MARKETING & SOCIETY

Class meeting time and location: Mondays and Wednesdays at 14:15-15:45, Room V002 (SAASTAMOISEN SÄÄTIÖ), Ekonominaukio 1.
Course Instructor: Dr. Alexei Gloukhovtsev
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Course description and learning outcomes

This course considers the relationship between marketing and society. Most marketing courses focus on providing managerially-relevant skills and insights, leaving little room for discussing the broader societal implications of marketing and consumer behavior. This course foregrounds these implications, affording us the opportunity to examine marketers' impact on society and explore a range of current issues and criticisms facing marketing. We will critically examine the many taken-for-granted assumptions that underpin mainstream marketing theory and practice, discuss the role of ethics in marketing, and debate the responsibility of marketers to society and the case for and against marketing regulations. Ultimately, the goal for the course to help you:

- Broaden your understanding of how markets, marketing, and consumer behavior are both influenced by and shape society.

- Recognize various ethical dilemmas that may arise in everyday consumer behavior and marketing practice.

- Critically reflect on the marketing activities of corporate, public, political, and non-governmental organizations.

- Understand how marketing principles can be used outside the domain of commerce to foster individual and societal wellbeing.

- Apply the above knowledge when developing marketing strategies and engaging in marketing activities, thus helping your organization create equitable relationships with its clients, customers, and society.

Assignments, workload, and grading

Contract grading – what and why?

Your grade for the course will be based on a system of evaluation called "contract grading" (aka "labor-based grading" or "spec grading"). In short, there is a prespecified amount of work that you need to do to earn a particular course grade (see "how will it work in practice" below). At the start of the course, you decide how much effort you're willing and able to put into the course and sign up for the corresponding grade. At the end of the course, there are no surprises: if you have fulfilled the requisite obligations, you get the grade.

A key part of contract grading is that you will not receive numerical grades for your assignments. As long as you complete an assignment to a satisfactory level, it will be considered complete for the purpose of the grading contract. Note, however, that 'satisfactory' does not mean mediocre. The bar is set reasonably high. If your work does not meet the standard, you will be asked to revise it until it does.

A growing body of pedagogical research supports the use of contract grading, and it is increasingly common at top universities worldwide. Contract grading has several advantages for the student:

- It more accurately reflects the way you will be evaluated in your professional work – your boss or client will not give you an assessment of 75% or 90% on your work. They only care if your work meets the brief and is of high quality.
- Contract grading encourages creativity and risk-taking. There is less temptation for students to play it safe by "ticking the boxes" required for a high grade.
- There is less ambiguity. Point grades (e.g., 16.5 out of 20) can seem arbitrary, especially for certain assignments such as essays and presentations.
- There is no uncertainty. No need to stress about whether you score high enough on an assignment or exam. You do the work, you get the grade.

For the instructor, contract grading means that assessment and feedback can be relatively brief but detailed and tailored specifically to <u>your</u> work. There is no need to waste time with formulaic and superficial feedback that covers all facets of an assignment but is ultimately concerned with defending a particular grade ("here is why you scored 16.5 points out of 20 on your essay"). Instead, when giving you feedback, I can focus on what you did especially well, and highlight key areas for improvement.

How will it work in practice?

To earn a '3' in this course, you agree to:
- **Make a substantial contribution to each of the four group assignments, as evaluated by yourself and your peers**

To earn a '4' in this course, you agree to:
- Make a substantial contribution to each of the four group assignments, as evaluated by yourself and your peers
- **Complete the final essay assignment at the end of the course**

To earn a '5' in this course, you agree to:
- Make a substantial contribution to each of the four group assignments, as evaluated by yourself and your peers
- Complete the final essay assignment at the end of the course
- **Complete the assigned reading for each lecture (8 in total) and reflect on each reading on Perusall**
- **Attend the lectures and actively participate in class discussion**
- **Complete a learning diary (4 entries)**

You may perhaps notice that there is a steep jump in the amount of workload required to get a 5 compared to a 3 or 4. This is by design. Nowadays, most students, in most courses, can

attain a grade of 3 or 4 with fairly minimal effort. A 5 usually requires significantly more work. Accordingly, this course is designed such that to earn a 5, you will likely need to dedicate approximately 160 hours of work to the course (i.e. roughly 26 hours per week), which corresponds to the official guidelines for a 6 ECTS course.

Please note that your grade is not a measure of your intellect, knowledge, or dedication. I have equal respect for students who earn a 5 and those who only need a 3 and diligently complete the required work to earn that grade.

Assignments in brief

Detailed instructions will be provided during the first lecture.

Group assignment

You will work together in groups of 5 students on four assignments related to key course topics. The group assignments will require you to apply the theories and frameworks discussed in the course to concrete real-world cases that you will likely encounter as a consumer and/or marketing professional.

Each group will be asked to present one of their four assignments during the course. Students will form groups and sign up for presentation dates during the first week of the course.

Deliverables for each assignment: ppt or pdf slide deck and statement of contribution.

Final essay assignment

An essay of approximately 3000 words, to be completed individually. In the essay, you will discuss a current global societal problem of your choice, and analyze how marketers, consumers, and policy makers are both contributing to the problem and what they can each do to help address the issue. More detailed instructions will be provided at the end of the course.

Readings

Prior to each class, I will publish a list of readings. These will usually consist of one academic article and one article from the popular press per lecture. You will be asked to read the articles and reflect on their content using the social annotation platform Perusall – you may, e.g., share your thoughts on the claims and arguments made in the text, ask clarifying questions about the content, and comment on your fellow students' notes. We will go over the basics of Perusall during the first lecture. Note: social annotations are not a substitute for class discussion, so be prepared to also discuss your reflections during in class.

Learning diary

Informal reflections on your learning throughout the course. The point of for you to reflect on and articulate what you have learned throughout the course, consider how it connects to your

degree studies, and how the knowledge might be useful to you outside of school. A significant portion of your learning diary should incorporate material discussed in class.

Deliverable: 1000 words per paper, +/- 10%.

Participation

Participation means that you are actively engaged in the course. Come to the lectures prepared, having read any assigned reading. Participate in class discussions, ask questions if you don't understand something, answer others' questions, comment on or debate the material if you disagree with what is presented. This course will be discussion and activity-based. As such, I expect students to think critically about the topics, and effectively communicate their ideas through lively discussion with their peers.

I do not expect every student to have something to say in every class. However, a good rule of thumb is that by the end of the course, I should be able to recall your name when thinking of students who took the course.

Preliminary schedule

Monday	22-Apr	Lecture 1	Course intro and practicalities
Wednesday	24-Apr	Lecture 2	Ethics and the marketing mix I
Monday	29-Apr	Lecture 3	Ethics and the marketing mix II
Wednesday	1-May		*No class*
Monday	6-May	Lecture 4	Marketing regulations, laws, and public policy
Wednesday	8-May	Lecture 5	Sustainable and responsible marketing
Monday	13-May	Lecture 6	Brand activism: Gender, race, and the 'woke' agenda in mktg
Wednesday	15-May	Lecture 7	Group presentation day 1
Monday	20-May	Lecture 8	Ethical consumption and consumer responsibilization
Wednesday	22-May	Lecture 9	Marketplace access and marketing to vulnerable consumers
Monday	27-May	Lecture 10	Market research, data, and privacy
Wednesday	29-May	Lecture 11	Group presentation day 2 and Course wrap-up

All lecture times are 14:15-15:45. While the lecture times are set, changes to the order of lecture topics are still possible.

Course policies

Deadlines and missed assignments

All deadlines are firm and non-negotiable. Barring force majeure circumstances (e.g., a documented illness), assignments submitted late will be regarded as 'missed' – i.e., not completed. Technical difficulties are to be expected and do not constitute a force majeure circumstance. Please backup your work and do not leave things until the last minute. After finalizing you submission on MyCourses, check that the file is readable.

Revisions and incomplete work

If you submit an assignment that does not meet the standard of 'satisfactory', I will ask you to revise your work until it meets the standard. However, assignments that are clearly incomplete and indicative of rushed last-minute work – stream of consciousness text with no coherent logic or structure, very superficial treatment of required components, or missing components altogether – will be regarded as 'missed' and will not be sent back for revision.

Homer Simpson returning a last-minute assignment. Don't be like Homer.
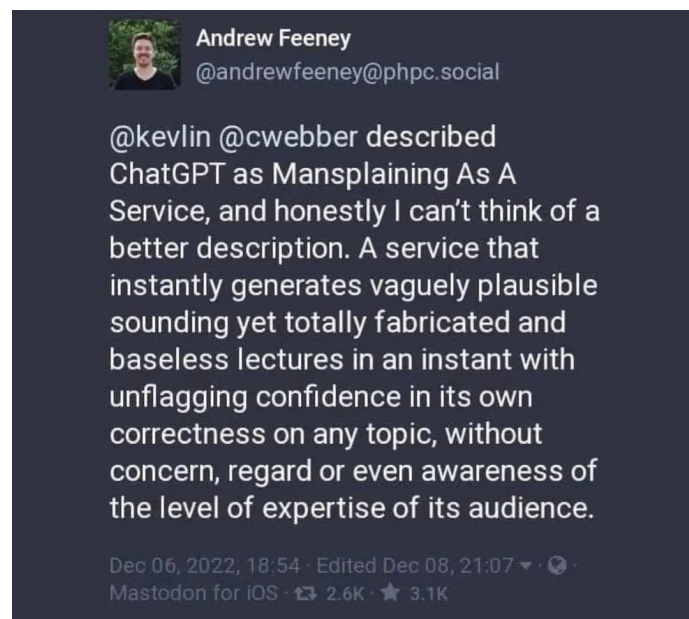
Dropping the course

All students who submit the minimum amount of coursework to pass the course (i.e., at least 2 group assignments) will receive credit and a grade for the course. If you would rather drop the course and not receive a grade, please notify me before the end of the course.

Group work

There will be an opportunity for you to form teams for the group assignment during the first lecture. If you are unable to attend, you can instruct one of your classmates to add you to their group if you so with. Alternatively, if you wish to be allocated to a group at random, you may email me after the first lecture.

We are all adults and I hope that there shouldn't be any problems with collaborating on group work assignments. However, in the unlikely event that problems arise, please contact me as soon as possible. Do not wait until the deadline to explain why someone failed to do their part of an assignment or did not contribute and should be left off the deliverable. I want this class to be a positive and valuable experience for you, but I can't help you if I don't know what's going on.

A note on Chat-GPT

Andrew Feeney
@andrewfeeney@phpc.social

@kevlin @cwebber described ChatGPT as Mansplaining As A Service, and honestly I can't think of a better description. A service that instantly generates vaguely plausible sounding yet totally fabricated and baseless lectures in an instant with unflagging confidence in its own correctness on any topic, without concern, regard or even awareness of the level of expertise of its audience.

Dec 06, 2022, 18:54 · Edited Dec 08, 21:07 ▼ · ⊕ · Mastodon for iOS · ♺ 2.6K · ★ 3.1K

This course does not ban the use of ChatGPT and other artificial intelligence (AI) tools. However, any work produced by such tools - whether an entire paragraph or part of a sentence - will not be regarded as the student's own work. As with any quote or material copied from another source (e.g., from an academic article, book, etc.), text and images copied from AI must be credited in the body of the text and appropriately referenced in the bibliography. Failure to do so will be treated as academic plagiarism - a violation of Aalto University's Code of Academic Integrity.

All written assignment will be put through AI detection software. If your work is flagged, you will be asked to resubmit your work.

The assignments on this course call for creativity, originality, and critical thinking. An assignment that predominantly quotes from other material - whether academic texts, popular press, or AI output - rather than showcasing the students' own analysis and reflection will be considered incomplete.

Please also note that AI tools have been shown to provide incorrect, misleading or biased content. It is also unclear whether ChatGPT or similar AI tools are GDPR-compliant. You are thus strongly advised not to enter any personally identifiable information or otherwise sensitive data into any AI prompt.

Communication

Lectures

Lectures will be held in person. Attendance is not mandatory, but active participation is requisite for receiving a 5 for the course. If you do choose to attend the lectures, I ask that you come on time and stay for the duration of the class.

Lectures will also be recorded. Ultimately, you are responsible for your own learning. Watching recordings on 2x speed is obviously no substitute for attending and actively participating in class.

MyCourses

All official communication will take place via MyCourses. Announcements will be posted in the 'Announcements' forum, and these messages will be automatically forwarded to your Aalto email address. Please check it regularly, especially in the days leading up to the course and during the first week of the course.

Should you have a question regarding the course, please ask yourself if there's the slightest chance that your question could be relevant to another student on the course. If yes, check whether someone has already asked the question in the Q&A forum on MyCourses. If you can't find the question, please post it in the forum. This is the quickest way to receive an answer – perhaps another student will be able to help you before I even see you message! Once your question has been answered, other students with the same question will be able to quickly find the answer.

Email

Please email me only if your question is of a personal nature and not relevant to others (e.g., you need a deadline extension due to a sudden illness or there is a free rider situation in your group). Emails with general questions will receive an automatic reply directing to you to the course FAQ or asking you to post your question on the message board.

I will do my utmost to answer questions posted to the Q&A forum or via email within one working day (24 hours – hopefully quicker than that). That said, I don't usually check my email or MyCourses in the evenings or on the weekend. This means I likely won't be able to offer last-minute help with assignments on the evening that they are due. Please plan accordingly.

Office hours

I am also happy to chat in person. Feel free to approach me after class or send me an email to schedule a meeting at the Department of Marketing. The Department is located in the Aalto BIZ building, on the floor above Restaurant Arvo. Topics that you may want to discuss in person may include, but are not limited to:

- Detailed feedback on your work
- Issues with group work
- Suggestions for improving your and others' course experience
- Potential topics for a master's thesis

Ethics policy

We conduct ourselves in a way that is respectful of others in all interactions during the course. We also follow the Aalto University Code of Academic Integrity:

https://into.aalto.fi/display/ensaannot/Aalto+University+Code+of+Academic+Integrity+and+Handling+Violations+Thereof

Access and accessibility

Your experience in this class is important to me. I strive to develop my courses in a way that promotes accessibility for all students. If you have any suggestions as to how to improve the accessibility of course material and the learning environment in this course, please let me know.

If you need individual teaching accommodations, as per Aalto policy these must to be arranged through the School of Business Learning Services (LES). If you have already established individual teaching accommodations with LES, please let me know before the start of the course. If you have not yet established accommodations through LES, but have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations (conditions include but not limited to; mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts), please contact LES first: study-biz@aalto.fi.

Detailed information regarding individual teaching accommodations:
https://www.aalto.fi/en/services/individual-study-arrangements