = 80 to 90, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.)

(For a full description of York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar - http://calendars.registrar.yorku.ca/pdfs/ug2004cal/calug04_5_acadinfo.pdf)

Students may take a limited number of courses for degree credit on an ungraded (pass/fail) basis. For full information on this option see Alternative Grading Option in the Atkinson Faculty of Liberal and Professional Studies section of the Undergraduate Calendar: http://calendars.registrar.yorku.ca/2012-2013/faculty_rules/AP/index.htm

Assignment Submission: Proper academic performance depends on students doing their work not only well, but on time. Accordingly, assignments for this course must be received on the due date specified for the assignment. This applies both to executive memos that have to be submitted to the instructor and simulation decisions that need to be uploaded to the Markstrat server.

Lateness Penalty: Executive memos received later than the due date will be penalized by ½ letter grade per day. Exceptions to the lateness penalty for valid reasons such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., may be entertained by the Course Instructor but will require supporting documentation (e.g., a doctor's letter). Failure to upload simulation decisions on time will not be penalized directly, but the simulation will be run with default decisions that usually results in poor performance. There will be no exceptions to this rule.

Missed Tests: Students with a documented reason for missing a course test, such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., which is confirmed by supporting documentation (e.g., doctor's letter) may request accommodation from the Course Instructor in a form of a makeup test (within a week before or a week after the test). Further extensions or accommodation will require students to submit a formal petition to the Faculty. Failure to appear at the mutually agreed time of a makeup exam will result in the grade of 0.

Deferred Standing Agreements: Deferred standing may be granted to students who are unable to write their final examination at the scheduled time or to submit their outstanding course work on the last day of classes. In order to apply for deferred standing, students must complete a Deferred Standing Agreement (DSA) form and submit their request no later than five (5) business days from the date of the exam. The request must be properly submitted with supporting documentation directly to the main office of the School of Administrative Studies (282 Atkinson), NOT to the Section Director. These requests will be considered on their merit and decisions will be communicated to the students by the main office. Students with approved DSA will be able to write their deferred examination during the School's deferred examination period which will be announced later. No further extensions of deferred exams shall be granted. The format and covered content of the deferred examination may be different from that of the originally scheduled examination. The deferred exam may be closed book, cumulative and comprehensive and may include all subjects/topics of the textbook whether they have been covered in class or not. Any request for deferred standing on medical grounds must

include an Attending Physician's Statement form; a "Doctor's Note" will not be accepted.

DSA Form:

http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/pdf/deferred_standing_agreement.pdf

Attending Physician's Statement form: <http://www.yorku.ca/laps/council/students/documents/APS.pdf>

IMPORTANT COURSE INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the following information, available on the Senate Committee on Curriculum & Academic Standards webpage (see Reports, Initiatives, Documents) - http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/senate_cte_main_pages/ccas.htm

- York's Academic Honesty Policy and Procedures/Academic Integrity Website
- Ethics Review Process for research involving human participants
- Course requirement accommodation for students with disabilities, including physical, medical, systemic, learning and psychiatric disabilities
- Student Conduct Standards
- Religious Observance Accommodation