

**MKT 531**  
**SERVICES MARKETING**  
**SPRING 2006**

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**Texts and Packet:**

1. Customers for Life, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Sewell
2. Services Marketing, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., Lovelock and Wirtz, Pearson/Prentice Hall
3. Readings Packet available at Image Master Printing, 2212 University Bldg

**Course Objectives**

1. To provide understanding and investigation of the “service element” in marketing
2. To study and analyze the customer service provided by organizations
3. To assess firm strategies related to successful retention and loyalty of customers
4. To learn about relationship marketing and service failure/recovery issues in the service sector
5. To reinforce your marketing research skills

**Class Approach**

You should come prepared to talk/discuss for each class you attend –If you are unable to fulfill this requirement please see me for alternative arrangements. You will be asked to discuss materials you’ve read as teams quite often so you need to come to class prepared!

Please keep up with current happenings in the field through the internet and other mediums. You are encouraged to bring in and talk about relevant articles, especially related to successful or unsuccessful firms and strategies in the service industry. **Extra credit on your participation** will result from especially useful discoveries.

**Assignments and Grading**

<b>1. Participation</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>2. Two exams – 20% each</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>3. Depth Interview Assignment</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>4. Service Audit Project</b>	<b>25%</b>

**Missed classes:** Please avoid missing classes – On that day you certainly can’t produce anything and will receive a 0 on class participation for that day. If you need to miss a class, please advise me ahead of time if possible by phone or e-mailing me. Missing excessive classes will affect your participation grade and can reduce your final grade, as well.

**Honesty is expected:** This involves not plagiarizing - i.e., not using anyone else’s work or words without giving them credit. If you engage in dishonest practices you will suffer the consequences of your actions.

**Peer evaluations:** When you are on a team you are expected to participate to the fullest extent possible. Team members will be asked to evaluate other members’ performance and lack of adequate participation can strongly impact your grade. You will be assigned to different groups for different assignments.

### 531 Schedule

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	23	Introduction MR text – Chapter 5 – Qualitative, MR text – Chapter 7 – Observation <u>+Wall Street</u> : Undercover with Hotel Spy
	30	<u>Customers for Life</u> <u>+State of Business</u> : Exceeding Expectations <u>+Why Service Stinks</u> (end of text)
Feb.	6	Chapters 1 and 2: Introduction/CB Issues <u>+HBR</u> : Using Behavioral Science <u>+HBR</u> : Harnessing the Science of Persuasion
	13	Chapters 3 and 4: Positioning/Creating <u>+HBR</u> : Creating the Living Brand
	<b>20</b>	<b>EXAM 1</b>
	27	Chapters 7 and 8: Distributing/Designing <u>+HBR</u> : Clueing in Customers <u>+HBR</u> : Passion for Detail
March	6	Chapters 9 and 10: Balancing Demand/Planning <u>+JR</u> : Customer-Sales Associate Relationships
	13	Service Audit Presentations
	27	Depth Interview Projects Discussed + Training session +articles will be assigned
April	3	Chapters 11 and 12: Managing People & Managing Relationships <u>+HBR</u> : Fear of Feedback

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+HBR: Understanding “People” People

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10	Guest Speaker
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17	Chapters 13 and 14: Customer Feedback & Service Recovery/Improving SQ + <u>Sloan</u> : Recovering from Service Failure
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24	Chapter 15: Organizing for Leadership + <u>HBR</u> : Lead for Loyalty + <u>HBR</u> : Managing Oneself + <u>HBR</u> : What Great Managers Do
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<b>May 1</b>	<b>EXAM 2</b>
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Exam Week	Depth Interviews Presentations (Due)
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## 531 Projects

### Service Audit Project (teams of 3-4)

**Proposal due: Feb. 6** (company selected and contacted, approach planned, research objectives enumerated, timeline; 1 – 2 pages long)

**Progress report due: Feb. 27** (how you are doing on timeline, what has been done and what hasn't been done, some preliminary findings; 3 – 4 pages)

**These two elements could affect your final grade in the class if you are borderline, i.e., doing them diligently could push you into the next letter grade; not doing these diligently and on time could keep you from receiving that next letter grade.**

Find a service organization that preferably has local operations and local customers. The objective will be to fully evaluate this organization—mostly at the local level. For example, you might evaluate Olive Garden. (If data is somewhat light or if desired, you might select two organizations and compare these, e.g. Olive Garden vs. Ruby Tuesday.)

Management needs to agree to your doing the assessment. Their cooperation and enthusiasm is critical to this project—if you can't get it, go to a different company. I have an example of a proposal that you can look at.

There are a number of assessments that you could attempt—be sure to first get any necessary/available **secondary information from the company or elsewhere**, both on the company and on the industry and competition. There may even be information out there on how to conduct service audits that might be helpful. Then you want to identify the groups you wish to evaluate—e.g., **management, employees, and customers**. And think clearly about how to obtain appropriate data from all three.

Research approaches might include some combination of **focus groups/individual in-depth interviews of all parties, mystery shopping, observation study or diaries of service provided over time, short surveys of parties involved, diaries of service provided over time, or other techniques that you think will address the questions**. If forms or guides or questionnaires are created be sure to include these in your appendix along with tables of findings. There will be a packet of previously-used interview guides and mystery shopping forms available to you. (I will give one copy to each group.) Also it includes a step-by-step procedure.

Use the material from the class on research methods and quality service provision to evaluate how well your chosen company is doing on service. In the paper—use references to note where you are drawing this information from unless it is from your head. Your paper should fully elaborate on research methods used and findings as well as providing suggestions for areas of improvement to management.

You should plan on giving a copy of your paper to management and thus I will expect to see a letter to management on the front page of your report (right before your executive summary), with a note to me, perhaps on a sticky note that this report has been delivered or sent to the company. You also need to get a short note from your client as to the usefulness of your report to them.

Your class presentation should be designed as a presentation to management. Your report should include a copy of your presentation slides. The body of this paper is likely to be 20 or more pages long. You need to ask your client to come to your class presentation; alternatively if they can't make it you will need to present at another time to them (as well as to the class) and you will need documentation of that presentation.

### **Depth Interview Assignment (teams of 3-4)**

You will be asked to conduct 9 "good" in-depth interviews (3 per person). You will be given the interview guide and details for selecting qualified respondents. We will also have a training day in which we will practice in class and we'll go over the techniques involved. I would also suggest you practice on a friend before doing the real interviews. I would also suggest that you insure that your informants are people who will be reasonably verbose on the topic and have the time and energy to talk with you. I would guess the interview will take 35 to 45 minutes of their time. There will be 3 topics to choose from and each will be presented in class to you with background information before you select a topic. Details will follow.

Your appendix should include your transcribed interviews (please transcribe as close as possible). It should also include a separate sheet indicating the profile of the subjects, including basic information on gender, marital status, age, education, profession, where they live, where they are from (if different from where they live now).

Your write-up should include the following:

First, you should have a section on your research objectives and your interpretation of the research objectives. Then discuss how you went about recruiting your subjects and how the interviews were conducted. Address any issues related to problems with the interviews. And address what you learned personally from the process.

Next address your findings by major topic categories. Probably the best way to do it is to merge your findings across interviews and talk about the similarities between the results and the differences. Using quotes from your informants in the body of your paper is highly recommended. It would probably be most helpful to include some tables showing major answers to the questions for each respondent. Then your discussion can refer to these but can focus more on the bigger issues, i.e., general principles, similarities, differences, etc.

Then you should have a conclusion section suggesting what you've learned about the topic and about doing research, limitations of your findings (e.g., what are the problems with relying on such a small sample?) and what additional research might be useful in this area.

**There may be other extra credit opportunities in this class as well.**

**Note: Late papers on any project will not be accepted or will be graded down considerably; always communicate with me early on any potential late paper problems.**