Joseph L. Rotman School of Management
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RSM 3056: Current Topics in Marketing Strategy

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This course builds on RSM 3052, and its aim is to expose students to the frontiers of research in theoretical/empirical marketing strategy so that you can start to think about a dissertation topic. Generally, we will examine papers of recent vintage, some still in working paper form, to expose you to current developments in the field. The aim of the course is to prepare you for a career in research and most immediately in terms of producing a second-year research paper. At least one class per student will be reserved for discussion of his/her second-year paper.

The course will meet weekly on Wednesdays from 2 – 5 p.m. in Room 570. Typically, we will discuss one topic a week—in some cases, for “big” topics, over two weeks—and each topic will have several papers assigned to it. Students will be assigned to topics by rotation/interest/expertise. Assigned students will be expected to present the topic to the class, in a format described below. Non-assigned students should be prepared with questions to ask of the presenting student—your class participation grade will depend on it as discussed below.

The course grade is based on three criteria: (1) class participation (20%), (2) presentation and discussion of papers assigned to you (30%), and (3) a research proposal (50%).

Class participation

All students should come prepared to discuss the papers assigned for each class. Your grade on class participation will be based on your ability to ask/answer questions, or otherwise contribute to class discussions, when you are not the presenting student for the week.

Presentations and discussion of papers

Your presentations should cover the following ground:

(1) Introduction: (a) problems/issues being examined in the paper, (b) relationship to the literature (briefly—if applicable, focus on earlier papers in the same module). (2 slides)

(2) For theory papers:
(a) Brief description of model set-up (1 slide); (b) Main results/propositions? (up to 3 slides) (c) What drives the results? (1 slide)
(2) For empirical papers:
   (a) Theory underlying the empirical work (1 slide)  
   (b) Data sources (1 slide)  
   (c) Identification strategy. Are the data adequate to address the questions motivating the paper? (1 slide)  
   (d) Empirical methodology (up to 3 slides)  
   (e) Results (up to 2 slides).

(3) Overall Assessment/Conclusions: Brief assessment of the contribution of the paper.  
Is the contribution of the paper interesting, useful and significant? How would you improve/extend the paper? (2 slides)

In short, up to 9 slides per theoretical paper and up to 12 slides per empirical paper.  
The presentations should be in the form of PowerPoint or Adobe Acrobat files.  
Your presentation mark will be based on the quality of your write-up and your ability to answer/respond to questions.

**Research proposal**

The research proposal is a good way to start thinking about a second-year paper. It can be about a theoretical topic or an empirical topic. As noted below, it should go beyond a literature review, to a concrete idea and some “results.” The page limit is 10 double-spaced pages.  
The research proposal is due by December 15, 2017.  
You should talk to me as soon as you can about your ideas for the proposal.

The proposal should be organized as follows:

(1) Motivation (problems/issues being examined, why they are important, proposed contribution)

(2) Related Literature, including discussion of how it relates to your proposed research (please note: only related literature—not encyclopedic review)

(3) For theory papers: model set-up, some results, anticipated results, and testable predictions (if any).

For empirical papers: theory underlying the proposed empirical work—model and predictions, possible data sources, empirical identification strategy, estimation methodology, some descriptive results, and anticipated (causal) results.

**Guest speaker**

At least one faculty will be invited to come to the class and present their current work. The idea is to broaden your exposure to other faculty, so that you become familiar with the diversity of research being conducted at Rotman.
READING LIST

The reading list reflects a combination of developing areas of significant research potential, and student interests.

1. Advertising I

Already Reviewed in RSM 3052


New


2. Advertising II: Targeting


3. Marketing of credence goods


4. Empirical dynamic models I: promotions


5. **Guest speaker**: Professor Matt Osborne speaking on dynamic empirical modeling (October 11)


6. **Online Marketing Activity**


7. **Non-rational Consumers**


8. **Social Responsibility and Green Marketing**


9. Two-sided media markets
