MARKETING 491J
TOOLS FOR PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS IN MARKETING

PROFESSOR CHARLES D. SCHEWE

Fall, 2007

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND OVERVIEW

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- ✓ **TO PROVIDE THE SKILLS AND INSIGHTS NECESSARY TO BE EXTREMELY EFFECTIVE EMPLOYEES/MANAGERS,**
- ✓ **TO GUIDE STUDENTS TO HIGH PRODUCTIVITY ON THE JOB IN THEIR CAREERS, AND**
- ✓ **TO BUILD SCHOLARLY INVESTIGATIVE SKILLS BEFITTING A COMMONWEALTH COLLEGE STUDENT.**

Tools for Professional Success focuses on **applying the conceptual frameworks of marketing to real-world problems faced by actual companies**. The purpose of the course is to give students some practical real-world experience solving marketing problems. Class members will work in teams. Each team will be given a particular problem from his/her company to work on over the course of the semester. Students are expected to apply what they have learned from coursework over their academic careers to solve the company's problem.

Course meetings will be run like a **series of staff meetings** rather than the traditional lecture/discussion course. Class meetings and individual appointments with Professor Schewe will offer discussion, providing a variety of skills and direction for achieving success in the business world. Companies demand **good communication skills** and those will be developed in written reports and in **powerpoint presentation skills**. Written documents and oral presentations will be critiqued by Ms. Gail Cruise from the Undergraduate Business Writing Program [WAC].

Each student team will have **a specific marketing problem from their company that will require investigation and solution** over the course of the semester. Company problems will cover a variety of topics and depend on the needs of the client company. Such problems might include analyzing customer satisfaction, determining customer preferences for product features and services, gathering data on market size and potential, or investigating competitive pricing and competitor strategies. **Solving company problems** will likely include **the following kinds of activities**: library, internet, and other outside sourcing of existing information, telephone interviewing, on-site interviewing of customers/client employees, store intercepts of customers, and regional travel to audit successful businesses. The client company will reimburse all expenses incurred subject to budgetary limitations. Each team should set up a procedure and policy for reimbursement at the first client meeting. Each team must also set up a procedure and policy for keeping the client informed of the team's activities…this also should be accomplished at the first meeting. Professor Schewe will not accompany you to any client meetings, including the final presentation. It is the team's responsibility to "manage the client."

SOME PAST CLIENT ENGAGEMENTS

Some of the projects that have been undertaken in the past include:

- **Friendly's Ice Cream Company**: This project focused on helping Friendly's understand how best to introduce its packaged ice cream into supermarkets. Consultants interviewed shoppers in grocery stores and conducted telephone interviews to determine the best recommendations. The team's suggestion of an advertising theme "Take the Friendly's Experience Home" was used in the company's spring promotional campaign. One of the consulting staff was subsequently hired as a full-time consultant for Friendly's while another obtained a position at A.T. Kearney Consulting in New York.

- **Kanzaki Paper**: The team investigated how to improve the marketing of the company's pressure treated labels. The workplan included interviewing distributors and printing shop management. The results of this study confirmed the suspicions of top management and resolved a conflict between two upper managers.

- **Tarnow Nursery**: This project assessed the customer service levels of competitors and the client nursery. Additional investigation of highest quality customer service practices in various industries resulted in recommendation to raise the delivery of customer service at Tarnow.

- **Hasbro**: The team investigated how Hasbro could broaden its market segment for the floor game Twister to college students. The researchers interviewed students at in the Five Colleges. In their final presentation, they showed how the circles on the game's floormat were too close for players with bodies larger than children. Hasbro managers had not thought of this key element to the game's success when targeting this new segment.

COURSE FORMAT AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Course members will be treated as staff consultants rather than students. **Professor Schewe** will act as a principal in a consulting firm. **His role is to monitor activities and direct students to effective methodologies to solve their problems**. Class meetings will allow sharing of knowledge and information sources among students about better avenues to successful client problem solution. Staff consultants/course members will use their creative abilities to learn frameworks that will promote better recommendations. Some of the **skills acquired** in this course include:

- ✓ Managing relationships with client company and its executives/managers
- ✓ Problem Solving
- ✓ Interpersonal skills that enable effective and efficient working with other class/internship company members
- ✓ Organization and Planning
- ✓ Time Management
- ✓ Leadership and delegation of responsibility
- ✓ Relentless pursuit of sources of information and interviewing skills
- ✓ The use of technology to solve business problems
- ✓ Improved writing ability and desktop publishing capabilities
- ✓ Audio-visual and verbal/powerpoint presentation skills

Students' company problems will comprise the basis for applying course understanding. At about a third of the way through the course, students will turn in a **report that states the company problem that is being addressed, the research methods that are being used to solve that problem, and a complete list of references used and persons spoken with.** This assignment will allow students to see how business reports are written. At the end of the course, students will turn in **a report that sets out the company problem, the methods used to investigate the problem, and the findings with recommendations made to the company.** This business report must be professionally written. Standards for written work are those of first class companies in terms of **organization, clarity, conciseness, and English grammar**. Students will have access to Undergraduate Business Writing Program consultants for assistance in their written reports. The expectations for the **quality of the desktop published report** are **sky high**. Ms. Gail Cruise and other members of the Undergraduate Business Writing Program will be available to help you in your report writing. Copies of **prior semester "Best Reports"** are on reserve in the **ISOM Library** under Marketing 491.

All in-class presentations should be engaging, professional, and educational to the class...and will be graded accordingly. See ***Making Presentation*s**, the required paperback book listed in Course Written Resources, and **"Beware These Presentation Pitfalls"** in this syllabus. Students also are encouraged to study ***I Can See You Naked***, an excellent book on making presentations that is also on reserve in the ISOM Library. Each class member [in teams where more than one class member is working with one company] will make three separate presentations during the semester [See Schedule]. Each presentation must be a powerpoint presentation. Students will be helped by **feedback from Ms. Cruise**. Students must provide a VHS tape for their presentations.

The **first powerpoint presentation** will be about **15 minutes** in duration and focus on a description of the student's company, the internship and the nature of the company problem. The **second 20**

minute powerpoint presentation will focus on the **problem and the methodology** used to solve the problem. **The final presentation will be 30 minutes and briefly revisit the problem and methodology but will focus on the solutions to the problem**. Each of these presentations will be videotaped for each student/team to review and self-assess one's presentation skills. Class members will make a final presentation to the company [along with a written report] as well and that will constitute a fourth presentation.

Course participants in the past have **praised a similar course** for making their conceptual coursework in SOM come alive, learning how to manage an employer, finding sources of information never before known to exist, learning how to handle interpersonal problems that arise when working with a group, meeting a deadline, and coping with uncertainty that accompanies solving real-world problems. They have also indicated that the **course workload and time commitment is far greater than expected, especially from the first of November forward…so be well-prepared.**

STUDENT REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Since this course applies the concepts of marketing, members must have had Marketing 301 as a prerequisite. Having Marketing 412 [Market Research] that provides the foundations of scientific research, and/or Marketing 410 [Consumer Behavior] is also a big plus although not a requirement.

Grades will be based on an assessment of the student's ability to apply marketing concepts to a company problem and work well within a company as an employee. Much weight will be given **to field reports where the company evaluates the work of the student**. Students' evaluations will reflect:

- ✓ their success at solving company problems,
- ✓ initiative,
- ✓ commitment to the company and course,

- ✓ ability to work with other employees and students,
- ✓ communication skills,
- ✓ punctuality, and
- ✓ overall productivity.

Students will be **evaluated at various points during the semester by company supervisors and prior to the final course performance review.**

Each team member will hand in **evaluations of each of the other team member's performance [See the two evaluation sheets at the end of this syllabus].** This evaluation will cover creativity, intellectual contribution, workload contribution, and commitment to excellence. These evaluations can dramatically **influence a class member's grade** for the course. **Mid-term evaluations** will be handed in toward the end of October; any team member with a grading of 70% or lower by any one team member will be given a **"pink sheet" warning** that improvement is expected. If a **70%** or lower evaluation (refer to evaluation sheet in this syllabus) is given by team members for another member on final evaluations, that person can receive a grade of no higher than a **"C"** for the semester. If the grade is **60%** or lower, a **"D"** would be the highest grade achievable. Marks of **50%** or below will result in **failure in the course**. You must use the official forms provided at the end of this syllabus…**your grade will reflect not handing this form in on time** [see discussion of late assignments below] and for **not using this form. This mandate applies to both mid-term and final team evaluations.**

In addition to field reports, **students' final grades will depend on classroom performance as well.** Students will be evaluated on their

- ✓ classroom discussion,
- ✓ the quality of their presentations, and
- ✓ quality of the company reports that offer recommendations for solving their company problem,

- ✓ attendance,
- ✓ courtesy,
- ✓ punctuality, and
- ✓ enthusiasm [you are expected to enter into the course discussion].

All of these **considerations** will also be **factored into the final grade.**

In the real world, **deadlines are common and held to**. In this course, all reports are due at the end of class time on the appointed day indicated on the schedule…unless otherwise indicated. **If an assignment is late**, the student in question will suffer a **lowering of his/her <u>FINAL</u> grade by one letter [for example, from an "A" to an "A-"]. For each day after the first 24 hour period that the assignment is late, the FINAL grade will be dropped an additional letter grade.**

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL ADMINISTRATIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS MADE IN CLASS. IF CHANGES IN COURSE PROCEDURE, PRESENTATION DATE AND THE LIKE ARE ANNOUNCED IN CLASS, YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR KNOWING THIS INFORMATION.

COURSE WRITTEN RESOURCES

The nature of each project is different and students are expected to find appropriate printed materials to solve their team project problems. This is a creative exercise on the team's part. Conceptual frameworks and information sources will come from any number of different outlets: **library articles, institute reports, research firm reports, and previously used textbooks** that can be consulted for needed information. Some **books and former course reports are on reserve in the ISOM library** for your reading and analysis. In addition, some class/staff meeting time will be devoted to investigating techniques for analyzing information gathered qualitatively during the process of the client engagement. The achieve this, the following books are required:

Evert Gummesson, ***Qualitative Methods in Management Research*****, Revised Edition, (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 2000)**

Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin, ***Basics of Qualitative Research*****, Second Edition, (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1998)**

Thomas Hindle, Making Presentations, (East Rutherford, NJ: DK Publishing: 1998)

Additionally, each student must subscribe for the semester to ***The Wall Street Journal and/or Fortune or Business Week.*** These publications provide up-to-the minute analysis of applications of business/marketing success stories that provide a wealth of ideas for increasing one's productivity on the job. Every other class period [see weekly schedule], each student will hand in **a 2-page critique of any 2 articles** that appeared **in the prior two-week period**. These reports should present a **description of the content of the article** and **also how it impacts on the student's internship** or is expected to be helpful in the **student's future career development**. These reports

will be graded on a 1 to 10 basis [where 10 is best] based on your insights into the article and how it impacts your client project or your future career.

HOW TO CONTACT PROFESSOR SCHEWE

Charles D. Schewe, 221C SOM, Phone 545.5672 [SOM Office Voice], 545.3858 [SOM Office Fax]; 256.0914 [Home Office Voice], 253.3338 [Home Office Fax]

Schewe@mktg.umass.edu

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1-2:30, and by appointment. From November 5 to December 12, Monday and Wednesday, 3-5.

Course Website:
http://intra.som.umass.edu/Schewe/mktg491

WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

Week 1: September 4…Introduction to Course.

Week 2: September 11…Feedback from Client Visits. Problem Formulation and Business Research. Gummesson, Chapters 1-3 and Strauss and Corbin, 1-4.

Week 3: September 18…How to Use the Library: Michael Davis, Business Reference Librarian, on conducting Library Database Research. How to Present and Write for Business: Ms. Gail Cruise on Making Business Powerpoint Presentations; Ms. Gail Cruise on How to Write Business Reports.

Week 4: September 25…Problem Formulation and Business Research and Quality in Business Research. Gummesson, Chapters 4-5 and Strauss and Corbin, Chapters 5-7.

Week 5: October 2…How to Analyze Your Data and Conduct Critical Path Analysis. Evaluative Criteria: A Decision Model to Guide Research. Evaluating Research Quality—WRNX Report. Open Coding, Strauss and Corbin, Chapter 8. **[Two Copies of Problem Formulation and Methodology Report Due with Bibliography of References]**

No Class on Tuesday, October 9…Due to Columbus Day, Tuesday is a Monday Class Schedule.

Week 6: October 16…How to Analyze Your Data. Axial Coding, Strauss and Corbin, Chapter 9. Critical Path Analysis Revisited. First 7/7 Due. **[WSJ/Business Week/Fortune Report Due.]**

Week 7: October 23…How to Analyze Your Data. Selective Coding, Strauss and Corbin, Chapter 10. **[Mid-term Team Evaluations Due]**

Week 8: October 30…One-on-One Student Meetings with Professor Schewe for Solving Team Problems **[WSJ/Business Week/Fortune Report Due.]**

Week 9: November 6…First Presentations.

Week 10: November 13…One-on-One Student Meetings with Professor Schewe for Solving Team Problems. **[WSJ/Business Week/Fortune Report Due].**

Week 11: November 20…Second Presentations

Week 12: November 27…Putting Together the Final Report. **[Final WSJ/Business Week/Fortune Report Due].**

Week 12: December 4…One-on-One Student Meetings with Professor Schewe for Solving Team Problems.

Week 13: December 11…Final Powerpoint Presentations Conducted**. [Final Team Evaluations Due.]**

Final Presentations Made to Client Companies after Final In-Class Presentation and Before December 20
Final Company Reports Due on December 11

About Charles D. Schewe, Ph.D.

Charles D. Schewe is Professor of Marketing at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst as well as principal in Lifestage Matrix Marketing. Dr. Schewe received his Ph.D. (1972) from the Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University and his MBA (1965) and BA (1964) from the University of Michigan. In 1979, he was a Fulbright-Hays Scholar at the University of Lund, in Sweden where he frequently is a visiting professor.

Professor Schewe has advised numerous companies in strategic planning, competitive intelligence, marketing research, customer service and competitive positioning. His client engagements have included The Coca-Cola Company, Kellogg's, Spalding Sports Worldwide, International Business Machines, Kmart, RJR Nabisco, Kraft General Foods, Prudential Bache, Grand Metropolitan, Lucky Stores, Eastman Kodak and Procter & Gamble. Over the last two decades, Dr. Schewe has focused on understanding the marketing management implications of an aging population and assisted numerous manufacturers and retailers targeting various age groups. From this knowledge base, he has worked as Executive Consultant to Age Wave, Inc., a San Francisco-based consulting firm specializing in offering counsel on the implications of the Aging of America. While working at Age Wave, Dr. Schewe met Geoffrey Meredith with whom he started Lifestage Matrix Marketing in 1994.

Dr. Schewe has spoken extensively and internationally to executive groups on marketing topics within his areas of expertise. He has given numerous keynote addresses to large audiences in such varied industries as credit unions, healthcare, financial services, senior living communities, building supplies, and polyurethane. He has authored over fifty articles in academic journals such as the JOURNAL OF MARKETING, the JOURNAL OF MARKETING RESEARCH, BUSINESS HORIZONS, MARKETING MANAGEMENT and the JOURNAL OF CONSUMER MARKETING. His recent articles in AMERICAN DEMOGRAPHICS have been quoted and referenced widely. He is frequently featured in newspapers, magazines and trade publications nationwide. He is the author of EXPLORING THE WORLD OF BUSINESS (Worth Publishers, 1996), co-authored with Ken Blanchard, author of THE ONE MINUTE MANAGER, and THE PORTABLE MBA IN MARKETING (John Wiley & Sons, 1998). His most recent book, DEFINING MARKETS, DEFINING MOMENTS: AMERICA'S 7 GENERATIONAL COHORTS, THEIR SHARED EXPERIENCES, AND WHY BUSINESSES SHOULD CARE, has been wildly acclaimed by business professionals and academics as detailing an exciting new way to understand today's market segments and their values.