

## AN EXPLORATION OF WHERE MARKETING IS TAUGHT ACROSS THE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

Rex T. Moody, Department of Business Administration  
Robert A. Lupton, Department of Information Technology and Administrative Management  
Ruth D. Lapsley, Department of Business Administration  
Central Washington University, Ellensburg WA 98926-7485, (509) 963-3560

### ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to better understand where the different academic areas on the typical university campus may include marketing concepts in their undergraduate courses. The researchers examine the course catalogs of several public-supported universities in one state to determine which courses contain a marketing component and then use this information to create a classification scheme of such courses. The classification scheme with discussion may ultimately prove useful to marketing department and business college administrators for accreditation purposes, possible cross-listing of courses, course scheduling, staffing decisions, and in identifying possible elective courses for the marketing major.

### INTRODUCTION

Marketing educators have long been interested in the undergraduate marketing curriculum and have published numerous papers concerning curricular issues. However, one area that has received scant research attention in the marketing education literature is that of other academic disciplines, outside of the business school, teaching marketing or marketing-related courses and concepts.

When Smart, Kelley and Conant (1999) investigated marketing education's future they noted several critical areas including decreasing enrollments in marketing programs, resource allocation issues, and a concern with the relevancy of marketing education as a business discipline. Having traditional marketing concepts and courses taught outside of the business school or marketing department has implications for each of these areas of concern. For instance, if marketing educators can reclaim students who may be taking a course that is the equivalent of principles of marketing but disguised as a different course offering in another department on campus, they might increase their enrollments and have justification for keeping their budgets intact. Furthermore, by reclaiming the students for the principles of marketing course, the educator can make the case that marketing is still relevant to not only business school students, but students from other academic disciplines as well.

Having what amounts to marketing or any other business course-of-study taught outside of the traditional college of business also has implications for accreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). AACSB's 2003 Eligibility Procedures and Standards for Business Accreditation (2004) require that any program at an institution that requires students to take 25 percent or more of their courses in "traditional business subjects" be included in the accreditation review. This requirement can have serious consequences for an institution under review by AACSB. For instance, if a department on campus such as Family and Consumer Sciences requires students to take just a few courses in traditional business subjects, whether taught in the home department or in the business school, that program would come under the Association's review, and could easily impede the accreditation effort. AACSB's requirements are actually more decisive mandating that non-business programs at an institution cannot even have the appearance through presentation in promotional materials as being business programs.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite the importance of examining the issue of marketing or marketing-related courses or programs taught outside of the traditional marketing department or college of business, we found little published research on the subject. A review of the table of contents and abstracts, when available, for the last nine years (December 1995 to August 2004) of the Journal of Marketing Education revealed that researchers published 190 articles in that time and that 16 or approximately 8.5% of those articles dealt with curriculum issues. Several of the 16 papers dealt with integrating a particular course, topic-area, or pedagogy into the marketing curriculum (e.g., Turley and Shannon 1999, Mohr 2000, Wee, Kek and Kelley 2003), while others covered the integration of technology into the curriculum (e.g., Benbunan-Fich, Lozada, Pirog, Priluck and Wisenblit 2001; Ueltschy 2001). Additional topics covered in the 16 papers include curriculum integration (e.g., Bobbitt, Inks, Kemp and Mayo 2000; Elam and Spotts 2004), professional training (e.g., Schibrowsky, Peltier and Boyt 2002), and program assessment (e.g., Davis,

Misra and Van Auken 2002). Several similar articles appeared in other publications (e.g., Glynn, Rajendran and Corbin 1993; Kellerman, Gordon and Hekmant 1995). Perhaps the most highly related article found in a scholarly journal concerned implementing an interdisciplinary marketing and engineering course project (McKeage, Skinner, Seymour, Donahue and Christensen 1999).

We did find evidence of the creep of marketing topics outside of traditional marketing courses in a practitioner article from Marketing News, aptly titled "Everybody's Teaching Marketing These Days" (Heckman 1999). Heckman discusses other areas where marketing is being taught within the business school. He attributes the use of marketing content in other areas to a number of factors. These include the use of technology in the marketing profession (e.g., a data mining course taught by the M.I.S. faculty that relies heavily on marketing concepts), the greater focus on customer service in all areas of business, and the fact that marketing education may be outdated in many business schools.

We also reviewed the Marketing Educators' Association (MEA) (previously Western Marketing Educators' Association--WMEA) conference proceedings since 1979 for papers discussing marketing education courses and curriculum. Results of this review were limited, identifying an area of research also lacking in the MEA (WMEA) literature.

In a content analysis of WMEA, Stern and Kelly (2001) identified 28 papers out of 633 competitive conference papers, or approximately 4 percent, which dealt with marketing education curriculum. These papers centered on the relationship with marketing curriculum and schools or colleges of business (e.g. curriculum and AACSB; curriculum and student and employer perceptions; international curriculum; technology and distance education and impact on curriculum). Only two papers broached the question concerning where marketing education undergraduate academic areas are taught on the typical university campus.

Pinney (1979) submitted a paper to the WMEA (now MEA), highlighting his concern that departments other than marketing as well as colleges other than business are offering courses and curriculum similar to those offered in marketing education. His article entitled, "The Mismarketing of Marketing as an Academic Discipline or Encroachment from Without and From Within" discussed the enrollment woes of marketing and the need for marketing educators to "market" their courses campus wide. His paper

referenced areas such as hotel marketing, advertising management, and health care marketing.

Again in 1994, Pinney (1994) revisited the "mismarketing" and asked "Where have all the children gone?" This WMEA paper concluded that marketing curriculum is expansive, especially in departments of micro-economists (e.g. price theory, behavior of the firm); communications and promotion (e.g. advertising principles, broadcast sales and sales management, media planning and analysis); transportation (e.g. warehousing, logistics); and production management (inventory control, space management). "These programs appear not only to be moving into business areas in general, their major encroachment has been specifically into the area of marketing." (Pinney, 1994, p 62). Finally, Pinney (1994) hypothesized that the business community has finally recognized the important role of the marketing concept and appropriately have integrated the concept into other non-school of business areas.

Kelley (1996) asked, "What is the future of marketing education? Given the criticism and environment trends taking place, what will marketing education in the year 2005 look like?" (p.51). Reporting on some of the same themes mentioned earlier in his article with Smart and Conant (1999), he states that fewer marketing classes and faculty will be needed in 2005 as university systems reduce redundancies, as well as the requirement of diverse marketing faculty capable of integrating the other business disciplines into marketing curriculum. Perhaps this is one explanation of why many areas of academia outside of the traditional business school are now offering marketing courses. Another is the reality that marketing is so intertwined with business and non-business activities and enterprises, that the traditionally non-business disciplines cannot help but be included in marketing and management related course (e.g. resource management and marketing, fashion merchandising, construction management and marketing, etc.).

## STUDY AND RESULTS

In order to investigate which academic disciplines may cover marketing courses or topics outside of traditional marketing departments and business schools, we examined the course catalogs of five publicly-supported universities within a single state. Each of the universities reviewed contains a business school or college. Furthermore, two of the universities are major research institutions, both of which offer Ph.D. degrees in business/marketing, while the other three universities investigated are so-called balanced institutions that emphasize

undergraduate education, but also require scholarly research from their faculty.

Using the university's respective catalogs a researcher reviewed each course description from each institution looking for any connection at all to marketing concepts. If the researcher felt that some connection to marketing did exist, the researcher copied the course description to another database for further review by a second researcher. The second researcher then examined the course descriptions in detail and made a determination of whether or not the course actually does contain marketing content. Table 1 summarizes the courses found which either completely offer marketing content or contain at least some marketing-related content that are taught outside of the traditional business-marketing curriculum at the five universities. Offering departments or disciplines within the university are major headings in the table, while marketing topics covered make up the sub-listings.

Several disciplines and types of courses are not included in the table because their relationship to marketing courses is well known and accepted (these include advertising and public relations courses typically found in schools/departments of journalism or communications). Furthermore, if a discipline teaches subject matter that is utilized in marketing, but is not marketing per se they are also not included (these include computer science courses such as data mining and geographical information systems courses). The exception to these rules is if the course description clearly lists the course as presenting marketing content, then it is included in the table.

Based on the data in Table 1, within the five universities studied there are at least 26 different disciplines, offering 71 different courses that contain at least some marketing content. Furthermore, the five universities offer 22 courses outside the marketing department or business school that exclusively cover marketing concepts based on their course descriptions.

## CONCLUSIONS

There are several conclusions to these findings. First, as Pinney (1994) suggests, perhaps marketing is so pervasive that discussion of marketing-related concepts across the university is impossible to avoid. This may indicate that over the years, marketing educators have done their jobs well and have built the field up to an indispensable level. However, it still

does not explain why marketing educators are not teaching all the marketing courses on campus.

Further reflection on the findings may indicate that in many of the cases listed in the table, marketing at best receives coverage in only a small portion of any one class and that it would be inefficient for students from other areas to take a complete marketing course to gain the small amount of knowledge they need. This conclusion indicates that marketing educators may do well to consider other forms of pedagogy besides the quarter-long or semester-long course. Perhaps a short 3-4 course-meeting marketing seminar needs offering to students through other academic disciplines.

Another approach is for marketing educators to offer courses tailored to the needs of disciplines outside the business school. For instance, there are several cases listed in the table where students who will eventually find themselves in a professional services setting take courses with marketing content in order to learn how to market service businesses. In this case, the marketing educator may be wise to begin offering a course in professional service marketing that could cut across the various disciplines. However, in some cases the marketing knowledge students need in areas outside the business school may be so specialized that the typical marketing professor would be hard pressed to serve the students' particular needs in a generalized or even specialized marketing course. Team teaching, with the marketing professor forming an alliance with a professor from the specialized area may be a solution in some such cases.

A final possibility is for the marketing educator to better market their own courses so that they become the standard of marketing education on campus and so marketing from the marketing educators becomes an indispensable subject for more students.

However, adding courses or revising curriculums may not be feasible when resource allocation, staffing, class size, and accreditation factors are considered. Based on the pervasiveness of marketing concepts and courses offered outside of the marketing department, marketing educators and department administrators are wise to examine the issue on their own campuses to decide what the best course of action is for their school. Such practices may be a problem at some schools, while at other schools the issue may present an opportunity for growth and program enhancement.

## FUTURE RESEARCH

Several avenues present themselves for further research in this area. First, the current study needs expanding to cover a wider range of universities in terms of geographic location, size, and type of school. Furthermore, marketing educators may need a more careful detailing of outside course use of marketing concepts. Perhaps a large-scale analysis of syllabi, instead of the general-level analysis reported here would provide greater information for the marketing educator. In future studies on the topic, it may also be useful to include information about what other disciplines on campus require students to take marketing courses offered through the business school and compare those disciplines to those that offer their own courses with marketing content. An interesting study suggested by a reviewer of this paper is to administer standardized tests covering core-marketing concepts to students across one or more campuses who have taken courses with marketing content both within and outside of the business school to determine if the students are learning the same material and have similar levels of marketing knowledge. Lastly, marketing educators should also look outside of the marketing area to other business disciplines to see if they deal with the same issue and look for possible reactions and outcomes.

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**TABLE 1**  
**Marketing Topics Taught Outside the Marketing Curriculum**  
**Shown by Academic Unit Teaching the Class**

<p><b><u>Administrative Management</u></b> Introduction to Business</p> <p><b><u>Agricultural and Resource Economics</u></b> *Advanced Marketing *Agribusiness Management and Marketing *International Marketing (Food and Fiber) *Marketing (Agriculture)</p> <p><b><u>American Studies</u></b> Exploration of Advertising</p> <p><b><u>Animal Sciences</u></b> Marketing (sheep and swine)</p> <p><b><u>Apparel / Fashion Merchandising</u></b> *Buying Consumer Behavior International Retailing Marketing (Furniture) Merchandising Product Development Trend Analysis</p> <p><b><u>Art / Graphic Design</u></b> Consumer Behavior Market Analysis Marketing Strategy</p> <p><b><u>Communications</u></b> Marketing (Conferences)</p> <p><b><u>Construction Management</u></b> Marketing (Real Estate) Marketing (Firm Management)</p> <p><b><u>Dental Hygiene</u></b> Marketing (Practice Management)</p> <p><b><u>Education Administration</u></b> *Marketing of Sports Events and Programs</p>	<p><b><u>Engineering</u></b> *International Marketing Market-Driven Strategies *Marketing (Civil) *Marketing (Forest Products) Marketing Research</p> <p><b><u>Family and Consumer Science</u></b> Consumer Awareness / Behavior Marketing (Food Service)</p> <p><b><u>Food Sciences</u></b> Marketing (Food Processing) Marketing (Food Service)</p> <p><b><u>Health Education</u></b> Marketing Campaigns</p> <p><b><u>Health Services Administration</u></b> Marketing (Managed Care)</p> <p><b><u>Human Development</u></b> Consumer Issues Family and Consumer Behavior</p> <p><b><u>Horticulture</u></b> Exploration of Advertising</p> <p><b><u>Leisure Studies, Hospitality, Recreation and Tourism</u></b> Consumer Behavior (Gambling) Consumer Lifestyle (Leisure) Hospitality Management Marketing (Camp Administration) Marketing (Catering) Marketing (Cruise Lines) Marketing (Gambling) *Marketing (Hospitality Services) Marketing (Tourism) Marketing (Wine) *Marketing Strategy and Development *Promotion</p>	<p><b><u>Leisure Studies, Hospitality, Recreation and Tourism</u></b> Restaurant Management and Marketing Sales and Advertising</p> <p><b><u>Marketing Education</u></b> *Advertising *Advertising and Sales Promotion *E-Commerce (Retailing) *Education (Marketing) Marketing (Music Business) *Retail Buying *Retail Management *Retailing (Principles) *Selling *Visual Merchandising</p> <p><b><u>Molecular Biosciences</u></b> Marketing (Bio-tech)</p> <p><b><u>Natural Resource Sciences</u></b> Marketing (Wood)</p> <p><b><u>Pharmacy</u></b> Marketing (Pharmacies)</p> <p><b><u>Public Affairs</u></b> Non-Profit Marketing</p> <p><b><u>Soil Sciences</u></b> Marketing (Family Farms) Marketing (Processed Foods)</p> <p><b><u>Theater and Film</u></b> Channels of Distribution (TV and Films) Marketing *Promotion (Broadcast and Cable)</p> <p><b><u>Physical Education, Health, and Recreation</u></b> Consumer Behavior Channels of Distribution Selling</p>
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\* indicates a complete class in the listed area