



## **Boston University Study Abroad London**

### **Strategic Brand Management in the UK Context**

*COM CM 447 (Elective B)*

#### **Course Description**

Building on studies in advertising, public relations, the media and social sciences, this course provides students with a theoretical and working knowledge of the role that brands and brand management plays in helping today's organisations achieve their marketing and corporate goals, with a particular emphasis on business and marketing environments in the United Kingdom. The course investigates the origin and rationale for brands, explains how brands create value for consumers, organisations and society at large and introduces the concept of brand equity – the differential effect that branding confers on the marketing of goods and services. The strategic brand management process involves the design and execution of marketing programmes to build, measure and manage brand equity; in this course, students will examine in detail and acquire working knowledge of these elements. How brands meet the emotional as well as the functional needs of customers/consumers and how they create meaning - brands as both sign and symbol - is central to their success and power and will be closely examined in the course.

#### **Hub-Aligned Course Objectives**

##### Social Inquiry I Learning Outcome 1-aligned Course Objective [SI1]

Students will demonstrate understanding that successful brand management is based on a deep understanding of consumer behaviour and that this behaviour is shaped and influenced by the social structures -family, college, work, community- in which consumers are located. Brands are socially consumed and brand choice is often a means of self-definition and social referencing.

##### Critical Thinking Learning Outcome 1-aligned Course Objective [CT1]

Students will be able to identify key elements of critical thinking by identifying and understanding the primary forces underpinning consumer preference and choice of brands, understanding the consumer purchasing journey and making informed, rational choices for the application of brand management strategy. They will be able to accurately appraise the strengths and weaknesses of competing brands across a variety of market sectors and territories including international markets, identify important points of parity and key points of difference between these brands, and evaluate the principal sources of 'brand equity' for these brands. They will be able to draw responsible and informed conclusions on the state of a brand's health, and to identify opportunities for brand development and growth and recommend future courses of action.

##### Critical Thinking Learning Outcome 2-aligned Course Objective [CT2]

Drawing on skills developed in student-centred learning activities, mainly through analysis of brand management case studies, critiques of academic literature on branding theory and practice and the examination of industry-based studies, reports and white papers, students will demonstrate their ability to critically evaluate the validity of arguments in respect to branding theory and practice, including their own.

### Oral and Signed Communication Learning Outcome 1-aligned Course Objective [OSC1]

Students will be able to craft and deliver responsible, learner-centred seminars and lead other discussion sessions for fellow students which explore and elucidate core brand management theories, concepts and practices using a range of media and modes of expression appropriate to the situation, employing both oral and signed argument.

### Oral and Signed Communication Learning Outcome 2-aligned Course Objective [OSC2]

Through participation in classroom activities and in the design of their learner-centred seminars, students will develop the ability to prioritise interactivity in their discussions and presentations. By delivering responsible, well-structured, and persuasive arguments they will stimulate an active learning environment and generate a positive classroom interaction in which their audience will be able to respond thoughtfully and knowledgeably to others.

### Oral and Signed Communication Learning Outcome 3-aligned Course Objective [OSC3]

Students will be able to speak/sign effectively in a variety of situations from formal to extemporaneous, interacting comfortably with audiences of diverse character, background, status and in various contexts, extending from formal public occasions to informal working group or brainstorming sessions.

## **Additional Course Objectives**

On completion of this course students will be able to:

- Recognise and reflect on the cultural and aesthetic context of creating and successfully managing brands in the UK and international context
- Critically evaluate the contribution of transparency, good citizenship and an ethical mindset to the long-term success of brands in today's business environment
- Work effectively and productively as a member of a team to create a professional response to a communications brief and to recognise the characteristics of a well-functioning team
- Exercise enhanced project management skills in order to complete communications tasks and projects in a timely and professional manner

Grade	Honour Points	Usual %
A	4.0	93-100
A-	3.7	89-92
B+	3.3	85-88
B	3.0	81-84
B-	2.7	77-80
C+	2.3	73-76
C	2.0	69-72
C-	1.7	65-68
D	1.0	60-64
F	0.0	Unmarked

## **Grading Criteria**

**'Incomplete'** or **I** grades are not permitted because of the obvious difficulty in making up missed work once the student has left the country. All work must be completed on time. We also do not allow **'Audits'** (AU), **'Withdrawals'** (W), or **'Pass/Fail'** (P) grades.

The grades reflect the quality of the work. Lecturers and students should use the following criteria for an understanding of what each grade means.

**A** This exceptional grade is assigned only to work that has persistently outstanding quality in both substance and presentation. The student must demonstrate a sustained capacity for independent thought and extensive study, producing rigorous and convincing analyses in well-ordered prose.

**A-** Awarded to work that is clearly focused and analytical, and based on wide reading. The student must cover all the principal points of a question and systematically develop a persuasive overall thesis, allowing for one or two venial omissions or inapt expressions.

**B+, B, B-** This range of grades indicates that the student has shown some evidence of original thought and intellectual initiative. The student has cited sources beyond the class materials, and shown a degree of originality in perception and/or approach to the subject. The work will show thoughtful management of material, and a good grasp of the issues. The differences between a B+, a straight B and a B- may reflect poor presentation of the material, or mistakes in punctuation, spelling and grammar.

**C+, C, C-** Work in this grade range is satisfactory, but uninspiring. If the work is simply a recitation of the class materials or discussions, and shows no sign of genuine intellectual engagement with the issues, it cannot deserve a higher grade. Should an essay fail to provide a clear answer to the question as set, or argue a position coherently, the grade will fall within this range.

Quality of presentation can lift such work into the upper levels of this grade range. Work of this quality which is poorly presented, and riddled with errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation, will fall into the lower end of the range. To earn a C grade, the work must demonstrate that the student is familiar with the primary course material, be written well enough to be readily understood, be relevant to the assignment, and, of course, be the student's own work except where properly cited.

**D** A marginal pass can be given where some but not all the elements of the course have been completed satisfactorily.

**F** The failing grade indicates the work is seriously flawed in one or more ways:

- Obvious lack of familiarity with the material
- So poorly written as to defy understanding
- So brief and insubstantial that it fails to properly address the subject
- Material presented is not relevant to the assignment
- Demonstrates evidence of plagiarism (see following section in Academic Conduct Code)

Please refer to the Academic Handbook for detailed grading criteria and policies on plagiarism. This can be accessed via Blackboard Learn: <http://learn.bu.edu>

*\* Final Grades are subject to deductions by the Academic Affairs Office due to unauthorised absences.*

## **Attendance Policies**

### **Classes**

All Boston University London Programme students are expected to attend every class session, seminar, and field trip to fulfil the required course contact hours and receive course credit. Any student that has been absent from two class sessions (whether authorised or unauthorised) will need to meet with the Directors to discuss their continued participation on the programme.

#### *Authorised Absence:*

The Authorised Absence Approval Request Form is available through the Academic Affairs section of the BU London Personal Page: <https://fm.bu-london.co.uk/fmi/webd/>

#### **Please note: Submitting an Authorised Absence Approval Request Form does not guarantee an authorised absence**

Students who expect in advance to be absent from any class should notify a member of Academic Affairs and complete an Authorised Absence Approval Request Form ten working days in advance of the class date.

Students may apply for an authorised absence only under the following circumstances:

- **Illness (first day of sickness):** If a student is too ill to attend class, the student must notify Academic Affairs as soon as possible by submitting an Authorised Absence Approval Request Form in advance of the class. If it is the student's first absence of the semester (from any class) a doctor's note is not required.
- **Illness (multiple days):** If a student is missing more than one class day due to illness, the student must complete an Authorised Absence Approval Request Form and a sick note from a local doctor excusing their absence from class. Once well enough, the student will need to meet with Academic Affairs.
- Important placement event that clashes with a class (verified by internship supervisor).
- Special circumstances which have been approved by the Directors (see note below).

#### **The Directors will only in the most extreme cases allow students to leave the programme early or for a significant break.**

#### *Unauthorised Absence:*

Any student to miss a class due to an unauthorised absence will receive a **4% grade penalty** to their final grade for the course whose class was missed.

This grade penalty will be applied by the Academic Affairs office to the final grade at the end of the course. As stated above, any student that has missed two classes will need to meet with Academic Affairs to discuss their participation on the programme as excessive absences may result in a 'Fail' in the class and therefore expulsion from the programme.

#### **Religious Holidays**

Boston University's Office of the University Registrar states:

'The University, in scheduling classes on religious holidays and observances, intends that students observing those traditions be given ample opportunity to make up work. Faculty members who wish to observe religious holidays will arrange for another faculty member to meet their classes or for cancelled classes to be rescheduled.'

#### **Special Accommodations**

Each student will need to contact the Disability & Access Services to request accommodations for the semester they are abroad. Students are advised by BU-DAS not to expect the same accommodations as they receive on campus.

BU London can only uphold special accommodations if we have received the appropriate documentation from the BU-DAS. We cannot accept letters from other universities/centres.

All disabilities need to be known to the DAS in Boston if they are to be used as a reason for requiring a change in conditions, i.e. reduced internship hours or special accommodations for the internship schedule.

**Lateness**

Students arriving more than 15 minutes after the posted class start time will be marked as late. Any student with irregular class attendance (more than two late arrivals to class) will be required to meet with the Academic Affairs and if the lateness continues, may have their final grade penalised.