Marketing Communications  
MBA 724 – Spring 2014  
Wednesday 7:20 – 10:00, ENT 173

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:
(1) O’Guinn, Allen, & Semenik, Advertising & Integrated Brand Promotion, 6th Ed.  
(2) The course cases are available in an electronic “custom e-book” that you purchase directly from McGraw-Hill. The casebook is available online at www.mcgrawhillcreate.com/shop and comes with both a downloadable .pdf form as well as an online viewing format.

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 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:
A (855 -950); B (760-854); C (665-759); D (570-664); F (Below 570)

**Assignments:**

* Midterm Exam
The midterm (3/19, in-class) 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.

* 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 Friday, May 2, 12:00 (noon)). Students will suggest a topic for their term paper in a 2-4 page proposal to the instructor (due 2/12). 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 another firm’s (competitor) 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)
(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.)
(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?)
(e) an evaluation of how well the various communication tools were integrated (in an IMC
sense). Include a discussion of the criteria you used to make this assessment
(f) 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
(g) an assessment of whether the overall campaign was successful (including a discussion of the
criteria used here)
(h) a relatively brief, but rigorous, comparative analysis with a campaign from a competitor in
the industry. Focus on comparing and contrasting this firm’s marketing communication efforts –
describe 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. 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 January 29th (our second class). For the case you
have “officially” signed 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 ten (10)
  pages (double-spaced, 12-point font) of text, plus up to two (2) pages of appendices.
At a minimum, the reports should 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 below in the academic or serious popular business press
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 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 relevant course material. The papers are worth 25 points each and will be graded primarily on the appropriateness of the articles selected to the topic – including its link to class material, the quality of the discussion of its content, and the extent to which the paper is free of mechanical writing problems. The following are the short paper topics for the semester:

1. (due 2/5): Topics related to ethical issues related to marketing communication.
2. (due 2/12): Topics related to consumer behavior/consumer psychology or target marketing/positioning as they relate to marketing communications.
3. (due 2/19): Topics related to measuring, evaluating, or researching marketing communications.
4. (due 2/26): Topics related to objectives for IMC campaigns, budgets/budget setting, or agencies (marketing intermediaries) involved in IMC.
5. (due 3/5): Topics related to international issues related to marketing communications.
6. (due 3/12): Topics focusing on the creative aspects of marketing communications (execution styles; risk-taking; etc.)
7. (due 4/2): Issues related to media strategy and planning (see chapter)
8. (due 4/9): Topics focused on television, print, radio or Internet specifically as media options for marketing communications.
9. (due 4/16): Issues related to direct marketing or personal selling as marketing communication tools.
10. (due 4/30): Topics addressing PR/publicity in a marketing communications context or corporate advertising.

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. 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 or call 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.

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

**Honor Code**

Academic honesty is important to maintaining the integrity of the university. The GMU Honor Code ([http://honorcode.gmu.edu/](http://honorcode.gmu.edu/)) applies to all activities and assignments in this course. Students will refrain from cheating, lying, plagiarizing, and stealing.

- Additionally, any papers or presentations that you prepare for this course must be entirely your work and should not have been used for credit in any other courses.
- 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).
**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. **

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading/Topic</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wed, 1/22</td>
<td>Introduction to course. Review of marketing principles. What is IMC? What part does communication play in marketing?</td>
<td>“The New Pitch” article (posted on Blackboard)</td>
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<td>Wed, 1/29</td>
<td>IMC and IBP; The players</td>
<td>Chapters 1 and 2</td>
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<td>Case: Grafica, Inc.</td>
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<td>Wed, 2/5</td>
<td>Social, regulatory and ethical issues.</td>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
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<td><strong>Short Paper 1 due.</strong></td>
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<td>Wed, 2/12</td>
<td>Consumer behavior, persuasion and STP in IMC</td>
<td>Chapter 5 and 6</td>
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<td>Case: Metabical</td>
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<td><strong>Term paper proposal due</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Short Paper 2 due.</strong></td>
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<td>Wed, 2/19</td>
<td>Measurement &amp; Evaluation</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
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<td><strong>Short Paper 3 due</strong></td>
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<td>Wed, 2/26</td>
<td>The planning process.</td>
<td>Chapter 8</td>
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<td>Case: Cunard Line Ltd.</td>
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<td><strong>Short Paper 4 due.</strong></td>
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<td>Wed, 3/5</td>
<td>International Marketing Communications</td>
<td>Chapter 8 and <em>New Yorker</em> article</td>
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<td>Case: Ericsson’s Global Brand Campaign</td>
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<td><strong>Short Paper 5 due</strong></td>
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<td>Wed, 3/12</td>
<td><strong>No Class – GMU Spring Break</strong></td>
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<td>Wed, 3/19</td>
<td><strong>Midterm Exam</strong></td>
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<td>Wed, 3/26</td>
<td>The message: Strategy &amp; Creativity</td>
<td>Chapter 9, 10 &amp; 11; <em>New Yorker</em> article</td>
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<td>Case: Capital One</td>
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<td><strong>Short Paper 6 due.</strong></td>
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<td>Wed, 4/2</td>
<td>Media strategy and planning</td>
<td>Chapter 12</td>
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<td><strong>Short Paper 7 due.</strong></td>
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<td>Wed, 4/9</td>
<td>Media: print, television, radio, and digital/interactive media</td>
<td>Chapters 13 and 14</td>
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<td>Case: UnME Jeans</td>
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<td><strong>Short Paper 8 due.</strong></td>
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<td>Wed, 4/16</td>
<td>Direct marketing &amp; Personal selling</td>
<td>Chapter 17</td>
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<td><strong>Short paper 9 due</strong></td>
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<td>Wed, 4/23</td>
<td>Sales promotions &amp; support media; Sponsorship &amp; branded entertainment</td>
<td>Chapters 15 and 16</td>
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<td>Case: John Hancock Financial Svcs.</td>
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<td>Wed, 4/30</td>
<td>PR and corporate communications</td>
<td>Chapter 18</td>
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<td>Case: Launching the BMW Z3</td>
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<td><strong>Short Paper 10 due.</strong></td>
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**Final report due**: Friday, May 2, 12:00 (noon).