

**MKT 405**  
**Services Marketing**

**Final Exam Study Questions**  
**Fall 2006**

A subset of the following questions will appear on your final exam. 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.

*In-class exam.* Three of the following questions will appear on the “in-class” portion of your exam. This portion of the exam will be worth 120 points, with each question that you answer worth 40 points. You will have two hours (120 minutes) to complete this portion of the exam. Thus, you will have approximately 30 minutes to answer each question, which would leave you with about 30 minutes to re-read your responses before turning them in. *Like the mid-term exams, the final exam will be open-book (but NOT open notes). Thus, you may use your book as a reference guide during the exam.*

*Take-home question.* This portion of the exam is **required** of everyone. It has already been distributed in class and is worth 60 points.

If you desire to receive a high score on the exam, you will need to integrate reading from the text-book, 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 30 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 administrative issues 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.

- (1) Throughout the course of the semester we have 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 restaurant 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.
- (2) (a) What is a “service blueprint” and why might a firm choose to blueprint its services? (b) Illustrate your understanding of the service blueprinting concept by drawing a blueprint for “Waiters to You” (attached). (*Note: If you wish, you may draw/design your blueprint in advance and bring it to the exam. Of course, this question may or may not be on the exam.*) (c) From your blueprint, describe three potential “failpoints” in this service delivery process. (*These potential failpoints should be included and identified on your blueprint.*) Discuss how the service delivery process could be changed to help alleviate such problems. (d) Discuss how the service blueprint might be used in marketing, human resources, and operations management decisions in *this* organization.
- (3) Assume you have been hired as a services marketing consultant by [REDACTED]. (a) Describe to the owner of [REDACTED] what is meant by *physical evidence* and (b) why it is so important for *service* organizations. (*Be sure to provide examples of both the servicescape and other forms of physical evidence at [REDACTED] to support your discussion.*) (c) Assume that [REDACTED] is not satisfied with its overall performance at this location. Discuss at least three ways the [REDACTED] *servicescape* might be changed in order to further differentiate the firm from its competitors and to better facilitate service delivery. (d) What else might [REDACTED] do in terms of *other types of physical evidence* (other than the servicescape) to enhance the customer’s experience? Explain.
- (4) In class we discussed various human resource strategies for closing Gap 3. One strategy for service firms that we discussed was *empowerment*. (a) Describe the concept of empowerment and discuss why it can play an important role in building a customer-oriented service organization. (b) Attached is an article that describes an empowerment program implemented a couple of years ago at [REDACTED] in [REDACTED]. Using the textbook and class discussions as a basis, discuss three potential *benefits* to [REDACTED] for empowering employees in this manner. (c) Similarly, discuss three potential *drawbacks* (for [REDACTED]) of such empowerment. (d) From a services marketing perspective, do you think [REDACTED]’s program is a good idea? Why or why not? (*Defend your answer using services marketing concepts in your discussion.*)

- (5) For some service businesses, customers themselves may be the primary competitors. Think of a service (excluding restaurants) where this could be the case (*and be sure to clearly identify it in your answer*). (a) Why might it make sense to consider *customers* as the primary *competition* in this service business? Explain. (b) We discussed seven factors that might influence a customer in a “make vs. buy” decision. Discuss the four factors that you believe are the *most pertinent* to customers in making purchase decisions *in this industry*. Provide examples to illustrate your points. (c) Suppose you are a marketing consultant to [REDACTED]. How would you suggest *positioning* this service in order to “compete” with your (potential) customers? (In particular, which major benefits of the service offering would you emphasize in promoting this service to convince customers to “buy” rather than “make”?) (d) Suggest two ways you might enhance the service in order to make it more appealing to customers and allow the business to overcome issues you raised in (b).
- (6) Several times throughout the semester we discussed the customer’s role in the delivery of educational services like that delivered at a university. (a) Illustrate your understanding of the idea of the *customer* as “co-producer” of the service delivery process by describing why is it important for the student (customer) to take an “active” role in the delivery of a university class. (b) Describe at least three problems that can result when the customer does not do his/her job sufficiently in this context. (c) In all likelihood you have had several classes in your college career where a fellow student had an influence on your experience in that class. Provide two distinct examples as to how *other students’* participation in the service delivery process *enhanced your* experience in and satisfaction with a class. (d) Provide two distinct examples as to how *other students’* participation in the service delivery process *inhibited or diminished your* experience in and/or satisfaction with a class and suggest how the instructor could have helped to prevent each of these from occurring.
- (7) Now that you have nearly completed the *BGSU Services Marketing* course (MKT 405) you are on your way to being considered an expert in the area of service. Assume the [REDACTED] article “[REDACTED]” 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.

- (8) The Shouldice Hospital Case was assigned for reading this semester and is the focus of this question. (a) Who is the target group of customers of Shouldice and what do they have in common, apart from having a hernia and being primarily male? (*Be VERY DETAILED and VERY SPECIFIC in answering this question, and include more than just demographic characteristics in the discussion.*) (b) From a *services marketing* perspective, describe three major *strengths* of Shouldice Hospital. (The focus should be on topics/concepts from *this* course.) (c) From a *services marketing* perspective, describe two major *weaknesses* of Shouldice Hospital. (d) Identify one specific *services marketing* strategy or practice that you think Shouldice Hospital does very well. (*Your answer should describe the specific strategy or practice we discussed this semester, as well as discuss specifically what Shouldice does in this regard.*)
- (9) This question is based upon the 2006 *Business Week* article “Mickey D’s Makeover” by Pallavi Gogoi. (a) Summarize the changes that many McDonald’s franchises are undergoing and what the firm is attempting to accomplish (overall) by making such changes. (b) Assume you are a senior executive at McDonald’s and you have been asked to defend the thinking behind these proposed changes to a group of franchise owners. Identify at least three *services marketing* concepts that could be used to defend this strategic decision—that is, the changes discussed in part (a). (*Your answer to part (b) should include a definition/description of each of the three concepts.*) (c) Using the three concepts discussed in part (b), defend these expenditures and discuss what specific impact(s) you (as a senior executive at McDonald’s) believe they will have on McDonald’s customers and/or on firm performance.