# **MKT 382 (Unique #05495) STRATEGIC BRANDING**

# Spring Semester 2021

# MW 12:30pm – 1:45pm

# RRH 4.314

This course is scheduled to be conducted in a hybrid format.  As permitted by prevailing health and safety conditions, we will hold in-person class sessions that meet classroom density requirements.  Students may choose to attend all sessions remotely with Zoom, and we will do our best to ensure that those students have an active role participating in the course.  A few classes will be designated as online-only – for example, to facilitate group presentations or the inclusion of a remote guest speaker.

**Instructor**

Prof. Steven M. Brister (“Prof. Brister”) Pronouns: he/him/his

Office: CBA 6.432D (south side of CBA near the Kelleher Center for Entrepreneurship)

Office Hours: 2:00 – 3:00pm Monday (on Zoom), or by appointment

UT Email: steven.brister@mccombs.utexas.edu

Professor’s Mobile/Text (For emergencies only, please): 213-804-4676

**Teaching Assistant**

Tanisha Panditharatne, 2nd Year MBA student Pronouns: she/her/hers

UT Email: Tanisha.Panditharatne@mba21.mccombs.utexas.edu

TA’s Mobile/Text (For emergencies only, please): 512-412-4849

**CONTACT**

The Canvas website for this class is the main source for important course information and communications including updates to the course schedule, assigned readings, and key slides for the lectures. Please enable Canvas notifications so you will be aware of important announcements, discussions, and grade posts.

**Canvas messages are the best way to contact the professor and TA outside of class sessions or office hours.** We will respond to Canvas messages daily (on weekdays).

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The most valuable asset many firms have is their brand. In our global economy, product and service offerings can be replicated by competing firms, while the knowledge and attitudes consumers have about brands is not easily duplicated. Therefore many companies recognize that the investment they make in the creation and communication of their brand will become a strategic differentiator in the future.

This course will focus on the art and science of branding as a fundamental element of marketing strategy.  Students will get hands-on experience with strategies, frameworks, and specific tactics for building, leveraging, and defending strong brands in any industry.  All aspects covered will be in the context of actual applications of brand concepts to real-world challenges.  Discussions will focus on current opportunities and challenges facing brand managers in a variety of industries and markets.

**COURSE OVERVIEW**

In order to focus the class experience on deeper understanding of the core concepts and real-world applications, **students are expected to complete the assigned readings in advance**.

Class sessions will typically consist of brief class lectures reinforcing key points from the readings, followed by interactive case discussions and individual/team exercises that apply the concepts to real-world situations. Lecture Slidesfor each class session will be posted on Canvas prior to class, and you are encouraged to download and preview them prior to class. However, these slides will not contain the depth of information conveyed in class.

Each student will be asked to participate actively in class sessions, and to not just be a passive observer. Case preparation homework assignments will encourage students to form their opinions and questions about the case material in advance. If I call upon you directly in a class discussion, it is not an attempt to embarrass you. Knowing that you come from various backgrounds and experiences, I simply hope that each of you will contribute to the depth of knowledge shared in this class.

Guest speakers will connect course topics to their experience in the real world at a few points during the semester.

**REQUIRED READING MATERIALS**

**Kellogg on Branding in a Hyper-Connected World**(~$25)edited by Alice M. Tybout and Tim Calkins, available through Amazon and other online retailers. (Note: The prior version of this book was published in 2003, and although it is available at no charge as an e-book through the UT Libraries website, it is significantly outdated.)

The **Strategic Branding Readings** (~$35) and **Strategic Branding** **Cases** (~$25) packets are available online from Harvard Business Press. You can access this resource through the links provided on Canvas. Each student must purchase their own copy of the HBP reading and case packets. Please do not share copies of these materials, as this is a violation of copyright.

The specific required and supplemental readings for each class session will be noted within each Canvas module, and may include PDFs or URL links to **Additional Business Press Articles** (from The Wall Street Journal, NY Times, Adweek, etc.).

**REQUIRED DEVICES**

Due to the hybrid format of this course, students will need to have a laptop computer (or tablet) with a webcam and microphone, and a stable high-speed internet connection. Many class sessions will include breakout group meetings on Zoom, so students attending class in-person will need to have headphones or earbuds available.

Please notify Prof. Brister immediately if you lack the appropriate technology, as UT resources are available to assist you.

**ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING**

Your grade in the course will be determined by your performance on a team-oriented multi-phase brand audit project, case-based homework assignments, and your contributions to class discussions.

Brand Audit Project Multiple Due Dates 60%

Case-Based Homework Assignments Multiple Due Dates 20%

Class Discussion Contributions Throughout Semester 20%

100%

Grades will follow plus/minus system with these cut-offs. A: 100-93, A-: 92-90, B+: 89-87, B: 86-83, B-: 82-80 = B-, C+: 79-77, C: 76-73, C-: 72-70, D+: 69-67, D: 66-63, D-: 62-60, F: 59 or lower. (Decimals will be not be rounded up or down – an 89.7 average will earn you a B+, not an A-.)

Please note that late work will not be accepted, except as made necessary by illness or a significant emergency. Any requests for late submission of work should be made directly to Prof. Brister, preferably well in advance of the due date.

Brand Audit Team Project (60% of Final Grade)

Each student will participate in the development of a multi-phase brand audit project as part of a team. In order to maximize the diversity of backgrounds on each team, Prof. Brister and the TA will manage the team assignments. Each team will choose a different brand to study, and at the midpoint and end of the semester these teams will present their insights and recommendations to the entire class.

The purpose of this assignment is to help develop your brand research and analysis skills, and to allow students to apply multiple branding concepts to a real world business case. More detailed information on this project will be distributed early in the semester.

Brand Audit Project Components:

1. Brand Challenge Identification (Team) **Thursday 2/4** For Review & Approval Only

* Each team will identify 3 brands with significant branding challenges for possible audit, based on the team’s interests and preliminary research.
  + Format: 1-2 page Word document (apx. ½ page per brand)

1. Brand Meaning Report (Individual) **Wednesday 2/17** 5% of Final Grade

* Each team member will conduct 2 one-on-one in-depth interviews with target market consumers to identify brand associations and assess their strength, favorability and uniqueness.
  + Format: Word document with summary of consumer-based brand equity components based on analysis of your interviews, along with full interview notes. Idea length: 2 page summary, plus interview notes.

1. Brand Audit Report (Team) **Friday 3/5** 15% of Final Grade

* Based on extensive research, analysis and collaboration, each team will complete a comprehensive Brand Audit report that details your team’s analysis and findings regarding the brand’s current situation.
  + Format: Apx. 15 page professional document that summarizes (in key graphics) and describes (in text narrative) your team’s findings for each major aspect of the brand. You may choose to submit in a variety of formats (PowerPoint presentation in notes view, Word document with graphics, magazine-style publication, etc.), but you must include both visual summaries and text narrative.

1. Brand Recommendations Research (Team) **Friday 4/23** 5% of Final Grade

* Each team will develop, field and analyze a survey that probes Brand Challenges, Consumer-Based Brand Equity, and the team’s brand development recommendations.
  + Format: Word document (2-3 pages) with topline results from survey, accompanied by a spreadsheet with full (formatted) survey data

1. Brand Recommendations Report (Team) **Friday 4/30** 15% of Final Grade

* Each team will develop 3-4 specific brand development strategies (with supporting tactics) that address the brand’s challenges.
  + Format: Apx. 5-6 page professional document that details the team’s recommendations concerning how the brand should address its challenges over the next few years.

1. Recommendations Presentation (Team) **Mon 5/3 & Wed 5/5** 10% of Final Grade

* Teams will present an executive summary (PowerPoint or other presentation software) of their audit focused primarily on their brand development recommendations.
  + Format: A 15-minute online presentation (supported by presentation slides) that explains your team’s recommended strategic solutions for the brand’s challenges.

1. Individual Contribution to Team **Friday 5/7**  10% of Final Grade

* Each student will receive an individual contribution grade based on self-evaluation, peer evaluations, and professor/TA observations.

Case-Based Homework Assignments (20% of Final Grade)

For each of the 8 assigned cases, a set of homework questions will be provided. You will need to draft your answers to these questions, and submit a 1-2 page Word document via Canvas prior to class. These are not full/formal case briefings. For some cases you will answer a few specific questions, and for others you will write a brief decision analysis memo.

To receive credit for each assignment, you must submit your responses online through Canvas prior to the start of class. These homework assignments will receive points based on the following criteria:

* 3 points = Excellent level of completion
* 2 points = Average level of completion
* 1 point = Minimum level of completion
* 0 points = Insufficient level of completion/Missing

Late assignments will not be accepted; however, you will receive credit for all homework submitted prior to class even if you are unable to attend. Your lowest homework assignment score will be dropped, for example if you were unable to complete the case homework prior to class.

Students should be aware that these assignments may be submitted to a plagiarism detection tool such as Turnitin.com. Turnitin is a software resource intended to address plagiarism and improper citation. The software works by cross-referencing submitted materials with an archived database of journals, essay, newspaper articles, books, and other published work. In addition, other methods may be used to determine the originality of the paper. This software is not intended to replace or substitute for the faculty member's judgment regarding detection of plagiarism.

The final homework grade for each student will be calculated based on their total points as a percentage of the potential homework points. For example, if a student earns 3 points on each of five assignments, 2 points on each of two assignments, and does not complete one assignment, they have earned 19 points out of a maximum of 21, and will receive a grade of 90.5.

Class Discussion Contributions (20% of Final Grade)

Each student’s contributions to class discussions will be evaluated based on quality, i.e., how it adds to the learning experience of the course. Quality is not necessarily a function of quantity.

Students who participate in in-person classes remotely via Zoom will be encouraged to contribute to the discussion as equal partners. Integrating remote Zoom participation into the classroom will be a new experience for many of us, so everyone is encouraged to submit their ideas for making this situation work as well as possible!

The following guidelines will be used in evaluating a student’s contribution to each class:

*Outstanding (3 points):* Contributions provided important insights and well as fruitful direction for the class. Arguments were well-supported and persuasively presented. If this student had not participated, the quality of the class discussion would have been significantly diminished.

*Good (2):* Contributions were on-target, fairly well-supported and persuasive. If this student had participated, the quality of the class discussion would have been slightly diminished.

*Observing Non-Participant (1):* Contributed nothing to the class discussion, i.e., a student is present (in-class or online) but is silent.

*Repetitive/Obvious (0):* Student’s comments were obvious and repetitive, and did not add value to the discussion. (Note this means there is a penalty for taking up “airtime” without value.)

*Absent (0):* Learning is enhanced through in-class discussions, so consistent attendance (in class or online) is required to get the most out of the course. Students who are unable to attend specific class sessions will be able to the recording by request.

Note that class contribution points may be deducted at the discretion of the professor and TA for inappropriate behavior in class or online.

The final class discussion contributions grades will be determined by a curve with the median class points earning a 90, and the remaining grades typically distributed between 80 and 100. An update on your participation points and the class average will be provided at the mid-point of the semester.

**COURSE ENVIRONMENT**

Each student should take personal responsibility for helping create a positive, productive class environment. For in-person attendance, this includes common courtesies such as arriving on time, silencing your cell phone, and refraining from texting, eating and having personal conversations during class. In the online classroom environment, this includes refraining from interruptions and other distractions. Please do your best to get the most our of each class session by avoiding multi-tasking, checking email, messaging, etc.

Use of personal digital devices (i.e., laptops, tablets, smartphones, etc.) during class should be limited to activities that support the course’s learning objectives – taking notes, researching/providing information relevant to class discussions (assuming it does not take time and attention away from class activities), and accessing class material on Canvas.

Due to the unique hybrid nature of this course, it is critical that all students make a effort to get to know all of their classmates, and that they help the instructor build a learning community that is fully inclusive and that respects the perspectives and input of all students.

**DIVERSITY & INCLUSION**

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, that students’ learning needs be addressed and that the diversity that students bring to this class can be comfortably expressed and be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit to all students. Please come to me at any time with any concerns.

**INSTRUCTOR BIO**

I grew up in Waco, TX and earned an MBA in Marketing from the University of Texas after completing a BA degree in Economics and History at Duke University. A few years ago, I returned to UT in order to share marketing insights from my professional experience with the next generation of marketing and business leaders.

I began my marketing career by working at several advertising, direct marketing and branding agencies, including Leo Burnett (Chicago) and Landor Associates (San Francisco). My first “client-side” experience was at DirecTV (Los Angeles), where I led the customer acquisition and e-business marketing teams. Later, I served as a Regional VP of Marketing for Time Warner Cable (Los Angeles), with responsibility for marketing functions including brand development, product marketing, customer acquisition and retention, and revenue development.

I keep busy outside of class with administrative responsibilities (as Asst. Chair of the Marketing Department) and with consulting engagements. For example, I recently completed a year-long engagement serving as the interim Chief Marketing Officer for the Hideaway Report. And a few years prior, I launched my own entrepreneurial venture, GayFamilyTrips.com.

My personal interests include travel, outdoor fitness (running, hiking, bicycling, paddling and swimming), cooking, reading, and listening to music.

**PRELIMINARY Course Schedule**

A roadmap for course content is outlined below, but is subject to change.

Students should refer the course’s Canvas website for detailed, up-to-date information and the assigned readings for each class period. Students are responsible for monitoring announcements made in class and on Canvas for specific changes in the schedule.



**McCombs Classroom Professionalism Policy**

The highest professional standards are expected of all members of the McCombs community. The collective class reputation and the value of the Texas MBA experience hinges on this. You should treat the Texas MBA classroom as you would a corporate boardroom. Faculty are expected to be professional and prepared to deliver value for each and every class session. Students are expected to be professional in all respects.

The Texas MBA classroom experience is enhanced when:

* **Students arrive on time.** On time arrival ensures that classes are able to start and finish at the scheduled time. On time arrival shows respect for both fellow students and faculty and it enhances learning by reducing avoidable distractions.
* **Students display their name cards.** This permits fellow students and faculty to learn names, enhancing opportunities for community building and evaluation of in-class contributions.
* **Students are fully prepared for each class.** Much of the learning in the Texas MBA program takes place during classroom discussions. When students are not prepared, they cannot contribute to the overall learning process. This affects not only the individual, but their peers who count on them, as well.
* **Students respect the views and opinions of their colleagues.** Disagreement and debate are encouraged. Intolerance for the views of others is unacceptable.
* **Students do not confuse the classroom for the cafeteria.** The classroom (boardroom) is not the place to eat your breakfast tacos, wraps, sweet potato fries, or otherwise set up for a picnic. Please plan accordingly. Recognizing that back-to-back classes sometimes take place over the lunch hour, energy bars and similar snacks are permitted. Please be respectful of your fellow students and faculty in your choices.
* **Students minimize unscheduled personal breaks.** The learning environment improves when disruptions are limited.
* **Students attend the class section to which they are registered.** Learning is enhanced when class sizes are optimized. Limits are set to ensure a quality experience. When section hopping takes place some classes become too large and it becomes difficult to contribute. When they are too small, the breadth of experience and opinion suffers.
* **Technology is used to enhance the class experience.** When students are surfing the web, responding to e-mail, instant messaging each other, and otherwise not devoting their full attention to the topic at hand they are doing themselves and their peers a major disservice. Those around them face additional distraction. Fellow students cannot benefit from the insights of the students who are not engaged. Faculty office hours are spent going over class material with students who chose not to pay attention, rather than truly adding value by helping students who want a better understanding of the material or want to explore the issues in more depth. Students with real needs may not be able to obtain adequate help if faculty time is spent repeating what was said in class. There are often cases where learning is enhanced by the use of technology in class. Faculty will let you know when it is appropriate.
* **Phones and wireless devices are turned off.** We’ve all heard the annoying ringing in the middle of a meeting. Not only is it not professional, it cuts off the flow of discussion when the search for the offender begins. When a true need to communicate with someone outside of class exists (e.g., for some medical need) please inform the professor prior to class.

**Zoom Professionalism and Etiquette**

Following are some best practices for making sure we are working together to create an efficient,effective, respectful, and ultimately enjoyable classroom when accessing remotely:

* Keep your video on at all times.
* Be mindful of your surroundings when on camera to minimize distractions.
* Avoid display of inappropriate materials or expressions, either visual, textual, or otherwise. Such displays may be subject to disciplinary action.
* Turn your camera off when leaving the meeting temporarily and use the away feedback icon.
* Include a professional photo of yourself for your Zoom profile picture. This photo will be visible during class sessions, if you keep your video off.
* Mute yourself unless you are speaking. This will reduce background or feedback noise and limit distractions.
* Pose questions or comments by using the “raise” your hand feature or typing in the chat window. Try to keep questions and comments brief, especially in large classes.
* Turn off your video if the video or audio is choppy. After the class or meeting, try these [Internet Connection Tips](https://wikis.utexas.edu/display/MSBTech/Internet+Connection+Tips).
* Use the most reliable WIFI you can access. If you are experiencing problems with your internet connection, here are some [Internet Connection Tips](https://wikis.utexas.edu/display/MSBTech/Internet+Connection+Tips).

For more information, please see [Zoom Etiquette](https://wikis.utexas.edu/display/MSBTech/Zoom+Etiquette)

**Classroom Policies**

**Statement on Learning Success**

Your success in this class is important to me. We will all need accommodations because we all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we’ll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. I also encourage you to reach out to the student resources available through UT. Many are listed on this syllabus, but I am happy to connect you with a person or Center if you would like.

**Religious Holy Days**

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

**Classroom Safety**

We will all need to make some adjustments in order to benefit from in-person classroom interactions in a safe and healthy manner. Our best protections against spreading COVID-19 on campus are masks (defined as cloth face coverings) and staying home if you are showing symptoms. Therefore, for the benefit of everyone, this is means that all students are required to follow two important rules.

• Every student must wear a cloth face covering properly in class and in all campus buildings at all times.

• Every student must engage in documented daily symptom screening. This means that each class day in which on campus activities occur, students must upload certification from the symptom tracking app and confirm that they completed their symptom screening for that day to Canvas. Students should not upload the results of that screening, just the certificate that they completed it. If the symptom tracking app recommends that the student isolate rather than coming to class, then students must not return to class until cleared by a medical professional.

• Information regarding [safety protocols with and without symptoms](https://www.healthyhorns.utexas.edu/images/pdf/HANDOUT_SocialDistancingToIsolation_COVID-19_2020.pdf) can be [found here.](https://www.healthyhorns.utexas.edu/images/pdf/HANDOUT_SocialDistancingToIsolation_COVID-19_2020.pdf)

• COVID-19 violations can be reported [here](https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/safetyrules.php).

If a student is not wearing a cloth face covering properly in the classroom (or any UT building), that student must leave the classroom (and building). If the student refuses to wear a cloth face covering, class will be dismissed for the remainder of the period, and the student will be subject to disciplinary action as set forth in the university’s Institutional Rules/General Conduct 11-404(a)(3). Students who have a condition that precludes the wearing of a cloth face covering must follow the procedures for [obtaining an accommodation](https://orientation.utexas.edu/students-with-disabilities) working with [Services for Students with Disabilities.](https://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/)

Other guidelines include:

• Students in A/B cohort classes should attend their in-person section only on the day and at the time that they are scheduled to attend.

• Students should not alter the layout of a classroom under any circumstances from its original configuration that is designed to maintain social distancing guidelines.

• Students should remain outside the building until the passing time prior to their designated class time. Use designated campus study areas as needed.

• Consumption of food and drink is not allowed in classrooms or public areas of university buildings except for designated break areas.

• Enter the building at the designated entrances. Use the hand sanitizer as provided or your own personal hand sanitizer after entering the building.

• Follow the corridor and stairway directional signage where applicable, maintain proper social distancing and noted paths of travel.

• All physically-able students should use stairs whenever possible. If an elevator is required there should be no more than the number of occupants noted on the elevator signage in the elevator at a time, maintaining social distancing.

• All classrooms doors should remain propped open before, during, and after class if it is not disruptive. This decision is at the discretion of the instructor using the classroom.

• Students should enter the classroom at the designated entrance and fill the room by row from the first row to the last row and from the seat furthest from the entrance to the seat closest.

• Only specific seats in classrooms will be available due to social distancing requirements.

• Students should carry their own personal sanitizing wipes to ensure that they can clean surface areas including classroom stations as needed. Wipes should be disposed of after class in the nearest trash receptacle.

• Students should exit the building immediately after the class completes at the designated exit. Each student should exit the room by row from the last row to the first row and from the seat nearest the exit to the seat furthest from the exit. Students who wish to speak with the instructor after class should do so at the location that will be designated by the instructor outside the building so that the next class can get set up and social distancing can be maintained.

• Dispose of any waste after class in the nearest trash receptacle.

• Exit the building at the nearest designated exit. Use the hand sanitizer as provided or your own personal hand sanitizer after exiting the building.

**COVID Caveats**: To help keep everyone at UT and in our community safe, it is critical that students (and faculty and staff) report COVID-19 symptoms and testing, regardless of test results, to the HealthPoint Occupational Health Program (OHP) as soon as possible. Please see this [link](https://hr.utexas.edu/current/services/occupational-health-program) to understand what needs to be reported.  In addition, to help understand what to do if a fellow student in the class (or the instructor or TA) tests positive for COVID, see this [University Health Services link](https://healthyhorns.utexas.edu/coronavirus_exposure_action_chart.html).

**Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited**

Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited: No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class unless you have my explicit, written permission. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University’s Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. I am well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in sanctions, including failure in the course.

**FERPA and Class Recordings**

Class recordings are reserved only for students in this class for educational purposes and are protected under FERPA. The recordings should not be shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings.

**Student Rights & Responsibilities**

* You have a right to a learning environment that supports mental and physical wellness.
* You have a right to respect.
* You have a right to be assessed and graded fairly.
* You have a right to freedom of opinion and expression.
* You have a right to privacy and confidentiality.
* You have a right to meaningful and equal participation, to self-organize groups to improve your learning environment.
* You have a right to learn in an environment that is welcoming to all people. No student shall be isolated, excluded or diminished in any way.

With these rights come responsibilities:

* You are responsible for taking care of yourself, managing your time, and communicating with the teaching team and with others if things start to feel out of control or overwhelming.
* You are responsible for acting in a way that is worthy of respect and always respectful of others. • Your experience with this course is directly related to the quality of the energy that you bring to it, and your energy shapes the quality of your peers’ experiences.
* You are responsible for creating an inclusive environment and for speaking up when someone is excluded.
* You are responsible for holding yourself accountable to these standards, holding each other to these standards, and holding the teaching team accountable as well.

**Personal Pronoun Preference**

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student’s legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by a name different than what appears on the roster, and by the gender pronouns you use. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

**University Policies**

**Academic Integrity**

Each student in the course is expected to abide by the University of Texas Honor Code: “As a student of The University of Texas at Austin, I shall abide by the core values of the University and uphold academic integrity.” **Plagiarism is taken very seriously at UT**. Therefore, if you use words or ideas that are not your own (or that you have used in previous class), you must cite your sources. Otherwise you will be guilty of plagiarism and subject to academic disciplinary action, including failure of the course. You are responsible for understanding UT’s Academic Honesty and the University Honor Code which can be found at the following web address: [deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/)

**University Resources for Students**

Your success in this class is important to me. We will all need accommodations because we all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we’ll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. There are also a range of resources on campus:

**Services for Students with Disabilities**

This class respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds, identities, and abilities. If there are circumstances that make our learning environment and activities difficult, if you have medical information that you need to share with me, or if you need specific arrangements in case the building needs to be evacuated, please let me know. I am committed to creating an effective learning environment for all students, but I can only do so if you discuss your needs with me as early as possible. I promise to maintain the confidentiality of these discussions. If appropriate, also contact Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329- 3986 (video phone). [diversity.utexas.edu/disability/about](http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/about/)

**Counseling and Mental Health Center**

Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress.

All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone. There are many helpful resources available on campus and an important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Asking for support sooner rather than later is often helpful.

If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings like anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support. [cmhc.utexas.edu/individualcounseling.html](http://cmhc.utexas.edu/individualcounseling.html)

**Student Emergency Services:**

If at any time you experience an emergency that necessitates your absence from a class requirement (e.g., attendance, assignment submission, or exam), please report your circumstances and absence via the Student Emergency Services website: [deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/)

**Important Safety Information**

If you have concerns about the safety or behavior of fellow students, TAs or Professors, call BCAL (the Behavior Concerns Advice Line): 512-232-5050. Your call can be anonymous. If something doesn’t feel right – it probably isn’t. Trust your instincts and share your concerns.

**Title IX Reporting**

Title IX is a federal law that protects against sex and gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual misconduct, dating/domestic violence and stalking at federally funded educational institutions. UT Austin is committed to fostering a learning and working environment free from discrimination in all its forms. When sexual misconduct occurs in our community, the university can:

1. Intervene to prevent harmful behavior from continuing or escalating.
2. Provide support and remedies to students and employees who have experienced harm or have become involved in a Title IX investigation.
3. Investigate and discipline violations of the university’s [relevant policies](https://titleix.utexas.edu/relevant-polices/).

Faculty members and certain staff members are considered “Responsible Employees” or “Mandatory Reporters,” which means that they are required to report violations of Title IX to the Title IX Coordinator. **I am a Responsible Employee and must report any Title IX related incidents** that are disclosed in writing, discussion, or one-on-one. Before talking with me, or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX related incident, be sure to ask whether they are a responsible employee. If you want to speak with someone for support or remedies without making an official report to the university, email [advocate@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:advocate@austin.utexas.edu) For more information about reporting options and resources, visit [titleix.utexas.edu](http://titleix.utexas.edu/) or contact the Title IX Office at [titleix@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:titleix@austin.utexas.edu).

The following recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the Office of Campus Safety and Security, 512-471-5767, [operations.utexas.edu/units/csas](http://operations.utexas.edu/units/csas/)

Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.

* Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
* Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.
* In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.
* Link to information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: [emergency.utexas.edu](http://emergency.utexas.edu/)