**CMGT 544:**

**Creating Organizational Identity/Communicating Branding**

**Spring 2017**

**Syllabus**

*“In this ever-changing society, the most powerful and enduring brands are built from the heart. They are real and sustainable. Their foundations are stronger because they are built with the strength of the human spirit, not an ad campaign. The companies that are lasting are those that are authentic.”*

* Howard Schultz, CEO, Starbucks

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**Office Hours:** Tuesday, 3:30PM-5:30, By appointment – Location TBD

**Course Hours:** 6:00pm-8:50pm Tuesday – Room ANN 209

**Course Description and Aims:**

Why should I buy your product?

A seemingly simple, innocent question that would seem to deserve a straighforward answer such as “it tastes better” or “it gets my laundry cleaner” or “it’s easier to use.”

However, when it comes to marketing, and the branding discipline in particular, the facts seldom matter. There is far more wrapped up in the consumer decision to buy one brand over another than the consideration of tangible features and benefits.

Access to technology has leveled the playing field to the point where creating a “great” product is simply the cost of entry. In fact, a knock-off PC provides essentially the same functionality as a Mac and an Android-based smartphone will accomplish nearly anything that can be done on an iPhone. The Walgreens house brand of acetomenaphin contains precisely the same ingredients as Tylenol. And you will likely notice absolutely no difference in your laundry if you use the house brand from Costco rather than Tide.

The art of branding, making a product emotionally resonant and distinct, is what differentiates one brand from the next. From packaged goods to enterprise software, customers seldom, if ever, make decisions based on facts. Rather, consumers actively seek meaningful connections to brands they perceive to align with their values and self-image.

The most successful brands understand this intuitively. Starbucks makes coffee but what they really make is community. Disney makes movies and theme parks but what they really sell is magic. Nike makes athletic shoes but what they really sell is aspiration.

This course will help students answer the “why should I buy your product” question from the marekter’s perspective, providing the skills to develop products, services and communications that will strike a responsive chord in an increasingly crowded, cluttered and hyper-competitive marketplace.

Students will learn vocabulary, concepts and frameworks to evaluate competitive brands, position existing brands to compete more effectively, and how to develop new brands to capitalize on unfulfilled consumer needs. You will study classical marketing theory along with the skills to “ladder up” from tangible product features to the emotional resonance, based on “bigger,” more aspirational ideals, needed to build solid relationships with consumers.

You will also become more comfortable with both professional and academic perspectives, and become less intimidated by denser academic material. You will read much, learning to summarize and synthesize the material, and re-present them in writing – clearly, comprehensively, yet succinctly.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

* Assess and analyze the state of a brand, in terms of its origin, its philosophy and stance, its position in the competitive space;
* Create a campaign to improve outcomes for the brand;
* Search through academic, professional and popular databases to locate relevant materials;
* Evaluate materials from popular, professional, and academic sources related to branding, to judge the different value of each source, and use each for specific purposes;
* Apply several key branding concepts to real branding cases.

**Grading Scheme**

A      95.0% or higher

A-     90.0%-94.9%

B+    87.0%-89.9%

B      83.0%-86.9%

B-     80.0%-82.9%

C+    77.0%-79.9%

C      73.0%-76.9%

C-     70.0%-72.9% (C- or lower is a failing grade)

D      60.0%-69.9%

F     59.9% or lower

**Summary of Assignments**

Essay/Blog

In order to assess your incoming thinking and writing skills, you will write a 3-5 page essay on any topic of your choice that concerns branding.

You can write about a new product, the dilemma facing existing, aging products, about an advertising campaign or anything else you like, as long as branding is the major theme. You have the choice to cite outside sources, but this is not required for this assignment.

Brief Branding Presentation

The brief branding presentation is to be done by the student individually. Two students will present each week, during the beginning of class. Each oral presentation is to last no more than 10 minutes. The time limit will be strictly imposed. There will be an additional 10 minutes allotted for questions and discussion.

The presentation’s purpose is to prompt you to become aware of developments in the branding space. Interesting developments can be about brands, or about a branding-related idea, problem or argument.

The instructor will coordinate and assign a specific week for you.

Major Brand Project (For detailed descriptions, see “Project Specifications”)

* Part 1: Choose partners and brands, search for materials
* Part 2: Description of Brand History and Relevant Branding Concepts
* Part 3: Description of Brand’s Current State and Environment; Application of Branding Concepts to Diagnose Weaknesses and Possibilities
* Part 4: Presentations

**Components of the Grade**

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| **Assignment** | **Due** | **Weight** |
| * Essay/Blog | January 16 | 5% |
| * Individual Brand Presentation | As Scheduled | 10% |
| * Project Part 1 * Choice of brand * Compilation of materials (articles, cases, books) * See project specifications, in Blackboard | January 30 | 5% |
| * Project: Part 2 * Descriptions of brand’s history; descriptions of relevant branding concepts that explained brand’s success and/or failure | February 20 | 20% |
| * Project: Part 3 * Description of brand’s current state and environment; application of relevant branding concepts to diagnose weaknesses and explore possibilities | April 3 | 20% |
| * Project: Part 4 * Presentation | April 18 | 30% |
| * Class Participation * General discussion/readings * Questions & responses to classmates individual branding presentations and final team presentations |  | 10% |
| **Total:** |  | **100.00%** |

**Note: All Assignments Due by Midnight on Designated Date**

**More on Class Participation**

Each student must contribute to the learning in this class. In most class sessions, you must speak, ask questions, argue respectfully. To do so, you must prepare well: read the assigned materials before class; read, view or listen to other relevant and interesting content; think. Staying silent is poor behavior. Silence is especially unacceptable when we have guest speakers. It sets a poor impression of being disengaged. Judgment of participation is based on the instructors’ aggregate impressions gained throughout the semester. If you participate frequently and enthusiastically, you will earn the full score. You will not earn the full score by merely attending classes. Simply attending classes and only occasionally participating will result in a mediocre score (e.g., half of the possible score). If you are absent, disengaged or disrespectful, you will earn zero.

**Attendance and Punctuality**

Graduate school is in many ways preparation or refinement for successful professional lives. Professional success depends on a range of skills and behaviors; one foundational behavior is showing up, on time and alert.

So, come to class. Come to class on time. When you are here, be here.

Not being here (i.e., being absent or being late) will accumulate penalties. You are allowed one absence without penalty. Thereafter, each first unexcused absence costs 2% of the total grade (being late counts as half an absence). Being absent from more than three classes opens the possibility for more stringent penalties (e.g., the highest grade to be earned is a C).

**Attention and Mobile Screens in Class**

Students must be 100% focused on lectures, discussions or other in-class activities when in class.

Notes should be taken by hand, written in a notebook.

Laptops, phones, tablets or other devices may not be used in class without explicit direction from the instructor. Texting, checking emails, visiting websites, using apps, etc. are strictly forbidden in the classroom.

Violation of this policy will result in penalties on the final grade.

**Academic Conduct**

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences.  Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>.  Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable.  See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

**Note:** Any draft submitted to the instructors is a formal document, subject to the University’s policies regarding plagiarism. Plagiarism is not excused for drafts.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university.  You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>.

This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person.  *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage [sarc@usc.edu](mailto:sarc@usc.edu) describes reporting options and other resources.

**Support Systems**

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing.  Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more.

Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students.  *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* <http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html> provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations.  If an officially  declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* [*http://emergency.usc.edu/*](http://emergency.usc.edu/)will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

**Academic Integrity**

The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to upholding the University’s Academic Integrity code as detailed in the SCampus Guide. It is the policy of the School of Communication to report all violations of the code. Any serious violation or pattern of violations of the Academic Integrity Code will result in the student’s expulsion of the Communication major or minor.

The School and the University is committed to the general principles of academic honesty that include and incorporate the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. By taking this course, students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. All submitted work for this course may be subject to an originality review as performed by TurnItIntechnologies (http://www.turnitin.com) to find textual similarities with other Internet content or previously submitted student work. Students of this course retain the copyright of their own original work, and TurnItIn is not permitted to use student-submitted work for any other purpose than (a) performing an originality review of the work, and (b) including that work in the database against which it checks other student-submitted work.

**Students with Disabilities**

Students requesting academic accommodations based on a disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP when adequate documentation is filed. Please be sure this letter is delivered to the professor as early in the semester as possible. DSP is open Monday-Friday, 8:30 am -5:00 pm. The office is in the Student Union 301 and their phone number is (213) 740-0776

**Readings and Viewing** **Materials**

The following books are required:

Vincent, L. (2012). *Brand Real: How smart companies live their brand promise and inspire fierce customer loyalty.* New York, NY: AMACOM.

<http://www.amazon.com/Brand-Real-Companies-Promise-Customer/dp/0814416764>

also available via USC Libraries (<https://libraries.usc.edu/>) [Research > HOMER Catalog > Advanced Search, then search by title and author last name]

Moon, Y. (2010). *Different:* *Escaping the competitive herd.* New York, NY: Crown Business.

<http://www.amazon.com/Different-Escaping-Competitive-Youngme-Moon/dp/030746086X/>

Stengel, J. (2011). *Grow: How ideals power growth and profit at the world’s greatest companies.* New York, NY: Crown Business.

<http://www.amazon.com/Grow-Ideals-Growth-Greatest-Companies/dp/0307720357/>

Barnes, B. (2011) *Everything I Learned About Business I Learned From The Grateful Dead.* New York, NY: Hatchett Book Group

[https://www.amazon.com/Everything-About-Business-Learned-Grateful-ebook/dp/B004QZ9P6A - nav-subnav](https://www.amazon.com/Everything-About-Business-Learned-Grateful-ebook/dp/B004QZ9P6A#nav-subnav)

Other readings, including articles from academic journals, will be specified in the week by week agenda below (most are now TBD but will be added). Many will be provided on Blackboard, the course management system.

For your major course project, you should be prepared to spend some funds (about $50) to acquire additional materials.

**Other Reading:**

Successful marketers must be in sync with the popular culture and the world around them. Most possess an insatiable curiosity, fueled, in part, by a wide range of reading.

Readings in addition to the required books will be assigned before each class. Students are also strongly encouraged to *read on a daily basis*, including:

* Newspapers on a daily basis, particularly the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal.
* Non-business related magazines and blogs: The New Yorker, The Atlantic, Salon, Slate, Vanity Fair, Rolling Stone.
* Business related magazines and blogs: Ad Age, Adweek, Brandweek, Forbes, Harvard Business Review, LinkedIn, (The everyday feed and “Pulse” sections offer a wide range of blogs by “Influencers” and other marketing professionals).
* Non-business books: Novels, history, bios and other non-fiction
* Most importantly, whatever interests you!

**Course Schedule & Assignments**

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| **WEEK** | **TOPICS/ACTIVITIES** | **READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS**  **(to be read/prepared before class that week)** |
| Week 1  January 10 | * Course Introduction * Assignments & expectations of performance * A very brief history of branding * Aspirational Marketing/Laddering up to higher values | * Course syllabus * Course project specifications |
| Week 2  January 17 | * Brand Myth, Brand Ideals & Brand Principles | * *Grow*, pp. 1-54 * *Grateful Dead*, pp. 1-84 * *Jeff Hirsch Essay: [Positioning is Dead! Redefining USP as “Unique Selling Personality”](%E2%80%A2%09https://www.therightbrainstudio.com/redefining-usp-as-unique-selling-personality)* * ***Essay Due no later than 11:59PM on Monday, January 16*** |
| Week 3  January 24 | * Student Branding Presentation * Working with Clients: Lessons Learned * Emotional Intelligence * “The Mental Health” framework | * *Grow,* pp. 55-114 * *Grateful Dead*, pp. 87-159 * Other journal articles/readings TBD |
| Week 4  January 31 | * Student Branding Presentation * Guest Speaker: * John Rindlaub, VP Marketing, Health Net | * *Grow*, pp. 115-199 * *Grateful Dead*, pp. 163-204 * ***Project Part 1 Due*** |
| Week 5  February 7 | * Student Branding Presentation * Super Tuesday * Super Bowl Ad Review * Guest Speaker from NFL | Grow, pp. 200-296  Readings TBD |

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| **WEEK** | **TOPICS/ACTIVITIES** | **READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS**  **(to be read/prepared before class that week)** |
| Week 6  February 14 | * Student Branding Presentations * The Art of the Creative Brief * P&G format and its evolution * Brand Awareness/Self Awareness * How to work with creative people | * *Different, pp.* 1-46 * *Brand Real,* pp. 1-49 * *Academic Journal Articles TBD* |
| Week 7  February 21 | * Student Branding Presentation * Creativity, Ideation & Concept Development * In-class exercises | * *Different, pp.* 47-103 * *Brand Real,* pp. 50-118 * ***Project Part 2 Due*** |
| Week 8  February 28 | * Branding in China * Guest Lecturer: Humphrey Ho, Managing Director, Hylink North America | * Article “The China Code” by Doctoroff, T. (Bb) * Video “What Chines Want” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxHXTQUE6qo](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__www.youtube.com_watch-3Fv-3DnxHXTQUE6qo&d=DQMFaQ&c=clK7kQUTWtAVEOVIgvi0NU5BOUHhpN0H8p7CSfnc_gI&r=aSY19VO-hMv8L1oxxsx7jQ&m=Kd7eAyur2-SJtBHyHSAoIssUotydvUPJs0yDCG39DDY&s=wZKgDJ7eyc34S7aRQVs4T1ucG8w2G8n8Ftbu47Lb5X8&e=) * Article “Why China can’t create brands [http://www.newsweek.com/why-china-cant-create-brands-81989](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__www.newsweek.com_why-2Dchina-2Dcant-2Dcreate-2Dbrands-2D81989&d=DQMFaQ&c=clK7kQUTWtAVEOVIgvi0NU5BOUHhpN0H8p7CSfnc_gI&r=aSY19VO-hMv8L1oxxsx7jQ&m=Kd7eAyur2-SJtBHyHSAoIssUotydvUPJs0yDCG39DDY&s=-v9A0kxFAZsbgGD_oqwSdi9LrSCIpog1i5PdscxWGag&e=) * Article "China, not Silicon Valley, is cutting edge in mobile tech.” <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/03/technology/china-mobile-tech-innovation-silicon-valley.html> * Article: "Chinese tech firms forced to choose market: Home or everywhere else" <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/10/technology/china-homegrown-internet-companies-rest-of-the-world.html> |

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| **WEEK** | **TOPICS/ACTIVITIES** | **READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS**  **(to be read/prepared before class that week)** |
| Week 9  March 7 | * Student Branding Presentation * Leveraging research to create unique brands (Part 1) * Secondary: * Competitive Analysis * White Space * SWOT * Primary Research * Qualitative | * *Different, pp.* 107-178 * *Brand Real,* pp. 119-167 |
| Week 10  March 14 | * Spring Break – No Class |  |
| Week 11  March 21 | * Student Branding Presentation * Leveraging research to create unique brands (Part 2) * Big Data * Quantitative: Brand Mapping * Guest Speaker: Karin Krikorian, Director, Management Science & Integration at Disney | * *Different, pp.* 179-232 * *Brand Real,* pp. 168-239 |

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| **WEEK** | **TOPICS/ACTIVITIES** | **READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS**  **(to be read/prepared before class that week)** |
| Week 12  March 28 | * Student Branding Presentation * Guest Speaker: John Rindlaub, VP Marketing, Health Net | * Readings TBD |
| Week 13  April 4 | * Student Branding Presentation * Branding and The Advertising Business * Brief History * Structure/Roles/Process * Business Model | * Readings TBD * ***Project Part 3 Due*** |
| Week 14  April 11 | * Student Branding Presentation * Lecture TBD * Team Meetings with Professor | * Readings TBD |
| Week 15  April 18 | Presentations | * ***Project 4 Due*** |
| Week 16  April 25 | Presentations |  |