

Course Syllabus

MKT 6339.0W1

The University of Texas at Dallas

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Course Information

Course

Course Number Section: MKT 6339.0W1
Course Title: Capstone Marketing Decision Making
Term and Dates: Fall 2015 (August 24 – December 17)

Professor Contact Information

Professor: Dr. Daniel Rajaratnam
Office Phone: 972-883-5028
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Office Location: SOM 13.318
Online Office Hours: By appointment

About the Instructor

Dr. Rajaratnam has taught numerous marketing courses at the graduate level over the past 31 years. He has a MBA and a Ph.D. in Marketing. He also worked as an executive in two large corporations. He has published in 10 business journals including the Journal of Marketing, Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, Journal of International Business Studies, and the Journal of International Marketing. He has won numerous awards for teaching and research. His most recent was for Best Paper published in 2014, in the Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science.

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

MKT 6301, MKT 6309, and MKT 6310

Course Description

This course will help you develop skills and gain experience in analyzing, formulating, and implementing marketing strategy and seeing how the marketing tactics selected need to be in alignment with that strategy. Course lectures are organized in modules on different topics related to marketing decision making. These modules are meant to supplement and integrate material that you have previously learnt in other marketing courses. A marketing simulation will be used to enable you to apply what you are learning. In teams you will manage a fictional firm that competes with firms managed by other teams. This large scale computer simulation will be using a software package called “Markstrat”. It will take up a significant part of your time and activity in this course over several weeks. A simulation has several advantages over other methods such as case studies. Unlike case studies where you typically stop with broad recommendations, simulations require that you make a specific decision. Further, these decisions will have consequences: you will receive “feedback” on your decisions in the form of the market performance of your firm. There is also the benefit of being able to continue the management of a company over time, rather than as a one-shot experience.

Student Learning Objectives / Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Differentiate between options and plan the correct application of segmentation, target marketing, positioning and other strategic considerations in developing a marketing mix for a given situation.
- Relate marketing plans and decisions to financial metrics and estimate the financial value of different alternatives, accounting for long-term implications of marketing actions and making sound assumptions to deal with market uncertainties.
- Appraise and justify the reasons and assumptions made for choosing from various solutions, discerning the tradeoffs involved in the different alternatives.

Required Materials

- **Markstrat Online PAK (software license) and Handbook:** You must purchase the “Participant Activation Key” (PAK = License) and Handbook. Go to <http://estore.stratxsimulations.com> enter my Course ID « A56216 », you will be asked to register to complete your purchase. Upon purchase, you will automatically be registered in my course « A56216 » You will be able to login stratxsimulations.com to access Markstrat. The Participant Handbook will be provided as soon as you access Markstrat. The cost is \$60 for each student.
- **Readings:** You must purchase and download the coursepack from Harvard Business School Press at: <https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/37321439>. The cost is about \$100 for each student.

Overview of How This Course is Structured

- There are a total of 12 Lecture Modules.
- There will be a simulation and written report which will be done in groups of 4-5 students
- Two individual closed book exams with multiple choice and true/false questions.

Academic Calendar

For details on add/drop dates and other important milestones please refer to the appropriate academic calendar located at the [UT Dallas Academic Calendar webpage](#)

Course Policies

Makeup Exams

There are NO make-up exams allowed unless you have a dire and serious emergency and in those cases most present documented proof such as a physician’s note. It is at the sole discretion of the instructor to determine if the emergency warrants an extension and makeup exam.

Extra Credit

There is no extra credit in this course.

Late Work

Late work will not be accepted. Please ensure that your written simulation journal/report is submitted on or before November 30, 2015

Special Assignments

There are no special assignments

Class Participation

Students are required to login regularly to the online class site. The instructor will use the tracking feature in eLearning to monitor student activity. Students are also required to participate in all class activities such as discussion board, chat or conference sessions and group project.

Virtual Classroom Citizenship

The same guidelines that apply to traditional classes should be observed in the virtual classroom environment. Please use proper netiquette when interacting with class members and the professor.

Policy on Server Unavailability or Other Technical Difficulties

The university is committed to providing a reliable online course system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty which prevents students from completing a time sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will extend the time windows and provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and also contact the UTD eLearning Help Desk: <http://www.utdallas.edu/elearninghelp>, 1-866-588-3192. The instructor and the UTD eLearning Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.

Technical Requirements

In addition to a confident level of computer and Internet literacy, certain minimum technical requirements must be met to enable a successful learning experience. Please review the important [technical requirements](#) on the [Getting Started with eLearning webpage](#).

Course Access and Navigation

This course was developed using a web course tool called eLearning. It is to be delivered entirely online. Students will use their UTD NetID account to login at: <http://elearning.utdallas.edu>. Please see more details on [course access and navigation information](#).

To get familiar with the eLearning tool, please see the [Student eLearning Tutorials](#).

UTD provides eLearning technical support 24 hours a day/7 days a week. The services include a toll free telephone number for immediate assistance (1-866-588-3192), email request service, and an online chat service. Please use this link to access the UTD eLearning Support Center: <http://www.utdallas.edu/elearninghelp>.

Communications

This eLearning course has built-in communication tools which will be used for interaction and communication. Some external communication tools such as regular email and a web conferencing tool may also be used during the semester. For more details, please visit the [eLearning Tutorials webpage](#) for video demonstrations on numerous tools in eLearning.

Interaction with Instructor

The instructor will communicate with students mainly using the Announcements and Discussion tools. Students may send [personal concerns or questions](#) to the instructor using the course Email tool. General questions which are not of a personal nature should be posted in the “Ask the Professor” Board or Forum. The instructor will reply to student emails or Discussion board messages within 3 working days under normal circumstances.

Student Resources

The following university resources are available to students:

UTD Distance Learning: <http://www.utdallas.edu/elearning/students/cstudents.htm>

McDermott Library:

Distance Learners (UTD students who live outside the boundaries of Collin, Dallas, Denton, Rockwall, or Tarrant counties) will need a UTD-ID number to access all of the library's electronic resources (reserves, journal articles, ebooks, interlibrary loan) from off campus. For UTD students living within those counties who are taking online courses, a Comet Card is required to check out materials at the McDermott Library. For more information on library resources go to <http://www.utdallas.edu/library/distance.html>.

Student Assessments

Grading Information*Weights*

Topic	Points	
Simulation Performance	200	Relative to competing teams
Simulation Journal	100	Lessons learned
Exam 1	150	Over the first half of the readings and lectures
Exam 2	150	Over the second half of the readings and lectures.
Total	600	

Grading Scale

Overall Course %	Letter Grade
90-100%	A
86-89%	B+
80-85%	B
76-79%	C+
68-75%	C
Less than 68%	F

Accessing Grades

Students can check their grades by clicking "My Grades" on the course menu after the grade for each assessment task is released.

Exams

Each of the exams will be multiple choice and/or true false over online lectures, course readings, and the simulation.

Group Formation

Groups of 4-5 students will be assigned during the first week of the class. You must indicate your group preference by midnight August 26, 2015. Each group can use the available group tools under its own group area in the course to communicate and collaborate within the group. A web conference system is available for use. Teams can schedule a live web conference for team work. Please see the [Web Conferencing page](#) for instructions on making a reservation and other web conference information.

Markstrat (Computer simulation)

Your group's performance in the Markstrat simulation will constitute a major part of your grade. Each group/team will be responsible for managing a firm within an industry and you will be competing against other teams in your class. There will be eight decision rounds (Period 1-8). The primary measure used to evaluate your group's performance is the cash flow generated by your business ("Net contribution"), which you will be striving to maximize within your "industry". Your net contribution will be compared with those of other teams. Your score will depend on how well you perform relative to the other teams. **You are responsible for becoming fully familiar with the software by reading the software manual (available once you purchase the software license).**

In order not to discourage any team prematurely, net contribution will be examined at two points in time, first for the early decision periods (Periods 1-4) and then again for the later decisions (Periods 5-8). This will give the option to reward "turnarounds" and penalize "fizzle outs." The two scores will be averaged for your performance grade. In addition to dissuade unrealistic end-gaming, the quality of your team's final strategic position will also be considered by the instructor when evaluating your overall Markstrat performance. Specifically, teams that leave their firm in a position that would likely lead to poor future performance (example no R&D effort) may be given an evaluation that is lower than would be received based on their past net contribution alone.

At the end of eight periods, each group will also make a written report for each decision period that includes the following: your starting business position and initial strategy; your firm's performance objectives and actual performance; key strategic moves that led to your success or demise; how you left your company positioned for the future; and important lessons learned from the simulation.

To do well in Markstrat, you should expect to spend several hours each week analyzing and making decisions.

No late decisions. The simulation cannot run without all decisions. Decisions are due by 7 pm on the due date. If your group does not submit a decision by the due date and time, default decisions generated by the computer will be used. Note that default decisions generally perform worse than decisions that you might normally make.

Rubric for Simulation Journal

The simulation journal should describe the decision process and strategy that your group used for each simulation decision and your analysis of the outcome. The journal should include for each decision period:

- An analysis of the marketing environment
- Your target market(s) and the reasons for this choice
- Your major competitors and why
- Your marketing objectives (specific and measurable)
- Your marketing strategy and an explanation of the rationale behind your decisions for each week
 - Product strategy
 - Pricing
 - Distribution channel decisions
 - Promotion and advertising tactics
- A copy of the performance summary report for each decision
- An analysis of what worked and why
- An analysis of what did not work and why
- Important "take aways" from that decision
- Any changes you plan to make for the next decision period.

In order to clarify, illustrate or support your points, you may include graphs, tables or other exhibits in order to track trends. The journal should be a chronological account of each decision, the budget and your explanation of your decision. Your journal should be clear, well organized, thorough, and show understanding of the simulation decisions as well as the effect of competitors' actions.

Assignment submission instructions

Locate the assignment in your eLearning course. You will submit your assignments in the required file format with a simple file name and a file extension. To submit your assignment, click the assignment name link and follow the on-screen instructions to upload and submit your file(s). For additional information on how to submit assignments, view the [Submitting an Assignment video tutorial](#).

Please Note: Each assignment link will be deactivated after the assignment due time. After your submission is graded, you may go to My Grades on the course menu and click the score link to check the results and feedback.

For any group assignments, select a group leader and only that individual will submit the assignment for the group and all group members will be able to view the results and feedback once it's been graded.

Proctored Exam Information

This course requires proctored closed book examinations.

Local students can now take their exams on-campus at the **UTD Student Success Center - Testing Center** (no fee charge). Please see the [UTD Student Success Center - Testing Center Website](#) for more information and check the hours of operation and testing center policies. Please be sure to view and follow the **Test Center Student Guidelines** found on the Testing Center main web page. If an exam is scheduled with multiple-day exam time window, students are required to make an appointment using the **RESERVE-A- SEAT** application to take the exam during the required exam test window as specified. If an exam is schedule only for one day (or set with a specific time window), students can just walk in to the UTD Testing Center to take the exam during that scheduled date (or on the set time). No reservation is needed. The UTD Testing Center is located at the McDermott Library basement (**Room MC 1.304**). When you arrive to take your exam, you will sign in with your **Comet Card** (or a **photo ID & UTD ID number** if you do not have a Comet Card).

Students who find UTD geographically inconvenient may use a testing service of their choice at a convenient location to have the exam proctored. All exams must be completed within this required exam time window: **see page 7 for testing dates**. All students must inform the instructor of their outside testing location. A proctored exam application **must** be completed **3 weeks prior to the date of the test**. Please go to the [Proctored Exam Information](#) page to check out **Procedures for Arranging an Individual Proctored Exam** and to access and complete the **Online Proctored Exam application**. Please note students are responsible for any fee charge of their testing services. All completed exams must be received within 3 days (not the date to take the exam but to have test center return them) to allow timely grade reporting to the UTD Registrar.

The UTD Testing Center requests all students strictly follow the proctored exam scheduling deadlines. If any student needs special accommodations, please seek the instructor's approval in advance. If you have any questions about using either UTD or outside testing center service, please email TestingCenter@utdallas.edu.

Academic Calendar

WEEK/ DATES	TOPIC/ LECTURE	READING	ASSESSMENT / ACTIVITY	DUE DATE
1 Aug 24 –30	Course Access & Overview of Marketing	Customer Centricity by Deshpande	Finish group formation and submit names and corresponding groups	Aug 30
2 Aug 31 -Sept 6	Overview of Markstrat	Markstrat Manual	Markstrat quiz	Sept 6
3 Sept 7 – 13	Marketing Environment	Introduction to Strategy by Casadesus-Masanell	Markstrat practice round	Sept 13
4 Sept 14 – 20	Strategic Planning	Framework for Marketing Strategy Formation by Dolan	Markstrat Decision 1 due	Sept 20
5 Sept 21 – 27	Segmentation	Segmentation and Targeting by Gupta; Brand Positioning by Avery and Gupta	Markstrat Decision 2 due	Sept 27
6 Sept 28– Oct 4	Competitive Strategy	Consumer Behavior and buying process by Gourville and Norton	Markstrat Decision 3 due	Oct 4
7 Oct 5 – 11	Generic Strategies	Business to Business Marketing by Cespedes and Narayandas	Markstrat Decision 4 due	Oct 11
8 Oct 12 – 18	Competitive Advantage	Creating Customer Value by Gupta	Exam 1 over lectures & readings weeks 1-7	Oct 18
9 Oct 19 - 25	Differentiation	Brands and brand equity by Deshpande and Keinan	Markstrat Decision 5 due	Oct 25
10 Oct 26 – Nov 1	Competition	Competitive Dynamics by Ly and Vroom	Markstrat Decision 6 due	Nov 1
11 Nov 2 - 8	Pricing	Pricing strategy by Dolan and Gourville; Pricing, Profits and Customer Value by Cespedes, Shapiro, Ross	Markstrat Decision 7 due	Nov 9

12 Nov 9 - 15	Distribution	Developing and managing channels of distribution by Rangan	Markstrat Decision 8 due	Nov 16
13 Nov 16 - 22	CRM	Customer Management by Gupta	Markstrat Decisions 9 & 10	Nov 22
Nov 23 – 27	Fall and Thanksgiving Holiday			
14 Nov 30 – Dec 6			Markstrat final report is due	Nov 30
			Exam 2 over reading and lectures since exam 1	Dec 7

All 10 periods of Simulation should be completed on or before November 22, 2015

Academic Integrity

The University has policies and discipline procedures regarding academic dishonesty. Detailed information is available on the [UTD Judicial Affairs](#) web page. All students are expected to maintain a high level of responsibility with respect to academic honesty. Students who violate University rules on academic honesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced.

Course Evaluation

As required by UTD academic regulations, every student must complete an evaluation for each enrolled course at the end of the semester. An online instructional assessment form will be made available for your confidential use. Please watch for the email notification at your UTD email inbox with course evaluation access information towards the end of semester.

University Policies

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Please go to <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies> for these policies.

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the professor.

Peer Evaluation Form for Group Simulation

Team _____

Confidential: do not turn in as a group with simulation report, you must turn it in individually to me as an email attachment. The purpose of this evaluation is to measure the contribution of each member to the group effort. Each member will rate the relative contribution of all members in the group.

If a majority of students on the team rate a student a “M” (Mediocre), then that student will get a 60 point deduction from the project. If a majority of students on the team rate a student an F (no usable contribution), then that student will get a 0 on the project. You should be honest and impartial in your evaluations. The instructor reserves the right to adjust and/or discard evaluations that are questionable or based on personality conflicts. Please use the scale shown below:

Rating scale

A. Acceptable: No major issues, contributed work: no point deduction

M. Mediocre: There were significant issues, for example student did not attend most of the meetings and/or contributed poor quality work and/or submitted late work and/or not enough volume of work: 60 point deduction. At my discretion I may increase point deduction, point deduction might be reduced based only on documented work-not verbal he said she said or “I was waiting for” excuses

F. No usable contribution. Student either did not contribute any work that could be used in the project or did so past the documented deadline set by the group: 0 on the project

Enter the name of each group member, yourself first, below.	Rate the member's contribution on the A, M or F scale:	Please provide some justification for your rating below <u>only if the score you assigned to a team member is a M or F.</u> Use back of the form if needed.
1. Your Name:		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		