

Course Syllabus

Marketing Seminar | 040037

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Chair of Marketing

Information

Aims, contents, and method of the course

This seminar is part of the Major in Marketing and International Marketing. Participants will work on emerging topics in marketing or marketing-related domains.

This seminar has several learning goals:

- Familiarize students with emerging topics within the broader field of marketing.
- Improve students' understanding of scientific work and increase their ability to synthesize relevant findings.
- Increase students' analytical skills and their ability to link conceptual / theoretical knowledge to practical implications.
- Improve students' academic writing skills, as well as their communications and presentation skills.

This course is targeted at students of the Major Marketing and International Marketing. Successful completion of all courses of the Minor in Marketing & International Marketing.

Participants will be assigned to groups of three and will work on a pre-defined topic or research question (students' preferences will be taken into consideration whenever possible). Each group will receive a few references, which will serve as a starting point for the investigation. The groups will need to identify and critically discuss all the relevant literature. We also appreciate when the investigation is enriched with additional data (these might include analyses of industry practices, expert interviews, case studies, analysis of available secondary data, etc.). We expect participants to develop new research insights and highlight also relevant research opportunities.

The class will be held on-site. On November 24th (09:45 – 16:30) each team will be asked to briefly present their research question (15 minutes presentation, which will be followed by a 15 minutes discussion. The final presentations will take place on January 26th and 27th. Please find a preliminary schedule below:

Schedule

Topic	Date	Time
Opening seminar Introduction to the topics	October 06	9:45 – 13:00
Presentation of the research question	November 24	09:45 – 16:30
Final presentations	January 26 January 27	09:45 – 16:30 09:45 – 16:30

Assessment and permitted materials

The final grade consists of three components.

Class participation 10%
Group presentation 40%
Final report 50%

Minimum requirements and assessment criteria

Students achieving less than 50% will fail the course and need to re-take the course. Attendance in the first class is required. Class attendance is expected throughout the seminar.

If the circumstances in terms of (Covid-19) require it, the course will be offered in a digital format. In that case, the requirements and assessment criteria will not change.

Seminar Paper

The seminar paper should not exceed 20 pages of text, Times New Roman, Font 12, 1.5 line spacing. The reference list is not included in this page count. You can move less important information to an Appendix (there is no space limit for the Appendix). Please organize your manuscript (for example, the headings) based on the *Journal of Marketing Research* formatting guidelines (see under “Manuscript Organization“)
<https://www.ama.org/submission-guidelines-journal-of-marketing-research/>.

Task. Teams of three will work on a specific topic that will be assigned to your team. The topics are briefly described below along with some inspiration for potential research questions. You are expected to familiarize yourself with the focal literature and are encouraged to identify interesting research questions in the said domain. The research questions can be answered by a thorough critical analysis and discussion of the literature (and particularly the empirical literature). Based on your literature review, and possibly an analysis of secondary data, you might also derive propositions that could be tested in future research projects. Moreover, you could also think about suggesting a conceptual framework that summarizes your findings (you are encouraged to use figures, graphs, etc.). Thus, the basis for your seminar paper will, in most cases, be the existing academic literature.

However, some topics are simply so new that they have not received sufficient attention from academic scholars. Accordingly, the discourse on very new phenomena often does not take place in academic outlets but rather in non-academic outlets (newspapers, online magazines, or on blogs). You are encouraged to integrate these outlets in your analyses. Therefore, you should not restrict your literature search to academic articles or conference proceedings only (you might also consider press articles from magazines such as *The Economist*, *Wired Magazine*, *Harvard Business Review* to newspapers such as *The New York Times* or *The Guardian*).

Furthermore, you might derive new insights by analyzing the behavior of firms—you might identify companies that implement entirely new tactics or strategies. For example, in the context of transparency, the clothing manufacturer Everlane discloses, for each fashion product it markets, the cost components (cost of labor, raw materials, etc.). Identifying these examples (short cases studies) can also provide novel insights and enrich your work. You could also consider enhancing your paper with an analysis of secondary data (in many cases, data/statistics are accessible to the public) or by conducting some expert interviews. Or you could do a content analysis to demonstrate how prevalent a specific phenomenon is. For example, in the context of customization, many companies allow customers to return their customized products. One could sample manufacturers in different industries and code whether or not they allow their customers to have their customized products returned or not. This is just an illustrative example, but it gives you an indication of what is possible in the context of a seminar paper. Creativity is strongly appreciated.

Introduction. In the introduction of your paper, you should discuss why your research question is important, and who might benefit from reading the paper. You should clearly articulate the goal of your paper and how your new insights help contribute to the existing body of literature. The research should also have implications for decision-makers, which in most cases are managers (but can also be policymakers or consumers). Your paper should have an abstract, introduction, main body, and discussion section.

Many introductions start with what we know about a topic, what we do not know (the gap), and why it is important to fill this gap. Other introductions start with introducing a particular strategy pursued by a company and the goal here is to understand what the consequences or antecedents of this phenomenon are. To marketers, it is often important to understand *whether* a certain strategy is effective or not (the main effect), *why* it is effective (the mediation effect; for example, understanding the psychological process behind the effect), and *when* it is effective or not (the moderation effect or boundary condition of an effect).

Please note that you will be evaluated based on your research paper's originality, quality, and interestingness. Merely repeating what has been established before is not sufficient (for example, just repeating the content of an existing literature review). Please make sure that you correctly cite the literature. Plagiarism will not be tolerated, and we commonly use plagiarism software to ensure the quality of the papers. For more information on plagiarism see the APA plagiarism guidelines: <https://apastyle.apa.org/instructional-aids/avoiding-plagiarism.pdf>

Resources. Below please find some resources that will help you to craft your paper. Please make sure to carefully read the documents. The University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) offers a great website that contains information on how to craft research papers. I strongly encourage you to visit the website—the information on this website will help you to organize your research paper. <https://uwc.ucla.edu/resources/handouts-for-students/>

Writing your introduction. The following paper might help you to better craft the introduction of the paper and flesh out why your research is interesting.

Grant, A. M., & Pollock, T. G. (2011). From the editors—Publishing in AMJ—Part 3: Setting the hook [Editorial]. *Academy of Management Journal*, 54(5), 873-79. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2011.4000>

Literature analysis. You will most likely synthesize the existing literature. Please note that literature reviews should not only repeat what has been found in previous articles, but you should also try to discuss and analyze the paper (and set it into context). The analyses of the literature might help you to support your arguments and answer your research questions. Please use the (online) resources of the library. Databases such as EBSCO will be of help. Moreover, you can also search for literature on google.scholar.com. Please also note that there are big differences in terms of quality of the academic journals. Papers published in high-quality journals are more credible than that of lower-level journals. Below please find examples on how to craft a literature review and an overview of quality journals.

Bem, D. J. (1995). Writing a review article for *Psychological Bulletin*. *Psychological Bulletin*, 118(2), 172.

<https://www.mcgill.ca/connections-lab/files/connections-lab/writing-a-review-paper-for-psychological-bulletin.pdf>

<https://resources.saylor.org/wwwresources/archived/site/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/PSYCH202B-2.1.2-Writing-a-psychology-literature-review.pdf>

https://psych.uw.edu/storage/writing_center/litrev.pdf

<https://psychology.ucsd.edu/files/undergrad/writing-research-papers-in-a-pastyle-guide.pdf>

<https://vhbonline.org/vhb4you/vhb-jourqual> <https://vhbonline.org/vhb4you/vhb-jourqual/vhb-jourqual-3>

Structured literature search. Depending on your research question, you might also consider conducting a comprehensive literature survey. In this case, I encourage you to visit the PRISMA website (<http://www.prisma-statement.org/>), which provides several important recommendations for analyzing previous literature. This might help you to make sure that you cover all important articles that have been published in this area.

<https://www.mcgill.ca/connections-lab/files/connections-lab/writing-a-review-paper-for-psychological-bulletin.pdf>

<https://www.bmj.com/content/372/bmj.n160>

Writing Style. Writing is not easy. However, writing is a craft that you can learn it. The following papers will help you to improve your writing style accordingly. In particular, I encourage you to read the front end of Joseph Williams (1990) classic book on writing, which will help you improve your writing substantially.

Williams, Joseph M. Style (1990). *Toward clarity and grace* (Chicago guides to writing, editing, and publishing).

<https://sites.duke.edu/niou/files/2014/07/WilliamsJosephM1990StyleTowardClarityandGrace.pdf>

Warren, N. L., Farmer, M., Gu, T., and Warren, C. (2021). Marketing ideas: How to write research articles that readers understand and cite. *Journal of Marketing*, 85(5), 42-57.

https://www.matthewgfarmer.com/uploads/1/3/8/3/138354195/warren_farmer_gu_warren_2021_-_marketing_ideas_paper_published_in_jm_1.pdf

Research Presentation

You are supposed to present your seminar paper using a power-point presentation. Each group member is expected to present. The presentation will be followed by a discussion of the presentation's content. Details concerning the length of presentations and a presentation schedule will be provided later.

Topics

To be announced