

Contemporary Marketing Issues Reading Package, 6 cr

Periods I-V, 2021-2022

17.09.2021-03.06.2022

Course staff:

Hardikkumar Ladva, Doctoral Candidate

(Teacher-in-charge, primary contact)

Hardikkumar.ladva@aalto.fi

+358504735667

1. How to complete the course?

Basics: This is an independent and self-directed course that a student completes by reading a package of articles and by writing an essay. Each package consists of 8-12 (bachelor) or 15-20 (master's) articles. A student may replace max two articles within the reading package. However, the responsible teacher must approve all the changes. In this case, email your request to the teacher. The student may choose the package based on which he/she writes the essay. After carefully reading the package, the student will write an essay that outlines the primary themes from the readings. In the essay, the student must have a clear argument, that has a thematic breakdown through the package. In other words, a summary of articles is not approved.

Your course transcripts will reflect the topic of your choosing

For example, your transcript could read:

MARK-C0001 Contemporary Marketing Issues: Sustainability and CSR

MARK-E0001 Contemporary Marketing Issues: Sharing, access-based and collaborative consumption

The workload of the course is planned to be as follows:

- Reading articles (60 h)
- Writing a final essay (100 h)

Learning objectives:

Upon the completion of this course, the student will have gained:

- Advanced knowledge on a contemporary marketing topic of their choosing
- Sharper critical thinking skills
- Experience in crafting an academic essay
- A deeper understanding of how analytical thinking help in the field of marketing

2. General Instructions for the assignments

Format:

- Indicate your name and student number on the front page of your submission.
- Name your file to indicate the course code, "reading package type" of the assignment, and your Last Name. E.g., "**Mark_C000102_Pricing_Ladva**"
- In your essay, use 12 Times New Roman and spacing 1,5.
- Please use a pdf file in your submissions.
- Use references to indicate, whether you are speaking from your point of view or referring to another (which?) source. Use a separate reference list.

- **References should be cited properly according to the American Psychological Association (APA) citation guidelines: <https://www.apastyle.org/>.**
- **Stick to the defined page or word counts, if one is given to you; In this case is it 10 pages of WRITTEN content, not including the title page, references, and images/tables/figures. Only content provided within the given assignment-specific instructions will be graded.**
- **Make sure your essay has a proper structure including an introduction, discussions, and conclusion sections.**

Timeline:

Period	Essay deadline	Introduction Lecture
I	29.10	17.09.21 9 at 10:30 (Zoom)
II	17.12	1.11.21 at 10:30 (Zoom)
III	25.2	
IV	14.4	
V	3.6	

Grading:

IMPORTANT! PLEASE, read the grading rubric before you start writing your essay. The grading will strictly follow the rubric without any leeway. If you have questions, ask well in advance. While writing the essay, check and double-check if you are addressing all that is asked of you through the grading rubric.

In general, I will evaluate your work based on the following questions:

- **How logical is the flow of argumentation and how well the arguments are justified?** Build a logical flow of argumentation (built upon the overarching content of the articles) to develop a convincing storyline. You may use examples to illustrate and support your line of reasoning.
- **How visible and multifaceted is the respondent's reflection?** Reflect on your thoughts and surrounding environment (e.g., discuss the pros and cons of an issue). Try to provide a convincing rationale for suggestions or evaluations that you may give. You are encouraged to give such in all reflection assignments.
- **How coherent and grammatically fluent is the essay?** Use clear, easy-to-understand language and submit structured and organized texts. Before submitting your texts, read them thoroughly and pay attention to their readability. If you cannot make sense of the core idea of your sentences, there is a huge possibility that the reader will not understand them either.
- **IMPORTANT: Have you understood the current state of literature?** This is effectively reflected in how you identify the research gaps amongst the papers in the

reading package and provide future research directions. Good answers will include identification of these gaps, excellent answers would have gone above and beyond by looking into more recent papers on the topic and the current state of literature and its gaps. Also, future research directions and research gaps \neq YOUR lack of familiarity with the topic; it is what is missing in collective understanding in marketing researchers and practitioners. Hence, carefully research the assigned papers and identify what is lacking, see if someone has answered that question in form of another paper, etc.

- **Excellent** answers typically precisely cover the overarching theme of the reading package, clearly define relevant concepts using easy-to-understand language, develop a coherent line of argumentation, and offer concrete implications which are meaningfully substantiated (i.e., do not strike the reader out of the blue). Most importantly, the writer should show her ability to critically deal with the subject of interest by including her own grounded, personal assessment of the matter (e.g., by discussing the pros and cons of an issue). Typically, these answers offer insightful thoughts and arguments, that are elaborated and well justified. In general, these answers show ambiguous and throughout work. **Very good** answers typically are close to excellent answers but lack some core elements.
- Answers that get **grades below** excellent or very good, typically discuss the topic in a too general level, essential concepts or ideas are dealt with narrowly or something essential is left unaddressed. For example, some questions may lack answers. In these answers, the student may also show intermediate / poor skills in showing that she has read and internalized the articles and can distinguish the central from the less essential. Typically, these answers offer arguments that are not elaborated or justified at all. The answer might also be too short taking into consideration what is requested. Typically, **good** answers have elements from excellent or very good answers, but they also include some deficiencies. The more deficiencies in the answer, the lower the grade will be. To get **poor (or fail)**, the student shows that she has not invested in the work at all.
- **Grammatically incoherent, difficult-to-read texts, in which e.g., verbs are lacking, or the meaning is otherwise impossible to make sense of, cannot be graded as excellent.**
- We will check for plagiarism; in extreme cases of plagiarism, the submission might be declared invalid, and the candidate fails this part of the course. We suggest you use Turnitin before you submit. (More info: <https://wiki.aalto.fi/display/turnitin/>)

Grading rubric:

Measurable Attributes	0 -Insufficient	1-Sufficient	2	3 -Good	4	5- Excellent
Specification and justification of the essay's objectives and/or points of view	Provides very vague or no specification or justification of the essay's objectives and/or points of view	Provides limited specification and justification of the essay's objectives and/or points of view		Provides clear specification and justification of the essay's objectives and/or points of view		Provides insightful specifications and justifications of the essay's objectives and/or points of view
Review of literature	Reports on assigned literature without connecting it to the essay's objective, omitting key references	Reports on all of the assigned literature without connecting it fully to the essay's objectives		Reviews all of the assigned literature relevant to the essay's objective in an appropriate and comprehensive manner		Demonstrates critical thinking in reviewing all of the assigned literature relevant to the essay's objectives

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Measurable Attributes	0 -Insufficient	1-Sufficient	2	3 -Good	4	5- Excellent
Critical assessment of the content	Shows no evidence of critical assessment of the content	Does not go deeply into the critical assessment of the content		Critically assess the content, personal and general reflections are included		Critical assessment and abstract ideas are reflected through the use of specific details
Identification of gaps in literature and directions for future research	No identification of the research gaps or directions for future research	Provides limited insight into future research directions or literature gaps		Identifies clear gaps in the literature, provides directions for future research		Provides novel directions for future research and creatively identifies gaps in the literature

Measurable Attributes	0 -Insufficient	1-Sufficient	2	3 -Good	4	5- Excellent
Academic style, language use, and readability	Uses non academic style; inaccurate language use interferes with reading and comprehension; citation format not observed, serious grammar and spelling mistakes	Uses sufficiently appropriate academic style; no substantial interference with reading and comprehension, citation format not always observed, grammar and spelling mistakes		Uses academic language fluently; minor errors may exist but do not interfere with reading and comprehension, some grammar and spelling mistakes		Meets academic writing standards, citation format consistently observed, no/very minor grammar and spelling mistakes
Consistency and coherence of the essay	Text is fragmented and unbalanced; problems with headings, paragraphs, and sections	Text is not fully balanced; does not really form a coherent whole; some problems with headings and paragraphs and section structure		Forms a balanced and coherent whole; headings, paragraphs and section structure typically support the overall coherence		Forms a coherent whole with consistent and explicit internal linkages; has a logical flow of argumentation with neat headings and clearly structured paragraphs and sections

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Tips for good academic essay writing:

1. Conduct a thorough reading of the materials
2. Take constant notes on the readings, summarize their main points to yourself
3. Compare and contrast the readings, identify themes that connect some or all of them
4. Also identify inconsistencies, differences, ambiguity, and problems between readings
5. Develop an objective or “viewpoint” for your essay; of what you want to convince the reader?
6. Outline your essay and think about what support and counterarguments you must present to argue your viewpoint
7. Write the essay; make sure you cite your sources correctly and consistently
8. Proofread, edit, and rewrite

Some DON'Ts:

1. Do not present a mere chronological summary of the articles.
2. Do not just present various themes *within* the articles – identify meaningful connections, compare and contrast the themes *across* the articles.
3. Remember: the essay’s objective should never be vague, combative, or confrontational. A good objective is a definable, arguable claim. Your goal for this text is to convince the reader!
4. The essay’s objective should be as clear and specific as possible. Avoid overused, general terms and abstractions.
5. **“Critical reflection” does not mean vague declarations of “I like /I do not like /agree with...”** Specify your claims and present clear arguments through evidence
6. Do not submit a “wall of text” – make sure that your arguments are structured and form a coherent whole. Use subheadings if and when appropriate.