Students sometimes don’t think they need to study marketing. I’ve heard comments like these:

“I know about marketing already. I’ve seen lots of ads.”

Marketing is much more than advertising. Identifying the must-have features for the next version of the iPhone? That’s marketing. Setting a price for a new line of Nikes? That’s marketing too. Deciding to sell your unique, one-of-a-kind jewelry on the Internet or in a local boutique? Marketing again. Opening your own law office? A lot more marketing than you might think!

“I don’t need to know marketing. I’m going to be a software engineer.” (or a journalist or a chemist or …)

Do you hope to start your own business some day? If so, you’re going to need to be good at marketing, because finding and keeping customers will be part of your job. And if your plan is to be a corporate executive, you need to understand all facets of the company so that you can work effectively with other executives.

Marketing is the connection between the company and the outside world. Marketers strive to understand customers’ needs and wants in order to guide decisions about developing, selling, delivering, and promoting products. Marketing also focuses on developing strong customer relationships.

Learning Objectives

After successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Explain the role of marketing, both within a firm and in society.
2. Evaluate the marketing aspects of a business opportunity, including strategic options and the impact of the marketing environment.
3. Analyze potential customer segments (both consumers and businesses), assessing the attractiveness of each as a target market.
4. Explain the value of a strong brand and its impact on consumer behavior and customer loyalty.
5. Identify factors that influence marketing strategy and tactics for a new product or service.
6. Apply a variety of analytical tools to marketing decision making.
7. Critique the marketing strategy and marketing mix for a product or service.
8. Use various online tools to facilitate team collaboration in marketing decision making.

These goals are related to the following learning goals of the business minor program:
- Students will develop analytical, problem-solving and decision-making skills that can be applied in a variety of business situations within a global business environment.
- Students will understand the role of marketing and its linkages with other functions of the organizations, the marketplace and global society.

**Prerequisites**

Before taking this class, you should have completed 30 credit hours (i.e., sophomore standing).

**Expectations**

Taking a course online requires dedication and organization. In order to have a successful semester, it is important that you:
- Visit the course website regularly (at least weekly).
- Stay on schedule with the material covered, and complete all assignments on time.
- Participate actively in discussions.
- Check your Mason Live email (or, if you forward your mail, the forwarding location) daily.
- Dedicate five to seven hours per week, on average, for the class.
- Contact me promptly if a problem arises that is interfering with your performance in the class.

**Learning Resources**

**Required Course Materials**

Our textbook is *M: Marketing, 3rd Edition*, by Dhruv Grewal and Michael Levy, McGraw-Hill, © 2013. It is available from the GMU bookstore and from various online sellers, and also as an e-book from McGraw-Hill. The text has an Online Learning Center with short quizzes and other resources, which is freely available; see the course website for a link.

You will also need a subscription to McGraw-Hill’s Connect homework/quiz manager. The bookstore sells a package including the textbook and a Connect access code; you can also purchase the book and the access code separately. See the course website for more information on Connect and a link to the Connect site for our class.

**Course Website**

Our course website on Blackboard serves as the information hub for this course. To view the site, visit [http://mymason.gmu.edu](http://mymason.gmu.edu), log on using your Mason Live user ID and password, and click the “Courses” tab. You should see MSOM303-DL1 listed; if not, please email me immediately.

The website includes a Welcome video and a “Start Here!” area providing an orientation to the course and to online learning. Please review these before starting on other course materials.

**Study Guide and Weekly Folders**

Each week, your assignments and activities can be found in that week’s folder on the course website. Each weekly folder contains a detailed list of readings, activities, and other assignments,
and also provides perspective on the material. You may read through this information online or download a weekly study guide in PDF form. In addition, you can get the “big picture” of the course, with topics and major due dates, from the weekly course schedule on the last page of this syllabus.

Availability of Learning Tools
This course is offered completely online (except for your textbook, if you choose a hard copy version). Live online sessions may be offered at specific times; however, they will be optional.

Weeks begin on Monday and end on Sunday. Weekly folders will be available one week in advance, so that you can work a week ahead of schedule if you want or need to (although you must take exams and participate in discussions during the week in which they are assigned).

All assignments are due before midnight on Sundays, except for initial posts in online discussions, which are due on Thursday in order to allow time to post comments later in the week.

Communication

Announcements and Course Updates
I will use the Blackboard Announcements feature as the primary means of communicating with the class, and will email all announcements to your Mason Live account. You will receive an email every Monday providing an overview of the week’s activities, as well as other reminders/announcements.

Blackboard Collaborate
Blackboard Collaborate provides a virtual meeting area for our class. It supports audio, text chat, a whiteboard, and screen sharing. We will use it for virtual office hours and one-on-one meetings (see below).

You need either a headset with a built-in microphone or a microphone plus headphones in order to participate in sessions using audio features. You can run it on a PC or Mac, and also on an iPad (with a reduced set of features). The course website has additional information on Collaborate.

How to Get Help/Ask Questions
You may require one-on-one help from time to time, and I’m happy to assist you. Please don’t sit alone and frustrated if you’re struggling with something. Asking for help isn’t a failure—but giving up because you didn’t seek help is.

But this assumes that you have first taken advantage of all course resources related to the topic—readings, videos, and practice activities. One-on-one help is available to supplement these resources, not to replace them.

If you need help or have a question, you may contact me through:

- **Email**: I check email frequently. I will respond in 24 hours or less Monday through Friday, and usually on weekends as well.
- **Ask the Professor forum**: The course website includes an “Ask the Professor” discussion forum. You are welcome to post questions there, and I will answer them—in most cases, with the same turnaround time as for email.
- **Virtual office hours**: Virtual office hours using Blackboard Collaborate will take the place of traditional office hours. I will announce a schedule at the start of each week. These sessions are optional; if you have a question or problem, you are welcome to “drop by.”
- **Live tutorials**: For some topics, I may hold optional live tutorials as the need arises.
- **One-on-one sessions**: If you need individual help, please contact me to schedule an online meeting. We can meet on Blackboard Collaborate, Skype, or the phone, whatever works best for you.
- **Telephone**: If an emergency arises and you need to reach me right away, my phone number is at the top of Page 1 of the syllabus.

### Grading and Assignments

The assignments in the class will earn the following maximum point values (each type of assignment is described in the sections that follow):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams (3 exams, 150 points each)</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Startup activities</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect quizzes and activities (5 points each)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short written assignments (20 points each)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 14 discussion</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team project:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussions (20 points each)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group leadership</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final deliverable</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop one score (written assignment or discussion in weeks 2-13)</td>
<td>-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grades will be assigned as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>900-1,000</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>600-699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>800-899</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>700-799</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Exams

There will be three exams during the semester. Exams are non-cumulative, except in the sense that later material builds on early material. Exams will be “closed book” with one exception. You may use one sheet of letter-sized paper (measuring 8.5 x 11 inches) during the exam, with whatever you like written or printed on both sides. See Blackboard for more information on exam format and content.

You will have a week in which to take each exam, and you can choose either of these two methods:

1. You may take exams online at a time of your choosing within a one-week time range, using a service called Respondus Monitor. You need to install a special browser, the Respondus Lockdown Browser, to use during the exam, and you must have a webcam and microphone, (they are used to record you while you take the exam. See “Technology Requirements” below for specific hardware and software requirements.

2. You may take exams at the College of Science Testing Center (Planetary Hall, Room 2) on the GMU Fairfax campus. The center is open approximately 55 hours per week, including some weekend and evening hours.

If you have a conflict with an exam period that makes it impossible for you to take it by the deadline, contact me at least two weeks in advance to discuss it. Otherwise, failure to complete an exam by the deadline will result in a score of zero, except in case of a documented emergency.
Quizzes and Activities

Without the discipline imposed by regular class meetings, it’s easy to drift away from an online course. Missing assignments and cramming for exams will compromise your learning and hurt your grade. Successful online students allocate regular time slots to the class.

In order to help you to stay involved and up to date with the course material, and to give you opportunities to practice new skills, each week you will have small assignments to complete. Some will be graded; others will be ungraded practice activities with solutions provided so you can check your work. These activities fall into the following categories:

Startup Activities

The Start Here! folder contains a quiz/survey designed both to test your understanding of “how things work” in the class, and also to help me to learn more about you. In addition, during Week 1 you will be asked to post an introduction to the class. These activities are worth 10 points each.

In addition, in Weeks 1 and 2 you can earn up to ten points per week by trying out LearnSmart, an interactive tool offered by our textbook publisher. LearnSmart is an “adaptive” tool that asks you questions and then chooses follow-on questions based on your earlier answers. The purpose is to encourage you to try the tool. If you find it helpful, it will be available each week as an ungraded practice activity, and in addition as a potential prep tool for exams.

Connect Quizzes and Activities

Most weeks, you will take a quiz on McGraw-Hill’s Connect website summarizing the textbook material for the week; in addition, there will be other interactive activities assigned. You may complete each quiz or activity up to three times, allowing you to improve your score. As long as you score at least 90%, you will earn the full value (five points); lower scores will earn partial credit. Your three lowest scores will be dropped; this means you can skip up to three of these without a penalty. For this reason, no extensions are offered on these activities.

Extra Credit Activities

On occasion during the semester, an additional Connect activity will be offered for five points of extra credit. These will be announced each week in the study guide.

“Reflect” and Practice Activities

In addition to graded activities listed above, the weekly folders also contain ungraded practice activities. These are short exercises that help you to check your understanding of concepts by applying them to a specific situation. Suggested answers will be provided. They are of three types:

1. Short “Reflect” exercises asking you to use course concepts to evaluate a business situation or to provide examples of a concept in action.
2. Interactive practice activities on Connect asking questions about a concept.
3. LearnSmart exercises on Connect. LearnSmart is an adaptive question-and-answer tool; it chooses questions to ask based on your previous answers. You will receive credit for LearnSmart exercises in the first two weeks, but after that they will be optional.

Sometimes students are tempted to skip practice activities since they aren’t graded; however, unless you are already competent in the concepts or skills covered by the activities, I recommend that you complete them. They allow you to practice skills in isolation, helping you to prepare for exams and assignments where you must apply several skills to more complex examples.
Written Assignments

The course includes six short writing assignments posted either to a course blog or to a private online journal. These assignments will ask you to apply the course material to your own experiences and to analyze the experience using marketing concepts. These activities are worth 20 points each.

Team Project and Discussions

Two types of activities are extremely important to deepen your learning beyond definitions of terms. One is to discuss ideas related to the current topic. Discussions require you to crystallize your thoughts so you can explain them to others. They also expose you to other viewpoints.

The second important type of activity is to use the course concepts to solve a problem, make a decision, or develop something new. The written assignments accomplish some of that by asking you to analyze or evaluate a real-world marketing example; however, that's not enough.

You will also participate in a team project in which you and your classmates will perform some of the steps involved in developing a marketing plan for a new product. And you can be as creative as you want; the question I want you to answer is: “What is a product that doesn’t exist, but you REALLY wish it did?” You are not bound by current technology; we will assume that the technology you need has been developed (though your product might be the first time the technology has been outside of a research lab).

The project combines these two types of activities—discussing and applying course concepts—in order to use your time more efficiently. You will make various decisions about marketing your new product in a series of discussions. Each discussion will earn you up to 20 points; in addition, participation in the project will earn you up to 100 additional points. The project instructions on the course website will provide details.

A final note: I will drop your lowest score on EITHER a discussion OR a written assignment. This means that you can skip one of these without a penalty. One restriction: you may not skip either the discussion or the journal post in Week 14.

Technology Requirements

To take this course, you will need the following hardware and software (this information is also in the “Start Here!” area of the course website):

Hardware

- A Windows PC or a Mac with at least 2 GB of RAM. It’s best to have at least a 13” screen
- A fast, reliable broadband Internet connection (e.g., cable, DSL).
- Computer speakers or headphones to listen to recorded content.
- A headset with microphone, or an integrated or external microphone plus headphones, to participate in live audio sessions using Blackboard Collaborate.
- Sufficient hard disk space to download required software and save your course assignments.

Software

- A web browser supported by Blackboard (see Blackboard Support for more information)
- Access to Blackboard Collaborate. To verify, complete the Blackboard Collaborate System Check. Collaborate has its own software requirements, which the system check will verify.
- Adobe Acrobat Reader (free download)
- A current version of Adobe Flash Player (free download)

These links are available in the “Start Here!” section of the course website.
Additional Requirements
If you wish to take the exams online, you must have the following hardware and software:
- A PC running Microsoft Windows XP/Vista/7/8, or a Mac running OS X 10.6 (Snow Leopard) or higher
- A webcam (internal or external) and a microphone
- The Respondus Lockdown Browser (downloadable from a link in the “Exams” area of the course website.

Employer-provided Computers
If you are planning to use an employer-provided computer for class activities, please verify with the system administrator that you will be able to install the necessary software and access course materials. Corporate firewalls may restrict access to some websites and media types.

University Policies and Resources

Academic Integrity Policy
You are expected to adhere to the George Mason University Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits actual and attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing. These rules apply to this course:
- You may use one sheet of letter-sized paper (8.5x11 inches) as a reference during exams. Both sides of this page may contain anything you choose, hand written or created on a printer. You may use no other information sources during the exam, whether hard copy, electronic, or human. Your answers on exams must be entirely your work, with no assistance given or received.
- For Connect activities, the team project, and written assignments, you may use both hard copy and electronic references for general information when preparing your answers. However, your answers must be entirely your own work (or, in the case of the team project, yours and your teammates’), with no assistance specific to the assignment given or received.

Violations of these policies may result in a score of zero on the relevant assignment and/or the filing of charges with the Honor Committee. Consult the Office of Academic Integrity website for more information.

Disability Policy
If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services to make arrangements.

University Policies
Students must follow the GMU University Policy and the Responsible Use of Computing Policy.

University Resources
GMU provides a number of resources to facilitate student success (e.g., Counseling and Psychological Services, Learning Services, University Career Services, Writing Center). If you need assistance, please consider taking advantage of these services.

Weekly Schedule
See the next page.
**Weekly Course Schedule – Spring, 2014**

Weeks start on Mondays and end on Sundays. All assignments for the week are due before midnight on Sunday except for initial discussion posts (due on Thursday, and highlighted in red text below). See the weekly folders on Blackboard for details about all assignments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Topic(s)</th>
<th>Connect activities?</th>
<th>Team Project (initial disc posts due Thursday)</th>
<th>Other Graded Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/13-1/19</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td>Course Overview Quiz/Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/20-1/26</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction to Marketing</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Blog post: Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Journal post: Favorite brand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/27-2/2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2, 4</td>
<td>Marketing Strategy/Environment</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Discussion: Product ideas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/3-2/9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4, 5</td>
<td>Consumer Behavior</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Discussion: SWOT analysis</td>
<td>Blog post: Consumer behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/10-2/16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Segmentation, Targeting, Positioning</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Discussion: Target market</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/17-2/23</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Marketing Research</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Discussion: Survey for target market</td>
<td>Exam #1 (Weeks 1-5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/24-3/2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Product and Branding</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/3-3/9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10, 11</td>
<td>New Product Development</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Discussion: Product issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/10-3/16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/24-3/30</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Pricing</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Discussion: Price</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/31-4/6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Integrated Marketing Communication</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Discussion: IMC plan</td>
<td>Blog post: Analyze Super Bowl ad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/7-4/13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Exam #2 (Weeks 6-10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/14-4/20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14, 15</td>
<td>Distribution and Retailing</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/21-4/27</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6, 18</td>
<td>B2B Marketing/Sales Mgmt</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Project summary due</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/28-5/4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3, 7</td>
<td>Marketing Ethics/Global Marketing</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Discussion: Ethics of global outsourcing (not part of the project)</td>
<td>Journal post: Course reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/3-5/11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td>Exam #3 (Weeks 11-14)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>