

University of Guelph
Department of Marketing and Consumer Studies

MCS*2600: Fundamentals of Consumer Behaviour

FALL 2010
COURSE OUTLINE

Instructor: Raffi Sarmazian
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Class times: Section 03: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:00-2:20pm, MACS 209

Office hours: By appointment TA: TBA

Office : MINS, Room 259

Course Description

Organizations survive and achieve their goals by satisfying the needs and wants of consumers as well as or better than their competitors. This course examines consumer behaviours, the economic, social, cultural and psychological factors related to consumer behaviours, the evolution and change in behaviours and relationships, and the ways in which consumers respond to stimuli employed in the marketing of products, services and ideas.

The American Marketing Association defines *consumer behaviour* as "the dynamic interaction of affect and cognition, behavior, and environmental events by which human beings conduct the exchange aspects of their lives." More generally, consumer behaviour is a marriage between psychology and marketing. Understanding the psychology and behaviour of the consumer can help marketers determine whether new products are likely to be adopted or expect reactions to changes in the marketing mix.

This course has two main objectives: 1) introduce students with the classic concepts and theories of consumer behaviour; and 2) enable students to apply the concepts and theories to real world marketing problems and develop their own ideas about their future research.

Appeals Procedure: Refer to Undergraduate Calendar on the U of G website

Drop and Add: Refer to Undergraduate Calendar on the U of G website

Academic Misconduct: Refer to the following:
<http://www.webapps.ccs.uoguelph.ca/lc/AcademicIntegrity/>

Independent work is required on all individual assignments; Read the definition of academic misconduct and what constitutes academic misconduct in the online undergraduate calendar.

Course Format

A variety of methods to present the materials (e.g., lectures, cases, discussion, group project) will be utilized. Students are expected to do the required readings before coming to class each week.

Textbook

Schiffman, Kanuk, & Das (2010), Consumer Behaviour, Tenth Edition, Pearson/Prentice Hall

D2L

To access D2L, go to the homepage - <http://courselink.uoguelph.ca>, you will see the login links using your university ID and password.

Course materials for MCS*2600 will be posted on D2L. You will find course reminders and updates there. It is recommended that you download lecture notes from D2L prior to class to assist in your note-taking. You should check the website regularly for course reminders and updates.

Evaluation

1. Exams		60%
Midterm Exam	30%	
Final Exam	30%	
2. Case Report (individual)		10%
3. Group Project		27%
Presentation	12%	
Paper	15%	
4. Research Participation		3%
Total		100%
Individual component	73%	
Group component	27%	

This course follows the University grading scheme outlined in the University Calendar:

A+	90-100%	Excellent: An outstanding performance in which the student demonstrates a superior grasp of the subject matter, and an ability to go beyond the given material in a critical and constructive manner. The student demonstrates a high degree of creative and/or logical thinking, a superior ability to organize, to analyze, and to integrate ideas, and a thorough familiarity with the appropriate literature and techniques.
A	85-89	
A-	80-84	
B+	77-79	Good: A more than adequate performance in which the student demonstrates a thorough grasp of the subject matter, and an ability to organize and examine the material in a critical and constructive manner. The student demonstrates a good understanding of the relevant issues and a familiarity with the appropriate literature and techniques.
B	73-76	
B-	70-72	

C+	67-69	Acceptable: An adequate performance in which the student demonstrates a generally adequate grasp of the subject matter and a moderate ability to examine the material in a critical and constructive manner. The student displays an adequate understanding of the relevant issues, and a general familiarity with the appropriate literature and techniques.
C	63-66	
C-	60-62	
D+	57-59	Minimally acceptable: A barely adequate performance in which the student demonstrates a familiarity with the subject matter, but whose attempts to examine the material in a critical and constructive manner are only partially successful. The student displays some understanding of the relevant issues, and some familiarity with the appropriate literature and techniques.
D	53-56	
D-	50-52	
F	0-49	Fail: An inadequate performance.

Case Report

A case study is designed to give you a chance to apply concepts and theories you have learned in this course to a “real world” marketing context. A case study allows you to practice: (1) determining the facts of the case; (2) making inferences from the facts to more fully understand the dynamics of the situation; (3) defining the problem facing the organization in the case; (4) determining optional solutions; (5) determining decision criteria; (6) analyzing and assessing the optional solutions based on the decision criteria; and (7) making an optimal decision.

The case material will be announced in class by Week 6. You are required to write a 3-4 page case report. The report should be typed with one-inch margin, double-spaced, using a 12-point font. The report is due in class on November 18. **Late submissions will NOT be accepted for grading.**

The following framework should be used as a guideline for formal written reports of case analyses:

1. Statement of the central problem

Clearly define the basic problem in the situation. Subsidiary problems or related issues may also be concisely referenced in this section.

2. Analysis of the situation

The information and the facts provided in the case should be used to analyze the situation. The discussion should consider the following for relevance to the situation: the effects of environmental and/or market conditions, the consumer (trends, patterns of consumption, preferences, attitudes, etc.), competitive effects, internal and external company strengths and weaknesses.

The facts of the case should not be merely restated. The situation analysis should be well-organized (according to the issues faced in the situation), and only information specifically relevant to the problem at hand should be included. Students should go beyond the facts available in the case to demonstrate why this information is relevant to the problem at hand.

3. Identify alternative strategies

Based on your analyses, alternative strategies should be identified which provide a solution for the problem you have defined. Evaluate the pros and cons of each alternative. Make sure your alternatives are rational, specific, and creative, but able to be implemented. Identify your decision criteria.

4. Recommended course of action

Propose a course of action (should fall out of one of the alternative strategies you discussed above) comprising recommendations concerning marketing goals, strategies, an executional plan, impact on profitability, further research if needed, etc. Provide a succinct summary rationale for your recommendation. Include some specifics regarding how and when these recommendations may be implemented.

Midterm Exam and Final Exam

The midterm exam will include multiple choice questions and short answer questions. Even though the final exam covers the entire course, major emphasis will be on material since the mid-term.

Note: *Appropriate medical or compassionate documentation is required to receive academic consideration for being unable to take a midterm or final exam at the designed time, and you must notify the professor **at least one day in advance** that you will be unable to attend. Consideration with regard to the final exam will involve taking a make-up exam that you will arrange with your Academic Advisor.*

Research Participation

Students will sign up to participate in **one** research study offered by the Department of MCS. Available studies will be posted on D2L. The purpose of this study is to help students understand the research process underlying consumer decision-making in different situations. A one-page summary of your experience as a participant must be submitted to the instructor. In lieu of participating in a study, students may submit a 2-page summary of a research article that has appeared in either the *Journal of Consumer Research* or the *Journal of Consumer Psychology*. The research component for this course is worth 3% of your final grade.

Group Projects

Students will work in groups to undertake a major integrative project analyzing the consumer behaviour principles underlying a current product or brand and present their findings in the class. Groups of 4 or 5 should be formed by the end of the second week. Groups should schedule a meeting with the instructor by the 5th week to seek approval for their final presentation project. Each group is responsible for submitting a formal write-up of their group project, which will be graded by the instructor.

You will have the opportunity to evaluate your group member's contribution to the group work at the end of semester. This also means that your contribution will be evaluated by your peers. If it turns out that your contribution is substantially lower than your peers, you may not receive full credit for group work. If you have difficulty working with your group members during the semester, you are encouraged to attempt to resolve these issues within the group. As a last resort, you should meet the instructor in person during office hours. (Do not use email for this purpose.)

Details of the project requirements are provided in Appendix A of this course outline.

Course Evaluation

Course and instructor evaluation will be conducted by paper and pencil in-class at some point during the last 2 weeks of the course.

Class Schedule (Subject to change)

Week	Tuesday		Thursday	
	Topic	Reading	Topic	Reading
Intro Week			September 9 Course introduction Group formation Assignment of cases	Chapters 1, 2, 3
1	September 14 Choice of brand or service for project FINAL group and case assignments	Chapter 4	September 16 Library resource presentation: M.J. D'Elia	Chapter 5
2	September 21 Motivation and involvement Personality	Chapter 6	September 23 Perception Learning and Memory	Chapter 7
3	September 28 Memory	Chapters 10-11	September 30 Social influences	Chapters 12-13
4	October 5 Cultural influences		October 7 * Midterm review * <i>Meet with instructor by this date for approval to project topic</i>	Chapters 1- 13 (except NOT Chapters 8, 9)
5	October 12 * Midterm exam		October 14 * Case material made available and discussed	
6	October 19 Attitude Formation	Chapter 8	October 21	

7	October 26 Communication and Consumer Behaviour	Chapter 9	October 28 * Workshop session for case report – no formal class; instructor will be available in classroom during class time for questions	
8	November 2 Consumer Decision-making	Chapter 15	November 4 Marketing ethics and social responsibility	Chapter 16
9	November 9 <i>* Workshop session for project – no formal class; instructor will be available in classroom during class time for questions</i>		November 11 <i>* Workshop session for project – no formal class; instructor will be available in classroom during class time for questions</i>	
10	November 16 <i>Group presentations and Discussion</i>		November 18 <i>Group presentations and Discussion</i> * Case reports due	
11	November 23 <i>Group presentations and Discussion</i>		November 25 <i>Group presentations and Discussion</i>	
12	November 30		December 2 <i>Final written report of project due to instructor by 5pm.</i>	
Final Exam	December 13		8:30-10:30 am Room TBA	

Group Project

Overview

The Group project is meant to have you synthesize and apply concepts learned from class to real-world phenomena. This assignment is designed to show some evidence of significant learning that takes place beyond the classroom.

The rationale for this assignment is two-fold: (1) students should learn more from the directed study of a topic in which they have expressed a personal interest, and (2) it encourages the expression of creativity—a critical characteristic of a good marketer.

Overall, the group project is worth 27% of your final grade: this grade consists of 12% for presentation and 15% for the final paper.

It is suggested that you consult with the instructor while preparing your group project. Getting feedback, while you are preparing the project, is likely to produce better results. Specific class times have been assigned for this purpose.

Guidelines for Group Project

1. Select a current brand of interest.
2. Acquire background information on this brand. You can find background information from applied/commercial publications (e.g., *The Globe and Mail*, *National Post*, *Maclean's*, *Marketing*, *Advertising Age*, *Business Week*, *Forbes*, *Fortune*, *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, etc.), or information available on corporate websites. In addition, you may want to consider contacting companies asking for the information you need.
3. You will need to provide some background information relevant to the brand, and its product category.
4. Analyze the brand by applying 3-4 concepts or theories that you have learned in this course. Your analysis should include an explanation of consumer behaviour concepts or theories and how the brand relates to/applies to these concepts or theories.
5. You are encouraged to demonstrate (in your presentation) and exhibit (with your final paper) items such as sample ads and/or other promotional materials, TV/radio commercial transcripts/descriptions/URLs, website materials, package photos, and any other relevant marketing artifacts.

Presentation

Present your group project in class: 15 minute oral group presentation followed by a 5-minute Q & A session. It is mandatory to attend and participate in your group's project presentation.

Final Papers

Each group is responsible for submitting a formal write-up of their group project (one submission per group). See guidelines below.

Format of Papers

Your written report should be approximately 10 to 12 double-spaced, typewritten pages, excluding title page and exhibits. Be sure to include endnote/source citations and a list of references consulted.

For citations, any standard reference format may be used, but list references alphabetically at the end of the paper using the same format for each. Then, employ an in-text citation format that uses the author(s) names, year of publication). Also, cite the periodical or Website address (URL) and date for each ad, either on the ad's exhibit or in your discussion of the ad.

Note: APA is the suggested reference format.

**** Peer Evaluation**

You will have the opportunity to evaluate your group members' contributions to the project at the end of the semester. This also means that your contribution will be evaluated by your fellow group members. If it turns out that your contribution is substantially lower than your peers, you may not receive full credit for group work. If you have difficulty working with your group members during the semester, you are encouraged to work issues out within the group; as a last resort, you should meet the instructor in person during office hours.

Important Dates

Provide the instructor with your choice of brand for your group project by Week 5.

Workshop sessions where you can ask questions of the instructor are provided in class during week 10.

Presentations are scheduled during the last two weeks of class (see course schedule).

The due date for the group project paper is **December 2** (Thursday) by 5pm. A hard copy of the project is required. Email submissions will not be accepted. Late projects will not be accepted.