

SYLLABUS
MKT 415 A
Consumer Behavior (CB)
Fall, 2014

- Instructor:** Larry Garber
Office: KOBC 236
Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:30 to 1:30, and Thursdays by appointment. Or, just stick your head in the door whenever it's open.
Telephone: 336 278 5931
Email: lgarber@elon.edu
Readings:
 - All assigned readings associated with class discussion are available in Moodle on eReserve.
 - Any additional readings may be supplied in class or electronically.
Drop Date: April 1, 2015
Prerequisites:
 - Sophomore Standing
 - MKT 311

“The multitude cannot accept the idea of beauty in itself rather than many beautiful things, nor anything conceived in its essence instead of the many specific things. Thus the multitude cannot be philosophic.”

Plato

[Philosophy: The study of the fundamental nature of knowledge, reality, and existence, esp. when considered as an academic discipline.]

"Experience is a hard teacher because she gives the test first, the lesson afterwards."
Vernon Law, former major league pitcher

Course Objectives

Consumer Behavior is a review of conceptual models and empirical research in consumer behavior. The major topics include decision processes, social and cultural influences, information processing, and social and cultural issues in consumer behavior and marketing. Emphasis will be on the usefulness of the material in an applied or managerial context. It is intended that, through required reading and assignments and classroom lectures, the student will acquire:

- A basic knowledge of the ideas and concepts of consumer behavior.
- A finer appreciation for how a deep understanding of the individual consumer is integral to a true understanding of the marketplace.
- A greater ability to apply one's knowledge of the individual consumer to the solution of marketing and business problems.
- A greater ability to apply one's knowledge of the individual consumer to problems across sectors, whether public, private or not-for-profit, including the provision of social services and the formulation of public policy .
- A greater ability to communicate ideas and recommendations clearly and concisely, orally and in written form.

Consumer Behavior is an interesting subject to teach and to learn because we begin by already knowing more than a little about it; for we are, after all, consumers ourselves. On the other hand, it is a complex and eclectic subject in which no one has all the answers. You will find in the course of our discussions that many questions will have no definitive answer, and I assure you there will be others for which I will not know the answer. Therefore, we shall draw upon our collective expertise as consumers, and lively classroom discussion to explore the many facets of consumer behavior, to find what answers we can, and short of that, to find ways of framing problems in a practical and useful manner.

Exams

Lectures and discussion cannot cover all the material in the text, but instead will highlight key points and provide current examples relevant to their useful application in a managerial setting. The student is responsible for understanding how those discussions relate to the reading, and how all these elements fit into a coherent overall structure for the course; and, by extension, how a knowledge of these principles and their application may be useful to the practicing manager.

There are three midterm exams. Exam #1 will concern all assigned reading, lectures and discussion from the beginning of the course. Exams #2 and #3 will concern all material covered from the previous exam. Each exam will consist of short answer and essay questions.

The goals of the three exams are twofold: to consolidate the facts of applied marketing and, perhaps more importantly, to cause the student to put everything into perspective and to puzzle out how all the pieces of applied marketing fit into a comprehensive and usable whole. Exam dates are listed in the Class Schedule at the back of the syllabus.

The writing center at UNC had a useful online discussion of how to prepare for and take an essay exam. Here is its URL. We will also be discussing how to write an essay exam in class.

<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/essay-exams/>

Class Participation

No one, including me, knows everything about marketing and consumer behavior. They are subjects that are too vast, complex and dynamic to permit that. Fortunately, students of marketing know a great deal about the marketplace and consumers before they even step into the classroom, if for no other reasons but because they are human, and lifelong consumers. We will tap into that knowledge by sharing our marketplace experiences through active class discussion. All will be highly encouraged to contribute, so that we can better see how the strategic principles that are introduced in this course might apply to the array of particular circumstances that our collective personal experiences represent. Such sharing of knowledge and experiences will lead to a view of modern marketing practice and the consumer that is more complete, relevant and actionable than we might have otherwise.

To underscore its importance to this class, your substantive participation in class discussions, or lack thereof, will affect your final grade score, as shown in the above grading summary.

As a part of class participation, students are required to present a minimum of two current events during the course of the term, as described in the following.

Current Events

Each lecture class will begin with current events. Each student is required to present one. A current event can be anything recent in the world that has strategic marketing implications, particularly if it reveals implications concerning the behaviors of some set of consumers. Current events are to be found in the daily news, the media, the marketplace, an individual's or organization's evident marketing actions, or within yourself as a thinking, feeling, and acting consumer.

Students who wish to present on a given day will volunteer at that time. Presentation days will not be assigned, nor will topics. It is the student's responsibility to take the initiative on this task, to find and select topics, prepare them, come forward when they are ready to present, and make sure that she or he makes at least one presentation by the end of the term. I will not be overseeing this. A record of completed presentations will be kept up-to-date and available to the student in the Grade Center section of Moodle. It is recommended that you do not procrastinate until the last days, because, if others do, there may not be time enough to accommodate everyone.

On average, two or three current events will be presented on a given class day. They will not be formal, and need not be elaborately prepared. A minute or two's introduction of an interesting event with marketing implications and perhaps a thought or two, or maybe instead just a question or two, about its strategic ramifications is sufficient. We will spend roughly a half hour on current events each class day, though, if the discussions on some particular day are particularly interesting or germane, we may spend longer, or, if few or no students step forward on a given day, we may spend little or no time at all. If on a given day there are more students with items for presentation than there is time available, some individuals may be asked to hold their items until the next class.

Readings

Assigned readings are referenced in the Reading List posted separately on Moodle. Required and supplemental readings are arranged by lecture topic therein. The readings themselves are to be found electronically on eReserve, arranged in alphabetical order by title (the titles are in parentheses). Please obtain these and read prior to class lecture on related topic. Additional readings may be posted during the term.

Lecture Notes

Lecture notes and some other supporting documents will be posted in the Course Documents Section of Moodle through the course of the term.

Consumer Journal

You are to keep a journal in which you record all your daily purchases for the term (Don't worry, it is not nearly as intrusive to your life as it may sound!). There are three parts to your daily journal. The first is a simple listing of all your purchases. Second, you are to write a very complete description and analysis of one purchase per week, two pages in length. This one purchase that you select from all the others may be one that is notable in the sense that it is memorable to you; whether, for instance, because it was an expensive item that you considered carefully before deciding to purchase it; or because the item held great meaning for you in some personal way, such as a gift item; or because some particular event surrounding this purchase occurred, such as an argument with a sales person. Or, in the converse, this purchase may be not notable at all, very mundane, in fact, but this purchase, too, may reveal interesting behaviors, and you may wish to choose a mundane purchase to write about some weeks. These are only examples of many reasons why you might select a particular shopping or purchase occasion to describe in detail.

And third, you are to review your shopping behavior, analyze patterns that are interesting, and serve to describe in some particular way you as a consumer and a shopper, with respect to the concepts and models learned in the course, up to 5 pages in length. Such a self-description may apply to some particular shopping category, or some particular type of purchase occasion. This analysis come in written form as a summary placed at the end of your journal.

See the course schedule at the back of the syllabus for due dates.

Group Research Project

Each class member will be assigned to groups. Each group will select a topic or issue related to consumer behavior and marketing management. You will then write a one page description and submit it for approval by the date listed in the course schedule. In this description, you are to briefly identify your topic, explain its pertinence to consumer behavior, and state a set of objectives for your research, including managerial implications.

Subsequently, you are to research the approved topic thoroughly, and: 1) present a thoughtful analysis of the relevant aspects and implications, from a consumer behavior

standpoint, making reference to those parts of the course material that are relevant; and, 2) evaluate the implications that this information has for the marketing of some related product or service, up to and including the recommendation of some marketing strategy which is based on your findings and conclusions.

Your project is to be presented in both written and oral form. The written report is due during the exam period, and shall be no more than 20 pages of text, double-spaced, plus appendix, exhibits, references, and illustrations. Your research should include both practical and academic sources, at least 6, cited within the paper and referenced in a bibliography. The first page of your report shall be an abstract, which summarizes the findings and recommendations of your paper.

Oral presentations will be made during the assigned exam period, as stated in the class schedule following. They may include overheads or other audio visual aids where helpful. Though the material of the oral and written reports is identical, care should be taken that the presentations are tailored effectively for the respective media. For example, the oral presentation should not be a mere reading of the paper.

To provide guidance for the development of this project, and to prepare it for final presentation, two open classes are scheduled in which groups can meet with me to discuss the project. There also due dates for groups to declare a topic, and to turn submit their abstracts and reference for critique. Due dates are listed in the class schedule at the back. The declaration of topic and the abstract will not be graded at those times. They are opportunities for me to provide comment if I should have concerns about what your group is doing.

Grades

GRADING SUMMARY

Exam 1	22%
Exam 2	22%
Exam 3	22%
Consumer Journal	12%
<u>Group Research Project</u>	
Presentation	11%
Written Report	11%
TOTAL	100%
The above score may be adjusted up or down by as much as 10% according to the level and caliber of contributions to class discussion. Contribution includes presentation of current events, explained in the following.	+/-

Grade Scale

93-100	A	73-76.9	C
90-92.9	A-	70-72.9	C -
87-89.9	B+	67-69.9	D +
83-86.9	B	63-66.9	D
80-82.9	B-	60-62.9	D -
77-79.9	C+	Below 60	F

CLASS SCHEDULE
Lecture Topics and Associated Readings, Key Dates, Due Dates

Assigned readings are referenced in the Reading List posted separately on Moodle. Required and supplemental readings are arranged by lecture topic therein. The readings themselves are to be found electronically on eReserve, arranged in alphabetical order by title. Please obtain these and read prior to class lecture on related topic. Additional readings may be posted during the term.

#	Day	Date	Topic	Assignments
1	We	2/4	Introduction, Process	
2	Mo	2/9	Individual Decision Making	
3	We	2/11	Needs and Motivation	
4	Mo	2/16	“	
5	We	2/18	“	
6	Mo	2/23	Memory, Information Processing: System 2	
7	We	2/25	Library Research Orientation. In our classroom. Bring your laptop. Betty Garrison, Business Librarian, will acquaint you with some library resources and electronic databases that will be important resources for your term project research. These may include social science databases of particular value in this course, which concerns itself with individual and group behaviors.	
8	Mo	3/2	Memory, Info. Proc. (cont.)	Topics Due
9	We	3/4	“	
10	Mo	3/9	Automatic Processing: System 1	
11	We	3/11	EXAM 1	
12	Mo	3/16	Consumer Neuroscience	
13	We	3/18	Learning, Loyalty, Engagement	
	Mo	3/23	No Class – Spring Break	Enjoy!
	We	3/25	No Class – Spring Break	Enjoy!
14	Mo	3/30	Learning (cont.)	
15	We	4/1	Perception	Abstract Due

	Mo	4/6	No Class – Easter	Enjoy!
16	We	4/8	Perception (cont.)	
17	Mo	4/13	Attitude Change	
18	We	4/15	EXAM 2	
19	Mo	4/20	Personality	
20	We	4/22	“	Consumer Journals Due
21	Mo	4/27	Social Influences/Computer Mediated Sociability	
22	We	4/29	“	
23	Mo	5/4	TBA	
24	We	5/6	TBA	
56	Mo	5/11	EXAM 3	
Final Exam Period: Group Presentations: Friday, 5/15, 3-6				