Marketing 554: Strategic Product Management

A high percentage of the sales and profits of any business organization are directly tied to the successful introduction of new products and services. Unfortunately, a lack of understanding about the process results in a high rate of failure. This course will provide you with the frameworks to be successful in the development and launching of new products.

The course was designed with the input of roughly 30 local product leaders from the most successful companies in the world including Amazon, Facebook, Microsoft, Smartsheet, Nordstrom, T-Mobile, and Expedia. You will be equipped to handle responsibilities to plan, build, and launch products and subsequently grow the business from these products. You will also develop the following important skills for any product manager: communication, adaptation, problem identification, problem solving, execution, and decision-making.

At the end of this course you should be able to:
1. Identify customer problems that can be solved through product innovation.
2. Define success for a product.
3. Generate creative ideas for how to solve the customer problem and achieve business success.
4. Use data for decision-making about feature prioritization.
5. Communicate with internal stakeholders to get necessary resources.
6. Align internal stakeholders to execute on a product plan.
7. Collect appropriate metrics to be able to adapt and grow the business.

Class meetings will include a mix of lecture, discussion, in-class activities, and guest speakers.

CLASS MEETINGS:
Mondays and Wednesdays 1:30 pm - 3:20 pm
Location: Paccar Hall room 395

PROFESSOR:
Jeffrey D. Shulman, Ph.D.

OFFICE & OFFICE HOURS:
Scheduled by appointment via email.
Office location: Paccar Hall room 552

CONTACT INFORMATION:
Jeffrey D. Shulman, Ph.D. Phone: (206) 221-4804 Email: jshulman@uw.edu

COURSE WEB SITE:
Canvas.uw.edu

COURSE FORMAT:
Students are expected to come to class having read the assigned text and prepared to discuss how to implement the processes outlined in the readings. You are encouraged to highlight insightful linkages between class material and your past experience as a professional and a consumer, to raise challenging questions and issues related to the topics being reviewed, and to participate actively in discussion.

We also have an exciting set of guest speakers who will provide insight into their approach as product leaders.

**POLICIES**

**Class Attendance**
Class attendance is critical to participation in the learning experience and is expected aside from circumstances related to (1) illness or (2) a critical work event that cannot be rescheduled. Regardless of the rationale for missing class, please note that you are responsible for the learning experience that takes place in your absence; please work within your team to address any material you may have missed.

**Professionalism**
Each student is expected to be fully engaged in class content and respectful of fellow students’ attempts to do the same. During class discussions you should be willing to support your point of view and—at the same time—be willing to listen hard to what others have to say, even when their view differs from yours. Keep in mind that each comment you offer potentially adds value to the overall dialogue in each class and over the entire quarter.

**Technology**
While you are free to use technologies that are directly related to class (e.g., a notebook computer for note taking or accessing a supporting Excel file or web page), please otherwise refrain from use of computer, phone, and tablets during class, other than use that would facilitate the purpose or objectives of the class. Use of technology other than for engaging in the activities associated with the class is distracting for you, your fellow students, and your instructor. Please also note that participation grades are based on the quality of participation in class; high quality participation requires all of your attention and focus during class time.

**The Honor Code**
I employ the principles and procedures espoused by Foster School of Business MBA Honor System to maintain academic integrity in the course. The Honor Code of the Foster School expressly prohibits cheating, attempted cheating, plagiarism, and lying to administration or faculty as it pertains to academic work. Suspected violations of the Honor Code will be handled in compliance with the University of Washington Student Conduct Code.

**Religious Accommodations**
Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW’s policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at Faculty [Syllabus Guidelines and Resources](#). Accommodations must be requested
within the first two weeks of this course using the Religious Accommodations Request form available at: https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/

ASSIGNED MATERIALS

Assigned materials will be critical for you to get the most out of this course. All materials are available in Canvas.

GRADING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percent of Final Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to Discussion</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Process Memos (2 Individual Assignments)</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team Project (5 submissions and presentation)</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>65%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem Identification</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Defining Success</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Brainstorming Solutions</td>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Prioritization</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Product Pitch</td>
<td>275</td>
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Contribution to Discussion

In management decision-making, team members should raise thoughtful points, respectfully challenge assumptions, and work to build consensus regarding the beliefs about the market and how to use these beliefs in the product development. Team members must come to meetings prepared to make informed contributions to the process. As such, students will be evaluated on their contribution to discussion. Quality of comments will be weighted more heavily than the quantity of comments. Coming to class prepared by having read the required readings will be useful in generating insightful contributions to discussion. I will take every measure to promote a warm environment in which students feel at ease in participating in discussions. I call upon the students to do their part in welcoming their peers’ points of view. Below is a description of how your class contributions will be calibrated:

*Outstanding Contributor:* Contributions in class reflect exceptional preparation for each class meeting. Ideas offered are always substantive, and provide one or more major insights as well as providing a fruitful direction for the class. Arguments are well substantiated and persuasively presented. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of the discussions would be diminished significantly.

*Good Contributor:* Contributions in class reflect thorough preparation on a regular basis throughout the quarter. Ideas offered are usually substantive; provide good insights and sometimes a fruitful direction for class discussion. Arguments, when presented, are generally
well substantiated and are often persuasive. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussions would be diminished considerably.

*Satisfactory Contributor*: Contributions in class reflect adequate preparation and may be scattered unevenly throughout the quarter. Ideas offered are sometimes substantive, provide generally useful insights, but seldom offer a major new direction for the class. Arguments are sometimes presented, and are fairly well substantiated and sometimes persuasive. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussions would be diminished somewhat.

*Unsatisfactory Contributor*: Contributions in class reflect inadequate preparation or are seldomly made. Ideas offered are seldom substantive, provide few useful insights, and rarely offer a constructive direction for the class. Class contributions are few and far between. Many contributions are “cherry picking” efforts making isolated, obvious or confusing points. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussions would not be changed or perhaps even improved.

Please note that it is only possible to contribute to discussion if you are in attendance for the class session. Absences will affect your ability to contribute to discussion and thus your overall contribution score. Points allocated for performance in this dimension can run the full spectrum and thus thoughtful participation on a regular basis is highly encouraged.

**Team Formation**

Teams will be formed during the first week. Each team will be responsible for completing a series of projects. Since these projects will involve classroom presentation of the team’s conclusions, the team members should sit in close proximity to each other within the classroom.

**SCHEDULE**

The following schedule includes the topics, the reading assigned, and the assignments due. Please see the Canvas site for more details on each.

**Marketing 554 Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>In-Class Activities</th>
<th>Assignments Due Before Monday’s Class unless otherwise stated (all materials on Canvas)</th>
<th>Assignments Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1    | Introduction | -Ice Breaker  
|      |           | -Roles and Responsibilities of a PM  
|      |           | -Skills to Develop  
<p>|      |           | -Managing Internal Stakeholders             |                                                                      | 1/6/20               |</p>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Guest Speakers on 1/8:</strong> Teresa Demel (Adobe) Kavita Kamani (Microsoft) Arjun Subramanian (Qualtrics)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 2 | **PLN:** Customer Problem Identification  
- Introduction to Team Project  
- PR & FAQ approach  
- Where to find problems  
- Customer Interviews  
- Customer Journey Mapping  
**Guest Speaker on 1/15:** Product Leader from Wyze | **FORM** teams of 4 or 5  
**THINK:** Questions to ask Wyze upper management that will focus your product development project efforts  
**READ:** Press release examples  
**THINK:** Similarities and differences across examples |
| 3 | **PLN:** Defining Success for Business  
- Introduction to OKRs  
- Customer Lifetime Value framework  
- Applying Economic Value Estimation  
- Collecting Data for Market Sizing | **SUBMIT:** Customer Problem Identification TEAM assignment  
**WATCH:** Economic Value Estimation video  
**READ:** Economic Value Estimation handout  
**WATCH:** Collecting data video  
**READ:** Objectives and Key Results Examples and Dos and Don’ts  
**READ:** Google’s OKR Playbook |
| 4 | **PLN:** Proposing Solutions  
- de Bono’s Six Thinking Hats  
- Nominal Group Technique  
- SCAMPER  
- Sketching Solutions | **SUBMIT:** Defining Success TEAM Assignment |
| 5 | **BUILD:** Prototyping and User Testing  
- Building a Prototype  
- Conducting User Tests with Prototypes  
**Guest Speaker on 2/5:** Farrah Abdallah (Zillow) | **SUBMIT:** Brainstorming Solutions TEAM Assignment |
| 6 | BUILD: Road-mapping and Acquiring Resources | -Prioritization  
-Estimating Resource Needs  
-Making a Business Case | **SUBMIT** Process Memo I individual assignment  
**READ** RICE: Simple Prioritization for Product Managers  
**WATCH** Product Strategy in 7 Minutes | 2/10/20 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | BUILD: Product Requirements and Project Management | -Introduction to Agile  
-Project Management Triangle  
-Writing Product Requirements and User Stories  
-Roles and Responsibilities | **SUBMIT** Prioritization TEAM Assignment | 2/19/20 NO SCHOOL ON MONDAY |
| 8 | LAUNCH: Bringing Product to Market | -Launch Checklist  
-Launch Timing  
-Mini-Case | **READ** Is your Product Launch Doomed  
**READ** Break Point: Product Engineers and the Pursuit of Speed and Safety  
**READ** Launch to Sell: Leverage Sales Enablement to Maximize Product Launches  
**READ** Managing Manufactured Products: Preparing to Launch | 2/24/20 |
| 9 | GROW: Continuous Improvement | -Introduction to Metrics  
-Two-Way Doors vs. One-way Doors | **READ** After Product Launches  
**READ** Metrics that Matter to Product Managers  
**LISTEN** Tales from the Real World on Continuous Improvement  
**SUBMIT** Process Memo II individual assignment | 3/2/20 |
| 10 | Final Presentations on March 11th  
Guest Judges from Wyze  
**Attendance is Mandatory** | | **SUBMIT** PR & FAQ TEAM Assignment  
**SUBMIT** Slide Deck for Final Presentations | 3/11/20 NOTE PRESENTATIONS ARE ON WEDNESDAY |