NUTC 205: NUTRITION-RELATED CONSUMER MARKETING
Summer 2019

Class Meetings: May 22, 2019 – August 26, 2019

Instructor: Rachel Cheatham, PhD
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Office hours by appointment

Semester Hour Units: 3.0 Semester hour units

Prerequisites: None

Course Description: Understanding the dynamic interplay between nutrition and marketing from both the consumer and marketer perspective is key to determining how to successfully market foods and beverages aligned with today’s wellness-focused consumer. In this course, students will examine the historical effectiveness of efforts by food companies, health advocacy organizations, and governments aimed at improving nutritional habits. Students will develop real-world skills used by marketing professionals. They will integrate an understanding of consumer consumption behaviors with global marketplace trends to inform marketing strategies including brand storytelling, content marketing, influencer marketing and social media engagement. By the end of the course, students will be able to leverage the power of food marketing to promote positive nutrition.

Course Objectives: By the end of the course, students will be able to do the following:

- Describe today’s consumer with respect to the dynamic interplay between food and beverage consumption behaviors, global marketplace trends, and dietary guidance
- Design and articulate evidence-based communication strategies which leverage nutrition science, employ effective brand storytelling and engage stakeholders
- Develop strategy and planning expertise for marketing communications campaigns to include content marketing and influencer marketing
- Create evidenced-based POVs (“point of view”) on hotly debated topics relevant to consumer-related nutrition marketing that are concise, persuasive, and credible

Texts or Materials:

There are TWO required books for this course.

- The Blue Zones Solution, Dan Buettner, 2015
- Content Inc., Joe Pulizzi, 2016

In addition to the two required books, there are weekly required readings including video/podcast content provided in Canvas on the course website. Each week required readings are listed first, followed by optional readings. Please spend your time wisely and only read what you feel is necessary and worthwhile to meet
weekly learning objectives. It is assumed and anticipated that you will NOT read every page of every reading every week. Use your best judgment.

If a student wishes to choose ONE BOOK from the list below and complete a Supplemental Book Review, then extra credit will be given as described in the Assessment and Grading section. The submission of a book review is entirely optional.

- **Cousins Main Lobster: How One Food Truck Became a Multimillion-Dollar Business**, Jim Tselikis and Sabin Loma
- **Different: Escaping the Competitive Herd**, Youngme Moon
- **Do the KIND Thing**, Daniel Lubetzky
- **Food Routes: Growing Bananas in Iceland and Other Tales from the Logistics of Eating**, Robyn Metcalfe
- **Killing It: An Entrepreneur’s Guide to Keeping Your Head Without Losing Your Heart**, Sheryl O’Loughlin
- **Salt, Sugar Fat: How the Food Giants Hooked Us**, Michael Moss
- **The Big Fat Surprise: Why Butter, Meat & Cheese Belong in a Healthy Diet**, Nina Teicholz
- **The Dorito Effect: The Surprising New Truth about Food and Flavor**, Mark Schatzker
- **The Tastemakers: Why We’re Crazy for Cupcakes But Fed Up With Fondue**, David Sax
- **Unsavory Truth: How Food Companies Skew the Science of What We Eat**, Marion Nestle
- **Vitamania: How Vitamins Revolutionized the Way We Think About Food**, Catherine Price

**Academic Conduct:**

Each student is responsible for upholding the highest standards of academic integrity, as specified in the Friedman School’s Policies and Procedures Handbook and Tufts University policies (http://students.tufts.edu/student-affairs/student-life-policies/academic-integrity-policy). It is the responsibility of each student to understand and comply with these standards, as violations will be sanctioned by penalties ranging from failure on an assignment and the course to dismissal from the school.

**Classroom Conduct:**

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful and professional manner throughout the course. For the online forum discussion in particular, it is expected that students will be actively engaged in the dialogue on a regular basis each week. It is expected that students will not disclose any confidential or proprietary information that may relate to their own ‘real world’ work with companies and/or clients.

If and when questions arise, students should try to seek out information on their own before contacting the instructor. The answers to your questions may have already been posted by your peers or the instructor on the course website. If you cannot find your answer, contact the faculty via email as soon as possible. Please do not wait until the last minute. Since students and instructors may not all be in the same time zone, you must allow for a response time to your question. Faculty will respond within 48 hours.

**Assessment and Grading:**

- **MODULES:** Course content is divided into four modules:
  1. Understanding Today’s Consumer
  2. Reaching Today’s Consumer
  3. Strategy & Planning
  4. The Evolving Landscape
Each module has one assignment worth up to 20 points each. Students are expected to apply what they’ve learned for each module with assignments that are modeled after ‘real world’ marketing and communications deliverables. Given this is a course in marketing, it is expected the student will pay extra attention to the communications aspect of each assignment. A concise, persuasive and credible writing and presentation style is strongly encouraged. This means at a minimum having accurate, original (not plagiarized) information with no typos or grammatical errors, and ideally means the student incorporates creativity and originality in message delivery. As to assignment formats, most assignments can be done in a narrative form (a written document), slide form (a PowerPoint ‘deck’), or where specified, in video format (an MP4 file). Lastly, it is expected that students will work on assignments throughout the duration of each module rather than waiting until the final week of the module to begin working on their assignment.

**ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE BY 10 PM U.S. EASTERN TIME ON THE SUNDAY NIGHT OF THE LAST WEEK OF EACH MODULE.**

- **ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUM:** At the beginning of the course, each student will sign up to take a week (or weeks) when s/he is the discussion forum leader.

  **THE WEEKLY DISCUSSION LEADER IS EXPECTED TO INITIATE THAT WEEK’S DISCUSSION NO LATER THAN 10 PM U.S. EASTERN TIME ON THE MONDAY OF THEIR ASSIGNED WEEK(S).**

  The discussion leader is responsible for identifying a timely nutrition news article from the media that is related to the course content for that week and share it with the class. When sharing, the discussion leader should describe the article and provide 2 – 3 insights on the content and its relevance to the course. For example, if the discussion leader identifies coverage of a new nutrition study, s/he could summarize the findings and offer a point-of-view (POV) on how accurately the findings were positioned by the media, how a food company could strategically leverage the findings in their marketing efforts, and how consumers may interpret and react to the headlines. The discussion forum leader is expected to advance the dialogue throughout the week with ongoing participation. A discussion leader should not simply post a kickoff entry, then cease participating.

  During the week, students are expected to both question and answer in a dialogue fashion. This dialoguing learning style requires students to pose probing questions and to provide thoughtful replies that draw upon the course readings and content to date. Posts from class members should contribute new ideas and POVs to the weekly discussion. Redundant content or short non-contextual replies like “I agree” are not acceptable.

  Also note that students must post their dialoguing comments in response to the discussion leader’s post during the same week timeframe. In other words, students are advised against going back into previous weeks to ‘catch up’ with old postings.

  The quality of the interaction, including the relevance to the week’s course material and to the field of food marketing communications, will be monitored and factored into the overall course grade.

- **EXTRA CREDIT:** There is one option for extra credit which involves doing a Supplemental Book Review. By completing an acceptable book review in the form of a 1-2 page POV on the strengths and weaknesses of the main conclusions of the chosen book, then one grading level can be added to the final grade (ie, B to B+). Again, the Supplemental Book Review is entirely optional. Please refer to the *Texts or Materials* section above for books which qualify for this extra credit task. Books not on the list do not qualify.
Grading Range:

Grading for the course will be based on the below distribution:

- Module Assignments: 20% each (totaling 80% of course grade)
- Weekly Online Discussion Participation: 10%
- Weekly Online Discussion Leader: 10%

A passing grade in the course is B- or better. Course grades will be based on the below (subject to revision during the course):

- A > 94%
- A- 90 - <94%
- B+ 87 - <90%
- B 84 - <87%
- B- 80 - <84%

Instructions for Submission of Module Assignments and Discussion Forum Posts: Module assignments and discussion forum posts are both described in the syllabus. Assignments received after their posted deadline or discussion forum posts not posted online within the specified timeframe will not be graded or accepted unless an extension was approved in advance. Students who are not able to complete an assignment on time should request an extension from the instructor by email prior to the deadline (prefer at least 72 hours). In the email, please provide a brief explanation as to why the extension is necessary. Do NOT assume the deadline will be extended…it will depend upon the assignment and only for circumstances beyond the student’s control. Time management is a critical capability in industry and is a basic expectation in this course. Do NOT wait until last minute to complete module assignments or to participate in the weekly discussion board.

Accommodation of Disabilities: Tufts University is committed to providing equal access and support to all students through the provision of reasonable accommodations so that each student may access their curricula and achieve their personal and academic potential. If you have a disability that requires reasonable accommodations please contact the Friedman School Assistant Dean of Student Affairs at 617-636-6719 to make arrangements for determination of appropriate accommodations. Please be aware that accommodations cannot be enacted retroactively, making timeliness a critical aspect for their provision.

Diversity Statement: We believe that the diversity of student experiences and perspectives is essential to the deepening of knowledge in this course. We consider it part of our responsibility as instructors to address the learning needs of all of the students in this course. We will present materials that are respectful of diversity: race, color, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, religious beliefs, political preference, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, citizenship, language, or national origin among other personal characteristics.
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WEEK 1: BEHAVIOR CHANGE THEORY

Learning Objectives:

- Explain various models of behavior change
- Debate how theoretical models of behavior change do or do not apply to “real world” applications

Required Reading/Assignments:


Assignments Due:

- Introduce yourself on the online class forum by providing some background about yourself, including why you are taking this course and what you hope to learn
- Review syllabus, assignments and course materials on the course website
- Begin thinking about MODULE 1 assignment...(Refer to specific instructions for this assignment below under Week 3 or on the Canvas course site under Module 1)
WEEK 2: METATRENDS & DIETARY GUIDANCE

Learning Objectives:
- Describe what a metatrend is and how it applies to consumer food consumption behavior
- Demonstrate an awareness of how current metatrends do (or do not) align with healthier eating choices

Required Reading/Assignments:
- Foodscape Metatrends (www.foodscapegroup.com/metatrends)
- Food-Based Dietary Guidelines (FAO)
- Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2015 – 2020
- Canadian Dietary Guidelines

Assignments Due:
- MODULE 1 assignment due at the end of next week ...(Refer to specific instructions for this assignment below under Week 3 or on the Canvas course site under Module 1)
WEEK 3: CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOR & OBESITY

Learning Objectives:
- Explain the multifactorial nature of consumption behavior and obesity
- Summarize the effectiveness of Blue Zones for demonstrating healthy consumption patterns
- Analyze the role of the food industry and product labeling with respect to consumption behavior and obesity

Required Reading/Assignments:
- The Blue Zones Solution – begin reading this book in preparation for the assignment due at the end of Module 3
- WHO Global Strategy – focus mostly on objective #3
- How Brands are Making Our Food Healthier (source: www.just-food.com)

Optional Reading:
- Trends in adult body-mass index in 200 countries from 1975 to 2014: a pooled analysis of 1698 population-based measurement studies with 19.2 million participants
- Smart food policy for healthy food labeling: Leading with taste, not healthiness, to shift consumption and enjoyment of healthy foods
- A Meta-Analysis of Food Labeling Effects on Consumer Diet Behaviors and Industry Practices
- Added Sugars: The Facts about Caloric Sweeteners
- In Defense of Sugar: A Critique of Diet-Centrism
- The UN Decade of Nutrition, the NOVA food classification and trouble with ultra-processing

MODULE 1 Assignment Due:
- Review the Top 10 Foodscape Metatrends and then identify one food or beverage product/service in the global marketplace which aligns with each metatrend. You will have 10 total pairings (metatrend + product/service) to analyze.
- For each pairing, describe how and why the product/service is on trend and who you believe the target consumer segment is for each pairing.
- Explain how the product/service may help promote positive health and consumption behaviors among target consumers.
WEEK 4: STORYTELLING & STAKEHOLDERS

Learning Objectives:
- Identify the distinct roles marketing communications can play in meeting business objectives
- Explain the tenets of storytelling within the context of brand positioning
- Create a nutrition/food-specific stakeholder map including level of influence

Required Reading/Assignments:
- Forbes – 5 Essential Elements of Powerful Brand Storytelling
- Stakeholder Analysis (Mindtools)
- Power Interest Grid

Assignment Due:
- Begin thinking about MODULE 2 assignment...(Refer to specific instructions for this assignment below under Week 6 or on the Canvas course site under Module 2)
WEEK 5:  MAKING YOUR MESSAGE RELEVANT

Learning Objectives:
- Translate marketing messages across target audiences
- Identify communication tools, channels and strategies for delivering a tailored marketing campaign

Required Reading/Assignments:
- Improving Public Understanding: Guidelines for Communicating Emerging Science on Nutrition, Food Safety and Health, IFIC and Harvard School of Public Health
- Food Literacy: How Do Communications and Marketing Impact Consumer Knowledge, Skills and Behavior?, National Academies Press

Optional Reading:
- National Dairy Council (website)
- Cherry Marketing Institute (website)
- Almond Board of California (website)
- If Our Bodies Could Talk video series (The Atlantic)
- Read It Before You Eat, Tricky Terms

Assignment Due:
- Plan ahead. Be sure to select your industry-funded study published within the last two years this week for the MODULE 2 assignment which is due at the end of next week... (Refer to specific instructions for this assignment below under Week 6 or on the Canvas course site under Module 2)
WEEK 6: SOCIAL MEDIA

Learning Objectives:
- Demonstrate knowledge of social media platforms commonly used by food and beverage companies
- Articulate the role of social media within the communication ecosystem
- Create content tailored to the variety of social media platforms available

Required Reading/Assignments:
- Social Media Marketing Infographic (Natural Products Insider)
- A Beginner’s Guide to Social Media
- The FTC’s Endorsement Guides: What People are Asking
- Tailoring in the digital era: Stimulating dialogues on health topics in collaboration with social media influencers

Optional Reading:
- The Proven Ideal Length of Every Tweet, Facebook Post, and Headline Online, Fast Company
- Instagram Powers Taco Bell’s Innovation Machine, Business Insider
- There’s drama on dietitian Twitter, and it’s exposing deep rifts in nutrition doctrine, The Washington Post

MODULE 2 Assignment Due:
- Select an industry-funded study published in the last two years. Assume the role of the food/beverage company or organization who funded the study, and create a messaging toolkit to promote the study’s findings.
  - Toolkit should include:
    - **Messaging** – Draft key messages about the study findings
    - **Press Release** – Include headline and written press release promoting the study’s findings
    - **Social Media** – Draft messages for the company’s social channels as well as promotional messages that can be shared by brand ambassadors
    - **Visual Assets** – Mock up or describe in writing any visual assets to be included in the toolkit such as an infographic or short video that bring the findings to life
WEEK 7: STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Learning Objectives:
- Describe how communications objectives align with and support overarching business objectives
- Develop an awareness of the intensely competitive landscape among food and beverage manufacturers
- Conduct a SWOT analysis

Required Reading/Assignments:
- Kellogg’s marketing strategy – a cereal example

Optional Reading:
- Write a Marketing Plan for Your Food Product (source: Manitoba Agriculture Office)
- Writing the Winning Business Plan (Tufts University/Derby Management)

Assignment Due:
- Begin thinking about MODULE 3 assignment...(Refer to specific instructions for this assignment below under Week 9 or on the Canvas course site under Module 3)
- Be sure to continue reading The Blue Zones Solution, and start reading the book Content Inc to prepare for the MODULE 3 Assignment
WEEK 8: CONTENT MARKETING

Learning Objectives:
- List the six steps of content marketing
- Critically critique examples of content marketing through the lens of a food marketer with emphasis on analyzing the content tilt

Required Reading/Assignments:
- Content, Inc – be reading this book throughout this module, with extra focus on the content tilt section
- Get Inspired: 40 Examples Driving Content Marketing Forward – focus on the food-related examples

Optional Reading:
- Content Marketing Institute website

Assignment Due:
- MODULE 3 assignment due at the end of next week...(Refer to specific instructions for this assignment below under Week 9 or on the Canvas course site under Module 3)
WEEK 9: INFLUENCER MARKETING

Learning Objectives:
- Describe the role of influencer marketing for promoting food/beverage products or services
- Differentiate influencer marketing from content marketing
- Summarize basic influencer marketing analytics for return on investment (ROI)

Required Reading/Assignments:
- 10 Influencer Marketing Trends for 2019 (infographic)
- How to Measure Influencer Marketing ROI

Optional Reading:
- Influencer Marketing Hub website
- FYRE – this is a documentary available on Netflix which is not food-focused, but perhaps one of the best case studies of what can go wrong with influencer marketing if and when done poorly

MODULE 3 Assignment Due:
- Create a consumer marketing campaign to launch a new food/beverage product/service inspired by one of the Blue Zones. Be sure to include the following elements in your marketing campaign:
  o Pick your zone and explain why that zone has been chosen
  o Describe your product/service and how it aligns with the dietary traditions of your chosen zone
  o Define your target audience. This can be any global market audience of your choosing from mainstream American consumers to Japanese Millennials. Note, the target market is NOT meant to include people already living in your chosen zone; rather, take inspiration from one zone and create a product/service for people living elsewhere outside of your chosen zone.
  o Content Strategy – Write your core messaging, including a clear articulation of your content tilt
  o Influencer Strategy – Identify 3-5 influencer collaborators for your campaign and explain why they’ve been selected to help promote your product/service
WEEK 10: TRUST & TRANSPARENCY

Learning Objectives:
- Decipher the complex interplay between food marketing and nutrition science with attention given to corporate trust and transparency
- Identify the objectives and effectiveness of industry-funded food and nutrition research used for food marketing purposes

Required Reading/Assignments:
- Best practices in nutrition science to earn and keep the public’s trust (ASN)
- Making China safe for Coke: how Coca-Cola shaped obesity science and policy in China (BMJ)

Optional Reading:
- And Now a Word from Our Sponsors, Eat Drink Politics
- Funding Source and Research Report Quality in Nutrition Practice-Related Research, PLoS One
- BMJ Talk Medicine (podcast) – How Coca-Cola shaped obesity science and policy in China
- Food companies and nutrition: beyond mere disclosure (Lancet/Unsavory Truth review)
- MilkPEP minutes 2006-2013 (www.governmentattic.org)

Assignment Due:
- Begin thinking about MODULE 4 assignment...(Refer to specific instructions for this assignment below under Week 13 or on the Canvas course site under Module 4)
WEEK 11: THE ENTREPRENEUR

Learning Objectives:

- Appreciate the increasingly impactful roles of food entrepreneurs in terms of creating healthier food/beverage products/services
- Recognize the role of social entrepreneurship

Required Reading/Assignments:

- How I Built This (NPR podcasts):
  - Clif Bar
  - Honest Tea
- How Christina Tosi Took Milk Bar From a Single Bakery to a Sugary Empire in 10 Years (Entrepreneur)

Optional Reading:

- The Bootstrapper’s Bible, Seth Godin

Assignment Due:

- Continue working on the MODULE 4 assignment...(Refer to specific instructions for this assignment below under Week 13 or on the Canvas course site under Module 4)
WEEK 12: SUSTAINABLE NUTRITION

Learning Objectives:
- Summarize varying perspectives on the definition and meaning of sustainable nutrition, with an emphasis on the evolution of ‘plant based’ eating
- Determine the extent to which sustainable food systems can be aligned with prevailing dietary guidance

Required Reading/Assignments:
- Sustainable Diets, Food, and Nutrition (National Academy of Sciences)
- How Language Can Advance Sustainable Diets (World Resources Institute)
- Food in the Anthropocene: the EAT-Lancet Commission on healthy diets from sustainable food systems

Optional Reading:
- Globalisation of agrifood systems and sustainable nutrition (Proceedings of the Nutrition Society)
- Shaping the Future of Global Food Systems: A Scenarios Analysis (World Economic Forum)
- Position of the Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior: The Importance of Including Environmental Sustainability in Dietary Guidance
- Refresh Food + Tech Report
- Fixing Food 2018 (Barilla)
- What the Rise of Alternative Proteins Means for the Meat Industry (Rabobank)

Assignment Due:
- MODULE 4 assignment due at the end of next week...(Refer to specific instructions for this assignment below under Week 13 or on the Canvas course site under Module 4)
WEEK 13: FUTURE CONSUMER…?

Learning Objectives:
- Describe how food science and personal technology are evolving jointly to better meet consumer demands for health and wellness
- Assess the impact of personalized nutrition in the marketplace on the consumer

Required Reading/Assignments:
- Top Food Technology Trends You Will See in 2019 (Forbes)
- Personalised nutrition and health (BMJ)
- Global Wellness Trends Report (Global Wellness Summit)

Optional Reading:
- Nutrigenomics and the Future of Nutrition: Proceedings of a Workshop (NAS)
- Sample Personalized Nutrition Report (Nutrigenomix)
- The gut microbiota, food science and human nutrition; a timely marriage (Cell Host Microbe)

MODULE 4 Assignment Due:
- Write a POV describing THREE hypothetical marketplace offerings or policy initiatives you believe if implemented could build greater trust and transparency in the global food supply with the future consumer in mind. Describe each initiative in detail including what it is, how it will be implemented, what challenges you expect to encounter and how you plan to overcome them. For each initiative, be sure to also include relevant data such as a related research study, industry white paper and/or consumer survey supporting your position.
  - Examples of initiatives include a universal symbol for ‘healthy’ on consumer packaged goods, a mobile app which identifies nutrient dense meal options based on personalized dietary preferences, a national requirement for all public schools to have a vegetable garden and nutrition classes, etc

- OR….

- ALTERNATIVELY, instead of doing three written POVs as explained above, choose ONE initiative and submit your POV on this ONE initiative in the form of a 3-5 minute video clip in a presentation style which is concise, persuasive and credible, as if you are pitching your idea to potential investors.
  - Note the video can be done with the Canvas tools, video software of your choosing or even your phone’s video camera, so long as the final output is submitted as an MP4 file