Course Title: Retailing and E-Commerce Management
Course Number: MKTG 332, Section 001
Course Description: Retailing and E-Commerce Management is an examination of retailing as a specialized economic and social institution within the distribution process and as it relates to overall marketing activities. The planning and implementing of store and non-store (catalog, Internet) retail-marketing strategies are addressed. Critical decision alternatives, variables, forces, and processes are considered from a managerial perspective.

Class Location: Robinson Hall B203
Class Meeting Time: Wednesdays, 4:30 P.M. until 7:10 P.M.
A detailed class schedule follows as part of this syllabus.

Final Exam: Wednesday, May 8, 4:30 – 7:15 P.M.
Instructor: Jeffrey Kulick

Contact information: I usually return email and phone mail messages the same day I receive them.

Telephones (leave a message at any of these numbers):
Office: 703-993-2197
Home office: 703-281-2588
Cell: 703-851-6450

Electronic communications:
Email: jkulick@gmu.edu
jeff.kulick@verizon.net
Fax: 703-993-1809

Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 3:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M., by appointment. Other times by appointment.
Location: Room 139, Enterprise Hall
Course Prerequisites
Prior to beginning the course, students must have completed Marketing 301 and have attained degree status.

Course Materials

You will also create a journal exploring key topics and strategic issues in retailing and e-commerce. Detailed assignment information will be presented in the early classes. You will need to work outside of class and use, or develop, external information sources.

Guest speakers have been invited to share expertise with the class. Once dates are confirmed you will be notified. Please be aware that speakers’ comments may become part of the exam questions, and those comments may certainly be incorporated into your journal assignment.

I will provide you with additional materials from other sources during class. The classroom discussions and presentations will be the basis for insights and deep understanding of key concepts. These materials will be the basis for examination questions. Related support materials and presentation slides will be posted on the class website on Blackboard.

From time to time, class work and the text will be supplemented by suggestions for outside reading. These suggested materials will be for the interest and development of the student, and they will not be the basis for examinations. If you are interested in a specific topic or section, please let me know. I will be glad to share bibliographies and titles from my library.

Course and School of Management Learning Goals
Please see the Appendix for a description of how this course addresses the School of Management Undergraduate Learning Goals.

The discipline-specific goal will be emphasized, and your learning will be measured in the project and in examinations:

1. *Our students will be competent in their discipline.*
   
   You will understand the strategic role that retailing plays in the marketing mix, which will provide additional insights on how all marketing plans are constructed and used.
Key subject areas include understanding the structure and nature of the retailing environment, applying consumer behavior to retailing, retailing strategy and the related financial strategy, the strategic role of human resources management in retailing, supply and value chain management, merchandise buying, elements of the retailing marketing mix, managing the store, and store layout and visual merchandising. E-commerce is explored within the context of traditional retailing and its special challenges and opportunities, with an emphasis on the role of technology.

Your progress against these goals will be measured in the examinations and class journal project.

This is a class within the Marketing Area, and the importance of the marketing aspects cannot be overemphasized. The class is intended to be an introduction to retailing and e-commerce. It is not possible to cover these topics exhaustively in one semester. If you have an interest in pursuing retailing, you will find this a solid foundation. It will also appeal specifically to individuals who will work with retailers, e.g., wholesalers, business-to-business marketers and manufacturers. Students who have an entrepreneurial interest will also find this course rewarding.

Class structure
The course incorporates three basic elements or approaches – introduction of concepts through reading and lectures, application of these concepts through class discussions and case studies, and integration of the concepts in the semester project.

New concepts will be presented throughout the course, all of which will build toward a comprehensive view.

Classes typically will include a presentation on key concepts, case discussions, and discussion of the internet-based exercises from each chapter of the textbook. Class discussion will form a crucial element to integrate the concepts. As such, class participation is essential for students to get full value from the class.

You are responsible, however, for your learning. The quality of your learning will dramatically increase if you are well prepared for class. You will be provided with Reading Assignments to help you focus on the main concepts in the textbook chapters.

You will find it essential to keep up with all the assignments and reading.

Your learning will be evaluated in three different ways:

- Examinations. There will be a mid-term exam and the final exam.
Class participation. How you contribute to the class will be a part of the overall evaluation.

Class project. You will be evaluated on the information you’ll discover, your analysis, and how well you present your conclusions and critical thinking.

The matrix at the end of the syllabus contains key topics and milestones. The nature of the journal assignments requires preparation and analysis. Do not wait until the last minute.

Examinations and course content
The body of material in this course is so large that we cannot cover all of it in class. Lectures will focus on the most important topics and the most difficult ones. The lectures will help you integrate the topics assigned for preparation. They are not a substitute for reading the text.

The exams will cover both the lectures and the assigned text and articles. You will be expected to demonstrate a mastery of key concepts and vocabulary in the exams.

It is especially important, therefore, to attend classes. Should you miss a class, you are responsible for getting the notes from your colleagues.

The exams will be a combination of objectives questions and short essays. I will let you know the precise structure of each of the exams close to their scheduled dates. In addition, I will conduct brief concept reviews before examinations to help create a context for your studying.

Excellent demonstrations of application, integration and clear understanding will distinguish efforts that receive the highest grades. Concise, insightful responses and entries are preferred.

All work is due at the beginning of the class on the due date. Please also submit an electronic version of your journal by the due date. Late work will not be accepted unless specific, prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. If accepted late, late work will receive a lower grade. All work must be completed by the final examination.

Distribution of points to be earned toward the course grade
You may earn up to 1,000 points during the course of the class. Your grade will be determined by the number of points that you earn.
Excellent demonstrations of understanding, application, integration and clear understanding will distinguish efforts that receive the highest points in assignments. Concise, insightful responses and comments are preferred over rambling, unfocused responses.

Grades are not negotiated. You will have opportunities to earn points throughout the semester. If it is your intention to get a high grade, you will need to earn that grade by consistently demonstrating your inquiry into and mastery of the subjects of retailing and e-commerce management.

Points may be earned as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date/Due Date</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Examinations</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Midterm Exam</td>
<td>March 20</td>
<td>200 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Final exam (comprehensive)</td>
<td>May 8</td>
<td>300 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Points from Examinations</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>500 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning application and integration projects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Journal entries deliverable 1</td>
<td>February 27</td>
<td>75 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Journal entries deliverable 2</td>
<td>April 10</td>
<td>150 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Journal entries deliverable 3</td>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>175 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Points from Project</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>400 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Class participation</strong></td>
<td>(throughout)</td>
<td>100 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL POINTS TO BE EARNED</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,000 points</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Grade scale**

Your final grade for the course will depend on the total number of points you earn:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Grade Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>940 – 1,000 points</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>900 – 939 points</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>870 – 899 points</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>830 – 869 points</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>800 – 829 points</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>770 – 799 points</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>700 – 769 points</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600 – 699 points</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 600 points</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note: The University considers a B to be a good grade. The School of Management considers a B to be a good grade. I consider a B to be a good grade. I hope there are many A’s in the class, but an A is a grade that is not earned automatically.
Examination policies
The exams will be closed-book and closed-notes and will cover the textbook, supplemental materials and all in-class presentations.

Any use of electronic devices during the testing times will be interpreted as a violation of the University Honor Code. These devices include cellular phones, electronic translators, music players of any sort and similar devices. Any student using such devices during an exam or any form of cheating during the exam will result in a grade of zero for the test plus the penalties in the SOM Honor Code guidelines.

Consistent with University policy, only provable, i.e., documented, absences due to personal illness or family emergencies constitute acceptable absences for missing exams. Preplanned weddings, vacations and deep-discount airfares are not acceptable excuses. There are no make-up exams or adjustments to satisfy the convenience of the students enrolled in this class.

If an examination is missed, you must make up the exam within one week. Unless you have made prior arrangements, a missed exam will result in a penalty of 10 percent of the total for the examination for each missed week.

Specific responsibilities
To meet the course objectives, you will use reading, assignments, projects, discussion and research. Emphasis will be placed on learning and applying theories and techniques to a variety of situations.

Attendance is expected. Much of the material will be developed in class and in discussion. I expect you to arrive on time, prepared to discuss the assigned materials and eager to share insights with others in class. I also expect you to remain in class for the entire period, and to participate throughout.

If there are emergencies or unavoidable absences, you should contact me prior to the class. You must arrange to get handouts and assignments from fellow students or Blackboard.

If you will miss a class for a religious observance, please let me know during the first two weeks of class.

Written assignments must show critical and cogent writing. It is your responsibility to ensure grammar, punctuation, spelling, pagination and expression are clear and correct.

Detailed class and reading assignments will be posted on Blackboard.
Class participation
Marketing is enhanced by dialogue, and this class will be greatly enhanced when students actively participate.

To succeed, marketers must be inquisitive, knowledgeable and able to communicate insights and knowledge with others. The classroom provides a learning environment for students to practice and develop these essential marketing skills. Class participation is essential to develop communication skills and explore topics in depth.

Class participation will be worth up to 100 points toward the course grade. Students who make an effort to participate will be noticed. Students will be evaluated on active participation including both speaking and listening, demonstrating the ability to evaluate others’ comments constructively, demonstrating familiarity with assigned readings and working effectively with groups and the class as a whole.

Not everyone likes speaking up in a class situation. If, however, the student does not enter into the discussions, there is no way to tell if he or she is learning or understanding the concepts presented. Each student is expected to contribute. Those who do not like to speak up in class will find opportunities to participate in the small-group class discussions. Full credit in the class participation section of the grade, however, requires dialogue in the classroom.

To earn the full points, the student should:
• Volunteer examples, insights and responses in class.
• Demonstrate having read assignments, thought about the questions and analyzed materials.
• Build on the comments of others—disagreeing where appropriate but also supporting the comments and integrating viewpoints.
• Share expertise and experiences relevant to the discussion.
• Comment on the substance and topic of the classes demonstrating integration of the materials.

Presentations and written reports
I look for internal validity (that the comments or recommendations are based on appropriate principles and are consistent) and external validity (the comments or recommendations are reasonable given the environment in which the organization functions). Additionally, organization, understanding, originality, breadth, depth of coverage and clarity of expression are important evaluation criteria.
Written and oral reports should always be appropriate to the audience and demonstrate concise business prose. All written reports should be neatly typed, legible and free of errors in grammar and spelling.

Unless otherwise stated, students must submit an electronic version of the assignments along with the written assignments.

**Being a marketing student**

As a marketer, you will need to observe many aspects of the world around you and be thinking constantly of opportunities, causality, and creating and maintaining competitive advantages. You will be exposed to retailing constantly throughout the course. Do not take these encounters lightly. You should observe each interaction in the context of the course, and incorporate these insights into your approach to marketing. If you notice something does not appeal to you, don’t ignore it, but instead try to determine the target. If you really like some encounter, figure out why.

You will observe marketing in the obvious advertising and promotion. That’s easy. Push the envelope to make connections less successful marketers would not make.

**Student resources**

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact The Offices of Disability Services (ODS) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS.

If business writing is unfamiliar or if it is not one of your strengths, you are encouraged to seek the support of the Writing Center.

The University Counseling Center may be an excellent resource for you if you feel that depression or other stress-like conditions are affecting your academic performance.

You may also find it useful to seek help from the University librarians if you need research help.

There are a number of additional resources available to you on the School of Management website.
Community Standards of Behavior
In keeping with the School of Management statement, the following standards of behavior will be an integral part of the course:

- Respect for the rights, differences and dignity of others
- Honesty and integrity in dealing with all members of the community
- Accountability for personal behavior

George Mason University Honor Code
Students are reminded of their responsibilities under the George Mason University Honor Code. It is understood that the students will uphold the highest standards of academic work and keep their efforts free of the four areas the Honor Code addresses specifically—cheating and attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying and stealing.

Students are also evaluated individually. While individuals may wish to consult, analyze and discuss their work with others, the student is responsible for ensuring he or she complies with the Honor Code.

The following paragraph is taken from http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode

Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.

I take the Honor Code seriously. I will be glad to discuss any of the Honor Code definitions or implications. The responsibility of each student as well as the faculty to ensure the Honor Code is upheld.

The School of Management has approved guidelines for penalties when individuals have violated the honor code. I use these guidelines. We will review these on the first day of class.
# Matrix Showing Key Topics, Textbook Reading Schedule, Assignment Due Dates and Exam Schedule

Events that will be graded are in **bold face**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class, day and date¹</th>
<th>Key Topics</th>
<th>Student Responsibilities (Textbook unless noted)</th>
<th>Milestones and Key Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class 1 Wed., Jan. 23</td>
<td>Key terms; social and economic significance; structure and distribution channels globally; job opportunities; retail decision making</td>
<td>Chap. 1: Introduction to the World of Retailing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 2 Wed., Jan. 30</td>
<td>Retailer characteristics; food retailers; general merchandise retailers; types of ownership; retail channels; benefits of retail channels; benefits of multichannel retailing; other multichannel issues; multichannel retailing in the future</td>
<td>Chap. 2: Types of Retailers Chap. 3: Multichannel Retailing</td>
<td>Create journal entry #1 after class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 3 Wed., Feb. 6</td>
<td>Buying process; types of buying decisions; social factors; market segmentation</td>
<td>Chap. 4: Customer Buying Behavior</td>
<td>Create journal entry #2 after class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 4 Wed., Feb. 13</td>
<td>Retail strategy; target market and retail format; sustainable competitive advantage; growth strategies; global growth; strategic retail planning; objectives and goals; strategic profit model; financial strength analysis; performance objectives</td>
<td>Chap. 5: Retail Marketing Strategy Chap. 6: Financial Strategy</td>
<td>Create journal entry #3 after class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 5 Wed., Feb. 20</td>
<td>Types of locations; unplanned retail locations; shopping centers; other locations; location and retail strategy; legal considerations; evaluating areas for locations; number of stores; site evaluations; trade areas; estimating potential sales; lease negotiations</td>
<td>Chap. 7: Retail Locations Chap. 8: Retail Site Selection</td>
<td>Create journal entry #4 after class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 6 Wed., Feb. 27</td>
<td>Objectives of HRM; issues in retail HRM; organizational structure; organization design issues; employee talent war; diversity; legal issues</td>
<td>Chap. 9: Human Resource Management</td>
<td>Create journal entry #5 after class.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ All classes meet 4:30 P.M. to 7:10 P.M.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Chapters</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Wed., March 6</td>
<td>Strategic advantage through supply management and information systems; flow of information and products in supply chains; distribution centers; system design; collaboration; RFID; CRM process; collecting customer data; analyzing data and identifying targets; developing and implementing CRM programs</td>
<td>Chap. 10: Information Systems and Supply Chain Management Chap. 11: Customer Relationship Management</td>
<td>Create journal entry #6 after class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Wed., March 20</td>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td></td>
<td>Content review for Midterm Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Wed., March 27</td>
<td>Overview; forecasting sales; assortment plan; inventory and product availability; control systems; allocating merchandise to stores; merchandise management performance; brand alternatives; buying national brands; private label merchandise; vendor negotiations; strategic relationships; legal, ethical and social responsibility issues</td>
<td>Chap. 12: Managing the Merchandise Planning Process Chap. 13: Buying Merchandise</td>
<td>Create journal entry #7 after class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Wed., April 3</td>
<td>Pricing strategies; considerations in setting retail prices; setting retail prices; markdowns; pricing techniques; legal and ethical issues</td>
<td>Chap. 14: Retail Pricing</td>
<td>Create journal entry #8 after class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Wed., April 10</td>
<td>Communications to develop brand images and customer loyalty; communicating with customers; planning retail communications</td>
<td>Chap. 15: Retail Communications Mix</td>
<td>Create journal entry #9 after class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Wed., April 17</td>
<td>Store management responsibilities; recruiting and selecting employees; orientation and training programs; motivation and management; evaluation and feedback; compensation and rewards; controlling costs; inventory shrinkage</td>
<td>Chap. 16: Managing the Store</td>
<td>Create journal entry #10 after class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Wed., April 24</td>
<td>Store design; store design elements; space management; visual merchandising; creating store atmosphere; website design</td>
<td>Chap. 17: Store Layout, Design, and Visual Merchandising</td>
<td>Create journal entry #11 after class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Wed., May 1</td>
<td>strategic advantage; Gaps Model; service recovery</td>
<td>Chap. 18: Customer Service</td>
<td>Journal Entries 9-11 and Book Summary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Wednesday, May 8 – Final Exam, 4:30 P.M. to 7:15 P.M.**

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2 You have two required entries for the last submission. You may substitute any of the class session entries for the required entries.
Appendix: SOM Undergraduate Learning Goals and the Course

This course addresses the following Learning Goals of the School of Management (SOM):

1. **Our students will be competent in their discipline.**
   Students will understand the strategic role that retailing plays in the marketing mix, which will provide additional insights on how all marketing plans are constructed and used.

   Key subject areas include understanding the structure and nature of the retailing environment, applying consumer behavior to retailing, retailing strategy and the related financial strategy, the strategic role of human resources management in retailing, supply and value chain management, merchandise buying, elements of the retailing marketing mix, managing the store and store layout and visual merchandising. E-commerce is explored within the context of traditional retailing and its special challenges and opportunities.

   Discipline competence will be measured in this course using exams, the course long journal project, in-class exercises and cases, participation in the areas of textbook chapters.

2. **Our students will be aware of the uses of technology in business.**
   This course requires students to send and receive e-mails, access and navigate the Blackboard learning system, conduct online research, and create MS Word documents, Power Point presentation slides, and, at times, Excel spreadsheets.

3. **Our students will be effective communicators.**
   This course requires all students to demonstrate their writing skills in examinations and the journal assignment. Students will also report on homework activities as a regular part of class participation.

4. **Our students will have an interdisciplinary perspective.**
   Retailing and e-commerce management draws upon many disciplines, including psychology, sociology, economics, public policy and regulation, law, accounting, finance, information systems, management and statistics. The necessity to explore each of these areas in retailing is particularly important given the public nature of consumer interaction.

5. **Our students will be knowledgeable about global business and trade.**
   This course focuses more on the domestic than the international market, but regular references will be made to international challenges and opportunities, especially in the area of e-commerce.
6. Our students will recognize the importance of ethical decisions. Ethical decision-making follows from understanding how actions affect many different publics. The textbook for this course weaves ethics in many chapters. Additionally, students explore ethical dimensions in cases and case discussions. Both sales and marketing practices are examined for ethical dimensions.

7. Our students will be knowledgeable about the legal environment of business. Students will explore the legal issues that pertain directly to retailing practices throughout the text and in case discussions.

8. Our students will be knowledgeable about team dynamics and the characteristics of effective teams. Students in this class work on in-class case discussions and exercises in small groups.

9. Our students will understand the value of diversity and the importance of managing diversity in the context of business. Diversity is an important consideration in retailing. Class discussions about market and consumer analysis will underscore group and individual differences based in language, age, geography, ethnicity, gender, and income. Students will likely interact in class and on their team with a diverse range of students from various countries. Lectures and case studies will include discussions about cultural diversity of consumers and managers.

10. Our students will be critical thinkers. Examinations and the project will ask students to understand, apply and integrate a variety of techniques, approaches and principles of marketing in a comprehensive, strategic approach. Students will be required to synthesize a variety of marketing issues. Students will develop a broader view of marketing as well as the particulars of retailing and ecommerce. The journal exercise, in particular, emphasizes a critical thinking approach to classroom discussions and issues.