COURSE DESCRIPTION

Contemporary approaches to business emphasize the importance of adopting a consumer focus. Marketing, in particular, begins and ends with the consumer – from determining consumer needs to ensuring post-purchase satisfaction.

The primary goal of this course is to enhance your understanding of consumer behavior. By the end of the course you will be knowledgeable about consumer psychology and ways of better meeting people’s needs. During this process, you will come to better understand yourself as a target of marketing influence. You will also appreciate how an understanding of consumer behavior can be used to develop powerful marketing techniques and tactics. The course also aims to provide an important competitive advantage: an ability to see how to have an impact on consumers, and hence a talent for making more insightful business decisions.

COURSE MATERIALS

Links to all required readings and course materials will be available on the course BlackBoard page. It is the student’s responsibility to maintain an active Rutgers email account and to visit the course BlackBoard page regularly for course messages and to access the required readings.

Communication will only be sent to your Rutgers email account. If you wish to use a different email address, please be sure to change your account settings and redirect your email.

Textbooks:

There are two books that you must purchase. The textbook is CB by Babin and Harris, 6th Edition. It can be purchased in the university bookstore. The other is a popular book written by Paco Underhill, Why We Buy. It can be purchased at the university bookstore or on Amazon for about $7. Used copies may also be purchased online.

Throughout the semester I may assign articles from recent magazines, newspapers, or journals to supplement the text and the classroom discussion. They will be made available on blackboard.

Class Format

The course will combine lectures, cases, exercises, demonstrations, and class discussion. We will use many different materials in this course to illustrate consumer behavior phenomena and to get you thinking about managerial implications of those findings.
It is important that each of you comes to class prepared. The level and success of the discussions depends on the willingness and ability of everyone to participate actively.

**Course Objectives**

To study those areas of the behavioral sciences (psychology social psychology, sociology and anthropology) that are relevant to the understanding and prediction of buyer behavior in both the household and institutional setting.

**Grading**

The final grade is determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group Project</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams (3)</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depth-Interview</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Why We Buy</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Participation</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1100</td>
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**Final Letter Grade**

- **A** 90% and above, 990 points and above
- **B+** 87-89.999%, 957 – 989 points
- **B** 80-86.999%, 880 – 956 points
- **C+** 77-79.999%, 847 – 879 points
- **C** 70-76.999%, 770 – 846 points
- **D** 60-69.999%, 660 – 769 points
- **F** 59.999% and below, 659 points and below

**Class Participation**

This course is designed to reward students who participate in a professional manner. That translates simply into someone who attends class regularly, arrives on time and stays the duration, and is prepared to engage in the material presented and assigned for each class period. More specifically, the following behaviors will be factored into your grade for this part of the course:

1. **Attendance** – Regular attendance is a signal of your commitment to this course; that's the easy part. You can’t participate if you’re not present. I will get to know everyone by name, so I do note who’s here and who’s not.
2. **Class Preparation** – Your active participation in this class is a vital ingredient in its success: it conveys your level of interest, ability, motivation, preparation, and mastery of
the material. You need to be prepared always to discuss the concepts, topics, and issues assigned for a particular class. Assigned readings need to be completed by the date listed on your syllabus. Engaging in broad discussions are your best opportunities to ensure that you understand the material. **Quality counts as much as quantity:** I will keep track of this.

A good participation grade is possible only through consistent attendance and quality participation. To facilitate accurate evaluation of class participation, please choose a seat on the first day of class and keep this seat throughout the semester. Also, please display your name cards everyday.

I will grade class participation using the following grading scheme:

- **10** Contributions in class reflect exceptional preparation. Comments and analysis offered are substantive, provide major insights, and move the class discussion forward. Arguments are robust, well defended, and presented with persuasion.

- **8** Contributions in class reflect thorough preparation. Comments and analysis offered are substantive and insightful. Arguments are generally well substantiated and persuasive.

- **6** Contributions in class reflect some preparation. Ideas offered generally reflect facts, but little is offered in terms of analysis or argument.

- **4** Student is present in class, but does not contribute.

- **0** The student is absent from class.

The total points across all the sessions will be summed to arrive at the final class participation score.

From time to time, life events (e.g., an interview) may prevent you from attending class; when this happens, you will receive a zero for class participation for that day. However, when computing your final class participation score, I will drop your lowest score.

Participation will also be graded on presentation days.

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**Course Policies**

*Religious Observance:* If you cannot attend a particular class because of religious reasons, please make arrangements with me at least one week ahead of time so we can make alternate plans for covering the material. If any exams conflict with a religious observance, please tell me within the first two weeks of the semester.

*Promptness:* Active participation is essential for enhancing your learning of the material, and regular attendance will be important should you wish to do well in the course. When you choose to come to class, you are expected to arrive on time, and to be prepared to talk about the assigned readings and eager to participate in class discussions. Failure to meet these expectations will result in a lower grade.

For days in which assignments are due, you will be required to turn them in promptly at the start of each class. Late assignments will not be accepted.
Please notify me as early in the term as possible if you anticipate excessive absences due to participation in University-sponsored events, observation of major religious holidays, or other approved activities. It is the student’s responsibility to keep informed concerning all material covered and assignments made. Absences, whether excused or unexcused, do not absolve the student from this responsibility.

**Regrading:** If you believe an error has been made in grading your assignments, you may request a re-grade by doing the following:

i. Write a brief note to me (by e-mail) explaining why you think there is an error. I may ask you to re-submit the assignment.

ii. All re-grade requests must occur within seven (7) calendar days of the day graded material is returned to the class or the final course grade is posted.

iii. I reserve the right to re-grade the entire contents of any submitted assignment. Your grade may go up or down.

**E-Mail:** When sending me an email, please include “MKT 374” in the subject heading. I have a filter that will allow me to give priority to your emails. This is also the best way to contact me with any questions.

**Laptop Policy:** Unless you provide me with a form from the Disability Resource Center that states that you will need to use a laptop to take notes in class, you are not allowed to use a laptop during lectures or exams.

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**Academic integrity**

Rutgers has clearly articulated policies governing academic integrity. Students are encouraged to carefully review the policy on Student Conduct. Any deviation from these expectations will result in academic penalties and disciplinary action.

You may also not distribute assignments, cases, or final exam questions used in this class to any other student who might take the course in the future. If there is any doubt regarding how the honor code applies to any aspect of this course, please contact me.

**Turnitin:** The Why We Buy Paper, Group Project, and Decision-Making Paper must be uploaded to the Turnitin website by 5 pm on the due date. Turnitin assesses originality and similarity to books and other papers, if 25% or more is similar to another paper or less than 75% original, you will automatically fail the assignment.

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**Exams**

3 exams will be given. These exams will include multiple choice, short-answer and essay questions. More details will be distributed in class prior to the first exam date and will emphasize the previous weeks’ course readings and material. So as to not be disruptive to the other students taking the exam, you may be no later than 10 minutes to class on exam day. If you arrive more than 10 minutes late, you will not be allowed to take the exam and a make-up will not be offered.
Make-up exams: You may take a make-up exam if (1) you have a medical emergency and provide me with a doctor’s note, or if (2) an exam conflicts with a religious observance and you have notified me within the first two weeks of the semester. You may not miss an exam for an extracurricular activity. Exam format for makeup exams may be different than the original exam, at my discretion. Additionally, make-up exams will take place before the regularly scheduled exam.

Exercises and Assignments

Throughout the semester, you will be required to complete several projects and exercises, sometimes to be completed outside of class, and at other times to be completed within the scheduled class time. The objective of these labs is to illustrate an operation of some aspect of consumer behavior relevant to Marketing. Specific details for each lab will be provided separately.

Grading Criteria

All work is graded for both form and content: content is defined as meeting the objectives of the assignment, and form includes both the clarity of communication and presentation and conciseness. Grading for each project (both the oral presentation and written reports) will be assessed using the following five criteria:

1. Clarity: careful, well-organized preparation (including spelling, syntax, and punctuation)
2. Conscientiousness: thorough coverage
3. Course Relevance: pertinence to key concepts in Consumer Behavior
4. Conciseness: fitting within the page or time limit
5. Creativity: imagination, insightfulness

Formatting Guidelines for ALL Submitted Work

I am very particular about any work submitted, either as part of a visual presentation to the class or as any hard-copy presentation. If I find 5 or more grammatical, spelling, or formatting errors, 5% will be deducted from your score on the project. I hope never to have to do this: please consider this simply a form of motivation to you to proofread your work before submitting it.

Typewritten reports are due at the beginning of class on the date assigned. 5% will be deducted for all assignments turned in after the start of class and an additional 5% for all assignments turned in after class is over. An additional 10% will be deducted for each additional day the assignment is late. All reference sources must be properly cited at the end of the report. If the report is the work product of a team, and not just of an individual, only a single report is due.

The following formatting criteria apply to ALL submitted work:

• Typed in 12-point font
• Double-spaced
• Standard one-inch margins (top/bottom, left/right)
• Numbered pages, at the bottom
• Stapled in the upper left-hand corner or bound
Disability Accommodations

If you have a disability and need accommodations to fully participate in this class, be sure to contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) immediately. All accommodations must be approved through the Disability Resource Center. For individualized academic adjustment based on documented disability, please see Professor Ringler by the end of the second week of the semester.

Contact and Office Hours

I welcome you to set up an appointment for extra help with the material, to discuss your progress in the course, or to talk about your education and career plans.

Required Participation in Academic Research Studies

To help facilitate the research of RBS faculty members across various disciplines (e.g., marketing, supply chain, management, finance), and ultimately, the reputation of RBS itself, a few departments have started to require student participation in research as part of course requirements in selected classes.

Presently, RBS—Newark and New Brunswick uses an online program (Sona) that expedites the process of recruiting, signing up, and granting credit to students for participating in surveys and studies conducted by the faculty for the purposes of academic research. The program provides an easy online method for you to sign up for research studies, keep track of the studies you have completed, and view how many credits you have earned so far. You can access the system online at any time, from any computer with a standard web browser. By participating in studies conducted by RBS professors, you can learn first-hand how academic research studies in business are conducted, you can contribute to the advancement of the field, and you can meet your classroom requirements. Whenever a new set of sessions (i.e., participation slots for studies) have been posted, an announcement will be made on the course Blackboard site.

In this class, you will need to earn 1 point of research credit. This will constitute 5% of your grade in this course. One point of credit will be granted for every hour of research that you participate in. To fulfill your course requirement, once research sessions are posted on Sona, you will need to log in to the Sona system to sign up for a specific day and time that you agree to show up and participate. By signing up, you agree to show up for this session and plan to stay for one full hour. This will earn you 1 point of research credit. Every student enrolled in this course must participate in 1 hour of behavioral research. Students that fail to complete their behavioral lab research requirements (time in the lab or an alternative assignment, described in detail below) before the end of the semester will receive a zero for this portion of their course grade.

If you are unable to show up for a study you sign up for, you may cancel 24 hours in advance online, and will not be penalized. If you do not cancel in advance (via the online system), you will be given a warning. The second time you fail to cancel your appointment (24 hours in advance), your Sona account will be blocked. Students with blocked Sona accounts may no longer participate in behavioral lab research. To fulfill their course requirements, students must participate in the alternative assignment. If
you cancel in advance, there is no penalty. Additionally, if you would like to participate in a study but the Sona system shows no availability, you can show up and try to get in on “stand-by.” In other words, if someone does not show up and we have extra room, then we will take students on stand-by. This will occur on a first come, first serve basis.

Finally, if you would like to earn research credit, but do not wish to participate in a behavioral research study, you may elect to do an optional alternative assignment instead of participating in studies. Specifically, you can complete an alternative writing activity involving library research by which you can earn the same amount of research credit in approximately the same amount of time as research participation. Details will be provided in class. Students interested in fulfilling their lab requirement through the alternative assignment must submit their papers by email to the behavioral lab no later than the time and date specified on the behavioral lab website*. Papers handed in after this deadline will NOT be accepted for spring semester credit. You should receive a confirmation email within 48 hours of submission. If you do not, please follow up with the lab coordinator to check that your submission was received. For a complete list of lab rules and polices, please visit the RBS behavioral lab webpage (http://business.rutgers.edu/rbl).

Please note: University rules and regulations regarding plagiarism do apply. Any student caught plagiarizing on this alternative assignment will receive a zero for this portion of their grade. The instructor for your course will then determine how the student’s punishment is handled. For more information on plagiarism please visit: http://wp.rutgers.edu/courses/plagiarism.

*All dates are subject to change.

Activating your SONA account
To set up an account on Sona and sign up for sessions, please use the link below. If you already have a Sona account through the RBS, please continue to use the one you have (though you will need to make sure to update the list of classes you are enrolled in every semester):
http://rutgersbusiness.sona-systems.com

When you create your Sona account (or log in for the first time that the semester), please note that you must specify the class you are enrolled in. If you are enrolled in more than one class, select all of those classes. Please register carefully to ensure that you are receiving credits for your time in the correct classes.

Signing Up for Studies
• Sign up for studies by logging on your Sona account. You will be able to see the upcoming studies offered. There will be a list of timeslots where you will be able to select the available dates and times for your studies.
• After you find an experiment with the timeslot you want to participate in, click "Sign Up" and wait for a confirmation to show that you are registered for that experiment. When you receive the confirmation page, please write down the time, date, and location.
• Please arrive 10 minutes early at the appointed time and place. All studies require your physical presence and take place in the RBS Behavioral Lab on the 5th floor of 1 Washington Park. If you cannot make a study, please cancel your appointment on Sona at least 24 hours prior to the start of the study. Failure to cancel so will result in an unexcused "no show" for your attendance.
WHY WE BUY PROJECT
(Individual Project)
Due 10/29

Students are required to read the book, Why We Buy, by Paco Underhill. The author is an industry expert specializing in behavioral aspects of consumer retail and public environments. After reading the book, students will analyze a retail environment of his/her choice in the context of Underhill’s book. Students may select one retailer, or compare one or more retailers selling similar types of goods. The major points in the book should be described and discussed (location, transition zone, traffic flow, crowding, accessibility, shopper demographics, signage, checkouts, etc.), relating back to both CB and Why We Buy. I suggest that you make a point of really observing consumers in a store environment, as well as noting your own behavior. Papers should run 7-10 pages, double-spaced. However, some students really get into it and go longer.

Grading Criteria: Identification of major points and supporting examples 50
Analysis and critique of issues raised, including suggestions for fixing these issues 80
General writing style and presentation 20

Total: 150 GROUP

PROJECT (400 Points)
Due 12/3

The purpose of this project is for you to apply the consumer behavior topics covered in this course to a real-world marketing problem. The assignment for each team (of ~4 students) is to prepare a paper, not to exceed 20 double-spaced pages, in which you identify the relevance of consumer behavior to an industry or company of your choosing. You may include additional pages of tables, figures, or other supplemental materials (this is in addition to the 20 doublespaced page limit). You will also present your project to the class in the format of a 20-minute oral presentation (must be done in PowerPoint and emailed to me no later than 12 pm on the day of your presentation).

Your grade for the assignment will be based on the following (out of 400 points):

1. A brief two-page outline of your proposed project will be due in class October 8 (20 points).
2. Your group’s paper, due at the beginning of class on December 3 (280 points).
3. Your group’s 15-minute presentation to the rest of the class (100 points). Professor Ringler will determine the date of the presentation no later than October 29.
4. Team Member evaluations are included in this document and are due on the day of the group presentation. Everyone must complete the team evaluation and turn it in at the start of class.
Instructions:
Using sources such as Fortune, Business Week, the Wall Street Journal, etc., identify a current marketing issue related to a consumer product or service. The aim is to analyze the consumer behavior inherent in some real-world situation and develop marketing recommendations based on that analysis.

A. What is (are) the marketing problem(s)
You should identify the key marketing problem(s) you will address in your project. Identifying examples of the problem will help you focus your project. You may use examples – photographs, commercials, promotions, etc.

B. Consumer Behavior Issues
You should identify the specific consumer behavior issues that are relevant to the marketing problem you have identified. It is important to be quite specific in your problem definition (e.g., are the issues related to consumer attitudes, cognitive decision making, perception, etc.?).

C. Primary Research
Use a form of primary research to gain information on the understanding of the consumer. This may involve observation research, a focus group, interviews, surveys, etc. Describe your method and findings in detail.

D. Consumer Analysis
The heart of your project is your creative analysis of the basic consumer behavior issues involved in your marketing problem. You should apply concepts, models, and theories we have discussed during the semester (e.g. perception, decision-making, attitude formation, social influences, etc.). Use these concepts to study, understand and explain the issues you are focused on.

Be sure to clearly describe the marketing recommendations that you would make based on your analysis of relevant consumer behavior phenomena. For instance, how would you package your product in a way that maximizes impact given what you know about attention and perception? How would you promote your product given the level of involvement your target market has in your product and the decision-making process your target consumers follow?

You will be evaluated on our choice of consumer behavior issues relevant to the marketing problem, the creative way in which you study those issues, your use of specific concepts from the textbook and class discussions, and the strategies that you recommend. Assume the audience for your paper has read the textbook and other readings for this course and attended the class lectures/discussions.

Make sure to include recommendations and ideas based on all 4 P’s of marketing.

Include any interview questions and answers, focus group questions, and original surveys.
Consumer Interview (100 Points)
Due 11/12

To prepare for our class discussion on November 12, please conduct an in-depth interview with someone not in the class about a recent purchase. If your last name starts with A-K, please ask this person to describe a recent purchase for a product that cost under $5. If your last name starts with L-Z, please ask this person to describe a recent purchase for a product that cost over $100.

Your goal in the interview will be to discover the decision-making process that led up to this purchase decision (including both external and internal factors that motivated this decision). Please be sure to find out the following (however do not limit your questions to the one’s provided and make sure you are able to explain every step of their decision-making process):

1. What led this consumer to realize that he or she needed or wanted to buy in this product category?
2. How many alternatives (if any) did the consumer consider?
3. How did the person decide to buy the alternative that he or she chose?
4. Which product attributes were important to this consumer? Why was it important to him or her that the product have these attributes?

Important: Please use the laddering technique to prompt the consumer to tell you the key benefits/values that they associate with product attributes. First, ask them to name an important attribute of the product, and then ask them why it is important to them that product have that attribute. After they answer, ask them why it is important to them that they get that benefit, and so on, until you’ve found out a higher-level, more-abstract motivation (e.g., self-esteem, peace of mind, safety, etc.) underlying their preference for the attribute.

- Are there other key associations (e.g., beliefs, feelings, memories, etc.) that come to mind for the consumer when thinking about this product that have not already been described?
- Will the person buy this same product (and brand) again? Why or why not?

After conducting this interview, please write-up a concise summary and analysis of your findings. Important: Be sure to include key marketing implications in your discussion of your findings. Your write-up should not exceed three pages double-spaced. Please be prepared to talk about your depth-interviews and your observations regarding marketing implications in class on November 12. Please also attach your questions and their answers to your questions as an additional appendix (i.e., it is not included in your three-page limit).
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<th>Assignment</th>
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<td>Value Perception and Attention</td>
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<td>3 – 9/17</td>
<td>Memory Research Methods – Observations and Focus Groups</td>
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<td>4 – 9/24</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
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<td>5 – 10/1</td>
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<td>Personality Attitudes</td>
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<td>8 – 10/22</td>
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<td>Why We Buy Project Time</td>
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<td>Exam 2 Why We Buy Blackboard Discussion Why We Buy Project Due</td>
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<td>14 – 12/3</td>
<td>Group Projects Due Group Project Presentations (7)</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 – 12/10</td>
<td>Group Project Presentations (7)</td>
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Team Member’s Evaluation Form

Name of Team Member doing evaluation: ________________________________

Name of Team Members being evaluated: ________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

INSTRUCTIONS: You have 100 points to allocate to all members of the group (including yourself). Please list the team member’s name, the number of points out of 100 the team member earned (based on the amount of work they did), and your reasoning for why they deserved the number of points specified.

1. Team Member 1 Name (YOU): ________________________________
   Points: ______ Comments:

2. Team Member 2 Name: ________________________________
   Points: ______ Comments:

3. Team Member 3 Name: ________________________________
   Points: ______ Comments:

4. Team Member 4 Name: ________________________________
   Points: ______ Comments:
*TOTAL POINTS SHOULD NOT EXCEED 100
Turnitin Account

- If you have ever had a Turnitin account, you should continue using it for any new classes you are taking which require Turnitin. You should not create another Turnitin account when you receive a new Class ID# and Class Password (see Warning below). Instead, you can add any number of classes to your already existing account. To enroll in a class using your pre-existing account, please do the following:

1. Go to www.turnitin.com
2. Click on the "Log In" button located toward the top right hand corner
3. Log into your account by typing the email address and password* you used previously.
4. Once logged into your account, click on the “Enroll in a Class” tab to the upper left of the screen. Type the numeric class ID# (8493208) and the case-sensitive class enrollment password (Wednesday) that your instructor has given you.
5. Your class will show on your homepage, after being added to your account.
6. Click on the class name and you will see the assignments and submissions for that class.
   - If you need to enroll in multiple Turnitin classes, you will need the class ID# and class password for each class, and repeat the steps above. Once you are enrolled in each class, you will not need that class ID# and class enrollment password again.
   - If you do not remember your account password, you can navigate to https://www.turnitin.com/password_reset1.asp to reset your password.
For students creating a new Turnitin account for the first time:

Your instructor provides a Class ID # and enrollment password to the class in order for you to create your own account to use Turnitin.

1. Go to www.turnitin.com
2. Click on “Create Account” link in the upper right corner.
3. On the next window, where it says “Create a New Account” choose the “Student” link.
4. Follow the directions on the New User page. You must have a Class ID# (8493208) and class enrollment password (Wednesday) to complete your profile. (Do not cut and paste into these fields.)
5. Once enrolled, your class will show on your homepage.
6. Click on the class name and you will see the assignments and submissions for that class. Once the initial student account with profile* is complete, you will only need to log into your account to see the class, or classes, in which you are enrolled. If you are enrolled in multiple Turnitin classes, you will need a class ID# and enrollment password for each class, in order to add the classes to your Turnitin account. Once you are enrolled in each class, you do not need that class ID and password again.

*The user Profile consists of an e-mail address, user password, optional personal information, and a set of user preferences.

Warning: Each student profile must be assigned a unique e-mail address in the Turnitin system. Students who have previously created a Turnitin profile will need to log in with the e-mail address and password that was originally set for the user profile. Creating duplicate accounts with duplicate class enrollments can cause issues. To fix these issues your instructor, possibly the school administrator, and the Turnitin Help Desk will need to be involved. To add new Turnitin classes to an existing account, please use the "Enroll in a Class" tab after logging in.

Helpful Definitions:

Class ID # - This is a unique identification number for your class. Your instructor will give you this number. You need this number to enroll in the class. If you do not have a Class ID# or have forgotten it, you must contact the instructor. Turnitin does not provide this information.

Password – Your enrollment password is provided by your instructor. If you have not received one, or the one you have is incorrect, you must contact the class instructor. Turnitin does not provide this information. (Reminder - All Turnitin passwords are case-sensitive.)