Consumer Behavior

This course covers the consumer behavior both as a human thought and action and as a field of study that is developing an accumulated body of knowledge. You will learn about consumer behavior as the set of value-seeking activities that take place as people go about addressing realized needs. Emphasis is placed on the modern day importance of consumer behavior and the new “corporate view” of the function. Additionally, you will be exposed to the view of HRM from the perspective of both management and subordinate employees. Topics include Value and the Consumer Behavior Value Framework, Consumer Learning, Comprehension, Memory and Cognitive Learning, Motivation, Personality, Lifestyles and much more. You will be exposed to practical situations and problem solving. Other critical areas such as Consumer Culture, Microcultures, Group Influence and Decision-Making will also be explored.

Required Text


Note: It is the student’s responsibility to make initial contact with the instructor via email (preferred) or phone. Students must have a valid working email address on file with the instructor.

Assessment & Grading Scale

Final exam
One final exam will be given during the term. The exam is cumulative, and requires thoughtful application of our studies to a real-world problem.

Participation Policy
You are expected to participate every week and to read the chapters, participate in discussion groups and complete the assignments that will be covered in class that week. There may be times when it is impossible to participate due to a long illness, a trip or an emergency. If you miss a week’s work, it is your responsibility to find out what was covered and to complete the assignments. Please contact me and we’ll work out the arrangements.
Discussion/Participation
Through discussions and written responses to questions, you are strongly encouraged to learn to think through your own and others' experiences and insights within the context of our discussions. In short, you are encouraged to demonstrate your internalization of our material for application in the real world. In this context, you are not being evaluated for reaching "right" conclusions, but for demonstrating your facility in forming arguments for any conclusions, given the material we will cover in class.

To give direct incentive to so engage, roughly 20% of your mark for the course will be comprised of my assessment of your classroom participation (discussions/emails) during the term. The point is not to create undue angst, but to determine your active engagement with the material in the context of the class.

Caveat
The syllabus is composed in good faith, with a schedule of readings, homework and discussions which will guide us throughout the term. Still, the instructor reserves the right to make adjustments to this schedule as deemed necessary for the overall enterprise of the class. Any changes will be communicated as far in advance as feasible, and you are responsible for knowing if and when any changes have been made.

Make-Ups
Make-Ups will be arranged only on good evidence of unavoidable absence from class (e.g. a specific doctor's note for illness or employer-arranged out-of-town business trip or other travel).

Grading
- Discussion 20%
- 4 Quizzes 20%
- Class Projects 15%
- Final 15%
- Written assignments 30%
- Total 100%*

* I’m open to and encourage additional learning opportunities that you’d like to pursue in the Consumer Behavior field. If you, for example, recommend a book to the class coupled with your written summary of the author’s intent, or you attend a forum at which a speaker addresses a class-related topic, or you initiate a discussion for the class to participate in, or you reference a journal article from a business magazine, please let me know. I will apply your experience/effort towards a higher grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Chapter 1-“Understanding Consumer Behavior”</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23-Introductions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Review Syllabus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Video on Consumer’s Union.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Homework-How Unilever’s Brands Connect with Consumers-</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Questions 1-3 on page 23, due Jan. 28.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Homework-Analyzing Consumer-Generated Content due Jan. 30.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Chapter 2—“Developing Information about Consumer Behavior”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28-Introduce semester projects</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Research methods</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Ethnic impact on consumerism</td>
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<td>-Consumer Behavior Research Methods (CBRM)</td>
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<td>Video on “Segmentation at Lake, Snell, Perry and Mermin”</td>
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<td>Discussion on “Unilever” assignment (from 1/23). Turn in assignment.</td>
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<td>In small groups, develop a list of the five levels of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (page 50) and provide an example of each level from the behaviors of each member of your group. Note the similarities and differences between the needs that emerge at each level. Explain how understanding these similarities and differences can be important to marketers.</td>
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<td>30-Presentations on “Consumer-Generated Content” (from Jan. 21)</td>
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<td>CBRM teams/individuals. Research method handed out.</td>
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<td>Flashcards on Chapter 2.</td>
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<td>Individually, select a high-involvement product you are interested in buying, such as a new car or a new computer system. Identify the factors that make this product personally relevant to you, such as how it relates to your specific goals or needs. Next, consider how product knowledge or experience, age, and money affect your ability to process marketing information about this product and make a purchase. Finally, analyze how the opportunity factors related to time, distraction, and information affect your behavior toward making this purchase. What can marketers of this type of product do to enhance your motivation, ability, and opportunity to buy from them?</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 3</th>
<th>Chapter 3—“Motivation, Ability and Opportunity”</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4-Quiz #1 (covers Chapters 1 &amp; 2)</td>
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<td>Video on “Activision”</td>
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<td>Discussion on “USAA” (from 1/30). Turn in assignment.</td>
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<td>Homework- Visit a local shopping mall and examine the interiors of two stores. Describe the physiological and psychological responses that different stores try to create. How do they achieve these responses through the use of color, brightness, and contrast? What other sensory stimuli do these stores use to encourage consumer response? 2 page paper due 2/19. Be ready to present.</td>
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<td>6-Flashcards on Chapter 3.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 4</th>
<th>Chapter 4—“Memory and Knowledge”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11-Video on “Lextant”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R&amp;E Presentation</td>
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<td>Discussion on “Under Armour”. Turn in assignment.</td>
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<td>Homework- Identify prototype brands in the following categories and explain why you believe they are prototypes: beer, soft drinks, candy, tennis shoes, and computers. You can do this individually or in groups of 2-4. The paper and presentation are due on Feb. 25.</td>
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<td>13-Flashcards on Chapter 4.</td>
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<td>In-class-Maximizing Marketing Stimulus (CD)</td>
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<td>Week</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
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</tbody>
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| 5    | **Homework:** “Nostalgia Marketing”, Questions 1-3, pages 120-121. Due 2/19.  
19 - Video on “Virtual Showcase”  
Presentations and papers on store visits (from 2/4).  
R & E Presentation  
Discussion on “Nostalgia Marketing”  
20 - CBRM presentations  
Flashcards on Chapter 5.  
**Homework:** “Volkswagen”, Questions 1-4, pages 149-150. Due 2/27.  
**Homework:** Find two ads that you think will generate a fair number of cognitive responses from consumers. Show these ads to a sample of 7 consumers and ask them to think out loud about their reactions while reading the ads. Record these responses. Then classify the responses into the categories of counterarguments, source derogations, support arguments, and affective responses. Use this information to answer the following questions: (a) What are the major strengths of each ad? (b) What are the major weaknesses of each ad? (c) How could each ad be improved? Can be done individually or in teams of 2-4. Due 3/4. |
| 6    | **Week 6**  
Chapter 6-“Attitudes Based on Low Effort”  
25 - Quiz #2 (covers Chapters 3, 4 & 5)  
Video on “The Advertising Council”  
R&E Presentation  
Prototype paper and presentation (from 2/11)  
27 - Discussion on “Volkswagen” (from 2/20)  
CBRM presentations  
Flashcards on Chapter 6.  
**Homework:** Interview a person who engages in personal selling for a business. Develop a short questionnaire that will identify the types of strategies they use to persuade consumers to buy particular products. First, ask some open-ended questions about how the salespeople try to influence consumers. Then ask some specific questions regarding the source and message factors discussed in the chapter. Be sure to ask how often the salespeople use each technique and how effective they think the techniques are. Summarize this information and answer the following questions: (a) Which types of persuasion techniques are most likely to be used in a personal selling situation? (b) Which message factors are most effective and why? (c) Which message factors are least effective and why? |
| 7    | **Week 7**  
Chapter 7-“Problem Recognition & Information Search”  
4 - Video on the “Second City”  
R&E Presentation  
Presentations on 2 ads viewed by 7 consumers (from 2/20)  
6 - CBRM presentations  
Flashcards on Chapter 7.  
**Spring Break** |
| 8    | **Week 8**  
Chapter 8-“Judgment and Decision-Making Based on High Effort” |
| Week | 18-Video on “Peet’s Coffee & Tea”  
R&E Presentation  
In small groups, select a high-effort decision situation. Now describe how a consumer would make this decision using each of the following: (a) compensatory brand-processing models, (b) compensatory attribute-processing models, (c) noncompensatory brand-processing models, and (d) noncompensatory attribute-processing models. Explain how you would design a marketing effort to influence each of these strategies.  
| 20-CBRM presentations  
Flashcards on Chapter 8.  
| Week 9 |  
Chapter 9-“Judgment and Decision-Making Based on Low Effort”  
25-Quiz #3 (covers Chapters 6, 7 & 8)  
Video on “Cold Stone Creamery”  
R&E Presentation  
Homework-Interview three consumers about their decision-making behavior for the following product categories: peanut butter, laundry detergent, canned vegetables, coffee, and ice cream. Ask the consumers to indicate (a) how much time and effort they take in making a decision and (b) how they select the brand they purchase (which choice tactics do they use?). Summarize the responses for each consumer individually and for all consumers; also, answer the following questions: (a) On average, how much time and effort do consumers spend on these decisions? (b) What are the major types of tactics employed for each category? (c) How do the tactics differ for the product categories? (d) Do consumers use the same or different tactics across product categories? (e) What are the marketing implications of your findings? Due 4/8.  
27-CBRM presentations  
Flashcards on Chapter 9.  
Discussion on Harley-Davidson (from 3/20)  
Homework-“Morton Salt”- Nearly a century ago, the manufacturers of Morton Salt charged its advertising agency with the task of designing an appropriate logo and a slogan for their product. The result was an enduring image in the consumption vocabulary of the average consumer: the Morton Umbrella Girl. Go to the Umbrella Girl’s web page at www.mortonsalt.com/heritage/mug.html, and read the history of Morton’s advertising. How does the slogan influence thought-based consumer decision making? Examine the logos that the company has used over the years. How might these influence feeling-based consumer decision making? Due 4/10.  
| Week 10 |  
Chapter 10-“Post Decision-Making”  
1-Video on “Culver’s Restaurants”  
R&E Presentation  
Homework- Interview one marketing professional, either by phone, email or in person. Ask her/him to describe in detail (1) how important satisfaction/dissatisfaction is to their business, (2) how they try to generate satisfaction, and (3) what kinds of experiences they have had with dissatisfied consumers, and how they handled these problems. Summarize your findings for
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 11   | Chapter 11—“Social Influences on Consumer Behavior”  
8-Video on “Ford”  
Report on interview with 3 consumers (from 3/25)  
Homework—“Black Friday/Cyber Monday”, 4 ?’s, pgs 322-323. Due 4/22.  
10-Semester Project Presentations  
Flashcards on Chapter 11.  
Discussion about marketing professional interviews (from 4/1)  
In class- Discuss the differences between normative and informational influence. Create a matrix in which you give marketing examples under conditions in which (1) normative influence is high but informational influence is low, (2) normative influence is low but informational influence is high, (3) both are high, and (4) both are low.  
Homework- No one knows a product category quite as well as an industry insider. That’s why many movie consumers go to Ain’t It Cool News (www.aintitcoolnews.com) for reviews by Harry Knowles, a quintessential Hollywood insider and self-appointed Movie Geek. Visit Harry’s website and check out the information provided there. Why is he regarded by many as an opinion leader? How well does Harry serve as an opinion leader for the average moviegoer? To what demographic group does Harry appeal most? Due 4/24. |
| 12   | Chapter 12—“Consumer Diversity”  
17-Quiz #4 (covers Chapters 9, 10 & 11)  
Video on “American Apparel”  
Semester Project Presentations  
Flashcards on Chapter 12.  
Homework- Pick a product or service category that individuals of all age groups consume. Conduct a research analysis of the marketing techniques used to attract the four demographic segments discussed in this chapter in the following areas: (a) brands or services offered, (b) package design, (c) advertising content, (d) media selection, (e) sales promotion, and (f) distribution strategy. Collect this information via a library search, a content analysis of advertising messages and media used, in-store visits, and interviews with marketers. Then answer the following questions: (a) |
| Week 13 | Chapter 13—“Household and Social Class Influences”  
22-Video on “JetBlue”  
Discussion on website for dissatisfied customers (from 4/3)  
Discussion on “Black Friday/Cyber Monday” (from 4/8)  
Homework—“IKEA”, 4 questions. Due 4/29  
In-class- A travel service has hired you to develop a marketing strategy for a vacation package. The company wants to offer different packages to different social classes. Develop a complete package and marketing strategy for each of the following: the upper class, the middle class, and the working class. Be sure to discuss (1) services offered (including destination, accommodations, and so on), (2) pricing, (3) the advertising message, and (4) media targeting. Summarize the key differences among the three marketing strategies.  
24-Semester Project Presentations  
Flashcards on Chapter 13.  
Discussion on “Ain’t It Cool News” (from 4/10)  
In-class-You have been assigned to develop a marketing strategy for a new fruit drink that provides high energy and is high in nutrients. It is also light and very refreshing, especially on a hot day. How would you market this product in different regions of the world? Develop a detailed marketing plan for one region that addresses the advertising message, media selection, distribution, and sales promotion. |
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| Week 14 | Chapter 14—“Psychographics: Values, Personality and Lifestyles”  
29-Video on “Washburn Guitars”  
Discussion on “IKEA” (from 4/22)  
In-class-VALS survey  
1. In small groups, develop a definition of values. Explain the distinction between a global value, a domain-specific value, an instrumental value, and a terminal value. Clarify the two ways in which the term terminal value is used.  
2. Explain how values are learned. Discuss what the terms assimilation and acculturation mean. Describe the characteristics of a society that stimulates assimilation.  
Homework—“Earache”, 4 questions, pages 406-407, Due 5/6.  
1-Semester Project Presentations  
Flashcards on Chapter 14.  
Presentations on research analysis (from 4/17) |
| Week 15 | Chapter 15—“Innovations: Adoption, Resistance and Diffusion”  
6-Video on “Harley-Davidson”  
Flashcards on Chapter 15.  
Discussion on “Earache” (from 4/29) |