Designing a New Special Topics Marketing Course

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Abstract

This article describes a model that is successfully used to create new Special Topics courses in Marketing based on student demand. The model is designed for those courses that are offered as special electives and might become part of the regular curriculum. All major course requirements are met while keeping preparation to a moderate level. The model worked so well that it is documented here to help faculty at other colleges and universities to do the same for their students.

The model is presented in four parts: Part I, identifying new Special Topics opportunities; Part II, getting the department to buy in to the new Special Topics course; Part III, developing the teaching methodology for the new Special Topics course; and the final section, Part IV, measuring student feedback. Finally, the paper includes Appendices that can be used by faculty to develop their own new Special Topics courses in Marketing.

Introduction

Designing a new Special Topics course in the Marketing curriculum is one of the most enjoyable responsibilities for a professor. Much has been written on college instruction, which is helpful to a new professor and experienced colleague. *The Chicago Handbook for Teachers: A Practical Guide to the College Classroom* (Brinkley 1999) offers a detailed guide for managing a course both inside and outside the classroom. Faculty who want to learn educational design can look to *Designing Courses for Higher Education* (Toohey 1999). Five basic steps to course assessment can be found in *Effective Course Design and Assessment for Entrepreneurship* (Cliatt 2001). Phoenix University has a centralized course development process that provides a "safety net" for instructors. Some critics call it a "cookie cutter" approach (Farrell 2003). This article does not provide a standardized approach but rather a simplified method for developing the Special Topics course. The model has been outlined to cover all major course requirements while keeping preparation to a moderate level.

This paper will describe a model used to develop a new Special Topics Marketing course. The model provides the key factors, serves as a procedural guide and is presented in four parts (Diamond 1998). Part I, identifying new Special Topics opportunities, describes a feedback form used to measure the student's level of interest in various Marketing electives; Part II, getting the department to buy-in to the new Special Topics, outlines a proposal used to convince other faculty members that the new Special Topics should be offered; Part III, developing the methodology for the new course, characterizes the preparation of the main content of the course; and the final section, Part IV, measuring student feedback, shares what was learned from students after they took the newly created Special Topics course in Marketing.

The paper includes many Appendices that can be used by faculty to develop their own new Special Topics courses. The Appendices include a form to measure student interest in Special Topics and elective courses, an example course proposal, a checklist for evaluating a textbook, a spreadsheet with a course schedule, and a form for students to evaluate the new Special Topics course.

The result is a format for new and experienced professors who have a level of expertise that they can exhibit in a Special Topics course. Each part is designed simply, with the basics being covered and the focus on the delivery of the course. It is also hoped that the organizational nature of the model gives a professor a level of confidence and a relaxed outlook on a class. The actual delivery of the course combined with rapport accounted for 66% of a recent survey and indicates the significance that students place on these areas (Farenda 2004). This is further developed in an article, "Ten Anchor Points for Teaching Principles of Marketing"; Care, Be Real and Be Prepared are listed as the top three points (Tomkovick 2004).

Part I - Identifying New Special Topics Course Opportunities

The first step in designing a new Special Topics course is to find out what topics students are most interested in learning about. As members of the Marketing Department, we should practice what we teach and develop courses in response to student interest. There is a perennial demand of management for quality courses, which can be used to attract new markets and students. The responsibility for the quality and variety of the Marketing courses rests with the highly autonomous professors (Kenny 2001). A Special Topics course should be the result of student interest and a Marketing professor seeking a course that permits reflection and discourse.

When teaching the basic or core Marketing course there is an opportunity at mid-term to ask students for feedback on the types of Special Topics that would meet their educational needs. Many of these needs are based on job interests and career choices (Morrison 2001). This can be accomplished by using a one-page feedback form (Appendix 1). Completing this student interest form takes just a few minutes and can be given in class. The first question on the form asks students to rank their level of interest in a list of the Special Topics and elective Marketing courses currently offered by your department and any new course titles that are under consideration for development. The second question in the form is an open-ended question asking students for any other Special Topics in Marketing that they would be interested in studying in the future. It is helpful to include all sections of the core Marketing course and collaborate with fellow professors (Lake 2003).

The list of course titles included on this feedback form was created by first listing the regular Marketing electives and Special Topics courses that have recently been offered. At our college, all of these Special Topics Marketing courses are designated as MK449. Next, the Marketing faculty could add titles of Special Topics courses that they would consider teaching in the future. There is a link between research and teaching and may result in a new course area (Roach 2001). Lastly, a competitive analysis of the other accredited business schools in a 100 mile radius was undertaken by looking at the Marketing course listings on their college's homepage to finalize the list of course titles.

The responses to this feedback form will help your department identify what Special Topics the students are most likely to register for in the future. With the results, you can measure the degree of interest in the upper-level electives and Special Topics Marketing courses that your department already offers. The topics students list that are not currently offered by your department are new Special Topics ideas.

The results of the student feedback form should be summarized by showing the rankings of student interest in each course in priority order. More than one Special Topics course could be identified in this manner. The results of this questionnaire helped our department learn that students wanted to study both Branding and Packaging and Retail Marketing in more detail. Both of these Special Topics courses have now been developed and taught multiple semesters. Student response to these upper-level courses has been extremely enthusiastic and both courses have been enrolled to capacity for all offerings since their development in 2002. There is considerable interest in making these courses part of the regular Marketing curriculum.

Part II - Getting the Department to Buy-in

Now that you have identified an unmet need for the students, the second step in the process of designing a new Special Topics course is to convince the other faculty members and the department head that the suggested new course should be offered. Our department likes to see a two to three page proposal that includes the following sections: Course title; Main goal; Prerequisites; Class size; and Teaching methodology outlining the Lecture topics, Articles, Case analysis, Videos, Guest speakers, and Student papers and presentations. An example of the proposal for a new Special Topics in Retail Marketing can be found in Appendix 2.

If all goes well and the other faculty members and the department head agree that you should design the proposed Special Topics, you can begin the development of the course methodology by following the process described in the Part III of this paper.

Part III - Developing the Teaching Methodology for the New Special Topics Course

This part of the paper describes the teaching methods used when presenting the main content of the new course. The first part of this section focuses on selecting a textbook that will work for the new course. Next, the paper concentrates on preparing the course structure, schedule, syllabus, learning objectives and lecture topics. The last part of this section is divided by sub-headings outlining a wide variety of class activities, including articles, case analysis, videos, guest speakers, and student papers and presentations that were included in the class schedule to make the new Special Topics course interesting and challenging for students.

1. Selecting a Textbook

There are many ways to select a textbook for a new Special Topics course. Contacting the business book representatives from the top college textbook publishers saves a lot of time. The book representatives can recommend the top selling book(s) for the course you are going to develop. The book representatives can send you a desk copy of the text and the supplemental instructor's materials so these can be evaluated to see if they will meet your needs for the new course. Comparing the top books from a couple of publishers is probably sufficient.

To cast a wider net and identify additional textbook recommendations, you could also ask what colleagues at other colleges and universities have successfully used when teaching a similar course. Sometimes other professors will also share their syllabus, which will give you ideas as you plan and develop the schedule for the new course.

Once two or three books have been identified for consideration, a Checklist for Evaluating a Textbook (Appendix 3) can be used to determine which book will suit your course and teaching style. This form can be used to record your impressions of each of the books under review.

The top part of the checklist gives you space to record the title of the book, author(s) names, publisher and the number of chapters. Noting this information will allow you to keep track of each book under consideration.

The middle portion of the checklist helps you determine the availability and suitability of each component of the instructor's materials and how likely it would be for you to adopt each of these elements in the new Special Topics course. Reviewing each item in the checklist will assist you as you assess the suitability of each textbook. The final portion of the form provides a space to record your overall evaluation of the textbook.

After completing the forms on each textbook under consideration, the rankings can be compared to guide your final selection. Several faculty members could also use this form to find consensus for a textbook selection if a number of professors will be teaching different sections of the same course.

2. Course Structure, Schedule and Syllabus

When developing the course structure, keep in mind that even adults have a short attention span. Plan to have at least three activities in each 75-minute class period. This will keep the lectures short (no more that 20 or 30 minutes) and allow time for two other learning tools such as discussing an article, analyzing a case, watching and answering questions about a video, or breaking into pairs or teams for an in-class applied exercise.

Prior to writing the syllabus, a Class Schedule was created in an Excel spreadsheet so that the entire course could be planned out and seen on one page. In the Class Schedule spreadsheet (Appendix 4), vertical columns are course activities and horizontal rows are class meetings. When reviewing the completed spreadsheet, the instructor can easily see that there are at least three activities planned for each class meeting. Class activities include Lectures, Articles, Cases, Videos, and Student Requirements (papers, presentations and exams).

The class schedule presented in Appendix 4 allowed for three exams (class numbers 8, 16 and 28), two guest speakers (class numbers 4 and 17), three classes for students to make their 20-minute group presentations (class numbers 21 through 23), and one Project Day (class number 12) when the professor has a 10-minute appointment with each team of students to discuss progress on the final project (Seels 1998).

When planning the mixture of class activities, keep in mind that individual students have different learning styles. One student will understand a new concept when they hear the lecture, another student will grasp the same material when reading a case or article, and a third student will internalize the material when the guest lecturer is speaking to the class (Reiser 2002).

Each class meeting began with a review of an agenda slide so that students knew what to expect each day. The agenda for each class mirrors the horizontal rows in the spreadsheet. Preparing an agenda also helps the instructor make sure they are ready for class with three different activities planned for each class meeting and that the time is being used effectively. For example, a class that has a 25 to 30 minute lecture, 15 minute video plus 10 minutes of class discussion allows for a third 20 minute activity in a 75 minute class period. The concept of three different methodologies is from the world of professional training (Overfield 1996).

Table 1 is an example of how five course topics each have a slightly different variety of class activities, but all follow the same principle of a short lecture combined with at least two other learning tools. The five course topics are printed in bold across the first row of the table and the class activities are listed in each column. This varied teaching format keeps students involved in the theoretical and applied aspects of the course and serves as a basic task analysis which underlies a position in retail management (Jonassen 1981).

Table 1

Variety of Class Activities for Five Different Course Topics

First Class	**Introduction to Retailing**	**Types of Retailers**	**Multichannel Retailing**	**Consumer Buying Behavior**
Introduction of Professor and Students	Lecture	Assign Group Project	Team Selection	Collect Individual Papers
Student Information Form	Retail Strategy Handout	Lecture	Lecture	Lecture
Review Syllabus	Assign Individual Paper	NAICS Codes for Retailers Handout	Discuss e-shoppers Article	Discuss Shop Like a Man Article
Retail Brands Video	Build-A-Bear Video	Discuss Value Retailers Article	Online Shoppers In-class Exercise	Background Music In-class Exercise

Occasionally the lecture, class discussion or other activity will take longer than originally expected. When time is running short, flexibility is needed to carry over material until the next class meeting. Even with good planning, some class material must be either dropped from the schedule or covered in less detail to stay on track with the course syllabus.

The syllabus was written after the Course Schedule was completed (Lovell-Troy 1992). The syllabus for this Special Topics elective contained the following major headings: Instructor Information, Course Description, Course Learning Objectives, Required Text, Academic Honesty, Documenting Sources for an Academic Research Paper, Electronic Blackboard, Standards of Student Writing, Student Papers, Exams, Individual Attendance and Class Participation, Grading, Library Resources and Class Schedule.

3. Learning Objectives

Before creating the lectures and other course content, Learning Objectives for the new Special Topics elective were developed. The learning objectives are skill and action-oriented for students. For the Retail Marketing class the following eight Learning Objectives were included in the syllabus:

1. Analyze the growing diversity of retail formats.

2. Examine opportunities and challenges that retailers face when interacting with customers through multiple channels.

3. Determine how consumers select a retailer when purchasing merchandise.

4. Investigate successful international retailing strategies used to enter new markets and build a sustainable competitive advantage.

5. Collect and analyze financial data that is used in retail decision-making and strategic planning.

6. Outline how retailers are using technical innovations to improve operations and deliver value to their customers.

7. Enhance written and verbal communication skills via the various assignments.

8. Develop interpersonal and team-building skills via the group projects.

Once these objectives were finalized, they were used as a reference point to ensure that all lectures, articles, cases, videos, papers and presentations enabled students to reach one or more of these goals (Briggs 1991).

4. Lectures

As suggested in the **Course Structure and Schedule** section, keep the lectures short (no more that 20 or 30 minutes). For the Retail Marketing course, all 19 chapters of the textbook were covered during the semester. Lectures contained between 10 and 15 slides. These slides were posted on the electronic Blackboard, an Internet course support system, prior to each class so that students could print out their own copy (Rogers 2002). Many students like to take their lecture notes right on the printed slides.

Short lectures will mean being selective when using the PowerPoint slides that come with the textbook. Making your own slides takes time, but students appreciate well-made slides that use a variety of formats. Remember, bullet only presentations are b-o-r-i-n-g. Another benefit of having brief, concise lectures and well-made professional slides is that students will learn from your example and their individual and team presentations will improve.

Each lecture began with a title slide with the name and number of the chapter in the textbook. Next, an outline slide was used to tell the class what key points would be discussed. Then a variety of slide types including bullets, illustrations, maps, graphs, tables and Marketing tools were used to present the main chapter content. Descriptive titles were used for each slide to help students follow along with the material. To complete the lecture, recap with a brief summary.

Having short, concise lectures with well-made slides will hold your students' attention, allow you to cover the most important points in the chapters, give you time in class for two other learning tools, and serve as an example for students to follow for their own presentations.

5. Articles for Reading Assignments

Articles from a variety of sources should be included as reading assignments for students in every Special Topics course. Students need a great deal of practice using library databases to become comfortable and efficient finding sources of information about companies and industries. An excellent way to give students experience using library databases is by giving reading assignments with the questions and the citation for the articles, and they must search for, print out and read the articles on their own time. Having students successfully navigate the library databases on a frequent basis (at least once per week) to find assigned articles improves their ability to collect information necessary to complete research assignments later in the semester, in future courses and upon entry into the business work environment (Harrison 1999).

Reading assignments are carried out as individual homework. Students are given a worksheet with the citation for the article, suggested database to use, and the questions to answer. For example, to analyze Wal-Mart's pricing strategy students were asked to read the article, "Is Wal-Mart Too Powerful?" found in *BusinessWeek* on October 6, 2003. Students were directed to LexisNexis Academic (one of the Library's databases) where they could access the article. After reading the article, each student was asked to complete a SWOT Analysis on Wal-Mart. There are two ways to determine if students are completing these outside of class reading assignments.

The first way to assess if students finished a reading assignment is to collect the worksheets and grade them. The second method to ensure students keep up with the articles is to give a written Class Participation based on the article during the first five minutes of class. Class Participation is kept short because it is only a portion of the entire Reading Assignment. In the example based on the pricing strategy for Wal-Mart, students answer only one portion of the entire SWOT analysis rather than all four quadrants. Students that complete the Reading Assignments prior to class do well with written Class Participation questions.

There are several advantages of grading the Class Participation over grading the entire Reading Assignment. The first advantage is that you will only have to grade a portion of the assignment, which will save you time. The second advantage of the Class Participation is that students will still have the completed worksheet from the Reading Assignment at their seat for a class discussion about the article later in class. From past experience, students are more willing to participate in class discussions if they have their thoughts written down in front of them.

A portion of the class period is then used to discuss the Reading Assignment. Students are invited to respond to the questions that were included in the Reading Assignment. In the SWOT analysis example, a set of PowerPoint slides was used to aid the discussion. First a blank SWOT tool was projected in the classroom and students either raise their hands or are called on to describe the Strengths for Wal-Mart. Once a sufficient number of students have contributed to this portion of the question, then the instructor's responses are revealed. Now the professor can move on to the discussion of the other components of the SWOT tool and each quadrant of the SWOT is revealed in turn following the student responses. This type of discussion can last between 10 and 20 minutes depending on time available.

For the Retail Marketing course, students are assigned approximately 13 articles from a variety of sources including *BusinessWeek, The Washington Post, Chain Store Age, Wall Street Journal, DSN Retailing Today, Advertising Age, and Progressive Grocer*. Articles are changed and updated each semester to keep the topics current.

6. Case Analysis

Cases should be included in the new course to reinforce the key topics in the lectures and help the students develop analytical skills by examining the strategy of industry leaders. Cases give students the experience of building on fundamental Marketing concepts and then applying them to real-world decisions. When possible, select businesses and companies that students find interesting. Students will often remember what they learned from the "IKEA case" longer than the "Global Retailing case" because it was an applied example.

Cases that worked especially well in the Retail Marketing course are listed in Table 2. In a 14 week semester there was time to include nine different cases. Cases offer a lot of flexibility because they can either be assigned as homework or they can be used as an in-class exercise. Cases are usually one to three pages long and include three to five discussion questions. Students worked in pairs or small groups to complete the analyses for these short cases. Cases were beneficial to the students because it gave them additional experience working in teams and the opportunity to present their findings informally to the rest of the class.

Table 2

Retail Marketing – Cases

Title	**Subject**
Giant Food Stores	Developing sustainable competitive advantage
Circuit City	**Assessing a retailer's financial performance**
Abercrombie & Fitch	Debating the ethics associated with "Hiring for Looks"
Men's Wearhouse	**Adding complementary merchandise and services to bring customers value**
Low Carb Trend	Buying merchandise to match consumer trends
Kohl's	Implementing private label cosmetics
How Much for a good smell?	Setting the price for a seasonal scented potpourri at a gift store
Diamond in the rough	Motivating specialty store employees
Lessons from Nordstrom	Benchmarking excellent customer service

Some cases were given as homework and students were expected to meet outside of class time to perform the assignment. Other cases were completed as in-class assignments (Gagne 1992). Allowing for a portion of the group case analysis to be carried out during class time gives the professor the chance to observe and facilitate the students' communication and interpersonal skills in the team setting.

Case discussions are carried out in a similar manner to the reading assignments as described in the previous section of the paper. Once students have read the case and completed the assigned analysis, the professor can then walk through the discussion questions with student participation and involvement. This type of discussion is a good opportunity to illustrate the different ways to present a case.

7. Videos

Today's college students are extremely visual in their learning style and videos help to break up the lecture and bring tangible examples into the classroom. Most Marketing textbooks come with a video library that is designed to support the chapters. In addition, Marketing videos are also available from other sources to support course topics such as Films Media Group and Stanford Executive Briefings. Students enjoy watching videos in class and then discussing the key concepts. Videos are an excellent way to spark class participation.

The ideal length of a video is between 10 and 30 minutes. Any longer and students get restless and you will not have time for other class activities. Students should be given a set of discussion questions before the video begins so they can takes notes while the video is playing. As soon as the video is over the class discussion begins. Table 3 lists the seven videos included in the Retail Marketing course.

Table 3

Retail Marketing – Videos

Title	Subject
Retail Brands Drive Value	Importance of Retail Brands in the Future
Build-A-Bear	Introduction to Retailing
Internet Shopping	Is Online Shopping Interactive or Invasive?
Mall of America	Retail Locations and Site Selection
Retailing in Europe	Retail Market Strategy in the European Union
Gruppo GTF	Optimizing the Value Chain for the Largest Italian Garment Manufacturer
Supermarket Persuasion	Store Layout, Design and Visual Merchandising

8. Guest Speakers

Two class periods in the Retail Marketing course were reserved in the schedule for guest speakers. Students enjoy hearing from experts in the field as invited guest lecturers because they bring real world experience into the classroom. To identify possible guest speakers you can contact members of the Board of Sponsors for your Business School, alumni from your undergraduate and MBA programs, professors at other colleges and universities, professional associations (such as the National Retail Federation for the Retail Marketing course), and local business leaders.

One of the speakers that worked well in this course was a Vice President of an international architecture, engineering and planning firm that specializes in retail development. This guest lecturer gave an overview of future of retail design focusing on changing demographics and lifestyle segmentation strategies.

Another popular guest speaker that visited the Retail Marketing course was a Marketing Research Manager for a Business-to-Business service provider. This speaker discussed the metrics that can be used to determine customer satisfaction and loyalty. This outside authority gave the class a customer service assessment tool that applies to a wide variety of businesses, not just Retailing.

A nice way to thank the guest speaker for taking the time to prepare a lecture and for coming to campus is to give them a gift at the end of class to show your sincere appreciation. Gifts that were well received were a sweatshirt or golf umbrella with the college or Business School logo. Lastly, two letters were sent to follow up and say thank you in writing. The first thank you letter was sent directly to the speaker saying how much the students benefited from and enjoyed the guest lecture. To prepare the second letter, the speaker was asked for the name and address of the appropriate executive to contact so that a written note could be sent conveying how well the speaker did representing their organization to your students.

9. Student Papers and Presentations

Students in Retail Marketing were required to hand in one individual written assignment and one team project that consisted of a written report and an oral presentation. For the individual written assignment, each student described the similarities and differences between their shopping behavior and their grandparent's shopping behavior. The first assignment was entitled *Generations of Shopping* and was to be between three and four pages in length.

The team assignment required students to research and write a comprehensive, 15 to 20-page paper where each team was assigned a different retail topic. The goal of this assignment was for each team to become the expert consultants on this subject, and then teach this information to the rest of the students in a 20-minute presentation. Before the semester began the professor developed a list of suggested topics that would be appropriate for this type of project that included the following:

1. The Future of Department Stores
2. Store Brands and National Brands

6. Importance of Holiday Sales
7. Is Wal-Mart Good for America?

3. Retail Advertising Programs
4. International Retail Growth
5. e-commerce Trends
8. Retail Technology Trends
9. Consumer Loyalty Programs
10. Fashion Merchandising

Students were divided into nine teams and each group requested the top three topics that they were most interested in studying during the fifth class meeting. Teams were given their first or second choices for topics when possible.

Teams had the next seven classes to begin finding information for the assignment and prepare for Project Day. Project Day is a class meeting close to mid-term where student teams meet with the professor and turn in an outline of the paper and a List of References (in MLA format) for their topic. The instructor can assess if teams are making progress and finding the necessary materials for the team assignment by grading the outline and references. Students have begun to learn about their topic and can ask the professor for specific assistance. If a team is having trouble dividing up the work or finding the necessary information, Project Day is a chance for the professor to coach the team and get them back on track. If teams are working well together, then Project Day is a time to encourage the students to keep up the good work and build confidence for the paper and presentation.

Project Day submissions are worth a total of 50 points. The written paper is worth 250 points and the presentation is worth 100 points, so the group project is worth 40% of the course grade. Since there are nine teams presenting, three class periods (class numbers 21 - 23) in the schedule have been reserved for group presentations. Teams are timed by a student that is not presenting. Timing the students is important because they need to learn to make their points in the time allotted and save enough time to thoroughly discuss conclusions and recommendations. It is also important to time the teams to ensure three teams can present in a 75-minute class.

Upon graduation, a number of students have informed the professor that the team project was instrumental in landing their first jobs. During the interview process students were able to describe how they worked in a team setting, and explain how they conducted research, performed their analysis and wrote a Marketing paper complete with recommendations.

10. Course Materials Book

A Course Materials Book was developed for Retail Marketing to help students be organized and prepared for class. This spiral bound book contains the syllabus, course schedule, individual and team assignments, and worksheets for the articles, cases and videos for the entire semester.

Students are given a copy of the Course Materials Book on the first day of class. Their initial reaction to this book is usually a little surprise, thinking that they are getting a one hundred-page syllabus. They are relieved when they see that the syllabus is only the first ten pages of the Course Materials Book and the rest is comprised of the worksheets for articles, cases and videos. Students are required to bring the Course Materials Book to every class.

Even though it takes considerable effort on the part of the professor to assemble this document, there are numerous advantages derived from preparing a Course Materials Book for both the instructor and the students. Preparing the Course Materials Book saves the instructor time before and during class on a weekly basis because the professor is not photocopying and handing out assignments and worksheets for each class. Students don't continually ask for lost or missed papers, either before or after class or during office hours, because they already have everything they need in one convenient place.

Students like the Course Materials Book because it helps them to be more organized all semester. They do not have to hunt for multiple loose papers before studying for exams. They also feel more prepared for each class since they can read ahead to see what to expect. If students miss a class, they can easily keep up with what was covered that day because they already have the worksheet for the assignments. The Course Materials Book provides a roadmap for the students and shows that the course is implemented as designed (Wedman 1996).

Part IV - Student Evaluation and Feedback on the New Special Topics Course

The fourth step in the process to develop a new Special Topics course was to ask students for their feedback at the end of the semester (Piskurich 2000). Students evaluated each component of the Retail Marketing course as seen in Appendix 5. Student feedback gives insights to the course and the instructor. Adjustments are made to the course and the professor as indicated in the evaluation (Shambaugh 1997). Results from the student feedback has been overwhelming positive and told the Marketing faculty that this new Special Topics course should be continued and offered in the future.

Summary

This paper describes a four-part model that was successfully used to create new Special Topics electives that addressed student demand. Listening to students' needs led our department in the appropriate direction to identify new Special Topics development opportunities.

Developing a new Special Topics course is an exciting and creative opportunity that allows the professor to incorporate your own area of expertise with your preferred teaching style to deliver a class that is both interesting and challenging for students. It has been extremely rewarding to develop new courses that meet students' needs and to realize through positive feedback that they learned a great deal and also appreciated the efforts made by the professor.

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Appendix 1

Student Interest in Upper-level Elective and Special Topics Marketing Courses

1. Please read the following list of electives and Special Topics Marketing courses and rank each one with your level of interest in taking this class in the future.

Level of Interest	None	Low	Moderate	High	Extremely High
Course Titles	1	2	3	4	5
Electives	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------
International Marketing					
Marketing Internship					
New Product Development					
Promotion Management					
Special Topics	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------
Advanced Selling Concepts					
Branding and Packaging					
Direct Marketing					
Electronic Commerce Marketing					
Entertainment Marketing					
Retail Marketing					
Services Marketing					
Sports Marketing					

2. Please list any Marketing course topics not included in the table above that you would be interested in studying in the future.

Thank you for your thoughtful feedback.

Appendix 2

Proposal for a New Special Topics Course in Retail Marketing

Course title: Retail Marketing

Goal: This course will introduce students to the strategic role of retailing in the distribution of consumer goods and services

Prerequisites: Fundamentals of Marketing and 60 credits, Marketing Majors and Marketing Minors will be given first priority

Class size: 20 - 30 students

Teaching methods:

Lecture Topics

Short lectures will cover the following topics:

Introduction to Retailing	Customer Relationship Management
Types of Retailers	Planning Merchandise Assortments
Multi-Channel Retailing	Buying Systems
Customer Buying Behavior	Buying Merchandise
Retail Market Strategy	Pricing
Financial Strategy	Retail Communication Mix
Retail Locations & Site Selection	Managing the Store
Human Resource Management	Store Layout and Design
Supply Chain Management	Customer Service

Articles

Will come from a wide range of sources available through the Library's electronic databases including the following:

Advertising Age	Point of Purchase
American Demographics	Progressive Grocer
Baltimore Sun	Stores
BusinessWeek	Supermarket News
Chain Store Age	The New York Times
DSN Retailing Today	The Washington Post
Harvard Business Review	Wall Street Journal

Appendix 2 – Continued

Case Analysis:

Used to reinforce key course topics and develop analytical skills by examining the Retail Strategy of global leaders in the industry including some of the following:

Abercrombie & Fitch	Kohl's	Starbucks
Circuit City	**L.L. Bean**	Subway
Crayola Works	Giant Food	Talbots
Dollar General	Men's Wearhouse	Target
Home Depot	Nordstrom	Wal-Mart

Videos:

Support lecture materials and give students real world examples. Videos on the following topics will be incorporated into the course:

Build-A-Bear	Retailing in Europe
Internet Shopping	Optimizing the Value Chain for Gruppo GTF
Mall of America	Retail Brands Drive Value
Growth Strategies for Taco Bell	**Retail Innovation and Technology**

Guest Speakers:

Invited guest speakers from local businesses will discuss their company's Retail Management Strategies.

Student Papers and Presentations:

Students will be completing team and individual papers and assignments that will then be presented to the other students. Informal and formal business presentations will be made during the semester. Possible assignments are listed below:

Customer Loyalty Programs	Legal and Ethical Aspects of Slotting Allowances
e-commerce Trends	Point of Purchase Displays
Fashion Merchandising	Retail Advertising Programs
Importance of Holiday Sales	Retail Technology Trends
International Retail Growth	Store Brands and National Brands
Is Wal-Mart Good for America?	The Future of Department Stores

Appendix 3

Checklist for Evaluating a Textbook for a New Special Topics Marketing Course

Title of the book	
Author(s)	
Publisher	
Number of chapters	

Does the textbook have the following instructor materials and how likely are you to use these features?

Likely to use in the course?

Not **Very**

Likely

Likely

Instructor Materials	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
Videos to support each chapter							
End of chapter exercises							
End of chapter discussion questions							
Test bank							
PowerPoint slides							
Cases with teaching notes							

Homepage for faculty							
Homepage for students							
Newsletter for faculty							
Authors accessible (phone or e-mail)							
Appropriate for undergraduate students							
Appropriate for graduate students							

Overall evaluation of the textbook

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Appendix 4

Class Schedule – Retail Marketing

Appendix 5

Student Evaluation for Retail Marketing

Please rank each component of this Special Topics Marketing course in the table below.

	Excellent	**Good**	**Fair**	**Poor**
Course Component	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
Textbook				
Course schedule				
Class agenda				
Variety of class activities				
Lectures				
PowerPoint slides				
Articles for reading assignments				
Class participation				
Case analysis				
Videos				
Guest speaker(s)				
Individual paper				
Team paper				
Team presentation				
Project Day				
Course Materials Book				

Thank you for your thoughtful feedback.