

M775
Special Topics in Marketing Strategy
Marketing Research on E-Commerce
Winter 2020 Course Outline

Marketing
DeGroote School of Business
McMaster University

COURSE OBJECTIVE

This seminar-based course intends to prepare Ph.D. students to undertake independent scholarly research in the domain of Marketing Strategy in the E-Commerce context. The course will introduce game-theoretical thinking in marketing research on various E-Commerce fields and cover some key theoretical perspectives, substantive questions, managerial concerns and methodological issues in this domain.

INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Ruhai Wu

Associate Professor, Marketing

wuruhai@mcmaster.ca

Office: DSB #214

Office Hours: By appointment

Tel: (905) 525-9140 x23048

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar will focus on specific areas in marketing strategy with an emphasis on firm-level analysis. Topics will vary.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

The course will help students develop the ability to independently conduct both theoretical and theory-driven empirical research in the areas of the covered topics.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS

Many academic papers and books will be used. A list of required and optional/suggested readings will be provided every week.

Please check <http://profs.degroote.mcmaster.ca/ads/wuruhai/M775%202020W.htm> for detail course materials.

EVALUATION

Class preparation, presentations, participation, and assignments	40 %
Idea Paper	20 %
Research Paper and Presentation	40 %

Conversion

At the end of the course, your overall percentage grade will be converted to your letter grade in accordance with the following conversion scheme. (*SUGGESTED conversion scheme*)

LETTER GRADE	PERCENT
A+	90 - 100
A	85 - 89
A-	80 - 84
B+	75 - 79
B	70 - 74
B-	60 - 69
F	00 - 59

Class preparation, presentations and assignments

Class preparation, presentations, participation and assignments are worth 40% of your final grade. Class participation and on-time attendance in each class session are required. You are expected to read on time and be prepared to discuss all the required material. In the first four weeks, some homework questions will be assigned for you to practice the knowledge learned in the class. In the following weeks, you will be required to present pre-assigned papers every other week. In addition, considerable weight will be given to your contributions to class discussions for articles that you are not required to present. You should be prepared to discuss all the assigned papers for each class.

I expect that you will have read each article carefully and have considered its merits, limitations, and how it relates to both the other articles that we are covering on a given day as well as how it fits into the broader set of readings that we have covered up to that point. In addition to helping you prepare for each seminar discussion, this level of integrative processing will help you prepare for your comprehensive examinations, develop research ideas and ultimately grow as a scholar.

Idea Paper

This assignment is worth 20% of your final grade and will be marked individually. Each student is required to submit one short “idea” paper (3 pages in length + references) by March 14th, 2020. The papers should be in a research proposal format and should focus on an e-marketing topic. An extensive literature review or analysis of data for these papers is not expected at this stage. The focus will be on the idea. In general, the following format is suggested:

- Description of the problem
- Discussion of relevant paper(s)
- Development of your research questions for testing if it’s an empirical study; or development of your model setup if it’s a game-theoretical study
- Expected contribution

Ideally, the ideas should lead to a strong, potentially publishable paper. I will review your paper and provide detailed feedback about your ideas during an individual meeting.

Research Paper and Presentation

Each student is required to create an independent and original manuscript relevant to e-marketing. This paper will account for 40% of your total course grade. In the manuscript, I expect you complete a refined draft of the literature review section, most part of the introduction section (as your findings may not be finished yet). If it is an empirical study, you should well develop the hypotheses and background theory, and explain in detail the data source(s) and the expected features of the potential data. If it is a game-theoretical modelling study, you should well define the model and provide some simple solution (solution to a simplified/benchmark model, or a numerical example).

The Presentation of your research will be at the class on April 7th. The research paper should be handed in by April 28th. If you need more time, please discuss with the professor.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

It is the student's responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the University Senate Academic Integrity Policy at the following URL:

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

This policy describes the responsibilities, procedures, and guidelines for students and faculty should a case of academic dishonesty arise. Academic dishonesty is defined as to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. Please refer to the policy for a list of examples. The policy also provides faculty with procedures to follow in cases of academic dishonesty as well as general guidelines for penalties. For further information related to the policy, please refer to the Office of Academic Integrity at:

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>

MISSED ACADEMIC WORK

Late assignments will not be accepted. No extensions are available except under extraordinary circumstances. Please discuss any extenuating situation with your instructor at the earliest possible opportunity.

POTENTIAL MODIFICATIONS TO THE COURSE

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with an explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

COPYRIGHT

McMaster University has signed a license with the Canadian Copyright Licensing Agency (Access Copyright) which allows professors, students, and staff to make copies allowed under *fair dealing*. Fair dealing with a work does not require the permission of the copyright owner or the payment of royalties as long as the purpose for the material is a private study, and that the total amount copied equals **NO MORE THAN 10 percent** of a work or an entire chapter which is less than 20 percent of a work. In other words, it is illegal to: i) copy an entire book, or ii) repeatedly copy smaller sections of a publication that cumulatively cover over 10 percent of the total work's content. Please refer to the following copyright guide for further information:

http://www.copyright.mcmaster.ca/Access_Copyright_Agreement

STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

Student Accessibility Services (SAS) offers various support services for students with disabilities. Students are required to inform SAS of accommodation needs for course work at the outset of the term. Students must forward a copy of such SAS accommodation to the instructor normally, within the first three (3) weeks of classes by setting up an appointment with the instructor. If a student with a disability chooses NOT to take advantage of an SAS accommodation and chooses to sit for a regular exam, a petition for relief may not be filed after the examination is complete. The SAS website is:

<http://sas.mcmaster.ca>

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Topic
1	Jan 7	Course Introduction; Game Theory Fundamental: Normal Form
2	Jan 14	Game Theory Fundamental: Extensive Form (Multi-period game)
3	Jan 21	Game Theory Fundamental: Role of Information
4	Jan 28	Game Theory Fundamental: Consumer Behaviors and Marketing Strategies
5	Feb 4	Online Channels
6	Feb 11	Pricing
7	Feb 18	Product and Innovation
8	Feb 25	Advertising
9	Mar 3	Word of Mouth
10	Mar 10	Social Commerce
11	Mar 17	<i>Individual meetings</i>
12	Mar 24	Internet of Things, Shared Economies
13	Mar 31	Research related to AI and Blockchain
14	Apr 7	Final Presentations

Note: The above schedule is tentative and is subject to change. Articles, papers and other reading materials will be assigned throughout the term. Specific materials will be assigned at least about a week before the discussions are due.