

Consumer and Organizational Buyer Behavior
MARK 4100
University of Georgia, Terry College of Business
Course Syllabus, Version One (updated 1/4/08)

Instructor: Professor J. Mark Mayer
Term: Spring 2008
Class Meets: Mon, Wed, Fri 2:30-3:20
Class Meets In: Sanford 112

Instructor Information

Office: 124 Brooks Hall
Telephone: 706-542-3764 (note: my answering machine does not work—if you don't reach me, please send me an e-mail message. If during "business hours" you can also call my cell at 706-248-1025 if you need to reach me).
E-mail: jmmayer@terry.uga.edu
Office Hours: Mon, Wed, Fri 1:00-2:00 and by appointment.

Required Texts

1. *Consumers* (2nd edition). Eric Arnould, Linda Price, and George Zinkhan (2004), McGraw-Hill-Irwin. *Note: all chapter references on this syllabus apply to the Consumers textbook.*
2. Your choice of one business-related bestselling book; we will discuss the parameters for this selection early in the semester.

Suggested Reference Materials

1. *The Wall Street Journal*
2. Trade magazines, like *Advertising Age* and *Brandweek*
3. Popular magazines, like *People*, *Rolling Stone*, *Cosmo*, *SI*, etc.
4. Online news and entertainment sites, like cnn.com, foxnews.com, ew.com, etc.

Course Description

This course examines what marketers need to know about consumers, and how they use this knowledge to satisfy consumer needs and wants. We will be examining consumer behavior primarily from a marketing management point-of-view; therefore, we will use the assigned readings, class projects, and in-class and out-of-class activities to help us develop a more sophisticated view of how marketing managers understand and influence consumer behavior. Concepts from marketing, economics, and basic behavioral sciences will be introduced.

Course Objectives/Expected Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student should:

- Appreciate the importance of understanding consumer behavior in successfully applying the marketing concept.
- Possess an initial understanding of why people buy and what they buy

- Understand how the disciplines of psychology, social psychology, sociology, and economics are integrated into the marketing process
- Explain internal and external influences on consumption behavior and on consumer evaluation of product/service providers
- Understand the growing sophistication of consumers and the challenge for marketers to continually meet changing needs
- Understand the importance of, and differences between, consumer behavior patterns and processes in the U.S. and global markets

Prerequisites

MARK 3000 is a prerequisite for this class. Final class rosters will be reviewed after Drop/Add. Any student not meeting prerequisites will be administratively withdrawn from the class.

Examination and Assignment Make-Up Policy

Exam dates and assignment due dates are non-negotiable; no assignments will be accepted late for any reason. If an assignment is not turned in by the due-date, you will receive an F (0 pts) for that assignment. If you are absent when an assignment is due, it is your responsibility to make arrangements to get your assignment to me either by e-mail or by fax. Note that make-up exams will not be given under any circumstances. Please plan ahead and mark your calendars for exam dates listed in the syllabus. Please do not schedule appointments (e.g., doctor) on exam days.

Two exceptions to this rule:

- 1) If you complete the process outlined by the Office of Curriculum Systems (<http://www.curriculumsystems.uga.edu>), verifying that you have another final exam scheduled for the same time or three final exams scheduled on the same day; or
- 2) If the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs verifies that you have a family emergency or personal illness that impedes your ability to take an exam.

If you arrive late for an in-class exam, you will be allowed to take the exam provided that no student has left the classroom. However, you will not be given any extra time to complete the exam (when the scheduled class period ends, you must hand it in).

Attendance Policy

Class participation is crucially important for this course (and for your personal development!) I will not deduct any class participation points for up to five (5) absences, providing that you notify me of your absence ahead of time by e-mailing me at jmmayer@terry.uga.edu. If you know that you are going to miss more than 5 classes, you shouldn't be registering for this course! Note that after five absences (or if you don't inform me of any absence) your grade will be negatively affected. Class attendance will be taken daily.

Also please note that I will offer the following bonuses for exemplary class attendance:

- If you NEVER miss class, for any reason, you'll earn an additional 3 pts on your final grade
- If you miss 1 class, for any reason, you'll earn 2 pts on your final grade
- If you miss 2 classes, for any reason, you'll earn 1 pt on your final grade

Academic Integrity

All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty.” If you are not familiar with that document, please read it so we do not have any confusion; all students are responsible for informing themselves of the standards of this document before doing any academic work. Please pay special attention to plagiarism issues.

Students with Special Needs

Students with special needs who require accommodations in order to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements should contact the instructor during the first week of class to discuss needs.

Changes to this Syllabus

This course syllabus is only a general plan for the course, and deviations to this syllabus may be necessary (these may apply to course sequence, grading issues, material to be covered, etc.)...in fact, I can almost guarantee at this point that some things will change, and possibly significantly.

I will be asking for detailed feedback on your opinions of how the class is going at about the mid-term point, and we'll review the overall feedback in class. Changes to the syllabus/course material/calendar may occur based on this feedback.

Please note that students are responsible for keeping up with all assignments, even if you miss a class in which the assignment was announced. Please check the WebCT course site frequently for announcements and revisions to the syllabus and overall class calendar. I will also be e-mailing you (probably more than you'd like!)

Class Approach/Note from the Instructor

Prior to my coming to UGA for doctoral studies, I completed a M.B.A. at Wake Forest University and then worked in brand management for two Fortune-200 companies (Kraft Foods and Wyeth Consumer Healthcare). I have direct experience with a wide variety of consumer behavior/marketing practices including consumer segmentation and targeting, new product launches, advertising development, brand repositioning/“turnarounds”, sales presentations, internet marketing, etc. Beyond these topical experiences, I have been able to gain insights into some of the critical success factors for building a successful career in marketing.

As an instructor, I seek to bring as much of this real-world experience to the classroom as possible. Therefore, I will be treating you largely as if I am your “manager” and I would ask you to consider your fellow classmates as “co-workers.” In team situations, you will generally be a “vendor” and I will be your “client” (e.g., you'll be the ad agency and I'll take the role of the brand manager).

For those of you who go on to a job in marketing (or in many other areas of business), you'll find that your job will probably not just be doing one thing over-and-over again, but rather you'll have a variety of different tasks. That's the way this class will be structured—I will not simply lecture, but rather in each and every class we'll doing a variety of activities.

Some of the key success factors that I will be seeking to help you develop are:

1. Interpersonal communication skills—verbal, written, presentation, etc. *It is almost impossible to succeed in the workplace without strong communication skills.*
2. Going beyond simply “understanding concepts” to “applying concepts” with emphasis on creativity and critical thinking. *Companies are not interested in people that simply “know stuff” ...they are looking for people who “know stuff” and can apply that knowledge in opportunistic, creative ways.*
3. Personal leadership and teamwork skills. Leadership and teamwork go hand in hand; they are about maximizing contributions (not hiding OR dominating). *You need to shine both as an individual and as a member of a team—you’re performance will likely be judged on both aspects!*
4. Consistency in performance. *Star employees are consistently excellent, both on the “major” and “minor” aspects of a job. They recognize that employees are judged not only by their best work, but by their worst work as well.*
5. Respect for others. This means respecting people’s different backgrounds, opinions, thought processes, etc. Respect implies both overt (e.g., classroom comments) and more subtle (e.g., non-verbal cues) behaviors. *Over the course of a career, you will manage, have as a manager, or have as a peer, a wide variety of people. Your career success or lack thereof will be significantly impacted by your interactions with these people!*

Grading:

Your grade will be determined by your performance on a wide variety of activities. They are described below in detail. The final exam will be optional. Therefore, you have the choice of taking as few as 2 tests or as many as 3.

2 Tests and Optional Final Exam: 30% of grade (10% or 15% apiece depending on whether or not you choose to take the final). There will be two regular exams and a final exam (which will be comprehensive AND optional). The final exam is optional and if you are satisfied with your course grade, you are under no obligation to take the final exam. *NOTE that you cannot replace a missed exam (or 0) by taking the final exam. If you miss an exam and are unexcused, your final grade will reflect that 0 as one of your test scores.*

The two in-semester tests will vary—the first is entirely multiple choice and will be taken in class, the second is short answer and essay and will be a take-home exam. Tests will cover assigned readings (largely from the textbook), as well as additional topics covered in class. Note that you are responsible for key concepts, terms, etc. that are discussed in the assigned readings even if we do not explicitly discuss them in class.

The optional final exam will be take-home and entirely short-answer and/or essay question format.

2 Minor Projects (individual): 20% of grade (10% apiece).

The first assignment is to read a best-selling business book and complete an abstract, report, and “one minute” presentation for class. Detailed instructions for this assignment will be distributed in class.

The second assignment will be to complete a 5-day comprehensive “consumer diary” and prepare an accompanying 3 page report summarizing key issues and learning discovered through this process. Detailed instructions for this assignment will be distributed in class.

1 Major Project (Group): 25% of grade (15% paper, 10% presentation). We will form groups of about five apiece to work on this project. This project will consist of both a 15-page paper and a major class presentation (both are group projects). Team members will also complete an evaluation form rating their fellow teammates’ contributions to both of those components, and these ratings will make up a significant portion of your individual grade. Please notify me if anyone is having difficulty with a team member (“free-riding” won’t be tolerated in the workplace, not will “domineering”...so we won’t want either going on in this class.)

Essentially, your task is to develop a major product launch that meets a consumer need or want (especially in light of a current marketing trend). More details follow below, and I will hand out a new product ideation checklist and a detailed list of what your write-up and presentation should contain during a later class period.

This project will be to develop a new, major, national consumer packaged goods (CPG) product launch in a specific industry (I will assign that industry). You will first identify consumer trends that show that this is an opportunity area, and then describe in great detail who the consumer(s) you are targeting this product at are. Then you will describe the product itself, both in terms of what it is, but also in terms of what its positioning and point-of-difference vs. competitors is going to be. You’ll next examine the 4 Ps and do a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis on your product. Next, you’ll determine what the volume opportunity is (in units and dollars). You will finally develop a comprehensive consumer research and consumer communication plan based on your above work.

Again, I will hand out appropriate materials to provide more guidance on expectations early in the semester.

Class Participation and Activities: 25% of grade. This component of your grade includes attendance, participation (quantity and quality), four online WebCT postings (which we will discuss in class), a group movie character analysis project, and in-class exercises (e.g., group exercises). We are not starting the semester with any quizzes on the syllabus, but I reserve the right to give them if class participation is consistently sub-par. I will notify you of your class participation grades when the course is ½ over, and feel free to contact me at any point in the semester to inquire about your grade.

Final grades will be calculated as follows:

A	: 95-100%	C+	: 77-79.9%
A-	: 90-94.9%	C	: 74-76.9%
B+	: 87-89.9%	C-	: 70-73.9%
B	: 83-86.9%	D	: 65-69.9%
B-	: 80-82.9%	F	: 0-64.9%

Other Notes:

- Please note that attendance means arriving on time. If you are running late (which obviously happens in the real-world too), please enter as unobtrusively as possible (e.g., don't apologize to me!) If you miss a significant amount of class time (e.g., a class exercise), you won't get credit for attending that day.
- Practice doesn't always make "perfect"...but it does make "way better." I strongly recommend practicing your in-class formal presentation ahead-of-time—get comfortable with the material, timing, etc. I'm also willing to look at drafts of papers, discuss ideas, etc. and provide feedback. I won't be forcing you to seek feedback before the deliverables are due but I'd encourage you to do so!
- One of the worst things that you can do in a corporate meeting/presentation is have a cell phone ring. Other off-limit areas are text-messaging, using laptops, reading magazines, talking while others have the floor, etc. As I mentioned, we'll be treating this like the "workplace" to a large degree...so those things would be pretty hazardous to your career and therefore please don't do them in my class! And just to repeat one more thing, laptops, text messaging devices, cellular phones, and music players are not to be open in class at any time.
- I realize that there are a lot of written assignments in my curriculum. Some of you are going to be more comfortable with that than others. However, it is important that all of you become as proficient with the written word as possible. I encourage you to take your time in completing these written assignments, and to view them as a "process" (think, plan, write a draft, think some more, rewrite, etc.), not as a one-time "event"!
- Please be careful not to plagiarize any one else's work. The rule of thumb is that if you are consciously expressing anyone else's ideas and not crediting them, you are plagiarizing. (Not to mention copying something directly from a source). Academic dishonesty cases are extremely unpleasant for everyone involved, so please don't do it!
- This course material is dynamic, and inherently interesting. In my opinion, this (consumer behavior) is the most fascinating subject in the business world. I'm going to do my best to really make this material come to life, and let's have fun with it!