

MKT 405
Services Marketing

Exam 1 Study Questions
Fall 2006

The following questions have appeared on exams for this class in past semesters. As you know, the exam consists entirely of essay questions. You will be expected to write out your answers in clear, complete sentences. Be sure your ideas make sense and are relevant to the question being asked. Also, you need to write so that your handwriting can be *easily read*. The intent of the exam is to provide you with an opportunity to *demonstrate your understanding* of key terms and concepts from the course.

It is likely that three or four questions will appear on your exam. The exam will be worth 120 points, with each question that you answer worth 30-45 points. You will have 75 minutes to complete the exam. Thus, you will have approximately 20 minutes to answer each question, which would leave you with about 15 minutes to re-read your responses before turning them in.

If you desire to receive a high score on the exam, you will need to integrate reading from the textbook and other assigned readings, in-class discussions, and real world examples in your answers. That is, quality answers will synthesize and integrate material from assigned readings and classroom discussion with concrete (**new**) examples and your own opinions. You may find it helpful to practice writing answers to these questions in order to determine how much you can actually write in about 20 minutes.

In preparing for this exam, you may discuss these questions and your thoughts with fellow students. However, *your* answers to the questions should reflect your own unique opinions, interpretations, and examples.

Here are some guidelines to follow in regards to writing the exam:

- You may use a pencil or pen in writing your answers. However, if you are the type that makes a lot of changes when writing, I would suggest using a pencil that allows you to erase words easily.
- You will be given lined (notebook) paper for your responses, so be sure to **label your answers** appropriately (such as (1a), (1b), etc.).
- Be sure to completely answer each part of each question.
- Your handwriting should be legible; illegible handwriting will be treated as a non-answer.
- Leave at least **two blank lines between each part** of the same question, i.e., between (1b) and (1c).
- Start **new questions** at the beginning of a **new page**.
- Write only on the **front side** of each page.

These guidelines are given to make my assessment of the exam answers as consistent as possible across exams. Now that you have received these guidelines, you should follow them...**failure to follow these rules for the exam will result in a reduced score.**

Past Exam Questions:

- (1) (a) Describe at least three basic *characteristics of services* that are often considered to distinguish them from goods and provide examples (*not* those from class discussion or from the textbook) in your discussion to illustrate your understanding of these characteristics. (b) Describe one marketing challenge that can result from *each* of the characteristics discussed in (a). (c) Assume you are interviewing for a position with an organization, and the interviewer makes the following statement: “Marketing services is the same as marketing goods.” The interviewer asks if you agree or disagree. How would you respond? *Support* your opinion by using course materials. (d) Now assume that you learn the position for which you are interviewing is with [REDACTED]. How would you convince the interviewer that you, having taken the Services Marketing course at BGSU, would be able to make a significant contribution to this [REDACTED] company?
- (2) One of the underlying frameworks for this course is the “expanded marketing mix for services.” (a) Define and describe each of the three new P’s of the services marketing mix. (b) Why do *services* marketers add *each of these new elements* to the services marketing mix? (Explain the reason for including *each* one, and use [REDACTED] to make your points.) (c) Think of your [REDACTED] and identify [REDACTED] you have been *most* satisfied with as a “customer.” Illustrate your understanding of the three new P’s by suggesting how *each* P positively influenced your experience [REDACTED]. (d) Again, thinking of your [REDACTED], identify [REDACTED] you have been *least* satisfied with as a “customer.” Illustrate how *one* of these three P’s negatively influenced your experience [REDACTED].
- (3) Early in the semester we discussed the *Gaps Model of Service Quality*. (a) Describe what is meant by a *customer gap* and provide a hypothetical example to illustrate your point. (b) Discuss how the customer gap relates to the four *provider gaps*. (c) Think about [REDACTED], the [REDACTED] depicted in the video. Describe a potential situation where a “customer gap” could occur. (Be sure to *clearly* tie the situation to the discussion of the customer gap.) (d) Select *three* of the provider gaps you believe [REDACTED] should be concerned about in the delivery of their service. Provide a general description of *each* of these three gaps and suggest a problem (or issue) related to each gap that is most likely to contribute to a customer gap.

- (4) In class we discussed a classification for characteristics of product offerings that included three categories: *search, experience, and credence qualities*. (a) Describe each of these categories. In your discussion, provide an example (other than those mentioned in class or in the textbook) of three products that are dominated primarily by characteristics salient to each of the three categories. (Include one product per category, and explain your thinking.) (b) Why is this classification important to examine when discussing [REDACTED]? (c) What two marketing strategies would you suggest to a firm selling a product that is high in credence qualities? Explain your thinking.
- (5) In class we discussed customers' *service expectations*. (a) Describe each of the two types of service expectations and provide examples not discussed in class for this topic (using one of the assigned readings/articles) of each in your discussion. (Clearly identify the article by providing either the author's name or the title of the article.) (b) Assume you have a [REDACTED] that is in need of some major service/repair work (e.g., [REDACTED]). Identify and describe three factors that would significantly influence your expectations in this situation and discuss their influence. (c) Explain what we mean by a *zone of tolerance*. (d) Consider a recent service experience you have had where the service provided did not fall within your zone of tolerance. Explain why and suggest *either* what the firm could have done to prevent this situation from occurring *or* what the firm could do to ensure that it happens again in the future.
- (6) We have discussed the importance of *customer satisfaction* during the semester. (a) There are many factors that influence customer satisfaction. Describe and discuss the two key factors that you believe are most influential in shaping a customer's satisfaction with a service provider. (b) In evaluating service quality, customers may evaluate both *process* quality and *outcome* quality. Define each and discuss why *both* are important. (c) Using your response to the previous parts of the question as a framework, discuss what elements might influence a customer's evaluation of the services provided by a [REDACTED].
- (7) (a) Describe both qualitative research and quantitative research and discuss at least three ways they differ. (b) Why would it make sense for *service* firms to employ *qualitative* research? Provide an example to support your discussion. (c) The *Critical Incident Technique* (CIT) is one of several qualitative marketing research techniques often used by service businesses. Describe the CIT and discuss two major benefits and two major drawbacks of using this technique. (d) Assume you are a research consultant to [REDACTED] about one hour's drive from the BGSU campus. Pick an issue for which CIT would be the *most* effective marketing research technique in studying it. Describe the issue in this context and defend your suggestion to use the CIT method, and *not* other research methodologies, to study this issue.

- (8) (a) What do we mean by the *service encounter* and why is it an important concept to consider? Provide an illustrative example (*not one from the textbook or class discussion*) in your discussion. (b) Dr. Bitner's early research on service encounters identified three groups of employee behaviors (initially identified from the *customer's* perspective) that are often *sources of satisfaction or dissatisfaction* in service encounters. Identify and describe each of the three groups. (c) Select a specific service industry. Identify (and describe) a strategy for each group (of employee behaviors from part *b*) that a services marketing manager in this industry might consider implementing and discuss why each strategy would be appropriate. (d) Describe (briefly) a service encounter [REDACTED]. Using Bitner's scheme to analyze [REDACTED] satisfaction or dissatisfaction, discuss which *one* category would be considered the *primary* source of pleasure or displeasure in this service encounter and why.

- (9) Now that you have completed close to half of the *BGSU Services Marketing* course (MKT 405) you are on your way to being considered an expert in the area of service. Assume the *Business Week* article "Why Service Stinks" that we read earlier this semester has received quite a bit of attention, and *ABC News* has come to campus to ask you what you think about what was said in the article. (*ABC* is going throughout the country looking for differing viewpoints in a video segment it is doing on this topic for its "Evening News" program.) Your task is to *demonstrate your knowledge of services marketing concepts and strategies* by taking a stand and defending it. Thus, you are to:

Defend this practice. (a) Describe three key business practices (including the preferential treatment received by some customers) highlighted in the article. In so doing, you are to (b) discuss three distinct concepts from the services marketing class that would *defend* these practices, (c) point out three *advantages* of employing the tactics pointed out in (a), and (d) suggest three *additional* services marketing strategies that could be deployed in order to improve the overall level of service in firms across the U.S.

or

Criticize this practice. (a) Describe three key business practices (including the preferential treatment received by some customers) highlighted in the article. In so doing, you are to (b) use three distinct concepts discussed in the services marketing class to *condemn* these practices, (c) point out three *disadvantages* of employing the tactics discussed in (a), and (d) suggest three *alternative* services marketing strategies that could be deployed in order to improve the overall level of service in firms across the U.S.

- (10) Assume you are the Services Marketing instructor and you are thinking about what essay questions you should include on your **comprehensive** final exam. Construct a *new* essay question (*not* one that has already been asked) that addresses an important services marketing issue or concept from a *business press article* (and **not** the *textbook*) assigned for reading in this course. The question should be one that can be answered satisfactorily in about 20 minutes of writing. (a) In the space below, completely specify all of the parts (should be at least three) of your question. (b) After you have listed your question, write up what you consider to be a complete answer, one that you (as the instructor) would award a score of 100%. If your question has multiple parts, be sure to indicate each part of your response so that it is clear which part of the question you are addressing. (*Note: You will be rewarded for creativity and originality in constructing the question, and for the completeness of your response in constructing your answer.*)