Primary Course Objectives:

- Provide a foundation for the understanding of brands and their potential as a business asset.
- Increase familiarity with the core-principles of a consumer-centric approach as they drive the creation and management of powerful brands.
- Encourage students to think creatively and critically, particularly as it relates to the objective evaluation of trends, consumer needs/wants, competitive threats and opportunities, and overall brand traction/equity.

Secondary Course Objectives:

- Improve writing and presentation skills.
- Create a habit of following branding news in order to contribute to each student’s fluency in the industry; and therefore ability to interface with industry professionals.
- Contribute to students’ overall understanding of the marketing and communications industry, including (but not limited to) brand management processes and the various types of roles and responsibilities.

Class Resources/Text: Only one text is required for purchase: *What Great Brands Do*, by Denise Lee Yohn.

In an effort to create an environment of active learning, we will fuel our discussions and assignments with a some choice chapters from seminal books, contemporary cases, relevant articles and videos, and various handouts.

Assigned reading material will be provided as handouts or uploaded to OAKS.

In addition to assigned readings, students will be asked to regularly check brandchannel.com, trendwatching.com, Adweek.com, and contagious.com.
**School of Business Learning Goals:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>COMMUNICATION SKILLS:</strong></th>
<th>Students will demonstrate the ability, via both written and spoken word, to effectively present, critique, and defend ideas in a cogent, persuasive manner.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>QUANTITATIVE FLUENCY:</strong></td>
<td>Students will demonstrate competency in logical reasoning and data analysis skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GLOBAL AND CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY:</strong></td>
<td>Students will be able to identify and define social, ethical, environmental and economic challenges at local, national and international levels. Students will also be able to integrate knowledge and skills in address these issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTELLECTUAL INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY:</strong></td>
<td>Students will be able to demonstrate their resourcefulness and originality in addressing extemporaneous problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SYNTHESIS:</strong></td>
<td>Students will demonstrate the ability to integrate knowledge from multiple disciplines incorporating learning from both classroom and non-classroom settings in the completion of complex and comprehensive tasks.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Course Learning Activities:**

In this course, students will work both individually and in teams; will deliver assignments in both written and oral formats; will demonstrate knowledge through in-class discussion as well as formal assignment content; will gather the information necessary to successfully complete assignments through thorough review of recommended reading, regular monitoring of ‘branding’ websites and blogs, online research, customer experience audits, online surveys and in-depth interviews; and will interact with marketing and branding professionals via guest lecturers.

**Honor Code:**

All students are to abide by the College of Charleston Honor Code as specified in the C of C Student Handbook.

Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when identified, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved.

Incidents where the instructor determines the student’s actions are related to a misunderstanding will be handled by the instructor. A written intervention designed to help prevent the student from repeating the error will be given to the student. The intervention, submitted by form and signed by both the instructor and the student, will be forwarded to the Dean of Students and placed in the student’s file.
**Honor Code cont’d:** Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive and XF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This grade will appear on the student’s transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the X to be expunged. The student may also be placed on disciplinary probation, suspended (temporary removal) or expelled (permanent removal) from the College by the Honor Board.

Students should be aware that unauthorized collaboration – working together without permission – is a form of cheating. Unless the instructor specifies that students can work together on an assignment, quiz and/or test, no collaboration during the completion of assignments is permitted. Other forms of cheating include possessing or using an unauthorized study aid (which could include accessing information via a cell phone or computer), copying from others, fabricating data, and giving unauthorized assistance.

Research conducted and/or papers written for other classes cannot be used in whole or in part for any assignment in this class without obtaining prior permission from the instructor.

Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook at: http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php

**Student Responsibilities:** For a summary of relevant school policies, see: http://catalogs.cofc.edu/professionalstudies/students-responsibilities-and-rights.htm

**Class attendance and participation:** We will discuss course topics and readings, and work through various cases in class thus attendance is expected.

**Grades:** All students are graded with the same standard.

**Late Work:** All assignment must be handed in, uploaded to Oaks, or presented on time. Late submission will not be accepted. Make-up work is not available to compensate for unexcused absences or low grades.

**Disability:** Students with disabilities that require special accommodation should contact the Center for Disability Services. When approved to accommodations through SNAP services, please see me to inform me of your needs.

**Use of Electronic Devices:** Cell phones must be turned off at the start of class. If you use a laptop, iPad or similar device for taking notes, it is expected that you will only be typing notes and NOT IMing, cruising online or checking social media.
**Graded Components:** Your overall grade will rely upon your successful fulfillments of the following assignments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>% grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation of Branding News of the Day</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mini Case: Rebranding</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Project: Brand Audit</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Brand Statement</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper: Convince me, why invest in branding?</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

100%

**Class Participation 10%**

Given the discussion and case review format of this class, it is imperative that you are in attendance at each class. Ideally you won’t just show up, but will come prepared to engage in the material, including asking questions and providing input that facilitates an even deeper, more valuable discussion and/or analysis of the topic at hand.

I tend to be rather punctual and will be prepared to start class on time. And as hardcore as it might sound, I will take attendance at each class. Given our class meets only once a week over the course of fourteen weeks, **two full absences or three partial absences (coming late or leaving early from the class) are grounds for receiving a failing grade in the class.**

Criteria for receiving the full score in class participation include:

- Appeared to have read the assigned material and most likely checked-in at one or more of the industry news/blog websites.
- Comments and questions consistently show evidence of an increasing understanding of both the issues and circumstances as well as the evaluative tools of branding.
- Comments and questions are consistently relevant and build upon the discussion vs. being well off-point or a distraction.
- Concepts are well reasoned and presented persuasively.

As instructors before me have suggested, it is always a good idea to go for quality, not just quantity.
Confession: for those of us who hire and work with young people entering the industry of brand strategy and brand communications, few things are more frustrating than someone who claims to want to be in the business but who isn’t a student of the business; who doesn’t stay on top of meaningful moves by iconic power brands or the rise of new brands; who doesn’t show an interest in trends that impact the marketplace, whether retail strategies or consumer needs, hopes and fears.

This exercise is designed to not only provide you with an opportunity to present to your fellow students but to display your increasing command of the language of branding. A valuable by-product would be to create regular linkage to branding trends and news.

For as many class meetings as possible, we will begin class with two to three, 10 to 15 minute verbal recaps of an article or blog post from the world of marketing and branding. Formal presentation materials such as PowerPoint and Prezi are not required but can be used as the student sees fit. Ideally the news feature will have 1) appeared within the past couple of weeks but yet to be discussed in class, and 2) be as relevant as possible to our core topics, including (but not limited to) brands, brand positioning, brand management, brand equity and brand value.

On the first day of class, you will be asked to sign up for a day/class meeting when you will assume responsibility for a report. For the report, be prepared to provide a topline recap of the article or blog post; rationale for why you selected it; why it’s important and how it connects to class assignments and/or recent discussions (or at least why it’s of interest); and the link to the article or post. As you prepare your presentation, consider the context of the news; things like what competitors are doing, how it fits with cultural trends, etc.

Taking an active role in class, taking notes, and reading the assigned material are all ways that students will successfully garner maximum credit for whatever quizzes that are administered.
Based on your reading and class participation to date AND primary research, write a 1 to 2 page (double spaced) paper about a brand that has either recently gone through a rebranding (brand refresh) or, based on your growing understanding of branding, is in need of a rebranding initiative.

You choose the brand.

Research:

In lieu on class on September 18th, it is expected that you will conduct research on the brand you select for your paper. The research may take the form of:

- Field research in which you visit a store, restaurant, automotive dealership, fitness facility or interact with customer service personnel, etc. as appropriate for your brand, in order to experience the brand first hand.
- A series of in-depth interviews or an in-person or online focus group(s) in which people are not only asked about their awareness or familiarity with a brand but about their impressions and/or experience with the brand.

Couple of things to remember:

- Brands aren’t just consumable products and services but are destinations, countries, people, political parties, not-for-profit groups and on and on.
- Brands aren’t just the (often) inspiring ideas behind them, but how they actually manifest in the market; how they communicate (what, when, where and even, to whom); how they deliver user/consumer/customer experiences (e.g. quality, consistency); how they live up to their brand promise/mission/vision.
- Feel free to select any brand but keep in mind that you, personally, may not be a prime target audience for that particular brand. So do try to critically evaluate the brand through the eyes of its core constituents. Although if you feel that the brand is missing an opportunity by not speaking to you or any other audience, you are invited to discuss that in your paper.

This is not intended to be a long (or long-winded) paper but instead an early test of your grasp of the criteria of evaluation for successful branding AND your ability to see a brand objectively, including through other people’s eyes. No perceptual maps or formal audit SWOT analyses are required. Just insightful, well reasoned responses to the following question areas. Note, these questions are only designed to serve as a guideline or starting point and do not have to be strictly followed.
Questions (for consideration):

• What is the brand?
• Has the brand undergone a recent transformation or refresh?
• **If yes**, what is your evidence of this? New logo, messaging, ad campaign, website, social media initiative etc.?
  - Based on your research and/or experience with the brand, how would you objectively describe the old brand and how does it compare to the new/refreshed brand?
  - Does the refresh or rebranding expand the brand’s market potential? Its potential customer base? Channels of distribution? Online presence? If none of these things, why do you think they revamped their brand?
• **If no**, is it in need for a transformation or refresh? What makes you say that? Lack of resonance in a modern marketplace? Not keeping up with its competitors? Failing to innovate? Is no longer living up to its brand essence (and/or mission and vision). Antiquated website? Absent in social media? Environmentally out of touch (packaging, gas mileage, etc.).
• Finally, based on your research and analysis, do you have any thoughts regarding things the brand (whether refreshed or in need of a refresh) might consider to ensure future/sustained success?
Students will work in teams of two (with the possibility of a couple of three person teams – depending on class size). It is recommended that consideration be given to getting together with team members that have similar schedules, complementary skillsets, and shared goals vs. just those with whom one might be familiar. Teams must be formed and submitted no later than start of class on Monday, September 25th. Brands and dates for presentation will be randomly assigned on that day.

The goal of the Brand Audit is to provide each student a hands-on opportunity to objectively evaluate the source and strength of a brand’s equity. A sample framework for the audit as well as a list of questions designed to provide both a grounding in the realities of the marketplace and a comprehensive inventory of brand assets is included in the APPENDIX of this document. Students may find it helpful to conduct primary research (whether in-depth interviews or an online survey among key consumer/customer groups) in order to gain full insight into how the brand resonates with consumers (potential customers). The goal is to gather enough information and insight to provide some degree of recommendation for how the brand might improve performance into the future.

The Brand Audit will take the form of a written document as well as an oral presentation to the class. Presentations will be giving during class time on November 20th and 27th and December 4th. Regardless of what day a student’s group may be presenting, all written brand audits are due at the beginning of class on November 20th.

The written document should include a 1 page executive summary; up to 10 pages (double spaced); and up to 5 pages of appendices.

Teams will each have about 15 to 25 minutes to both present their brand audit and field questions from the class. The presentations should highlight key findings and insights from their Brand Audit. Students are invited to use their creativity in presenting and may use any format (PowerPoint, Keynote, Prezi, video, etc.) which best lends itself to an engaging and informative presentation.
As some faculty who teach this course around the country say, “Brand Thyself.” The goal of this assignment is to continue to hone your skills in using brand-building concepts to brand that you know oh so well (or could possibly get to know even better).

Your Personal Brand Statement can be in any format that best works for you; whether that be a couple of typed pages, a PowerPoint slide, or a simple table or graphic. To ensure you have an option that is most comfortable for you, two formats or approaches to the Personal Brand Statement can be found in the APPENDIX to this document.

In both options you will be considering yourself as a brand and asked to identify strong, favorable and unique associations with your brand. You’ll ask yourself to imagine how you’d like to appear to those around you and compare it to how people might actually see you.

The Personal Brand Statement document is due by 4 PM EST, on Monday, October 30th, 2017.

Using one of the following three scenarios write a persuasive memo defending the investment of time, money and resources into build strong brands.

**Scenario 1:** Chief Marketing Officer writing to a Chief Executive Officer in defense of maintaining a strong budget for brand building.

**Scenario 2:** Brand consultant writing to a Chief Marketing Officer proposing a rebranding exploration/project.

**Scenario 3:** Chief Executive Officer writing to shareholders, celebrating the benefits of a strong brand.

If you pursue a career in marketing you’re going to inevitably going to have to defend branding at one time or another, so you might as well start right now. Be as creative as you’d like. Use a real or imagined company and situation. But most importantly be persuasive.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENT/READINGS DUE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>August 28th</td>
<td>Goals for class. Review of Syllabus Favorite Brands discussion. What is a Brand? Really?</td>
<td>Identify two or three of your favorite brands and be prepared to explain why they are meaningful, important or interesting to you. Sign-up for ‘news’ presentation. Read: Keller, Strategic Brand Management (SBM) pg. 19 and Chapter 1, pgs. 29-48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sept.11th</td>
<td>Zappos and Coca-Cola</td>
<td>Read: Yohn, What Great Brands Do, Chapters 3, 4, and 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sept. 18th</td>
<td>No Class Use time to conduct field research for Mini-Case: Rebranding assignment (due September 25th)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sept. 25th</td>
<td>Strategic Brand Management Brand Equity and Core Concepts of Positioning</td>
<td>Read: Keller, SBM Chapter 1, pgs. 58-64 (History of Branding) and Chapter 2, pgs. 67-79 and Chapter 4, pg. 168 Submit Team Project roster via Oaks Mini-Case: Rebranding DUE via Oaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Oct. 2nd</td>
<td>Building a Strong Brand: Start with your customer Tools for brand analysis</td>
<td>Read: Keller, SBM Chapter 3, pgs. 106-128 and pgs. 134.137; Chapter 10, pgs. 326-338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Oct. 9th</td>
<td>Getting to Brand Essence How to do a Brand Audit.</td>
<td>Watch: Simon Sinek video Read: Stengel, GROW _selection from Ignition blog Keller, SBM, Chapter 8, pg. 293-299</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Oct. 16th</td>
<td>NO CLASS/Winter Break</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Oct. 23rd</td>
<td>Personas &amp; Archetypes</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Oct. 30th</td>
<td>Cultural Context and Engagement</td>
<td>Read: Keller, SBM Chapter 9, pgs. 346-351 Personal Brand Paper DUE via Oaks</td>
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<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>DATE</td>
<td>TOPIC</td>
<td>ASSIGNMENT/READINGS DUE</td>
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| 11  | Nov. 6th | **Branded House vs. House of Brands**      | Read: Kappferer, Chapter 13
Keller, SBM Chapter 2, pgs. 98-100 (Marketing Advantages); Chapter 9, pgs. 353-358
(BrandAsset Valuator); and Chapter 10, pgs. 375-376 (The Prophet Brand Valuation Methodology) |
|     |          | **Brand Valuation**                        |                                                                                       |
|     |          | **Managing Brand Equity in a transparent world** |                                                                                       |
| 12  | Nov. 13th| **Brand Audit Q&A Session**                |                                                                                       |
|     |          | **The Art of Persuasion: Beyond PowerPoint** |                                                                                       |
|     |          | Guest Speaker via Skype                    |                                                                                       |
| 13  | Nov. 20th| **Brand Audit Presentations**              | **ALL Brand Audit Papers DUE via Oaks**<br>(even for teams presenting on 13th and 18th) |
| 14  | Nov. 27th| **Brand Audit Presentations**              | Complete Online Course Evaluations                                                   |
| 15  | Dec. 4th | **Final Brand Audit Presentations**        | **Final Paper: Convince Me DUE via Oaks**                                            |
|     |          | **Course Wrap-Up**                         |                                                                                       |
Depending on your career interests and goals there are a few rather definitive texts dedicated to the discipline of branding. Since during the course of this semester, we will be reading selected chapters and sections from several of these books, it is NOT mandatory that you purchase any of them. They are listed here only for your reference.

- Two cornerstone textbooks often featured in college and MBA level coursework are Keller’s *Strategic Brand Management 4th Edition* and Kapferer’s *The New Strategic Brand Management*.

- Although first published about 20 years ago, many in the industry also continue to refer to Aaker’s seminal work in *Managing Brand Equity, Building Strong Brands and Brand Leadership*.

- While there are a plethora of books written on the topic, one that will also be referenced in this course is Stengel’s *GROW: How Ideals Power Growth and Profit at the World’s Greatest Companies*. 
It is not mandatory to use this particular framework. Templates, charts, and paradigms for the analysis of brand positioning, brand equity, brand strength and everything in between abound. BUT, within this framework there are important questions that must be addressed or considered when conducting a brand audit.

Other areas that are often also considered are CHANNELS of distribution (where something is sold can play an important role in both delivery of the brand as well as building the brand); and TRENDS (e.g. the mood of the country, health and wellness habits).

A sample of the questions one might ask within each of the areas is on the following page.
TEAM PROJECT: BRAND AUDIT
Brand Audit Framework_Sample Questions

COMPANY
• What are the company’s sales and/or growth objectives?
• How does Wall Street/the investment community/business press seem to view this company? Or even this brand?
• Do brands seem to play an important role in the creation of value for the company?
• What is the corporation/parent company known for (if it’s different from the brand?)
• What role does this brand play in the company’s portfolio?

CONSUMER
• Who is the ideal prospect for this brand? And Why?
• Describe them, including purchase or usage behavior; demographics; psychographics.
• What do they care about?
• How do they react to your category? What do they want/need/expect from the category?
• Are they all the same, or are there sub-groups or segments? If so, how (and why) are they sub-segmented?

MARKET/CATEGORY/INDUSTRY/COMPETITION
• How would you define the category or industry in which this brand competes?
• Would the consumer define it the same way?
• What business are they ‘really’ in?
• Is the category/industry healthy? Growing? Stagnant? Why? Is the challenge to gain share or create new users?
• What position does this brand hold in the category? Consider everything from share of the category to challenger vs. leader status.
• Who are the key competitors? And are they in the same category? Describe their distinct brand attributes or positions.

CHANNEL
• Where is the product primarily sold? Or found?
• How is it sold?
• Is your brand/product important to the channel or retailer where it is primarily sold?
• Is the brand/product in the right place in the store? Online?
• Does the distribution channel contribute positively to the brand? To the customer experience?

BRAND IMAGE
• What are the brand’s core equities? What assets are most closely associated with the brand, e.g. logo, tagline or advertising, website, community involvement, employee empowerment.
• What is the brand best known for? Stand for?
• How would its best customers describe the brand?
• Does the brand stand out or hold some kind of unique position within the marketplace? Among its core competitors?
• How would you describe the essence of the brand based on tagline, messaging, other activities, sales channel, etc.?

TRENDS
• Are there any broad-based or even generational trends that are influencing this consumer, market, product or brand? Think mood of the country; health and wellness trends; shifts in lifestyle preferences (e.g. tiny house phenomena); fashion trends – trends that might have an impact on your brand’s ability to reach its goals.
PERSONAL BRAND STATEMENT

Assignment Options only one must be completed to fulfill the assignment

OPTION 1
The Perception Gap

Before beginning, it might be helpful to define a reference point for this exercise; that is determine if you’re describing how you’d like to be seen/thought of in general or by classmates, or by faculty, or by prospective employers, or within the world you’d like to work.

Once you have a point of reference, as objectively as possible, describe in one circle how you see yourself or would hope to be seen by others and in the second circle, capture how you believe others actually see you. If you’re up for it, it could be helpful to interview a couple of people for their input into the second circle.

At the point you’ve filled in the two circles, ask yourself to what degree they overlap (graph the insight appropriately)? Or to what degree there is a gap? This learning should be helpful as you think about how to live a brand that contributes to a rich and rewarding life.

OPTION 2
Personal Positioning Statement

Relying upon classic brand positioning language, write a statement that not only captures how you see yourself (among peers, to potential employers, etc.) but what makes you unique.

TO Audience
Who is the target? What slice of the population will be the most motivated by what you do or who you are?

YOUR BRAND IS THE Frame of Reference
Where do you play? What is the frame of reference that helps to define the space in the marketplace that you compete in?

THAT IS THE Benefit
Where do you thrive? Thinking about your unique essence or benefit, what is the promise you’re making to your core audience or within your frame of reference.

THAT’S BECAUSE Proof of Your Promise
Why should they believe you? What support point help to back up the main benefit?