MODULAR SPECIFICATION – UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

KEY FACTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module name</th>
<th>Contemporary Topics in Marketing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module code</td>
<td>BS3216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>Cass Business School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department or equivalent</td>
<td>UG Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>UK credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECTS</td>
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<td>Level</td>
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MODULE SUMMARY

Module outline and aims

The aim of this module is to introduce you to the most recent trends and issues in marketing theory and practice. This module description has to be relatively broad, because the topics covered will, by definition, change frequently. In general, the idea is to expose you to a radically different view of marketing, to ethical and moral issues that marketers face and often themselves create, and to keep up with the changes and challenges presented by digital marketing (with a current focus on social media marketing). The overall goal is to challenge your existing understanding of marketing, to get you to think outside-the-box, and to develop a critical view on contemporary marketing issues.

Content outline

1: Postmodern views of marketing: Turning what you thought you knew about marketing on its head
2: Religiosity, spirituality, and the sacred in consumption
3: Enchanting a disenchanted world: Commercial spaces in the experience economy
4: Critical views of marketing
5: Finding untapped customer segments: Serving global nomads, homosexuals, immigrants, and other neglected consumer groups
6: Tribal marketing and (online) consumption communities
7: Social media marketing and what it has to do with the above
8: Word-of-mouth influences on product adoption and diffusion in the age of social media
9: Spotlight on one particular social media marketing technique (for example, social video marketing, social network marketing, or mobile marketing)
10: Student presentations (in the evening, outside of university, and in front of an
### WHAT WILL I BE EXPECTED TO ACHIEVE?

On successful completion of this module, you will be expected to be able to:

**Knowledge and understanding:**
- Understand the difference between “modern” and “postmodern” approaches to marketing.
- Understand the basic premise of “critical” marketing.
- Understand how these concepts and ideas link to today’s marketing environment, especially with a view to social media.

**Skills:**
- Apply different frames of thinking about marketing to the same problem to understand their advantages and disadvantages, enabling you to choose a course of action.
- Learn to challenge conventional ways of thinking about marketing by explicitly paying attention to the socio-cultural environment in which consumption is embedded.
- Develop your own viewpoint and communicate it effectively in class – lively discussions are encouraged!
- Learn to read, understand, appreciate, and critique academic articles.

**Values and attitudes:**
- Become a more informed consumer and make “better” and more ethical consumption choices going forward.
- Be open minded about different ways to view the marketing world, enabling you to think more creatively about marketing problems and about problems created by marketing.
- Think for yourself and challenge conventional wisdom.
- Contribute to team work fairly and responsibly.
HOW WILL I LEARN?

The selected course material will be a mix of online sources, recent books (not necessarily academic books), and selected academic articles. You will see how theory (whose importance is often under-rated) and research can actually help make sense of the rapidly changing marketing world we live in, and even shape the consumer behaviour of the future. You will be encouraged to collect and share any popular news articles that relate to the topics we discuss, as these will start out each lecture. Lectures will be very interactive and structured around real-life examples. You are expected to be well prepared for the lectures and to actively participate. Critical thinking is highly encouraged… or in other words, try to challenge me and each other.

Teaching pattern:

<table>
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<th>Teaching type</th>
<th>Contact hours</th>
<th>Self-directed study hours</th>
<th>Placement hours</th>
<th>Total student learning hours</th>
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<td>Lecture</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>128</td>
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<td>148</td>
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<tr>
<td>External visit</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td><strong>TOTALS:</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
<td><strong>128</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>150</strong></td>
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WHAT TYPES OF ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK CAN I EXPECT?

Assessments

Written assignment: This is an individual assignment – you are asked to read, understand, and then review an academic article that you have been assigned. What is good and bad about the article? Is it interesting/original? Is it useful for marketing practice and/or theory? Is it well-grounded in existing literature? Does it use an appropriate methodology? This exercise will help you become used to reading academic articles and (hopefully) seeing the value of good academic work. This should be very useful for your own dissertation.

Oral assessment and presentation: You will work in small teams on a topic assigned to you and related to one of the contemporary issues we will discuss. Each team will work on a different topic. Some preliminary ideas for topics are, for example:
- A short history of the representation of the consumer and consumption in the popular literature starting from the 1900s (related to Session 1)
- The role of religiosity in the success of the Twilight series (related to Session 2)
- Enchanting retail spaces: Videographies of each of the group member’s favourite retail environment (related to Session 3)
- Sustainable marketing strategies: How could the Evian brand survive if it got rid of its core product, bottled water? (related to Session 4)
- The role of Internet memes in social video marketing (related to Session 9)
- And so on...

Since this course is all about challenging conventional wisdom, I will try to put you a bit out of your comfort zone. Therefore, the presentations will be judged by a panel of industry experts and will take place in Session 10, in the evening, at the offices of one of the participating companies.

Exam: The exam will most likely consist of essay questions based on the main topics we
discussed. It will most likely be open book.

Assessment pattern:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment type</th>
<th>Short description</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Minimum qualifying mark</th>
<th>Pass/Fail?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Written assignment, including essay</td>
<td>Review of an assigned article</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral assessment and presentation</td>
<td>Group Team presentation</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written exam</td>
<td>Essay questions</td>
<td>50</td>
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Assessment criteria

Assessment criteria are descriptions of the skills, knowledge or attributes you need to demonstrate in order to complete an assessment successfully and Grade-Related Criteria are descriptions of the skills, knowledge or attributes you need to demonstrate to achieve a certain grade or mark in an assessment. Assessment Criteria and Grade-Related Criteria for module assessments will be made available to you prior to an assessment taking place. More information will be available in the UG Assessment Handbook and from the module leader.

Feedback on assessment

Following an assessment, students will be given their marks and feedback in line with the Assessment Regulations and Policy. More information on the timing and type of feedback that will be provided for each assessment will be available from the module leader.

You can arrange personal meetings about any feedback you have been given and are advised to use this in future modules when the criteria relate to transferable areas such as presentation, use of literature and theory and ability to analyse, evaluate or synthesise.

Assessment Regulations

The Pass mark for the module is 40%. Any minimum qualifying marks for specific assessments are listed in the table above. The weighting of the different components can also be found above. The Programme Specification contains information on what happens if you fail an assessment component or the module.
INDICATIVE READING LIST

Since there is no textbook that covers the chosen topics in a meaningful way, the reading material will mainly include “classic” and very recent academic articles and working papers. In addition, you are encouraged do search for further information about the different session topics themselves.


Further web site links to be made available on Moodle

Version: 2.0
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For use from: 2013-14
Appendix: see [http://www.hesa.ac.uk/content/view/1805/296/](http://www.hesa.ac.uk/content/view/1805/296/) for the full list of JACS codes and descriptions

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