Reflection Paper 1

I really enjoyed Marketing Research this semester. I enjoyed that the majority of the class was not lecturing, but rather activities and videos that helped my understanding of Marketing Research. I liked the sections on variables and statistics because it reinforced my prior knowledge of statistics from the two business statistics classes I already took. Along with this, it put these concepts into a marketing perspective and showed me how I can apply what I learned in statistics to marketing and marketing research. I also liked learning about different survey methods and research methods because I feel that this knowledge is very relevant. Regardless of which area of marketing I enter, I will be able to apply any of the things I learned in the course.

My favorite part of the course was the Marketplace Simulation. I did not know what to expect going into it, but it was really cool to be able to, as a group, design a product, set pricing, design advertising, and open in different markets. I liked being able to see our progression each week and how our decisions affected the rest of the market. The one big thing I learned from the simulation is how hard it is to predict what your competitors are doing and how much that can effect your own performance. We often had all the right products, all the right ads, and reasonable pricing, but the other teams were priced just below us, causing them to take market share away from us. I know that in a real business situation, all of these factors are so important to gaining market share. This showed me how hard it is to set price at just the right spot to pull in market share.

I also really enjoyed the in class activities we had. These helped me apply what we had just learned in the lecture and gave me a better understanding of the material. I liked having Jeopardy reviews before the tests because it made preparing for the tests a little less stressful. When it came to tests, I had mixed feelings about the scratch off test answer sheets. I liked being able to know immediately if I got a question right or wrong and then in the end immediately knowing what I scored on the test. However, I am a very indecisive person especially when it comes to test taking. I did not like not being able to change my answer because it caused me to second-guess myself multiple times. If I was unsure about a question, I would skip it and move on before scratching it off. After I completed the questions I was sure of I would go back and look at the questions I was unsure of. At this point, I would think I knew the answer but second guess myself and scratch off a different one. Often my original answer was correct and I ended up missing a point by scratching off and incorrect answer first. While this is probably just nitpicking about this test method, it is just something I noticed while taking the scratch off tests. I studied a lot for each test and I felt the test material accurately reflected the study materials and I was given every opportunity to succeed on the exams. I think the quizzes gave an additional opportunity to go over the course material and gain a better understanding of the material.

I also really enjoyed the fun videos shown almost every week. They always facilitated discussion and helped my overall understanding of the material that week. Another thing I enjoyed and thought was helpful were the discussions we had for each chapter about ethics. This always added to what we were learning about and provoked additional thought about the material. It also gave a great opportunity for class discussion. If there were some ethical situations I did not know a lot about or did not have an opinion on, it was nice to listen to the discussion and become more
informed. On the other hand, I liked being able to speak up and discuss things that I did have an opinion on and learn about the point of view of other students in the class.

Reflection Paper 2

After successfully completing Supply Chain Management with Iana Shaheen as my instructor, I can honestly say that this course has been structured in a way that has most closely followed each and every one of the course and student learning objectives as listed in the syllabus. Usually, other courses tend to list all these amazing objectives in their syllabus but the actual class sessions are far from what I had expected. In the following I would like to furthermore elaborate on why I am so satisfied with the skills and material I was taught in this course.

Going into the semester, I admit I was expecting to mostly just be presented the usual powerpoints about material from what is assigned each week with little to no class discussion and then a few quizzes every now and then to test our understanding of what is being taught. However, I was extremely positively surprised when from day one, Professor Shaheen made class time a very interactive learning experience. We often had open class discussions and even though I can be a very quiet student in class, I felt comfortable enough to contribute to the discussions as well, may it be topics actually related to supply chain management activities, sales strategies, cultural differences between countries and their influence on global business decisions, or just share insights about my own heritage and German background.

At the beginning of this class I was aware of some principles regarding supply and demand because of the economics courses I had taken before, but I was not very fond of the different steps in the supply chain including logistics, supply network design, sourcing and warehousing, how to integrate all functions in a sustainable manner, why it is so important, and how to evaluate performance. Professor Shaheen used very helpful graphics in her powerpoints to convey the concepts to us in a way that was easy to understand. A plethora of case studies that she brought into class and let us read through them and then discuss and analyze together, for example the one about UPS and the most recent one from Amazon and their attempts to venture into the offline retail markets, helped me view the world around us in a different way. Nowadays, whenever I receive a package after ordering something online, I now know what different steps the product must have gone through to make it from the manufacturer all the way to my front door (or a delivery service station/store for convenient pick-ups).

I love how sometimes we would have to teach ourselves a certain topic, design a poster about the information, and then teach it to our fellow classmates because that way, we were not just forced to read the text or listen to her presentations, but we were able to explain and learn a topic in a more easy way, explained by students to students.

Another activity I greatly appreciated were the variety of different guest speakers, such as another USF student who is currently working at FedEx, 2 wonderful gentlemen named Rick De La Rosa and Zachary Grossman from SunCoast Roofing, but we also got to learn how supply chain management works in a non-profit organization such as Feeding Tampa Bay (which was my favorite guest speaker night by the way).
I also liked that our teacher always made it a point to look at everything we discussed in class from a global perspective and not only taught us how America runs business and I believe that made it a very well-rounded learning experience overall.

The most challenging part of this course however was our Marketplace Simulation and despite the fact that this simulation was also new to Professor Shaheen, I felt like we had adequate support in tackling the challenges we faced in the simulation. We definitely learned a lot through trial and error and though my teammates who already work in supply chain management disciplines said they would do some things differently than the simulation allowed us to (to dual-source for example), I think it was a great opportunity to learn to make educated guesses with inputs and outputs, learning how to be a reseller, how to negotiate with manufacturers and how to overcome business risks in a somewhat sustainable manner.

Again, I am very glad that I had such a greatly engaged instructor teaching this class because she really made the material fun and really made it an effort to get us interested in supply chain management - successfully.

**Reflection Paper 3**

Overall, I did enjoy this class in comparison to a lot of my other classes. I think I liked the simulation the best. In the simulation I learned just how much work goes into developing, marketing, selling a product, and building a company. In the simulation, we were forced to make decisions that I do not think we would have taken into consideration otherwise. For example, there was one part my group missed in one quarter and it was to check ad claims. We had not realized we had false claims on our ads, but in the next quarter it was pointed out to us and from that point on we made sure to keep a closer eye on what we are putting on our ads and how true the claims are. Additionally, the simulation taught how competitive markets can be and how every decision, no matter how small or big, is essential in creating and maintaining a successful and profitable company. Another aspect of the simulation I liked was that you gave us class time each week to work on it. This made it easier to work with everyone and not have to worry about any scheduling conflicts that could have come up outside of class. Even though we had one person that wasn’t there for everyone class, I can’t imagine how many meetings he would have missed if we had to work on this simulation outside of class.

Another part of the course I liked was the jeopardy exam reviews. Considering most of my classes do not even review for exams, I was very happy to have those reviews. I liked that the reviews forced us to answer questions and think about the topics as opposed to you just lecturing about every topic over again. I know I personally do not learn as much when I am just sitting there listening to a lecture, so the jeopardy reviews definitely helped. That being said, another aspect of the course I liked were the occasional in-class activities. For example, the surveys we took in class were a fun learning mechanism, even if we did have to eat a terribly salty brownie. Additionally, the group activity we did
where we had to ask people in the hall about how much they would pay for a haircut, and then present our findings to an “executive board” was also a fun and interesting way to learn about marketing research. This activity had us going straight to potential customers and gaining information about what they expect when getting their haircut, how much they might pay, etc. The activity taught us what type of questions we should be asking.

I also surprisingly liked the scratch-off exams. Initially I thought I might not like the scratch-off exams and was a little nervous for them. I thought getting the results of each question right away might throw me off and I would do worse on the exams, but I think I might have done better because of them. I was nervous that if I saw I was getting answers wrong, it might make me less confident in my answers and I might just get more wrong, but I think it did the opposite as I saw I would get answers right and it made me more confident in my answers and I actually put more thought into choosing my answers. So overall, I think I was worried for nothing and the scratch-off exams actually helped me more than hurt. I would definitely say continue using those.

I think if I were to suggest any changes or additions to the course, I would probably add a project similar to the haircut activity, where we have to research a market and somehow apply and present the results in a way that fits the topics of the results. I know some students would rather lectures as they are less work, but I think project like this would help give students a more real-world experience of what market research is like and how it is applied in developing and marketing a product. I know I personally, would not mind the extra work if there is the added benefit.