

Fall 2023 – Monday – 2:00pm - 4:50pm

Location: ANN 101

Instructor: Eric Markgraf

Contact Info: Markgraf@usc.edu

Course Description

I believe a company's so called BRAND is the single most important asset they have. It is the life blood of a company and psychological association and emotion connection that a person has with the company's product or service. That is why it is so critical not to stray out of your lane and every branding decision is so vitally important to the continued positive life of a company.

BRAND is so important it should have its own Profit and Loss column on any company's budget document. If you think of any company that you know and love in your life you never actually think of that company's product first, you think of the company.

You think of NIKE, not Air Zoom Pegasus 38, you think of Apple, not the new Mac Air Desk Top, you even think of Crest, before you think of their new complete mouthwash product. And because you think of the company first, they can easily sell more products to you under their umbrella because you TRUST them.

Since BRANDS are more important than ever. In an environment of hyper-competition, diminishing consumer attention, and ongoing uncertainty, strong brands deliver better performance and higher valuations. Branding has evolved from little more than designing a logo into its own complex discipline - a discipline founded on the principles and practices of communication. While other fields, such as management, focus more on outcomes such as price and equity, this course examines the complex processes underlying branding, to give better insights into how to create and shape brands.

You will learn about:

- How branding is a company-wide endeavor rather than just a marketing activity.
- How brands are increasingly defined by customer experience rather than advertising.
- How customers and employees need to be engaged rather than just informed.
- How brands need to evolve yet stay consistent.
- Why, when and how to focus on an important outcome: loyalty.

You will read, view, and discuss much, learning to summarize and synthesize materials, and to tell the stories they reveal. You will become more comfortable with both professional and academic perspectives. And since branding is a collaborative process, you will frequently work in teams, learning to share insights and expertise to create better outcomes.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrated leadership and teamwork in small groups
- Execute brand briefs and understand what makes a good and trustworthy message to consumers.
- Assess and analyze the state of a brand, in terms of its origin, its philosophy, and its position in its competitive space.
- Develop strategies to create or shape brands in today's world
- Evaluate creative and brand assets and assess what is good and what does not work
- Demonstrate effective presentation skills that convey creative ideas and positioning

Policies and Procedures

a. Additional Policies

While it is expected that students will make every effort to attend every classes, it is recognized that personal circumstances will arise which preclude class attendance. In such circumstances, the student is responsible for obtaining the materials presented in missed classes and for making up coursework.

I would like to create a learning environment for my students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.) To help accomplish this, if you have a name and/or set of pronouns that differ from those that appear in your official records, please let me know. If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. If anything is said in class to make you feel uncomfortable, please reach out to me, even anonymously.

b. Communication

Please contact the instructor outside of class and if you cannot come to office hours to arrange a meeting time by email. You can send a second email if I have not replied within 24 hours. Please allow more time on weekends.

Required Readings

How Brands Grow: What marketers don't know, by Byron Sharp

What's the Future of Business: Changing the Way Businesses Create Experiences, by Brian Solis

Grow: How ideals power growth and profit at the world's greatest companies, by Jim Stengel

Different: Escaping the competitive herd, by Youngme Moon

Winning the story wars: Why those who tell (and live) the best stories will rule the future, by Jonah Sachs

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Final Project Paper: 60 % of grade. **Oral Presentation of Final Project** 10%

Your final project will be you and your team's creation. The team will consist 2 or 3 members, and over the semester, study a specific consumer- or retail-oriented brand. You will examine the brand's history, assess its position in the current environment, and develop potential strategies for the future. In the study, you will utilize relevant branding concepts to explain its past moments of success and failure. You will also apply branding concepts to evaluate its current state and environment, diagnosing weaknesses and generating possibilities.

Your study will be detailed in two papers:

- Evaluation of Brand History, 10-12 pages.
- Current State of Brand and Future Strategies, this a creative presentation, power point or other at least 10 pages

The report and creative highlights will be presented to the class at the end of the semester.

Active Participation in Class: 10% of grade

Assignment 1: Individual Oral Presentation: 5% of grade

You will be asked to pick your favorite brand and discuss why it connects with you and your history with that brand during your life.

Assignment 2: Individual Written Paper: 5% of grade

You will be asked to write a 2-3 page paper on a dying BRAND or one that died and why you think it died and where it went wrong and how it strayed from it's mission, and how it lost the consumer's trust.

Assignment 3: Individual Oral Presentation: 10% of grade

You will be asked to prepare and present a discussion using key academic learning from our readings and how it relates to a real time problem going on in the marketplace within a specific business sector you choose and what BRANDS are surviving and adapting to these real time issues.

Breakdown of Grade

Assignment	% of Grade
Final Project	60
Class Participation	10
Individual Assignments	20
Oral Presentaion of Final Project	10
TOTAL	100%

Grading Scale

95% to 100% A	80% to 83%: B-	67% to 69%: D+
90% to 94% A-	77% to 79%: C+	64% to 66%: D
87% to 89%: B+	74% to 76%: C	60% to 63%: D-
84% to 86%: B	70% to 73%: C-	0% to 59%: F

Grading Standards

Letter Grade	Description
A	Excellent; demonstrates extraordinarily high achievement; comprehensive knowledge and understanding of subject matter; all expectations met and exceeded.
B	Good; moderately broad knowledge and understanding of subject matter; explicitly or implicitly demonstrates good, if not thorough understanding; only minor substantive shortcomings.
C	Satisfactory/Fair; reasonable knowledge and understanding of subject matter; most expectations are met; despite any shortcomings, demonstrates basic level of understanding.
D	Marginal; minimal knowledge and understanding of subject matter; more than one significant shortcoming; deficiencies indicate only the most rudimentary level of understanding.
F	Failing; unacceptably low level of knowledge and understanding of subject matter; deficiencies indicate lack of understanding.

Grading Timeline

For effective learning, students should receive timely feedback on assignments and exams. Therefore, every attempt will be made to grade assignments/exams and post grades within two weeks. Scores for all assignments and exams are regularly updated on Blackboard. You are responsible for notifying the Instructor **within one (1) week** of a score posting if you think a score is missing or inaccurate. Moreover, you only have this period of time to contest a score on an assignment/exam. If you fail to inquire/notify us of any discrepancy, missing score, or contest a score within one week of the date the score is posted, no further changes will be made.

Assignment Submission Policy

A. All assignments are due on the dates specified. Lacking prior discussion and agreement with the instructor, late assignments will automatically be given a grade of F.

Add/Drop Dates for Session 001

(15 weeks: 8/21/2023 – 12/1/2023; Final Exam Period: 12/6-13/2023)

Link: <https://classes.usc.edu/term-20231/calendar/>

Last day to add: Friday, September 8th, 2023

Last day to drop without a mark of "W" and receive a refund: Friday, September 8th, 2023

Last day to change enrollment option to Pass/No Pass or Audit: Friday, September 8th, 2023 [All major and minor courses must be taken for a letter grade.]

Last day to add/drop a Monday-only class without a mark of "W" and receive a refund or change to Audit:

Tuesday, September 12th, 2023

Last day to withdraw without a "W" on transcript or change pass/no pass to letter grade: Friday, October 6th, 2023 [Mark of "W" will still appear on student record and STARS report and tuition charges still apply.]

*Please drop any course by the end of week three for session 001 (or the 20 percent mark of the session in which the course is offered) to avoid tuition charges.]

Last day to drop with a mark of "W": Friday, November 10th, 2023

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Important note to students: Be advised that this syllabus is subject to change - and probably will change - based on the progress of the class, news events, and/or guest speaker availability.

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings/Homework	Homework Due at Class
Week 1 Date: 8/21	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introductions 2. Class Syllabus 3. What is Branding 		
Week 2 Date: 8/28	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Oral Presentations 2. Introduce your creative partner 3. Discussions of strong Brands and Why they are relevant. 	Read How Brands Grow Chapter 12	<p>Pick a BRAND that has meant something to you and explain your history with it.</p> <p>Pick a creative partner for the semester's project</p>
Week 3 Date: 9/4			Labor Day Monday September 4th
Week 4 Date: 9/11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss key learnings from the Book What's the Future of Business 2. Discuss brand building 3. Discuss details of Final Project Requirements 	Read: What's the Future of Business	
Week 5 Date: 9/18	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss where BRANDS go wrong and the history of their mistakes 2. Discuss Key Learnings from the Book Grow 	Read: Grow	Write a 2-3 paper on dying or dead BRAND and why you think it happened and what were their missteps that led to it's demise and how they lost consumer trust.
Week 6 Date: 9/25	Guest Lecture		
Week 7 Date: 10/2	1. Discuss Creating Value for Customers.	Read: Different	
Week 8 Date: 10/9	1. Half of class oral presentation		You will be asked to prepare and give a 5-10 minute presentation, using key learnings to help a real life market situation for a BRAND.
Week 9 Date: 10/16	1. 2nd Half or class oral presentations	Read: Story Wars	1st draft of Brand Histories due.

Week 10 Date: 10/23	Discuss Key Learning from the Book Story Wars Discuss Brand History drafts		
Week 11 Date: 10/30	Guest Lecture		
Week 12 Date: 11/6	Preparing final project and presentations with partner in class		
Week 13 Date: 11/13	Preparing final project and presentations with partner in class		
Week 14 Date: 11/20			Final Presentations
Week 15 Date: 11/27			Final Presentations
STUDY DAYS Dates: 12/2-12/5			
FINAL EXAM PERIOD Dates: 12/6-12/13	Final Project Due		Date: For the date and time of the final for this class, please consult the Fall 2023 Final Schedule

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct

[The USC Student Handbook](https://policy.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/USC_StudentCode_August2022.pdf) (https://policy.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/USC_StudentCode_August2022.pdf)

Academic Integrity

USC's Unifying Value of integrity is a foundational principle that inspires the community to match its values to its actions. Academic integrity is ultimately the sole guarantor of the legitimacy of one's education, and therefore, is vitally important not just for oneself, but for the entire USC community. The value of all USC degrees is negatively impacted by violations of academic integrity. In the classroom, general principles of academic integrity include 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. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles.

Academic Integrity violations (academic dishonesty) include, but are not limited to:

Plagiarism and Cheating

- The submission of material authored by another person but represented as the student's own work, whether that material is paraphrased or copied in verbatim or near-verbatim form.
- Re-using any portion of one's own work (essay, term paper, project, or other assignment) previously submitted without citation of such and without permission of the instructor(s) involved.

- Improper acknowledgment of sources in essays or papers, including drafts. Also, all students involved in collaborative work (as permitted by the instructor) are expected to proofread the work and are responsible for all particulars of the final draft.
- Acquisition of academic work, such as term papers, solutions, or other assignments, from any source and the subsequent presentation of those materials as the student's own work, or providing academic work, such as term papers, solutions, or assignments that another student submits as their own work.

The School of Communication maintains a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found responsible for plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on examinations, or purchasing papers or other assignments will be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards and may be dismissed from the School of Communication. There are no exceptions to the school's policy.

In addition, it is assumed that the work you submit for this course is work you have produced entirely by yourself, and has not been previously produced by you for submission in another course or Learning Lab, without approval of the instructor.

Students and Disability Accommodations:

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

b. Support Systems

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call

suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)- (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298

equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following *protected characteristics*: race, color,

national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/ notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710

uscsa.usc.edu

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Annenberg Student Success Fund

<https://annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/resources/annenberg-scholarships-and-awards>

The Annenberg Student Success Fund is a donor-funded financial aid account available to USC Annenberg undergraduate and graduate students for non-tuition expenses related to extra- and co-curricular programs and opportunities.

