Course Syllabus
MKTG 8217-001– Theory Construction & Evaluation
Fall Semester, 2015
3.0 Credit Hours

(Last updated: 8/17/2015)

Instructor: Dan L. Sherrell, Ph.D.
Phone1: 901.678.4552 (office)
E-mail: dsherrll@memphis.edu
Office: Fogelman Executive Center: room #150
URL: https://umdrive.memphis.edu/dsherrll/www
Class: 1:00 – 4:00pm, Wednesday, FCBE 365

Office Hours: 3:00-6:00pm, Tuesday & Thursday
Other times by appointment

Course Overview:
This is a doctoral-level course designed to help each student develop and evaluate theory as a preliminary step to a career involving teaching, conducting research, and engaging in publication activities as a professor. The course uses a seminar format with primary emphasis on the in-depth discussion of material assigned for reading. Preparation for each class will entail considerable reading and thinking about the relevant topics for discussion. Because many of the topics discussed in this course are subjective in nature, group consensus regarding these topics is neither expected nor desired. It is very important that all participants read and think about the assignment materials prior to each seminar session. All participants are expected to contribute their ideas, insights, and critiques to each session. Students who do not participate will be specifically asked to join in and contribute. To develop as a scholar, you must be able to communicate your ideas and assimilate new information from discussion.

Pre-Requisites/Co-Requisites:
Doctoral student classification

Required Texts (and Related Materials):

[Note: this book is out-of-print. With the author’s permission, a copy of the assigned book chapters will be made available to students.]
Location of Course Materials:

All course materials (including the assigned textbook chapters and assigned articles) are located on the eCourseware website.

The course syllabus and lecture notes/slides will be made available through the University eLearn course management system at: http://elearn.memphis.edu. The assigned reading material will be available on the University umdrive site at: http://umdrive.memphis.edu/dsherrll/public.

Course Objectives:

The basic objectives of this course are:

a. To review the basic tenets of philosophy of science as they relate to theory generation and testing.
   • To examine the development of relevant theory in your discipline.
   • To develop and present critiques of the dominant theoretical perspectives on topics of your choosing from your discipline.
   • To develop an appreciation for the accepted (and/or debated) boundaries of your relevant discipline.
   • To provide the foundation and opportunity for each student to develop a theoretical paper that deals with a functional area or controversial theoretical issue in your relevant discipline.

Fogelman College: Learning Outcomes for Your Degree

This course is designed to help you to meet the overall learning objectives for the Ph.D. degree offered by the Fogelman College. You should take the time to become familiar with the overall learning objectives as a student in the Ph.D. program:

• http://www.fcbeassessment.net/PhD.htm

Course Methodology

a. Read textbook chapters and assigned readings prior to class meetings and be prepared to participate in class discussions.

b. Prepare for and complete the mid-term examination.

c. Prepare and present a critique of four (4) empirical research articles from your chosen discipline.

Your choice of articles must be approved by the course instructor no later than 1 week (7 days) prior to the presentation of your critique in class. The student is also responsible for delivering an electronic copy of the selected article to the professor at that time (or a hard copy if the electronic version is unavailable). All papers being critiqued will be made available to the class for review prior to your presentation.
The focus of these critiques should be on the conceptual development and theoretical justification for the research questions addressed by the study. The methodological short-comings of the research study should not be the primary emphasis of your critique. You are trying to answer the questions:

- What is (are) the research question(s) addressed by this study?
- Why is (are) the research question(s) addressed by this study important?
- What should the reader expect the empirical outcome to be?
- Why should the reader expect the predicted outcome?
- What do the results tell us about our knowledge on this topic that is useful?

Students will be asked to make a professional (i.e., using powerpoint or similar technology) presentation of their article critique in class. Each student will be asked to critique and present their evaluation of four (4) published empirical articles from their chosen discipline during the semester (see schedule below).

d. Students will be asked to prepare a report identifying and validating the presence of a minimum of two (2) empirical generalizations in their discipline.

Hunt’s criteria for lawlike generalizations should be used as the benchmark for evaluation of the common empirical regularities appearing in the team’s chosen discipline. However, each student will still have to operationalize Hunt’s criteria for their specific discipline. That is, each student’s report/presentation should describe how they developed their selection criteria for identifying and selecting empirical generalizations in their discipline. The available empirical evidence used to support the claims of a discipline’s empirical generalizations should be reviewed and a determination of a level of consensus across research studies for the empirical generalizations evaluated. Students will be asked to prepare a report and a presentation to make to the class on 11/18 (see schedule below).

e. Individually choose a functional area of interest in your discipline (e.g., sales management, service quality, health care marketing, customer loyalty, etc.) and:
- identify an important (i.e., publishable) research question/issue in your discipline;
- critically analyze the available theoretical frameworks that could be used to address that question;
- choose a theoretical perspective/framework from which to address your chosen issue;
- develop a series of research hypotheses and describe a general method you would use to address the research issues you have identified; and
- present that paper to the class during the final exam period at the end of the semester.

Each student must submit a prospectus on their planned paper to the instructor in class on 10/28 (see schedule). This prospectus should include:

a) A thorough description of the research question/issue chosen for the paper;
b) A discussion of the implications of solutions to this particular research question (i.e., So what?); and

c) A brief description of previous research addressing the research question/issue chosen for the paper.
The Prospectus is worth 15% of your total course grade, so don’t minimize its importance in planning your work schedule for this class.

The paper should include:
- A clear explanation of the research question/issue you are addressing, including an evaluation of the importance of the question/issue to your discipline;
- A description of the theoretical frameworks that have been used or can be used to address the question/issue you have chosen;
- A description of the research hypotheses you would use to examine the research question you have chosen; and
- A general description of the research method you would intend to use in testing the research hypotheses you have specified

Your completed paper is due electronically by **3:00pm on December 09th** (see schedule)

**Professor’s Expectations of Students:**

In general, you should assist the instructor in creating a positive, supportive environment for learning by staying engaged in the course and actively participating in all online discussions.

**Student’s Expectations of the Professor:**

In my role as your instructor, there are certain things you can expect from me including: well-organized and engaging learning experience, response to emails within two (2) business days, and feedback on all work submitted within 7-10 calendar days.

**Grading and Evaluation Criteria**

Students will be evaluated on their understanding and mastery of the assigned course materials as well as their critiques, presentations and final preparation of the assigned empirical generalization team paper and the individual research proposal.

**Final Course Grades**

Evaluation measures for the course will be weighted as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article critiques (4 critiques @ 5%)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical Generalization exercise</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual paper prospectus</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual conceptual paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Course grades will be assigned using the university +/- grading system. Final course grades are earned according to the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Point Range</th>
<th>Assigned Grade</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>97-100 pts</td>
<td>A+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94-96 pts</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-93 pts</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89 pts</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84-86 pts</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-83 pts</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77-79 pts</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74-76 pts</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-73 pts</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67-69 pts</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64-66 pts</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-63 pts</td>
<td>D-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 60 pts</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Course Topics:

**MKTG 8217 – Fall 2015**  
**Class Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8/26</td>
<td>Course introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9/02</td>
<td>Hunt, <em>Modern Theory</em>, Ch. 1; Assigned articles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>9/09</td>
<td>Hunt, <em>Modern Theory</em>, Ch. 2 &amp; 3; Assigned articles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>9/16</td>
<td>Hunt, <em>Modern Theory</em>, Ch. 4 &amp; 5; Assigned articles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>9/23</td>
<td>Hunt, <em>Modern Theory</em>, Ch. 6 &amp; 7; Assigned articles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>9/30</td>
<td>Assigned articles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>10/07</td>
<td>Assigned articles; article critique I choices approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>10/14</td>
<td><em>Article critique I presented in class</em>; Workshop in Individual Theory paper in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>10/21</td>
<td><em>Exam I (Hunt (1-7) + assigned articles)</em>; article critique II choices approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>10/28</td>
<td><em>Article critique II presented in class</em>; Assigned articles; <em>Prospectus for individual paper due in class</em>; article critique III choices approved;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>11/04</td>
<td><em>Article critique III presented in class</em>; article critique IV choices approved; Workshop on Empirical Generalizations paper in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>11/11</td>
<td><em>Article critique IV presented in class</em>; Workshop on Individual Theory paper in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>11/18</td>
<td><em>Empirical Generalization Exercise presentations; Reports due in class</em>; last day of class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>11/25</td>
<td><em>Thanksgiving holiday</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>12/02</td>
<td><em>Individual Paper presentations in class</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>12/09</td>
<td><em>Final exam - Individual papers due electronically by 3:00pm.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Class Assignments
Fall, 2015

Class 1 – 8/26

Introduction

Class 2 – 9/02

Hunt, *Modern Theory*, Ch. 1


Class 3 – 9/09

Hunt, *Modern Theory*, Ch. 2 & 3


Class 4 – 9/16

Hunt, *Modern Theory*, Ch. 4 & 5


Class 5 – 9/23

Hunt, *Modern Theory*, Ch. 6 & 7


Class 6 – 9/30


Class 7 – 10/07


Class 8 – 10 /14 – Article critique I presented in class
Workshop on Individual Theory paper in class

Class 9 – 10/21 – Exam I (Hunt 1-7) + assigned articles

Class 10 – 10/28 – Article critique II presented in class; Prospectus for individual paper due in class


**Class 11 – 11/04 – Article critique III presented in class;** Workshop on Empirical Generalizations paper in class

**Class 12 – 11/11 – Article critique IV presented in class;** Workshop on Individual Theory paper in class

**Class 13 – 11/18 – Empirical Generalization paper presented in class; Paper due in class**

**Class 14 – 11/25 – Thanksgiving Holiday – no class**

**Class 15 – 12/02 – Individual Paper presentations in class;**

**Final Exam Period – 12/09 – Individual papers due electronically by 3:00pm**

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**Final Exam Schedule**

The final exam for this class will be scheduled according to the Registrar's academic calendar website (see schedule above)

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**Course Policies**

**E-MAIL:**

All students are required to maintain and access their University of Memphis (@memphis.edu) email account. You will receive all official course correspondence at this email account. Any inability to receive incoming mail in a timely fashion (e.g., not regularly checking your email, having a “full mailbox” condition, etc.) is the student’s responsibility.
Attendance:

Success in mastering the content covered in this course is based on discussion and understanding of the concepts covered. This course requires active participation to master its content. Consequently, attendance is required. You are expected to stay active and engaged throughout the academic term and keep up with the schedule of activities. Your full engagement in the class begins on the first day of the semester and should be maintained until the last assignment is submitted.

Adding / Dropping:

If you have questions about adding or dropping classes, please refer to this page on the Registrar's website.

Academic Integrity:

The University of Memphis has clear codes regarding cheating and classroom misconduct. If interested, you may refer to the Student Handbook section on academic misconduct for a discussion of these codes. Note that using a “Solutions Manual” is considered cheating. Should your professor have evidence that using a “Solutions Manual” has occurred, he/she may take steps as described on the campus’ Office of Student Conduct website. If you have any questions about academic integrity or plagiarism, you are strongly encouraged to review the Fogelman College's Website on Academic Integrity.

Participation:

To be successful in this course as a student, you must stay active and involved throughout the entire semester. Students are expected participate in all interactive aspects of the course.

Classroom Behavior:

All participants in the course should be considerate of the other course participants and treat them (as well as their opinions) with respect. The class will operate under the assumption that any and all feedback offered is positive in nature and that the intentions of the person(s) providing feedback are strictly honorable. Insensitivity in this area will not be tolerated. If you have any questions about online communication, you should review the Fogelman College's Netiquette website.

Late Assignments:

Assignments and projects may be submitted anytime up to and including the date due. Please review all information in this syllabus and related “Course Activity Summary / Schedule” for all due dates for formally assessed work. If your work is not submitted on time, the instructor reserves the option to deduct up to 20% of the grade value for tardiness depending upon the circumstances and appropriate communication between the student and the instructor.
Extra Credit:

There is no extra credit offered in this course. Your final grade will be computed based on your work on the activities previously described in this syllabus.

Reporting Illness or Absence:

Due dates and deadlines have been established for each graded assignment. In this course, deadlines are taken very seriously. Please do not wait until the last day to submit assignments. If an emergency should arise, it is the student’s responsibility to contact the instructor prior to the deadline to discuss the matter. A deadline extension will be considered only if all of the following conditions are met:

1. Extreme emergency and 2. Instructor contacted prior to the due date.

Inclement Weather:

In the event that inclement weather requires the cancellation of classes at The University of Memphis, local radio and television media will be immediately notified. Additionally, The University of Memphis has established an Inclement Weather Hotline at 678-0888 as well as TigerText, an emergency alert text messaging service to students, faculty and staff. This optional service is used in the event of an on-campus emergency, an unscheduled university closing, or a delay or cancellation of classes due to, for instance, inclement weather. Click Here for information on TigerText.

Syllabus Changes:

The instructor reserves the right to make changes as necessary to this syllabus. If changes are necessitated during the term of the course, the instructor will immediately notify students of such changes both by individual email communication and posting both notification and nature of change(s) on the course bulletin board.

Student Services

Please access the FCBE Student Services page for information about:

- Students with Disabilities
- Tutoring and other Academic Assistance
- Advising Services for Fogelman Students
- Technical Assistance