**IMC - Situation Analysis Paper Outline (20 points = 20% of course grade)**

Your starting point for this research should be the Raymond A. Mason School of Business Marketing Databases: <http://mason.wm.edu/about/library/subjects/marketing/index.php>

#### Introduction

#### Overview of topic to be addressed to include the selected organization and market opportunity.

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#### Organization Overview

Brief history of organization and industry/brand position (e.g., organization size, growth, image). Explain how this specific marketing opportunity is aligned with the brand of the organization.

Industry Background

Conduct an environmental analysis that examines political/legal, economic, social and technological factors that could have an impact on your selected market opportunity; may include a SWOT analysis to support this analysis if needed

Competitive Analysis

Analyze at least three different competitors, with an emphasis on brand positioning as well as the competitive message and media strategies of product(s) related to your selected market opportunity. State your competitive advantage in this marketplace relative to others. Note example competitive analysis posted on Blackboard.

#### Target Market

Select one particular market segment (the target market) and outline the buying decision process (Who buys the product? Who influences the purchase decision? Who makes the purchase decision?). Develop a user persona (demographic, geographic, psychographic, behavioral factors) with a tool such as https://xtensio.com/user-persona/ or <http://www.makemypersona.com>. Determine a positioning strategy and develop a positioning map (using brand logos as positioning points if possible).

Marketing Objectives

These are statements that reflect what the integrated marketing communications (IMC) program will achieve; in effect, the role the IMC program will play in the marketing effort. IMC objectives involve a desired audience response, which results from the process of consumer decision making. These objectives will drive the final marketing communications presentation.

Stated objectives should be SMART: specific, measurable, actionable, relevant and time-bound. An example SMART objective could be stated as: Increase *[category like website visits]* by *[number or percentage]* for *[target market]* through *[specific tactics]* as of *[date]*.

The final paper should be prepared as an MSWord document in accordance with APA format and should be 10 – 12 double-spaced pages not to include the title page, references or appendices for support data. There will be a deduction for papers that exceed this page limit.

The paper should include ***at least twelve relevant references*** from professional sources, academic journals, peer-reviewed articles and related (text)books. All references must be cited in APA format within the paper ***and*** in a comprehensive list of references at the end of the paper.