



University of Pennsylvania – The Wharton School

Special Topics: Retail Merchandising – MKTG 306402, MKTG806402

Syllabus - Spring 2019 **DRAFT**

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Classroom: TBD, Wednesday 3-6  
Office Hours: Wednesdays 2-3 by email appointment

Course description and objectives:

This course is to introduce and expose students to both the fundamentals and recent trends in the end-to-end retail merchandising process. The format of the class will be a combination of lecture, case discussion, and guest speaker presentations.

The objective is to familiarize students with both the theory and practice of planning, buying, designing, sourcing, displaying, and fulfilling merchandise to consumers. This knowledge will be fundamental to careers working for retailers themselves (e-commerce or omnichannel), but also in consulting to retailers, and in banking or investing in the retail sector.

Evaluation will be a combination of in-class participation, an individual assignment of a case analysis, a fundamental concepts test, and a group presentation.

Date	Topic	Assignment	Text
3/20	Overview of Merchandising and the Role of Experience		
3/27	Financial Overview – Retail Math & Wall Street / Private Equity	Case Group 1  Team member list due	Donnellan: Chapters 9-10
4/3	Assortment Development & Optimization in the Digital World	Case Group 2  Team topic selection due	Donnellan: Chapter 13

4/10	Product Design, Development, & Sourcing – Speed & Fast Fashion	Case Group 3	Donnellan: Chapter 8
4/17	Visual Merchandising – Online, Mobile, and Brick & Mortar	Case Group 4	Donnellan: Chapter 16
4/24	Inventory Deployment –Stores, DC, Drop Ship	Case Group 5 Test	Donnellan: Chapter 11
5/1	Trends & Innovation – Analytics & Tools	Group Presentations	

Reading materials:

Suggested text: Donnellan, John, Merchandising and Buying Management, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, Bloomsbury Publications, 2014, ISBN# 978-1-60901-490-2

Additional materials will include case studies. All in-class presentations will be available via Canvas.

Grading – weighted as follows:

Class Participation	30%
Individual Assignment (Case Write-Up)	20%
Test	20%
Team Assignment	30%

- Given the limited number of meeting sessions (seven over the course of the quarter), attendance is mandatory at all sessions, including the first.
- Class participation includes attendance, preparation, and quality questions & discussion during class lecture, case discussion, and guest lecturer Q&A
- The team assignment will provide an opportunity for students to research and present an emerging trend or innovation in retail, linking it to retail fundamentals learned throughout the course.