



College of Commerce
Division of Economic and Financial Studies
Department of Business

BBA213

DISTRIBUTION DECISIONS

UNIT OUTLINE
SEMESTER 2, 2006

Lecturers: June Buchanan Steve Erichsen

Unit Convenor: June Buchanan

Lectures: Thursday 6.00pm~9.00pm, X5B T1

Prerequisites: Admission to BBA or BCom-Mktg;
BBA101 or MKTG101

Students in this unit should read the Unit Outline carefully at the beginning of semester. It contains important information about the unit. If anything in it is unclear, please consult the Unit Convenor.



1. About this Unit

Distribution Decisions introduces a number of topics, which form part of the broad range of interdependent areas of concern to those working within or managing modern commercial enterprises. It is not intended to make participants subject matter experts in what is a complex and dynamic area of modern business. Rather, it is intended to provide participants with sufficient requisite information to understand the principles involved and their interrelationships, together with some guidelines as to how one might better learn 'how to learn effectively'.

Participants are expected to take full responsibility for managing their own learning, just as they must take responsibility for managing their own careers. This means that your results for this course will in all likelihood reflect the quality of your efforts to come to grips with the principles involved and your understanding of how they might be applied in real-world situations.

As most of the situations covered by this subject are problematic (that is, involving both quantitative and qualitative analysis), there will be few if any precise answers. Every option will have advantages and disadvantages with implications and strategic ramifications for both action and inaction. Understanding the underlying principles, their theoretical basis and, more importantly, how they may be applied in practice so as to achieve sustainable improvements on the present situation, should be a key objective for participants in this course.

BBA213 has a credit-point value of 3, so you should spend on average 12 hours per week (lectures, tutorials, study, etc.) on this unit.

2. Teaching Staff

June Buchanan	june.buchanan@mq.edu.au
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Steve Erichsen	erichsen@optusnet.com.au

(4-6 pm Thursdays, or other times may be possible by appointment from time to time)

3. Classes

Lectures will take place between 6pm and 9pm each Thursday on the following schedule. Where case study presentations are scheduled, those will follow immediately after the main lecture.

Date	Week	Topic	Comments
3rd Aug. 2006	1	Course Introduction Marketing Channels: Structure, Functions and Framework for Analysis.	Coughlan et al, Chapter 1
10 th Aug 2006	2	Segmentation for Marketing Channel Design: Service Outputs	Coughlan et al, Chapter 2 ALL GROUP DETAILS MUST BE FINALISED
17th Aug 2006	3	Supply-Side Channel Analysis: Channel Flows and Efficiency Analysis, Channel Structure and Membership Issues	Coughlan et al, Chapters 3 & 4 SUBMIT PROJECT PROPOSAL
24th Aug 2006	4	Gap Analysis	Coughlan et al. Chapter 5 Case Study 1
31 st Aug 2006	5	Channel Power and Managing Conflict	Coughlan et al, Chapters 6 & 7 Case Study 2
7 th Sep 2006	6	Strategic Alliances	Coughlan et al, Chapter 8 Case Study 3
14 th Sep 2006	7	Class test	
Mid- Semester Break			
5 th Oct 2006	8	Class Test Review Distribution Intensity and Vertical Integration	Coughlan et al. Chapter 9 Case Study 4
12 th Oct 2006	9	Legal Constraints on Marketing Channel Policies	Coughlan et al, Chapter 10 Case Study 5
19 th Oct 2006	10	Retailing	Coughlan et al. Chapter 11 GROUP PROJECT DUE
26 th Oct 2006	11	Wholesaling	Coughlan et al, Chapter 12 Case Study 6
2 nd Nov 2006	12	Franchising	Coughlan et al. Chapter 13 Case Study 7
9 th Nov 2006	13	Logistics and Supply Chain Management	Coughlan et al, Chapter 14 Case Study 8

4. Required and Recommended Texts and/or Materials

a. Required Texts

The required textbook for this unit is:

Coughlan, A. T.; Anderson, E.; Stern, L. W.; and, El-Ansary, A. I. (2006) *Marketing Channels* 7th edition, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey,

c. Relevant Journals and Business Periodicals

These publications contain extra information on the subject and may be of use to students

Journal of Marketing Channels

International Journal of Retailing

International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management

Journal of Marketing

Journal of Marketing Research

Forbes Magazine

BRW

5. Unit Web Page

Lecture Notes, Case Studies, the Unit Outline and important notices will be posted on Web CT.

6. Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes of the unit are

- To gain an understanding of Marketing Channels structure and functions
- To Understand Demand, Supply and Competitive influences on Channel design
- To be able to critically assess Channel design
- To understand key Channel implementation issues like Channel Power, Channel Conflict, Distribution Intensity and Strategic Alliances
- To understand the role of key Channel Institutions such as Retailers, Wholesalers, Franchising and Logistics
- To be able to apply distribution theory to real life examples both in case form and through company research
- To work effectively in groups to analyse and prepare reports on distribution issues.

In addition to the discipline-based learning objectives, all academic programs at Macquarie University seeks to develop students' generic skills in a range of areas. One of the aims of this unit is that students develop their skills in the following:

- Foundation skills of literacy, numeracy and information technology;
- Self-awareness and interpersonal skills;
- Communication skills;
- Critical analysis skills;
- Problem-solving skills;
- Creative thinking skills.

7. Teaching and Learning Strategy

a. Lectures

Students should prepare for each lecture by, as a minimum, reading the nominated chapters from the required text as well as reading relevant material from the recommended reading lists. Lectures are your opportunity to assess whether or not you fully understand the topic of the week and to debate your opinions with the class.

b. Case Studies

Analysis of business problems then preparing concise reports and recommendations for action to management will be a regular feature of your business career. Case study analysis simulates this business activity.

The cases will be available on the Web CT.

c. Group Work

Distribution problems are by their nature multi-disciplinary therefore in the business world you can expect to have to work with groups of other managers to resolve distribution issues. Working in groups during this course will be valuable experience for your working life ahead.

Students have two options for joining a group.

Option 1 – Organise your own group

Students can organise themselves into groups of five. This option has the benefit of enabling students to select whom they will work with. Students taking this option must submit a completed Group Contact Sheet (one per group, with the contact details of all group members) either to the lecturer on Thursday August 10th, or by emailing the completed form to june.buchanan@mq.edu.au by 5.p.m. on Monday 14th August 2006 at the latest. If emailing, please name

your file by the unit name (i.e. BBA213), your group name, followed by the contents of the file (i.e. Group Details Form). A blank Group Contact Sheet is included at the end of this unit outline.

Option 2 – Be placed in a group by the lecturer.

Students who have not organised themselves into a group, or have organised a group of less than five, will be formed into groups of five by the lecturer. In this case students must email a group contact sheet containing their name(s), contact details etc **no later than 5 p.m. Monday August 14th**. Students failing to satisfy either Option 1 or 2 must be prepared to accept the probable outcome of not being placed in a group. As there is a significant amount of group work, this situation is to be avoided at all costs! Contact details for the groups allocated by the lecturer will be emailed before the lecture on Thursday at the latest (i.e. 17 August).

As you will have to be in regular contact with your group it is recommended that you get the contact details of all of the members in your group. A blank Group Contact Sheet is included at the end of this unit outline for that purpose. Not being in contact with your group is not an excuse for having little input into the group work.

If you do not pursue either option 1 or option 2 it will be assumed that you are not continuing with the unit.

Group work submitted by individuals will not be marked.

There are two tasks to be completed by the groups.

i Case Studies Groups should prepare for each case study by both reading the designated case and answering the questions associated with the case given by the lecturer. Your group's written work should be submitted to the appropriate lecturer before the commencement of the lecture for each week there is an assigned case study. **Please ensure your file has the unit name, your group's name and the name of the case study.**

Your case submissions will not be returned so please ensure that all members of the group have a copy prior to handing in.

Where no specific questions are asked you should use the following structure for each case summary:

Situation Analysis

Perform a SWOT analysis i.e. Strengths and weaknesses of the company; opportunities and threats in its external environment. Substantiate any assertions being made with evidence from the case i.e. if sales are going up say by how much, if there is conflict in the channel say who is it between.

Problem Definition

Define the main issues or real problems facing the company and lay these out, where relevant, as one or more principal distribution problems.

Analysis and Evaluation of Options

Analyse the problems facing the company by extrapolating the facts and figures from the case. It is important in this section to take the numbers given in the case a little further than they are presented.

After completing this analysis evaluate the pros and cons of the most feasible alternatives considering costs and benefits of each.

Other Information that should be Obtained

Specify the further data you think should be obtained and the analysis required to give a better solution to the case problem.

Recommended Courses of Action

Make recommendations giving reasons.

General notes

- For those unfamiliar with Case Study methodology a Case Study guide will be made available on the Web CT.
- You will be expected to conduct further research concerning the relevant underlying theory/theories and, if appropriate, updated information. The better case studies will show evidence of having included research from peer-reviewed journals. Please ensure you include a Bibliography with your case studies. Occasionally you will, like any manager, need to make assumptions. Please note any assumptions you have made.
- All case study material will be included in the class test and final exam

You will need to have your own thorough understanding of each case to achieve a satisfactory mark in the exam

Task 2- Group Project

The group project is to be submitted on or before 5:00pm Thursday October 19th, 2006 in the designated box at ERIC.

The topic for the group project is a CHANNEL AUDIT

CHANNEL AUDIT ASSIGNMENT:

You will be required to perform an audit of a specific firm's existing distribution channel. Your report should be presented in three parts

1. Describing the **current state** of the channel (its structure, members, allocation of channel functions and flows, ability to meet target customer segments' demands for service outputs, gap analysis, and power and conflict characteristics)
2. **Suggestions for improvement** of the channel design and management.
3. An **annotated bibliography** to any secondary sources you use (business press articles, journals, books, etc.) Each reference in the bibliography should be accompanied by several sentences explaining the major points of the reference and their relevance to your group's research. Under **no** circumstances simply copy the abstract of the article. You must use your own words. There is no page limit for the annotated bibliography; however, it should only include **relevant** articles and texts. In addition you should mention the names, titles, and companies of any people you interview for the audit

You are responsible for finding a firm whose distribution channel you wish to study. You should do your best to use both primary (e.g., personal interview) and secondary (e.g., library research) data to perform your analyses although it is not compulsory to do primary research. Groups should include a significant number of peer-reviewed journals as part of their secondary data.

Projects submitted by individuals will not be marked.

8. Relationship between Assessment and Learning objectives

a. Class Test 15%

This exam will be held in the lecture of Week 7, covering material presented in the first six weeks of lectures. The exam will consist of 60 multiple choice questions, will be "closed book" and of one and one half hours duration. This test is designed to give students feedback on how well they have understood and can express their understanding of the course material presented so far.

b. Case Studies 10%

Your group will be assessed on the quality of the written submission as well as your contribution to the discussion of the case in the lecture

c. Group Project 25%

You will be graded on the quality of your analysis and recommendations and on your ability to apply the analytic concepts from class to your chosen distribution channel situation. It is best to study a pre-existing channel rather than a firm's plans to enter a new market and build up a new channel. However, if you wish to look at a case of new market entry, you may do so, but please include an analysis of the firm's pre-existing channel (if it exists) for other products and suggestions for altering it for the new product or market.

The report itself (excluding the annotated bibliography and exhibits) should be no more than 2000 words long. Submissions that go beyond the word limit will not be marked as to do so would give non-complying groups an unfair advantage.

It is our experience that students find it no challenge to fill up the word limit. Do not waste it on irrelevant information and verbosity. If history repeats itself, then what will separate the better assignments from the others will be the level of understanding of the theory and competence in applying it to the issues. The quality of journals used in secondary research will also impact on the standard of your report.

General points to observe are:

- All work is to be in 12-point pitch/font size.
- Where page limits are set, they refer to A4 size pages.
- While presentation is important, content is much more important. It is not necessary to purchase binders for this assignment. It is sufficient to hand in your work securely stapled in the top left-hand corner.
- If you do choose to use a binder, please choose one that lies flat when open. Under no circumstance use a folder which is a collection of plastic sleeves.
- Please use recyclable materials where possible.
- It is the responsibility of the group to make and keep a photocopy of the project.

Marking and Peer Assessment

Working in groups is a valuable experience for students in that it reflects working life, however, it presents some difficulties for markers. In particular, the marker is

not present at any of the group meetings, and so does not see the contributions of the individual members. The marker will mark the project, but will rely on information from each group to generate individual marks.

To provide an assessment of each group member's contribution to the project two things are to be handed in as part of your project.

1. Each student is to write up to one page outlining their own contribution to the project and include it in an appendix to the project
2. The group members are to agree on the contribution made by each member and sign off on their decision. This information is to be included on the assignment cover sheet. An assignment cover sheet is provided at the end of this outline.

If the group considers that all members have contributed equally, then each member will put 100% as their contribution and all members will be given the same grade as the marker gives the written assignment. If, for example, the group considers that one person has contributed significantly more than the others then that person will put down 100% as their contribution, and the others will put down something less than 100%. Another example would be where the group agrees that one member has done significantly less than the others; in this case that person would put down something less than 100% as their contribution. Where there is disagreement among group members, then the assignment sheet may be printed off, a participation mark allocated to each group member, signed by the person and handed to the lecturer, confidentially. In this case, each group member must hand in a signed form to the lecturer.

The lecturer will give a mark for the project. This mark will then be multiplied by the contribution % for each member of the group to arrive at an individual mark for each student. So, if a student has a contribution of 100%, and a group project mark of 75, then the student will be given an individual mark of 75 ($75 \times 100\%$). If, however, a student has a contribution of 90%, and a group project mark of 75, then the student will be given an individual mark of 67.5 ($75 \times 90\%$). 100% is the highest that can be given.

When assessing each member's contribution it is important to take a balanced view, recognising that there are various roles, skills and stages involved in the project. The project will involve information gathering, familiarisation with theory,

synthesis of ideas, analysis of information, writing of the project report and finally word processing the project report. When working in groups it is usual for people to take on various roles (leader, scribe, idea generator, etc). While some roles are more visible than others none is any more important than the others. Unless all are done well, the result will be flawed. It is up to the group to negotiate amongst itself how the work will be allocated in an equitable manner, making the best use of people's strengths. There are four things that we would give weight to when assessing group members contributions, firstly their attendance at group meetings, secondly their punctual delivery of the work that the group has assigned them, thirdly the quality of the work submitted and fourthly whether or not their contribution to discussions and the written work are based on the theory.

d. Final Exam 50%

The final exam will be held in the formal exam period. The examination will be "closed book". The exam will consist of essay-style answer questions and be designed to fully test your understanding and ability to express your understanding of all of the course material. Further details will be given later in the semester regarding format and content.

You are expected to present yourself for examination at the time and place designated in the University Examination Timetable. The timetable will be available in Draft form approximately eight weeks before the commencement of the examinations and in Final form approximately four weeks before the commencement of the examinations at <http://www.timetables.mq.edu.au/exam>. The only exception to not sitting an examination at the designated time is because of documented illness or unavoidable disruption. In these circumstances you may wish to consider applying for Special Consideration. Information about unavoidable disruption and the special consideration process is available at <http://www.reg.mq.edu.au/Forms/APSCons.pdf>

If a Supplementary Examination is granted as a result of the Special Consideration process the examination will be scheduled after the conclusion of the official examination period. (Individual Divisions may wish to signal when the Division's Supplementary exams are normally scheduled.)

You are advised that it is Macquarie University policy not to set early examinations for individuals or groups of students. All students are expected to ensure that they are available until the end of the teaching semester, which is the final day of the official examination period.

9. Plagiarism

The University defines plagiarism in its rules: "Plagiarism involves using the work of another person and presenting it as one's own." Plagiarism is a serious breach of the University's rules and carries significant penalties. You must read the University's practices and procedures on plagiarism. These can be found in the *Handbook of Undergraduate Studies* or on the web at:

<http://www.student.mq.edu.au/plagiarism/>

The policies and procedures explain what plagiarism is, how to avoid it, the procedures that will be taken in cases of suspected plagiarism, and the penalties if you are found guilty. Penalties may include a deduction of marks, failure in the unit, and/or referral to the University Discipline Committee.

10. University Policy on Grading

Academic Senate has a set of guidelines on the distribution of grades across the range from fail to high distinction. Your final result will include one of these grades plus a standardised numerical grade (SNG).

On occasion your raw mark for a unit (i.e., the total of your marks for each assessment item) may not be the same as the SNG which you receive. Under the Senate guidelines, results may be scaled to ensure that there is a degree of comparability across the university, so that units with the same past performances of their students should achieve similar results.

The process of scaling does not change the order of marks among students. A student who receives a higher raw mark than another will also receive a higher final scaled mark.

For an explanation of the policy see

<http://www.mq.edu.au/senate/MQUonly/Issues/Guidelines2003.doc> or

<http://www.mq.edu.au/senate/MQUonly/Issues/detailedguidelines.doc>.

11. Student Support Services

Macquarie University provides a range of Academic Student Support Services. Details of these services can be accessed at <http://www.student.mq.edu.au>.

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Group Name: _____

GROUP PROJECT COVER SHEET

Student Name	ID number	Participation %	Signature

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Group Name: _____

GROUP CONTACT SHEET

Student Name	ID number	Phone	email

