

**Annual Report of the Laurier Chair in Brand  
Communication – July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013**



Dr. Brad Davis  
Associate Professor, Marketing  
Wilfrid Laurier University

# Table of Contents

Message from the Laurier Chair in Brand Communication .....3  
Major BBA Curriculum Revisions.....5  
Curriculum Development .....7  
Teaching Team Development .....8  
Teaching Materials Development .....9  
Media Presence .....9  
Advisory Council.....10  
Conclusion.....10

## Message from the Laurier Chair in Brand Communication

The 2012-13 academic year saw the Brand Communication program continue to attract a significant number of Laurier business students. Again, this year we saw over 200 students take the core courses towards the program's option. This represents 90 per cent of all marketing students.

We also saw approval for a significant revision of the BBA Curriculum that will be particularly beneficial to the Marketing Area and the Brand Communication program. The revisions will start to unfold this coming September, but changes to the Marketing curriculum will not come in to effect until September 2014. This gives us a full year to significantly revise and update a number of our courses to reflect trends and issues that some of our practitioner advisors identified as priorities to us.

It was also a year that saw Laurier's School of Business & Economics establish a number of firsts in Canadian business education and continue to build its reputation as one of the most innovative and progressive programs in the country. The Brand Communication program has been both a beneficiary and participant in each of these major steps forward.

In December 2012, President and CEO of Second Cup, Stacey Mowbray, became SBE's first "CEO In-Residence", while former Procter & Gamble CEO Tim Penner assumed this honorary title in June 2013. The program complements the existing successful "Entrepreneur in Residence" program which also brings leading business figures into the school to provide the benefit of their experience and insights to students and faculty.

Laurier became the first Canadian member of the 55-school Global Business School Network (GBSN) joining school such as; Columbia University, Northwestern University, Cornell University, the University of Virginia, Dartmouth University, and the University of Chicago, as well as the London Business School, INSEAD in France, ESADE Business School in Spain, and the National University of Singapore. GBSN is devoted to helping to address the lack of management leadership training in the developing world through programs, events and networking.

This past year, we received accreditation for several of our co-operative education programs from the Canadian Association for Co-operative Education (CAFCE). CAFCE accreditation represents the highest standard of achievement for co-operative education programs in Canada, and recognizes that Laurier has met a wide range of quality standards in its programming.

When Laurier launched its undergraduate co-op program in business in 1976, it was the first of its kind in Ontario. It is now the largest business degree co-op program in Canada. CAFCE accreditation indicates that our growth has not come at the expense of program quality.

Construction has also begun on the new Global Innovation Exchange building which will house the School of Business & Economics starting in the fall of 2015. The \$103 million 213,000 square foot building will be environmentally and technologically state-of-the-art. Faculty teaching in the Brand Communication program will be housed in this new facility.

Recently, we received a \$250,000 grant from Procter & Gamble to support our sustainability center which focuses on education and promotion of human development in emerging nations. In support of the growing concern about sustainability and corporate social responsibility, we will also be offering a new course on *Marketing and Society* to address related issues.

We also received a \$1.25 million donation from the Bank of Montreal to support entrepreneurship and international educational initiatives. The donation will also support scholarships and curriculum development.

It has been an extraordinary year for the School of Business & Economics and next year promises to be even more remarkable. The BBA revisions will establish a platform that will allow us to develop more innovative educational experiences for our Brand Communication students.

There will also be announcements forthcoming that will truly mark the start of a whole new chapter in the life of the school. As was the case with the events of this past year, the Brand Communication program will continue to be at the heart of SBE's growth.

In the following pages, I've outlined the activities surrounding the Brand Communication program this past year. As always, I will be happy to expand on any aspect of the overview and would welcome any ideas or input from our practitioner partners.

Thank you for your continued support!

Sincerely,

Dr. Brad Davis  
Associate Professor, Marketing  
Laurier Chair in Brand Communication  
Wilfrid Laurier School of Business & Economics

## Major BBA Curriculum Revisions

A significant restructuring of the BBA curriculum is underway with the first steps in place for the start of the fall 2013 term. The most significant changes will occur to the Marketing/Brand Communication program although these revisions will not be implemented until the start of the fall 2014 academic year:

- BU352 Introduction to Marketing will be moved from third to second year. This will make marketing students better prepared for co-op positions which start after second year.
- BU362 (the second required introductory marketing course) has been eliminated. In third year, we will require marketing students take BU432, Consumer Behaviour, and a revised BU422 Marketing Research course. This will also ensure that marketing students are better prepared for co-op placements and have a stronger foundation for specialized fourth year courses.
- These courses (BU432 Consumer Behaviour and BU422 Marketing Research) – along with BU452 Marketing Strategy – will become required courses for all Marketing and Brand Communication students. This will ensure a greater degree of quality control and consistency across marketing students.
- In the overall re-structuring we have eliminated three previously required business courses and moved four others from year four to earlier years. This effectively leaves fourth year as a blank canvas – free of any required courses and maximizing each area's flexibility to engage in innovative programming. For example, we will have the opportunity to improve the co-ordination of subject matter by requiring courses be taken concurrently. Students could take BU470 *Brand Communication*, BU472 *Marketing Communication* and BU469 *Social Networks and Marketing* together. Instructors would be able to eliminate any overlaps, offer assignments that spanned all three courses and have more flexibility for experiential exercises.

The re-structuring will create the platform necessary to build innovative new educational experiences that better prepare graduates for the world they will experience. The model will allow courses to be developed based on integrating knowledge and experiences rather than the old fashioned silo design, and would be ground-breaking in university curriculum delivery.

Over the course of next year we will be revising several courses in preparation for the curriculum changes to be implemented in the 2013-14 academic year. In response to conversations with a variety of practitioners, we will attempt to expand skill development in two areas in the marketing curriculum:

1. Soft skills development (verbal and written communications, presentation skills etc.)
2. Analytical skills (data analysis, quantitative measures etc.)

A student-faculty committee is developing a proposal to create a program in Data Analytics. "Big Data" is one of the most important areas of management now and for the future of marketing. Unfortunately, few business schools are addressing the need directly. Laurier hopes to offer the first program designed to produce specialists in marketing data analytics.

## Curriculum Development

Existing and newly offered courses in the Brand Communication program go through continuous review and revision. Our courses feature a significant number of guest lectures and live-cases to involve industry partners. This involvement provides excellent opportunities to solicit advice and insights on course content and subject matter. Again, we received strong course evaluations in all our program courses; but, were particularly pleased with the excellent feedback on some of our newer courses.

- *Brand Communication Management* continues to be the most popular marketing elective. In 2012-13, we offered the course in all three semesters and added an additional section in the winter term to accommodate the demand. We now offer five sections of the course – the most of any marketing elective.
- *Strategic Brand Management* (the MBA version of *Brand Communication Management*) continues to be a very popular elective. The course is offered at both our Waterloo and Toronto programs and attracts approximately 45 students on each campus. Each year, the Waterloo course exposes students to 10-12 live brand-case exercises, many of which are converted into teaching cases for wider circulation.
- *Creative Thinking for Marketing Managers* was launched in spring 2011 and offered again spring 2012. An MBA version of the course, *Creative Decision Making in Marketing*, was launched in fall 2011. Both courses were very well received and demand is pushing us to offer additional sections in the future.
- *Social Networks and Marketing* was offered for the first time in the BBA program in fall 2012 to excellent reviews. Nearly a dozen companies participated in student projects with many expressing how impressed they were with the quality of the students work. One health care brand manager came directly from a meeting with her social media agency to hear the students' presentations. She indicated that the students' campaign ideas "were easily on par with what our own agency came up with".

## Teaching Team Development

The growth in the number of sections and students in the Brand Communication program has required a steady increase in instructors and the recruitment of additional faculty to add support to the number of initiatives underway.

- Dr. Ping Zhao from Cornell University was recruited this past fall and is joining our faculty this summer. Dr. Zhao has considerable experience and expertise in data analytics. “Big Data” has been identified by a number of academic groups and practitioners as one of the most important topics facing marketers – and, an area where there is a recognized skill shortage.
- Dr. Sara Wilner and Dr. Grant Packard have continued to make valuable contributions to the development of the curriculum and key courses in the Brand Communication program. Their experiences through Schulich and Michigan respectively have provided valuable ideas on adding content and educational experiences.
- We continue to recruit part-time instructors for the brand program in our effort to build teaching depth. This coming year, we will have two instructors who have taught at other institutions (Guelph, Schulich, Humber) that are joining Laurier for the first time. In both cases they have long and successful brand management careers behind them.
- Unfortunately, Dr. Lindsay McShane departed Laurier for family reasons and took a faculty position at Carlton University’s business school. However, in her time at Laurier, Lindsay became a strong supporter and contributor to the Brand Communication program. She has already had discussions about introducing a Brand Com course at Carlton.
- I have also had discussions with faculty members at Schulich and the University of Winnipeg regarding brand/marketing communications courses they were offering. Instructors indicated an interest desire to incorporate elements of Laurier’s Brand Communication courses into their programs.



## Teaching Materials Development

Over the past academic year, we scheduled 20 live-case exercises in which practitioners came into the classroom and worked with students in the Brand Communication program on actual marketing issues.

In October of this year, I will be presenting a branding case ("Graf Hockey") at the North American Case Research (NACRA) conference in Victoria, British Columbia. Cases accepted at the conference are published in the NACRA proceedings and gain exposure to a wide academic audience. The conference is competitive, meaning cases must be peer reviewed and accepted.

Our goal moving forward is to submit at least one branding case every year to the NACRA conference and also to the Administrative Sciences Association of Canada (ASAC) conference. This will ensure that cases receive peer feedback to ensure quality—but, most importantly, reach a wide audience of instructors seeking Canadian brand cases for their courses.

## Media Presence

- We were contacted by CBC International for an interview regarding the 2012 Brand Sparks Consumer Study supporting the Best New Products Awards. The study received responses from 100,000 Canadians. Brand Sparks now identifies Laurier's School of Business & Economics as their research partner on this and other studies they conduct.
- I was contacted by the Globe and Mail to provide comments in a Report on Business article entitled "How to create a brand: five tips".
- Additionally, I was contacted by Canadian Business for comments on an article regarding the branding of Ferrari.
- One of the projects in the *Social Networks and Marketing* course involved the creation of a social media strategy for the Brand Communication program. Students developed a test blog site ([discussmarketingcanada@blogspot.ca](mailto:discussmarketingcanada@blogspot.ca)) and promoted the site via Twitter and connected with a You Tube channel as part of the project. The initial promotion was aimed at students at Laurier and IVEY (where they had some connections). They reached about 30 followers within one week. The project provided excellent feedback and insights to assist in the creation and launch of the formal site which is under development. We are currently working to line up potential contributors and content to enrich the site before launch.

## Advisory Council

Over the past year, we have come into contact with a number of colleagues who have agreed to provide the benefit of their experience and insight into our curriculum development and contact. Our goal is to develop a range of advisors with experience across academics and key industries to provide a breadth of expertise. We will accommodate the level of involvement to the availability of council members but hope to enlist our advisors in annual symposiums and conferences; guest blogging; guest lecturing and as an expert panel to consult on key issues as needed.

Over the next year our advisory council will grow as new contacts are made and more industry leaders come into contact with our program.

1. Dr. Lindsay McShane (Associate Professor, Carlton)
2. Dr. Tim Dewhirst (Associate Professor, Guelph)
3. Dr. Sara Wilner (Associate Professor, Laurier)
4. Andy Mcauley (Chairman, Union Creative)
5. Richard Burjaw (Vice President, Brand, Category Marketing and Food Services, Starbucks)
6. Lindsay Duffield (President, Jaguar Landrover Canada)
7. David Bigioni (Vice-President, Marketing, Molson Coors)
8. Brian Brown (Vice-President, Marketing, Unitron)
9. Ian MacKellar (Vice-President, Ogilvy Mathers)

## Conclusion

In the 2012-13 academic year, the Brand Communication program consolidated and fully integrated the changes from last year: new courses, new faculty and continued refinement of course content. We were also able to push forward on significant curriculum changes that leave us poised to build a platform for a truly innovative brand marketing program.

The 2013-14 academic year will see a great deal of time and effort invested in course development and content management in preparation for the upcoming curriculum overhaul. The school is also poised for some significant announcements that will help shed light on the Brand Communication program to a wider community.