COURSE DESCRIPTION

We acquire goods and services, consume them, and dispose of them. In this course, you will understand key concepts related to the decisions consumers make, the processes underlying these decisions, and the implications of this field of study for different segments of society: consumers, marketers, and public policy makers. Consumer behavior is an interdisciplinary area. Though the marketing perspective will remain dominant, we will also draw from psychology, economics, sociology, and other areas.

A lecture-discussion format will be used. The class will be a forum to build upon theoretical concepts, improve our understanding, share our interpretations, think of applications and, eventually, rise to a higher level of thinking. To accomplish this kind of learning, it is imperative that you do the assigned work diligently and participate enthusiastically in class. Please read the assigned textbook chapters before coming to each class, so that we can then build upon the basic concepts from the textbook. Bring along a printout of the PowerPoint slides for that day (available on Blackboard) and, when in class, concentrate less on writing and more on listening and discussing.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required textbook: Consumer Behavior & Marketing Strategy by Peter & Olson (8th edition or higher) (Available at https://create.mheducation.com/shop/#/catalog/details/?isbn=9781308411231).

Recommended books: Malcolm Gladwell’s “Blink,” “Tipping Point,” “Outliers,” and “David and Goliath”; Dan Ariely’s “Predictably Irrational”; Richard Thaler’s “Nudge”; and Daniel Kahneman’s “Thinking Fast and Slow.”

CLASS ORGANIZATION & ADMINISTRATION

The chief course goals are to (1) understand the concepts, theories, and principles from the social sciences that apply to consumers and their purchase behavior, (2) learn how to make appropriate marketing decisions based on a sound knowledge of consumer behavior concepts, and (3) become a better consumer, understanding how consumer behavior principles may affect our own buying patterns.

A student who satisfactorily completes this course will learn: (1) The decision process by which consumers identify and select options that satisfy consumption goals, including problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, choice, and post-consumption evaluation. (2) The internal factors that influence consumer choice, including perception, memory, and attitudes. (3) The external
factors that influence consumer choice, including cultural factors. (4) How marketers strive to use an understanding of consumer behavior to promote effective marketing such as through advertising, product design, or promotions.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

I do NOT tolerate cheating. Students are responsible for understanding the RU Academic Integrity Policy (http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI_Policy_2013.pdf). I will strongly enforce this Policy and pursue all violations. On all examinations and assignments, students must sign the RU Honor Pledge, which states, “On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination or assignment.” I will screen all presentations and assignments through plagiarism detection services that compare the work against a large database of past work. Don’t let cheating destroy your hard-earned opportunity to learn. See business.rutgers.edu/ai for more details.

CLASSROOM CONDUCT

Do not disturb the class environment by chatting, using cellphones, arriving late, leaving early, or engaging in any distracting activity.

The use of laptops is not permitted. Please bring along a printout of the day’s PowerPoint slides to class (available on Blackboard…there are very few slides per chapter).

If a disability does not let you participate fully in class, please bring this to my attention early on. For this, you need to be registered with the Office of Disability Services.

You do not need to inform me if you miss a class. However, you will be responsible for losing points on that day’s grade component. I will make adjustments only if your absence was due to health reasons or if you were asked to represent the University at an event (in both cases, documentation will be required).

To be updated on classroom activities, please be sure to check your official Rutgers email account, and also the postings on Blackboard.

FINAL GRADE ASSIGNMENT

The following grade components add up to 100 points; there are no extra-credit opportunities.

Exams: 40 points

Class Participation: 10 points

Group Project Peer Evaluation (Project 1 and Project 2): 5 points
Group Project Report (Project 2): 5 points

Group Project Presentations (Project 1 and Project 2): 40 points

Your points from each component will be summed. The final course grade will be as follows.

\[
> 92.99 = A \\
90.0 – 92.99 = A - \\
87.0 – 89.99 = B+ \\
84.0 – 86.99 = B \\
81.0 – 83.99 = B - \\
78.0 – 80.99 = C+ \\
75.0 – 77.99 = C \\
68.0 – 74.99 = C- \\
60.0 – 67.99 = D \\
< 60.0 = F
\]

**Exams: 40 points**
10 exams will be held. Each exam will consist of 8 multiple-choice questions, worth .5 points each. For each question, you will pick the “most appropriate” option out of five options. Each exam will be based on the chapters on a certain day, and will be held right after the lecture is over. Thus, you won’t be preparing after the class is over, but rather before. Specifically, be prepared with the assigned chapters in advance, so that we can use class time to discuss the finer points and to go beyond the core concepts. Because the exam will cover everything that we discuss in class that day, paying attention during class and seeking clarifications is critical. At the end of the semester, the lowest score will be dropped and substituted with the average score from your other 9 exams.

**Class Participation: 10 points**
If you simply attend classes without any detrimental/beneficial class behavior, your score will be 5 points. If your behavior is generally detrimental to class learning (disturb class by arriving late, chatting, texting, etc.), your score will be lower than 5 points. If your behavior is generally beneficial to class learning (ask useful questions, offer interesting applications of a concept, etc.), your score will be higher than 5 points.

**Group Project Peer Evaluation: 5 points (Based on combined work put in for Project 1 and Project 2)**
Each group will participate in two group projects. You are free to choose your group, but it is very important that you conscientiously do your part of the work. Peer evaluations are aimed at deterring “freeriders.” At the end of the semester, the other members of your group will give you a score between 0 and 5 (provided confidentially to me). The average of those scores will be your peer evaluation.

**Group Project Report: 5 points (Only for Project 2, not Project 1)**
Each group will submit a 5-page report (12 pt. font, double spaced, 1-inch margins; references can be additional pages) after the presentation for Project 2 is over. Your score will depend on the extent to which you provide a clear and persuasive summary of your project. This document should be a standalone document that should be comprehensible by itself, without having to refer back to the presentation. It should touch upon the same elements as you cover in the presentation (see below), while incorporating any feedback that you may have received on Project 2 presentation from the instructor/other students.

**Group Project Presentations: 40 points (20 points for Project 1 and 20 points for Project 2)**

The two projects will cover different brands. For each project, you should be prepared to present within 10 minutes. This will be followed by a 10-minute question-answer session.

The objective of each project is to apply consumer behavior concepts to a well-known brand. You should act as a consulting team trying to make a brand more successful. For gathering information, rely only on authentic secondary sources of information such as newspapers and magazines (The Wall Street Journal, Business Week, etc.). You can search for information by using different databases available on the Rutgers library website (libraries.rutgers.edu). If you use Internet search engines to find information, please verify the authenticity of the source. You should cite your sources at the bottom of each slide of your PowerPoint.

For each project, the sub-grades will be as follows:

**Brand Overview (3 points):** Description of the brand and strength vis-à-vis competition.

**Criticism (7 points):** From the consumer behavior perspective, where has the company gone wrong? Present evidence for one broad criticism rather than a bunch of unrelated criticisms.

**Alternatives (7 points):** What are the various ways in which the criticism can be addressed? Please present 3 alternatives that are mutually-exclusive, stand-alone solutions to the specific criticism that you raise.

**Recommendation (3 points):** Choose one of the alternative solutions as your recommendation. Explain why you chose this alternative, and then discuss implementation details.

**MACCY in Governmental Accounting (22:630:610)**

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

Note: The exam on a particular day covers whatever we cover in class that day (i.e., the chapters for that day, and other things that we discuss to build on those chapters). This is to encourage you to read the chapters in advance, and make it easier for you to comprehend what we discuss.

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SUPPORT SERVICES


If you are a military veteran or are on active military duty, you can obtain support through the Office of Veteran and Military Programs and Services. http://veterans.rutgers.edu/

If you are in need of mental health services, please use our readily available services. Rutgers University-Newark Counseling Center: http://counseling.newark.rutgers.edu/

If you are in need of physical health services, please use our readily available services.

Rutgers Health Services – Newark: http://health.newark.rutgers.edu/

If you are in need of legal services, please use our readily available services: http://rusls.rutgers.edu/