Marketing Communications
MBA 724 – Fall 2018
Tuesday 6:30 – 10:05, Buchanan Hall D005

GENERAL INFORMATION:
Instructor: Dr. Chris Joiner
Office: ENT 132
Phone: 703-993-4235
e-mail: cjoiner@gmu.edu
Office Hours: By appointment

Prerequisites: Completion of M.B.A. core requirements or permission of instructor.

Text & Cases:
(2) The course cases are available in an electronic “course pack” that you purchase directly from Harvard Publishing. The casebook is available online at https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/554626 and you will need to register on the site prior to purchasing the course pack. Note: we will be using this on our second week of classes.

Class website: http://mymason.gmu.edu

The course Blackboard site will be used for a variety of purposes this semester – e.g., online class discussions, accessing notes and lecture material, distributing class material and course-related announcements.

Course Description: MBA 724 examines all forms of communication and all sources of brand or company contacts as potential message channels in building a relationship with the intended audience (e.g., potential customers). The course focuses on an integrated planning process for all communication elements, including consumer and trade advertising, public relations, direct and database marketing, promotions, personal selling, and new media to achieve synergy in communicating with various constituencies. During the semester, we will consider communication channels, messages and audiences as they relate to an organization’s strategic marketing plan.

Course Overview:
This course will be taught with a graduate-level focus, which is to say that with a few exceptions, I will try to minimize the amount of straight lecture presentation. When you come to
class you will be expected to have read the assigned material (including cases) and to have thought about it. The class will be conducted as a series of questions and answers, discussions, examples, etc. organized around the topics in the textbook and the selected cases. Additionally, each student will have a case for which they are responsible and which will include a written analysis as well as class discussion leadership responsibilities.

Note that a significant part of your grade will be based on class participation. That means you need to read the assignments (especially cases!), come to class and have something relevant to say. I am interested in a wide variety of points of view, but would like to keep the discussions relatively focused - No points just for talking a lot.

**Final grades for the course will be based on the following**

- Term Paper Proposal 50
- Final Term Paper 300
- Case analysis 150
- Short Papers (4) 100
- Class Participation 150
- Midterm Exam 200

**TOTAL:** 950

Grading in this course is consistent with the graduate academic policies at GMU: grades will be assigned according to the following general ranges (pluses and minuses will be used):
A (855 -950); B (760-854); C (665-759); D (570-664); F (Below 570)

**Assignments:**

- **Midterm Exam**
  The midterm (Week of 9/11, take home) will consist of a series of essay questions. You will have three required questions and a choice (between 2 options) for the fourth. The midterm will cover the cases, articles, and class and text material up until the midterm. You need to know the cases pretty well - I won't ask very specific detailed questions about them but will ask you to address a more general topic - e.g., “marketing communication objective setting” in the context of one of the cases. Details on administration will be provided

- **Final project – IMC Audit Term Paper**
  This project can be done individually or with up to two additional people. You will be required to complete an IMC audit term paper (maximum length: 25 pages, page limit does not include appendices, exhibits), due Saturday, October 20, 12:00 (noon). Students will suggest a topic for their term paper in a 2-4 page proposal to the instructor (due in class 9/4). It will be reviewed and if necessary I will provide feedback on issues/problems and/or make suggestions.
  This is a research-based project at its foundation. The paper itself should be a thorough, comprehensive, treatment of the topic, complete with in-text citations and a bibliography. The topic is an applied research analysis of a recent (within the last five years) marketing communications campaign from a firm that has specifically integrated two or more of its communication tools and a comparison with a competitor’s campaign in the same industry. The focal company can be a well-known national firm, the company you work for/used to work for,
or a company you are familiar with/have access to through some other means. The analysis must include, but is not limited to:

(a) the overall strategic purpose the company had for the campaign (i.e., the big picture/context)
(b) the specific goals/objectives of the campaign (i.e., the specifics)
(c) a discussion of how this specific campaign fits with the current positioning of the company/brand (e.g., in terms of image, message, theme, consistency, etc.). This is clearly related to (b) and should focus on the fit of the campaign.
(d) a description of the specific marketing communication tools used and the function of each (what role do they each play in the overall IMC campaign?), as well as,
(e) a specific description of how well (or not) each of these integrated tools contributed to (i.e., enacted/implemented) the positioning and campaign goals/objectives and how well the various communication tools were integrated (in an IMC sense). Include a discussion of the criteria you used to make this assessment (e.g., themes, messages, images, approach, etc.)
(f) an assessment of whether the overall campaign was successful (including a discussion of the criteria used here as well; i.e., how are you analyzing success?)

(g) a relatively brief, but rigorous, comparative analysis with a campaign from a competitor in the industry. Specifically focus on comparing and contrasting this firm’s marketing communication campaign efforts – by describing the similarities and differences between the two campaigns.

**Case analysis**

Case analyses are useful in presenting actual IMC issues faced by marketers in the “real world.” The importance of this type of applied experience is vital in developing a fuller understanding of the development, implementation, and modification of IMC, as “textbook content” does not necessarily completely describe these activities. Therefore a large part of this course will focus on cases. Cases have been selected based on their fit with the relevant topic areas we will cover and marketing communications in general.

Appropriate, graduate-level, preparation is required for all cases this semester. Additionally, each person will be responsible for completing ONE formal case assignment (case write-up & class leadership) during the semester. Sign-ups for cases will take place on **August 21st** (our second class).

For the case you sign up for:
- You should be prepared to assist the instructor in leading the discussion of the case in class.
- You will need to complete a written analysis for your chosen case. This should not exceed twelve (12) pages (double-spaced, 12-point font) of text, plus up to two (2) pages of appendices.

**At a minimum, the reports must include:**

a) a very brief summary of the key facts in the case; b) a “situation/background” analysis – this section should include any information and analyses you feel are relevant and should be closely linked to (c); c) description and discussion of the key questions, problems, decisions – this should include why these are the key issues; d) identification of relevant options/alternative solutions supported by any relevant analysis and rationalizations; e) discussion of chosen alternative and explanation/defense/reasoning in support of choice; f) any relevant implementation and action considerations facing the firm.

The report should consider the discussion/guide questions I provide for the case, but these questions are **not meant** to limit the extent of your analysis and report.

**Short Papers**
You will be responsible for four (4) short papers during the semester. This assignment involves finding an article relevant to the topics listed below in the academic or mainstream business press (i.e., Wall Street Journal, New York Times, Washington Post, Advertising Age, Business Week, etc.) and writing up a 2 page report. You should submit a copy or a print out of your article with your paper and be prepared to discuss your paper in class. Articles must be current, limited to those published in the past 6 months.

** You will need to email a brief (2-3 sentence) summary of your short paper content to me by noon on the day of our class.**

The papers should: summarize the article, discuss any noteworthy issues it references, and relate it to specific relevant course material. The papers will be graded primarily on the appropriateness of the articles selected to the topic and the description of its link to class material. The following are the short paper topics for the semester:

1. (due 8/21): Topics addressing regulatory, social responsibility or ethical issues related to marketing communication.
2. (due 8/28): Topics related to consumer behavior/consumer psychology or target marketing/positioning as they relate to marketing communications.
3. (due 9/4): Topics related to objectives for IMC campaigns, budgets/budget setting, or agencies (marketing intermediaries) involved in IMC (see text and PPT for topic ideas).
4. (due 9/11): Topics related to international issues as they relate to marketing communications.
5. (due 9/18): Topics focusing on the creative aspects of marketing communications (execution styles; risk-taking; etc.)
6. (due 9/25): Topics related to media strategy and planning (see chapter)
7. (due 10/2): Topics focused on television, print, radio or Internet specifically as media options for marketing communications.
8. (due 10/8): Topics related to sales promotions, support media, sponsorship or branded entertainment as marketing communication tools.
9. (due 10/16): Topics addressing PR/publicity in a marketing communications.

Short paper topics will be assigned to individuals during the first class session.

♦ Class Participation
This is a discussion-centered class and therefore it should be your priority to attend and participate in each class session. Case preparation is critical and required. Both quality and quantity of contributions will be considered when assigning grades. Contributions may be made in class and on the discussion forum on Blackboard.

Other Important Course Policies & Expectations
➢ Deadlines: All deadlines are final. Assignments are due by class time on the due date. Assignments handed in after the deadline (anytime after the class meeting time) will be considered late and will be subject to a 20% per day penalty. This penalty may be waived at the instructor’s discretion if warranted by special circumstances, and if arrangements are made in advance of the due date.
➢ You are strongly encouraged to share your industry knowledge and expertise during class discussions and group meetings.
You are expected to attend class regularly, with the understanding that occasionally an absence will be unavoidable. If you miss class, you are responsible for finding out what you missed and catching up.

I will be happy to discuss the course, your progress, or any other issue of concern or interest on an individual basis by appointment. Please feel free to e-mail me for any clarification that you might need during the semester on any administrative or substantive issue. I will try my best to respond within a day.

George Mason University Honor Code & Academic Integrity:
The GMU Honor Code (Link) applies to all activities and assignments in this course. Students will refrain from cheating, lying, plagiarizing, and stealing. All students are expected to complete their own original work, except in cases where the teacher instructs students to work in groups, and to give credit to any other person or source whose ideas and printed materials (including those on the Internet or websites) are used, paraphrased or directly quoted. You also may not borrow the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgement. Please note: Faculty are obligated to submit any Honor Code violations or suspected violations to the Honor Committee without exception (School of Business Honor Code Sanctions posted on Blackboard). Projects used for credit in other classes may NOT be used for credit in this class.  

• In all papers submitted in this course, if you reference the work of others either through verbatim quotes or by substantial paraphrasing, you must clearly identify the source of the information in a footnote or endnote, and also identify the information obtained from that source. The specific format of citations and bibliographies is your choice, as long as the reader can determine the specific source of a quotation, statistic, or fact referenced in the paper. (One exception: you do not need to provide citations for statistics or facts obtained from the case study about which you are writing).

Special Accommodations:  If you have a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. Please take care of this during the first two weeks of the semester. More information about ODS is available at http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc.
** IMPORTANT: This syllabus and schedule are subject to change. Changes will be announced in class and/or on Blackboard and students are responsible for these changes. **

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading/Topic</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Tue, 8/14  | Introduction to course. Review of marketing principles. What is IMC and IBP? What part does communication play in marketing? | “The New Pitch” article (posted on Blackboard)  
Chapters 1 and 2                                                                                       |
| Tue, 8/21  | Social, regulatory and ethical issues.                                          | Chapter 4  
**Short Paper 1 due**                                                                                   |
| Tue, 8/28  | Consumer behavior, persuasion and STP in IMC  
Personal Selling                                                                                       | Chapters 5 and 6, 17 (371-374)  
Case: Magellan Boatworks  
**Short Paper 2 due**                                                                                   |
| Tue, 9/4   | The Planning Process                                                           | Chapter 8  
**Case: Old Spice: Repeating Success in the Face of Competitive Threat**  
**Term paper proposal due**  
**Short Paper 3 due.**                                                                                        |
| Tue, 9/11  | International Marketing Communications                                         | Chapter 8 and *New Yorker* article  
Case: Harmonie Water  
**Short Paper 4 due**                                                                                   |
| 9/11 – 9/15| *Midterm Exam*                                                                  | Take Home (details to be provided)                                                                        |
| Tue, 9/18  | The message: Strategy & Creativity                                              | Chapter 9, 10 & 11  
Case: Dove: Real Beauty Sketches Campaign  
**Short Paper 5 due.**                                                                                   |
| Tue, 9/25  | Media strategy and planning                                                     | Chapter 12  
**Case: Nike Football World Cup 2010**  
**Short Paper 6 due.**                                                                                   |
| Tue, 10/2  | Media: print, television, radio, and digital/interactive media  
**Guest Speaker: John Hart**                                                                            | Chapters 13 and 14  
Case: The Ford Fiesta  
**Short Paper 7 due.**                                                                                   |
| Mon, 10/8  | Sales promotions & support media; Sponsorship & branded entertainment           | Chapters 15 and 16  
Case: Racing Santander & F1  
**Short Paper 8 due**                                                                                   |
| Tue, 10/16 | PR and corporate communications                                                 | Chapter 18  
Case: Bosch in India  
**Short Paper 9 due.**                                                                                   |

***Final report due: Saturday, October 20, 12:00 (noon).***