

# MKTG 4050: Misplaced Marketing

## pragmatic marketing decisions & consumers' interests

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<http://www.auburn.edu/~rotfehj/essays.html>

**Class time:** Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:30-10:50, room 152 Lowder Hall  
→ To make up time for days campus was closed, class end time has been pushed back 5 minutes

**office hours during Spring 2014 semester classes:** Tuesdays & Thursdays 7:00-7:40 a.m., 11 a.m.-noon; Wednesdays, 7-10 a.m., plus whenever the door is open (which is most weekdays from 7 a.m. through mid-afternoon)

**Course Prerequisites:** Grade of C or better in MKTG 3310

### Required Purchases



- Adventures in Misplaced Marketing, ISBN: 9781567203523
- Packets of required readings sold at SOFY Copy Center, 145 W. Magnolia.  
(Easier entrance might be in back of the building by the city parking garage. Cash or check only, no credit cards are accepted)

### Required online materials

- Additional required reading assignments available via syllabus links in class outline below
- University e-mail will convey assignment updates, required reading materials, plus lecture supplements.
- Online [discussion questions](#) provide most of the specific questions that members of the class will be called upon to answer during class
- What to do to maximize learning in the term, or, if you prefer, [how to fail](#)
- Canvas will not be used

## Important Dates & Times

[test dates subject to change caused by January snow event  
& February fear-of-snow-that-didn't closing]

**Test #1: February 6**

**Test #2: TBA March 6 or March 18**

**Test #3: TBA, tentative either April 10 or April 15**

**Comprehensive final exam: Wednesday, April 30, 8-10:30 a.m.**

As per university policy, the final exam will be administered at the assigned time. An earlier test will not be granted for students wanting to depart for jobs, job interviews, graduate school interviews, family vacations or to witness meteorological events

## Grading

To take any tests or quizzes, students must have turned in a completed the class contract

Final [grades](#) will be determined by scores on:

- Three tests (at least 30 points each)
- 5-point writing assignments, or in class quizzes of class preparation (at least 8, total of 40 points)
- Comprehensive Final Exam (at least 70 points)

Grades will be based on point totals, not averages, percentile scores or letter grades on each item. The points scored on each item are added together and the grade is based on the point total. There might be extra credit values on tests or the final exam – hence the notation of "at least" by the number of possible points for each item above – but the availability of extra credit items will not alter the cut-offs points required for each letter grade.

**A = 180-200 points**

**B = 160-179 points**

**C = 140-159 points**

**D = 120-139 points**

**F = 0-119 points**

**FA = either:**

- 1) 0-119 points & absent from more than 25% of non-exam classes, or
- 2) unexcused absence from any test or final

**Course Learning Objectives:** To acquire a broader knowledge of the pragmatic environment of marketing management decision and the difficulty of making decisions serving consumers' interests, especially when a marketing perspective is lost, misapplied or abused.

The Prime Directive for all test and homework assignments: Business practices are

determined by decision makers who are people working in organizations, not anthropomorphic businesses, people who are presumed to not be dishonest, ignorant or lazy.

In any marketing class, students must realize that they can no longer view products or services as a customer – as when purchasing a new laptop computer, watching commercials, or deciding to smoke cigarettes – but instead, as the marketing managers whose customers make decisions for a variety of different reasons. Ethnocentrism is a common problem for marketing professionals who sometimes fail to realize that their values are usually different than their customers, and managers' decisions also requires understanding perspectives of business critics. Misplaced Marketing therefore explores a number of different perspectives toward decision options, including: individual customers; business decision makers; regulatory agencies; and those times the best interests of the individual consumer segments might not serve interests of the greater society (or the health of the planet).

### **General guidelines to maximize learning**

To understand a class meeting and learn the material, it is important to study each assignment and think about it before class, plus read the related [discussion questions](#). Like a business meeting, come to all classes prepared to be called upon and questioned about applications of the material. With books closed for class time, present your informed opinions in discussion. Since few present or potential customers, if any, would be people like you, strategy and tactics must be assessed in terms of what the target markets might perceive, not in terms of what you might personally like. In addition, similar to how marketing managers often deal with products or consumer choices with which they might personally disagree, class will discuss products you might not buy, in contexts for which you would never be in the target market, including examples that you might find personally offensive. In this class, as in business, it is unavoidable.

### **Writing assignments, quizzes & other class preparation**

Take-home quizzes – and other homework assignments in place of quizzes – are to encourage preparations for class meetings by being drawn from the reading assignments scheduled to be discussed in the upcoming class. These will either require short two or three sentence answers to designated discussion questions, or short two or three paragraph case statements of a current problem. These single-page written assignments would be collected from those present at the start of a designated class date, each worth at least 5 possible points. At least 9 will be collected and scored, and the worst score of those collected will not count toward your point total. Scores will always be returned before the start of the next class meeting.

Students must be present and on time to turn in the assignment. No make-up assignments or quizzes will be given. It is presumed that no one misses class for a minor or trivial reason and that every absence will have a valid and documentable excuse. A student who is absent for a due date for any reason will have that quiz be the one dropped as the worst score. Students that have a valid excuse for missing more than one quiz, documentation and verification contacts of excused absences must be provided for all quiz days missed, not just those in excess of the one dropped. If such materials can't be provided for all quiz dates missed, the additional missed quiz is considered unexcused for grade purposes. Students who arrive late for class, even if by what they consider only a few minutes, will not be allowed to turn in their assignment on that day.

### **Tests & Final Exam**

The tests & final exam will be essay format, with the three tests covering material from a specified segment of the course, and the comprehensive final exam covering the entire semester. All assigned readings, additional handouts, videotapes, lectures, guest lecturers or discussion materials brought up by other students could be the basis for test questions, and, since they are all inter-related, it is impossible to say what to emphasize when you study. If you feel there is a difference between lecture materials and the reading assignments, the lecture materials should be used as a basis for answering exam questions. The prime directive for all test and homework assignments: Business practices are determined by decision makers who are people working in organizations, not anthropomorphic businesses, people who are presumed to not be dishonest, ignorant or lazy.

On test days, the answers will be at the front table as required reading for everyone before leaving. Because of the answer key availability after the test, anyone who arrives late on test days will not be allowed to start the test once anyone has completed the test and left the room. Scores will be returned before the start of the next class meeting after each test date. For a limited time, students may come to my office to read (not write notes on) their scored test if they bring the card that was returned with the test score.

On excused absences, prior notice must be provided for any planned events and unexpected emergencies require direct notification as soon as possible by phone or email, with documentation provided as soon as you return to campus. Delayed notifications will not be accepted. Anyone with a documentable excuse under the items listed below may choose to either take a make-up test at 6:30 a.m. or have the point value of that test shifted to the final exam. The following are the only conditions under AU policy [in [Student Policy eHandbook](#)] considered excused absences from exams: illness of the student or serious illness of a member of the student's immediate

family; death of a member of the student's immediate family; trips for student organizations sponsored by an academic unit; trips for university classes; trips for participation in intercollegiate athletic events; subpoena for a court appearance; religious holy days.

### **Attendance & class participation**

Classes will always start on time in the business sense of the term: at the time designated for the start of class, students are expected to be in their seats and ready to work. Arriving late could be treated as an absence for purposes of collecting assignments. It is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor of any emergency or personal problem that might impact his or her performance in the course. For any absence, students are always responsible for obtaining from classmates any missed class notes, upcoming assignments and other handouts, plus the information from any announcements made in class.

While attendance is not part of the grade point totals except for turning in assignments, active class participation and involvement are ineluctable requirements for learning the course material. While open and voluntary participation is encouraged, individuals whose hands are not raised will often be called upon to answer a question. Similar to a business meeting at which you read the background material and then raise questions and discuss additional information on the topic, the class meetings will apply the assigned reading materials in new directions.

### **Other class & AU policies**

\*\* Everyone is expected to make a daily check of university e-mail for assignment updates, additional explanations on lecture topics or after-class answers to student questions.

\*\* If you find it difficult to take notes and be an active participant in class at the same time, bring an audio recorder and take notes from it later. The lectures themselves exist under university and personal copyright. Any recordings made of the class are for individual use as a study aid and are not to be sold, publicly posted or otherwise distributed on any forum without written permission from the instructor.

\*\* Anyone with difficulty completing tests during the time limits of the class period can meet with Professor Rotfeld to request an early start for tests. This offer is not tied to any requirements from the Office of Accessibility.

\*\* You must sit in the same position on the seating chart in every class. Everyone in the class will be given a copy of the chart so you can learn your classmates' names. It is hoped that you will discuss your ideas with each other when preparing for class discussions, since experience has found this to be the surest way to improve your performance in the course.

\*\* Students are expected to do their own work in the classroom on quizzes and tests

as per the Auburn University student academic honesty code in the [Student Policy eHandbook](#) (Title XII) Academic honesty violations or alleged violations of the SGA Code of Laws will be reported to the Office of the Provost, which will then refer the case to the Academic Honesty Committee.

\*\* If you have a disability, you must meet with me in my office to discuss possible accommodations after you electronically submit the approved accommodations through AU Access. Course requirements will not be waived, but accommodations will be made to assist in meeting the requirements, provided you are timely to develop a reasonable accommodation plan. If you have not established accommodations through the Office of Accessibility, but need accommodations, make an appointment with the Office of Accessibility, 1228 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT).

### Web sites of suggested interest and review

- Public Citizen's Consumer Law & Policy blog (<http://pubcit.typepad.com/clpblog>)
- Where "shoppers bite back" (<http://consumerist.com>)
- Medicine and Madison Avenue home page (<http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/mma>)
- Government information on recent product recalls (<http://www.recalls.gov>)

### Reading Assignments

The reading assignments are grouped by topics, but daily assignments and speed of coverage of different areas will be announced in class. AiMM is shorthand for the book, article titles listed are from the packet, and article titles marked as "online" are available via links to the title itself in this syllabus. Additional articles could be distributed via handouts or email to students of files or links to new publications. The online topic-by-topic [discussion questions](#) will be updated during the term, and they are provided as guidance that you should consult as you read the assigned articles & chapters.

#### 1. History & Consumers in the Marketplace

Herrmann, The Consumer Movement in Historical Perspective

online-[A Pessimist's Perspective on the 4th Wave of Consumer Protection](#)

#### 2. The Modern Marketplace and Competition

Palast, excerpt from *Best Democracy Money Can Buy*

online-[Slapping Down Dangerous Information](#)

online-[Depending on the Kindness of Strangers](#)

online-[A Pessimist's Perspective on the 4th Wave of Consumer Protection](#)

#### 3. A Marketing Perspective on Consumer Rights

AiMM, ch. 1

Mueller, St. Phineas

Bhide and Stevenson, Why Be Honest If Honesty Doesn't Pay

online video-[The Truth About Dishonesty](#)

online video-[Why doesn't MTV play music videos](#)

## **Test 1**

### **4. The Lost Marketing Perspective**

*AiMM*, Ch. 2 and 3

online-[Movie Theater's Suicide-by-Advertising....](#)

electronic handout: Hotelling's Law, plus linked audio

electronic handout: Why don't hotels give you toothpaste

recommended: *AiMM* Ch. 6

### **5. Marketing Myths: The Case of Advertising**

*AiMM*, [Ch. 4](#) and 5

Wolburg, The Need for New Anti-Smoking Adv Strategies...

### **6. Perspectives on Modern Government Regulation**

*AiMM*, Ch. 7

### **7. Risk, Consumers & Regulation: Fears & Disasters**

Risky Business

Dangerous Supplements

Garfield, Softly Lit or Blunt

## **Test 2**

### **8. Business Self-regulation**

*AiMM*, ch. 8

online-[Desires Versus the Reality of Self-Regulation](#)

### **9. Marketing Abused**

*AiMM*, ch. 9

Wright, How Moral Men Make Immoral Decisions

Davidson, Consumer Goods Marketing: A Zero-Sum Game?

recommended: Davidson, Success Without Greed

### **10. Marketing & Its Paranoid Critics**

*AiMM*, ch. 10

Broyles, Subliminal Advertising & the Perpetual Popularity of Playing to People's Paranoia

online-[Imagine the Television Commercial:...](#)

online-[Stealth Influence of Covert Marketing](#)

recommended: online-[Mine is the Blue One on the Left](#)

### **11. When Customers Aren't Right**

*AiMM*, ch. 11 & 12

online-[It Hurts. Fix It](#)

recommended: online-[The Largest Segments That Should Not Be Served: ...](#)

recommended: Thomaselli, DTC Ads

recommended: Jevons, Misleading Voters

## **Test 3**

**12. Segmentation, Communications & News Management**

*AiMM*, ch. 13, 14 & 15

**13. Managerial Ethnocentrism**

*AiMM*, ch. 16

**14. It Isn't "Just" Marketing**

*AiMM*, Ch. 17