

Consumer Behavior – Course Syllabus INBM 300

Instructor

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Office hours: TF 11:30am-1:20pm or by appointment

Class Meeting Time and Location

Section 01: Tuesday & Friday. 1:30pm – 2:45pm, Althouse 201

Section 02: Tuesday & Friday. 3:00pm – 4:15pm, Althouse 201

Course Texts (Required):

Michael R. Solomon (2019). *Consumer Behavior: Buying, Having, and Being*, 13th edition. U.S.: Pearson Education, Inc.

ISBN: 978-1292318103

Course Pack: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/1023903>

*Contains required readings for case studies

Recommended Reading (Optional):

Daniel Kahneman (2011). *Thinking Fast and Slow*.

Course Description

Marketing requires an understanding of the needs, wants, and values of consumers. This course is designed to introduce students to the psychology of consumption and provide tools for understanding how individuals make decisions in marketplace contexts. In this course, we will draw upon a research-based curriculum to explore how motivation, attitude, attention, memory, cultural background, emotion, and other factors shape consumer behavior. We will learn how consumers process information and use products to solve problems. Additionally, we will explore the insights that marketing reveals about the workings of the consumer mind. Consumer behavior is a multidisciplinary field that is contributed to by scholars in psychology, economics, anthropology, statistics, and more. As such, this course is designed to be accessible to students from a variety of majors in addition to providing a valuable supplement for INBM majors. This course has been designated as a Sustainability Connections (SCON) course because of the significant relationship between the purchasing behavior and disposal decisions of consumers and issues surrounding climate change. The relationship between consumer purchasing decisions and disposal behavior will be a key topic explored during this course.

The course focuses on three broad topics:

- 1. Consumers as individuals.** We will explore basic psychological concepts like motivation, perception, memory, and emotions to help us understand behavior.
- 2. Attitude change and decision making.** We will examine how consumers search and evaluate alternatives, develop attitudes, and make choices.
- 3. Consumers in their social and cultural settings.** We will examine the interaction between the consumer and multiple external influences. We investigate how social elements (friends, family, etc.) and culture influence behavior.

Throughout the course, you will learn multiple concepts, frameworks and theories that can be used to understand how consumers think, feel, and behave. The culmination of this endeavor will be a group project requiring you to address a consumer behavior challenge, select a relevant theory to examine and explain the issue, and apply the theory properly to aid in a managerial decision. Upon completion of this course, you will have a sound knowledge of how to understand the behavior, needs, and decisions of consumers from a variety of cultural backgrounds.

Course Objectives

This course is designed to help students to:

1. Acquire a basic understanding of the major topics studied in the field of consumer behavior.
2. Learn conceptual frameworks that can be used to gain insight into how consumers think, feel, and do.
3. Think critically about the relationship between consumption behavior and issues pertaining to sustainability and climate action.
4. Develop practical research skills that can be used to collect information about consumers from a variety of backgrounds.
5. Become rational and responsible consumers.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance (5%)

Consistent attendance is very important to this course. Attending class regularly will ensure that you are able to maximize your learning from the lectures and encourage interactions among other students who will serve as your team members. Excused absences require email notice to the instructor ahead of time. If you are absent, you are responsible for making up the assignments and reviewing the content we learned during the class by asking either the instructor or your peers. Accommodations are available for students that have requested them through Access and Disability Services.

Accommodations will also be made for students that have tested positive for covid-19; it is not appropriate for covid-positive students to attend class in person.

2. Participation and Engagement (5%)

Students are expected to participate actively in class discussions, ask/answer questions, engage with in-class activities, and contribute to debate. Participation facilitates learning and helps to prepare students for the civil discussions and debates that occur outside of the classroom.

3. Reading Quizzes (15%)

Multiple choice reading quizzes will be assigned for each reading. These are expected to take approximately 15 minutes to complete and can be accessed through Moodle. These quizzes are not timed, but are due at 11:59 p.m. on their corresponding date. Late reading quizzes will not be accepted unless extenuating accommodations have been made with the instructor beforehand.

4. Case Assignment: Consumer Behavior and Sustainability (10%)

Consumer behavior plays an important role in challenges surrounding sustainability. Indeed, a great deal of environmental harm can be attributed to the actions of individual consumers. Fortunately, individual consumers can also make decisions that positively impact sustainability initiatives. Marketers, policy makers, and other parties interacting with consumers are presented with opportunities to promote pro-environmental consumer decisions. In this assignment, students will be presented with a business case requiring the application of consumer behavior principles in order encourage adoption of a sustainable product. Each student will be asked to develop a written analysis and plan of action for increasing demand for this product. Detailed instructions for this assignment will be posted on Moodle.

5. Exams (40%)

There will be two multiple choice exams in this class. Each exam is worth 20% of your final grade. The content covered in the exams include all of the information covered in the readings and lectures pertaining to the corresponding course section. This means that Exam 2 does not explicitly test information that has already been tested in Exam 1. The exams are closed book, closed notes, and are designed to test students' individual comprehension of the material. As such, academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. For information about what constitutes academic dishonesty, please refer to the section on the Academic Code of Conduct.

You **MUST** take the exams during the regularly scheduled times unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. Acceptable reasons for taking exams at a different time include (a) documented medical emergencies for the student or a close family member, (b) the documented death of a close family member, (c) proverbial acts of god, (d) test-taking accommodations arranged through the college. Absences for illness or emergencies will be excused only if accompanied by an official letter from the relevant office.

***IMPORTANT:** Please consult the exam schedule before making travel arrangements. Scheduled travel during the exam period does not justify an excused absence.

6. Group Project (25%)

Students will be assigned into groups of 4 or 5 for a group project which will be worked on throughout the course. Each group will be asked to select an existing brand that is not currently positioned as a sustainable or “green” brand but could feasibly “go green” in the near future. The objective for each team is to perform a series of market research tasks in order to develop a strategy for successfully repositioning their chosen brand along the lines of sustainability. These market research tasks will be conducted throughout the body of the course, with due dates coinciding with relevant lecture topics. At the end of the course, teams will organize the data they have gathered through their market research, write a detailed marketing plan, and present this plan to their fellow classmates. Detailed instructions for this assignment (and sub-assignments) will be posted on Moodle.

Grades for the group project will be subject to peer evaluation. It is important for each student to contribute to the project—students that do not contribute fairly to their group assignments may have points deducted from their group project grade.

Grading Overview

A total of 100 points will be allocated as follows:

Activity	Contribution to Grade	Individual/Group
Attendance	5%	Individual
Participation and Engagement	5%	
Reading Quizzes	15%	
Case Assignment	10%	
Exams	40%	
Group Project*	25%	Group

* Adjusted for intra-team evaluation

Aggregate scores will earn course grades according to the following cutoffs:

A	93-100%	C	65-69
A-	90-92	C-	60-64
B+	85-89	D+	55-59
B	80-84	D	50-54
B-	75-79	D-	45-49
C+	70-74	F	Below 45

Classroom Conduct:

Professional conduct is expected in the classroom. Below is a set of expectations and guidelines for behavior in this class:

1. Be polite and civil in your responses to the instructor and other students.
2. Turn your cell phone to silent mode when you come to class. Please do not use your cell phone unless invited to do so by the instructor.
3. Laptops or tablet computers are not allowed in class, with rare exception as permitted by the instructor.
4. Be on time and prepared for each class.
5. Dress appropriately for class and for group presentations.
6. Treat all class members with a general attitude of respect and inclusivity. Discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, etc. will not be tolerated and may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with university policy.

Policies:

The Academic Code of Conduct:

Academic Honesty is a serious matter and is strictly expected in this course. Sources should be quoted or paraphrased in a professional manner in all writings. For a reference on how to cite the work of other authors, see the guidelines established by the American Psychological Association (APA):

<https://apastyle.apa.org/>

Violations of the Academic Code of Conduct could result in a failing grade for the class and possible further repercussions as stated in the “Community Standards”:

http://www.dickinson.edu/info/20273/dean_of_students/1140/student_conduct_faqs

You are responsible to know what is and is not plagiarism. Please see the library website for more information: <http://libguides.dickinson.edu/citing>

*Recently, AI technology capable of constructing written documents has been developed and made publicly available (e.g., ChatGPT). The use of this technology for written assignments in this course is not allowed and will be considered a violation of the Academic Code of Conduct.

Accommodating Students with Disabilities

Dickinson values diverse types of learners and is committed to ensuring that each student is afforded equitable access to participate in all learning experiences. If you have (or think you may have) a learning difference or a disability – including a mental health, medical, or physical impairment – that would hinder your access to learning or demonstrating knowledge in this class, please contact Access and Disability Services (ADS). They will confidentially explain the accommodation request process and the type of documentation that Dean and Director Marni Jones will need to determine your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. To learn more about available supports, go to www.dickinson.edu/access, email access@dickinson.edu, call (717)245-1734, or go to ADS in Old West (lower level), Room 005.

If you've already been granted accommodations at Dickinson, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can meet to review your Accommodation Letter and complete your Blue Forms. If you will need test proctoring from ADS, remember that you will need to provide them with at least one week's notice.

The Norman M. Eberly Multilingual Writing Center (MWC)

The MWC consists of both English and foreign language writing tutoring services. The English writing tutors work with native and nonnative speakers of English, and the foreign language writing tutors work with writers of Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. Writers of all levels and abilities need feedback in order to develop their ideas and grow as writers. Dickinson's trained peer writing tutors can help you generate ideas, begin drafting, revise a rough draft, figure out your professor's preferred documentation style, understand and respond to professor feedback, and edit your writing – among other things. For in-person appointments, you have the option to meet with tutors in the MWC, which is located on the first floor of the Waidner-Spahr Library. For online appointments, tutors will send you a Zoom link prior to your scheduled time. Please show up promptly for both online and face-to-face appointments as there will be a ten-minute grace period after which the tutor may no longer be available. To schedule an appointment for an online or face-to-face appointment, use our scheduler at <https://dickinson.mywconline.com/>.

Quantitative Reasoning (QR) Center (facing the Writing Center)

Dickinson College provides additional support for students taking courses with quantitative content across the curriculum through the [Quantitative Reasoning \(QR\) Center](#). For the fall 2021 semester, the QR Center will offer in-person tutoring in addition to general quantitative support. The QR Center is also offering remote tutoring to any student who may need it this semester. [Click here](#) to make an appointment on WCONLINE. Then, **access the drop-down menu under "limit to" at the top of the scheduler** and select the course name. This will restrict the tutor list and schedule to only those tutors approved for this course. When you make your appointment, please also paste or upload your assignment with any work that you have done and indicate if this will be an in-person or online appointment. The QR Center also provides in-person, drop-in tutoring, but students should check the weekly schedule and list of tutors to ensure a tutor can help with their specific course.

Course Schedule (Subject to change with advanced notice)

Class	Month	Date	Topic	Reading	Deliverable
1	Jan	24	Course Overview	Syllabus	
2	Jan	27	Introduction to Consumer Behavior	Ch. 1	Reading Quiz
*	Jan	29	Add/Drop Deadline		
3	Jan	31	The Self I	Ch. 5	Reading Quiz
4	Feb	3	The Self II	Belk Article (Moodle)	Reading Quiz
5	Feb	7	Perception I	Ch. 3	Reading Quiz
6	Feb	10	Perception II		
7	Feb	14	Learning and Memory	Ch. 4	Reading Quiz Group Project Proposal Due
8	Feb	17	Motivation and Affect I	Ch. 5	Reading Quiz
9	Feb	21	Motivation and Affect II		
10	Feb	24	Personality, Lifestyles, and Values	Ch. 7	Reading Quiz Market Research Report Due
11	Feb	28	Attitudes and Persuasive Communications	Ch. 8	Reading Quiz
12	Mar	3	NO CLASS – Conference Travel		Interview Assignment Due
13	Mar	7	Exam 1 (in class)		
14	Mar	10	Market Research Computer Lab Day		Class held in ALT 204
*	Mar	11	Begin Spring Break		
*	Mar	19	End Spring Break		
15	Mar	21	Decision Making I	Ch. 9	Reading Quiz
16	Mar	24	Decision Making II		A/B Assignment Due
17	Mar	28	Buying, Using, and Disposing	Ch. 10	Reading Quiz
18	Mar	31	Sustainability and Consumer Behavior		Customer Persona Assignment Due
19	Apr	4	Case Discussion	Patagonia Case	Reading Quiz
20	Apr	7	Food Marketing		
21	Apr	11	Social Influence	Ch. 11	Reading Quiz
22	Apr	14	Status I	Ch. 12	Reading Quiz
23	Apr	18	Status II		Case Assignment Due
24	Apr	21	Culture I	Ch. 14	Reading Quiz
25	Apr	25	Culture II		
26	Apr	28	Time, Money, and Happiness		Final Project Due

27	May	2	Final Presentations		
28	May	5	Final Presentations		
*	May	6	Reading Days Begin		
*	May	14	Reading Days End		
*	May	15	Final Exam Section 1 (9am-noon)		
*	May	16	Final Exam Section 2 (9am-noon)		