

University of Guelph
Department of Marketing and Consumer Studies
MCS*3600-Consumer Information Processes
Fall 2008

General Information

Instructor: Dr. Lefa Teng
Section 1: Tues, Thur 8:30am-9:50am
Section 2: Tues, Thur 11:30am-12:50pm
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Course Description

This course is intended to introduce you to an in-depth analysis of consumer information processes from a theoretical standpoint, based on the knowledge and skills you have learned in the two basic courses (i.e., Fundamentals of Consumer Behaviour and Research Methods). It consists of reading recent academic articles (critically focusing on hypotheses, methods, and findings of the articles), presenting and discussing these articles, and conducting application exercises.

Main course objectives include:

1. To critically analyse and interpret academic articles, and identify important research questions in the field of consumer behaviour;
2. To describe the process of conducting consumer research and reporting empirical findings in the form of a journal article;
3. To apply consumer behaviour theories to the real market world.

Prerequisites: MCS*2600 (Fundamentals of Consumer Behaviour) and MCS*3030 (Research Methods)

Format

Classroom sessions will include a mix of introductory lectures, group presentations (35 minutes long for each group), class discussions and classroom application exercises. Students are expected to do the required readings before coming to class each week.

Students will have the opportunity to apply the concepts discussed in the lectures by completing several individual assignments and library work. They will find these application exercises useful to their learning as well as skill-building.

Course WebCT

The MCS*3600 WebCT webpage (address: <http://courselink.uoguelph.ca>) is a key component of this course. WebCT is where course materials and grades are posted. It is also an information center where you can find course reminders and updates. You should check the website before contacting the instructor with questions of a general nature related to this course.

Grading Scheme

Individual Evaluation: (55%)

Class participations	15%
Assignment (1 @ 10%)	10%
Test 1	15%
Test 2	15%

Group Evaluation: (45%)

Article presentations (2 @ 7.5%)	15%
Application exercise	10%
Final paper presentation	5%
Final written paper	15%

Class participation

The classroom experience is judged important to the learning process. Students are expected to have read all selected journal articles to be discussed in each class. Questions should be prepared for presenters to add to class discussion and article critique. Evaluation of class participation will be based on evidence that students have read the required material, therefore on the quality of input, not the quantity. Questions regarding articles will appear on the two in-class tests. Individual participation grades are assigned on a weekly basis. The minimum class participation marks to pass this course are 7.

Assignment

One individual assignment will be announced in class. The assignment should be typed with one-inch margins, double-spaced, and in a font size no smaller than 10-point. It should be 6-8 pages. Appendices may be appropriate, and not limited by the page constraint.

Due date for the Assignment: Thursday, Week5

The deadline is absolute. Unless acceptable documentary evidence is provided, all late work will be given a zero grade.

Two tests

Short answer questions will be used in both tests. The questions may involve short scenarios or marketing decision problems. Your understanding of the assigned readings, lectures and active participation in all of the learning activities will be essential to perform well on the tests. Test 1 will primarily be based on materials for weeks 1-6; and Test 2 covers weeks 1-10.

Note: *Appropriate medical or compassionate document is required to receive academic consideration for being unable to take a test at the designed time, and you must notify the instructor in advance that you will be unable to attend.*

Article presentations

You will be assigned to a group in the first week of class. You will work in this group (4-5 members in each group) for both the presentations and the final paper. Group members must prepare jointly for class presentation and discussions. No changes to group composition will be permitted once the groups have been formed. Individual student grades on group work will reflect the instructor's assessment of the assignment plus group members' assessment of the contributions of each other using the attached Peer Evaluation Form.

Each group should choose two papers from the list of articles provided for presentation. All papers are available on WEB CT or can be found in the referenced journal online or at the library. Paper selection will occur in the first week of classes.

Each group member is required to read the article, summarize it, critique it and interpret its marketing implications for the class.

The class presentation should cover the following:

- a. Main research questions/ issues being investigated
- b. Practical importance of the issues
- c. An overview of the study
- d. Hypotheses
- e. Research methodology/ research procedures
- f. Results and their interpretation
- g. Potential marketing applications
- h. Strengths and weaknesses of the paper
- i. Recommendations for improvement

Tips for paper presentation:

- a. Read the paper early and do brainstorming well at least two weeks ahead;
- b. Prepare presentation slides and send an electronic copy of the presentation to the instructor at least one day ahead of the presentation;
- c. Present a paper as authors of the paper.
- d. Plan the presentation to last 35-40 minutes (including the time for leading class discussions).
- e. Each group member is required to participate in the presentation, and transition among members must be well coordinated.
- f. You are expected (almost required) to elicit audience participation frequently during the presentation (i.e., every five minutes). This is to ensure that article presentations become interactive.
- g. You may incorporate "discussion preparation questions" into your presentation. Challenge the audience to answer these questions at multiple points during the

presentation, and then present your own answer.

Application exercise

Each group is assigned one application exercise. Use of **visual cues** (e.g., print ads, commercials available on the web, product and company logos, actual products, etc.) is strongly recommended. Note....submit a copy of the advertisements or magazines that you use for this exercise.

Final paper

The details of instruction about the final paper will be provided by the instructor in Week 7. This paper should be typed with one-inch margins, doubled spaced, with a font size no smaller than 10-point (although 12-point would be easier to read), and be minimum 16-18 pages in length. Appendices may be appropriate, and are not limited by the page constraint. As stated in the course outline, all deadlines are absolute unless documentary evidence is provided. All late work and plagiarism will be penalized.

Final paper presentation

Details of the oral presentation will be provided later in the semester. Presentations are scheduled for WEEK11 and WEEK12. All participants are required to attend the presentation sessions. Failing to attend will be given a -2 mark.

Overall Weekly Plan for Covering Specific Topics (tentative):

Week	Tuesday		Thursday	
	Topic	Reading	Topic	Reading
1 (Sep. 4)			Course outline Group formation and assignment of articles	
2 (Sep. 9/11)	Review of basic methodologies		Motivation, Ability, and Opportunity	Article #1
3 (Sep. 16/18)	<i>Motivation, Ability, and Opportunity</i>	Article #2	Exposure, Attention, and Perception	Article #3
4 (Sep. 23/ 25)	<i>Exposure, Attention, and Perception</i>	Article #4	Attitudes based on High Consumer Effort	Article #5
5 (Sep. 30 /Oct. 2)	<i>Attitudes based on Low Consumer Effort</i>	Article #6	Consumer knowledge	Article #7
6 (Oct. 7/9)	Memory and retrieval	Article #8	Review session for Test 1 and guidelines for application exercise	
7 (Oct. 14 /16)	Test 1 (in class)		Problem Recognition and Info Search (I)	Article #9
8 (Oct. 21 /23)	<i>Problem Recognition and Info Search (II)</i>	Article #10	Judgement and Decision Making (I)	Article #11
9 (Oct. 28/30)	<i>Judgment and Decision Making (II)</i>	Article #12	Cultural Influences on Consumer Behavior	Article #13
10 (Nov. 4/6)	Post Decision Processes	Article #14	Review session for Test 2 and guidelines for final paper	
11 (Nov. 11/13)	Test 2 (in class)		Group Presentation)	
12 (Nov. 18/20)	Group Presentation		Group Presentation	
13 (Nov. 25)	Group Presentation			

SELECTED ARTICLES FOR GROUP PRESENTATION

Article # 1

C. Miguel Brendl, Arthur Markman, and Claude Messner (2003), "The devaluation effect: Activating a need devalues unrelated objects," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 29 (March), 463-473.

Article # 2

Chen, Haipeng, Sharon Ng, Akshay R Rao (2005), "Cultural Differences in Consumer Impatience," *Journal of Marketing Research*, 42 (3), 291-301.

Article # 3

Laura Peracchio and Joan Meyers-Levy (1997), "Evaluating Persuasion-Enhancing Techniques from a Resource-Matching Perspective," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 24(2), 178-191.

Article # 4

Brian Wansink and Koert van Ittersum (2003), "Bottoms up! The influence of elongation on pouring and consumption volume," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 30 (December), 455-463.

Article # 5

Michaela Wänke, Gerd Bohner, and Andreas Jurkowitsch (1997), "There are Many Reasons to Drive a BMW: Does Imagined Ease of Argument Generation Influence Attitudes?" *Journal of Consumer Research*, 24 (September), 170-177.

Article # 6

Jacqueline J. Kacen and Julie Anne Lee (2002), "The Influence of Culture on Consumer Impulsive Buying Behaviour," *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 12, 2, 163-176.

Article #7

Rohini Ahluwalia and Zeynep Gurhan-Canli (2000), "The effects of extensions on the family brand name: An Accessibility-Diagnosticity perspective," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 27 (December), 347-356.

Article #8

Stewart Shapiro and Mark T. Spence (2002), "Factors Affecting Encoding, Retrieval, and Alignment of Sensory Attributes in a Memory-Based Brand Choice Task," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 28(4), 603-617.

Article #9

Naomi Mandel and Eric J. Johnson (2002), "When Web Pages Influence Choice: Effects of Visual Primes on Experts and Novices," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 29(2), 235-245.

Article #10

Teng, Lefa (in press), "A Comparison of Two Types of Price Discounts in Shifting Consumers' Attitudes and Purchase Intentions," *Journal of Business Research*.

Article #11

Zhu, Rui, Xinlei Chen and Srabana Dasgupta (2008), "Can Trade-Ins Hurt You? Exploring the Effect of a Trade-In on Consumers' Willingness to Pay for a New Product," *Journal of Marketing Research*, XLV (April), 159-170.

Article #12

Putten, Marijke Van, Marcel Zeelenberg and Eric Van Dijk (2007), "Decoupling the Past from the Present Attenuates Inaction Inertia," *Journal of Behavioral Decision Making*, 20 (September), 65-79.

Article #13

Grier, Sonya and Rohit Desphande (2001), "Social Dimensions of Consumer Distinctiveness: The Influence of Social Status on Group Identity and Advertising Persuasion," *Journal of Marketing Research*, 38 (2), 216-224

Article #14

J. Jeffrey Inman and Marcel Zeelenberg (2002), "Regret in repeat purchase versus switching decisions: The attenuating role of decision justifiability," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 29 (June), 116-129.

Appendix A Peer Evaluation Form

(Fall 2008)

RATING

Suppose your efforts in the term project are worth 100 points. A colleague of yours who put in twice as much effort than you should be assigned 200 points. On the other hand, a colleague who put in only half as much effort as you did would be 50 points. Use other numbers to indicate level of efforts that each group member put in for the final term project. Please take into account both the quality and quantity of effort in adjusting marks for yourself and other group members.

	GROUP MEMBERS	POINTS
1	_____ (Yourself)	<u>100</u>
2	_____	
3	_____	
4	_____	
5	_____	

NOTE: This evaluation will be held in strictest confidence - only the course instructor will review it.

COMMENTS: Please explain reasons for any significant differences in marks given to yourself or other group members in the space below and, if necessary, on the back of this sheet.

This Course Outline Is Subject to Change.

University Grading Scheme:

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

A+ A A-	90-100% 85-89 80-84	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.
B+ B B-	77-79 73-76 70-72	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.
C+ C C-	67-69 63-66 60-62	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.
D+ D D-	57-59 53-56 50-52	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.
F	0-49	Fail: An inadequate performance.

http://www.uoguelph.ca/undergrad_calendar/index.shtml