

Course Syllabus: Consumer Buyer Behavior

MARK 4100 Fall 2009 University of Georgia, Terry College of Business
Course Syllabus, Version One (updated 8/30/09)

Instructor: Professor J. Mark Mayer

Meets: Tues. and Thurs. Section 1—9:30-10:45, Section 2—11:00-12:15

Classrooms: Caldwell 107 (Section 1), Sanford 209 (section 2).

Instructor Information

Office: 124 Brooks Hall Telephone: 706-248-1025

E-mail: jmmayer@terry.uga.edu (but I would greatly prefer if you contacted me using the e-mail function on WebCT)

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursdays, 1:00-2:30. Or chat with me before/after class. I'm also usually on campus and you can feel free to drop by anytime. If you urgently need to meet formally outside of class/office hours, call me and we'll schedule a time.

Required Texts and Course Materials

I'll be using Solomon's Consumers, 8th ed. You may purchase any edition of this book. Additional course materials will be provided via the class WebCT site.

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

An overview of what marketers need to know about consumers and how this knowledge is used to satisfy consumer needs. Consumer behavior concepts, processes, and models that help explain differences in consumption behavior and choice are discussed. Concepts from marketing, economics, and basic behavioral sciences are introduced.

Prerequisites

Prerequisite: MARK 3000

Final class rosters will be reviewed after Drop/Add. Any student not meeting prerequisites will be administratively withdrawn from the class.

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 US and global markets.

Topical Outline

- Definition and importance of consumer behavior
- Psychological, economic and social foundations of consumer behavior
- Models of consumer behavior
- Research designs for understanding consumer behavior
- Economic and social influences on consumer behavior
- Psychological influences on consumer behavior
- Needs, motivation and values
- Personality and the self-concept
- Consumer decision-making
- Experience, learning and knowledge
- On-line buying behavior

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 be taking attendance on a daily basis. However, we will be doing a lot of in-class exercises that you'll get a "zero" on if you're not in class. I will not penalize missed in-class exercises providing that you inform me ahead of time that you'll be missing class—just send me a message through the WebCT site. Note that I do reserve the right to automatically withdraw anyone who is systematically missing class and adding no value to the course and classmates.

Academic Honesty Policy

As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic honesty policy, "A Culture of Honesty," and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in "A Culture of Honesty" found at: www.uga.edu/honesty. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations in order to participate in course activities or meet course requirements should contact the instructor or designee during regular office hours or by appointment.

Changes to this Syllabus

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

Note from Professor on changes: I can almost guarantee at this point that some things will change, and possibly significantly. I will be asking for feedback (your opinions of how the class is going) at about the mid-term point. 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 Professor

Prior to my coming to UGA for doctoral studies, I completed an 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 in group settings.*
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!*

Principal Course Assignments:

Please see attached course calendar. The description of key assignments is also contained in the grading section that follows.

Course Requirements for Grading Purposes:

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: 40% of grade (13.33% or 20% 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 be a mix of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. Tests will cover assigned readings (largely from the online powerpoints), as well as additional topics covered in class.

The optional final exam will be take-home and entirely essay question format.

1 Major Project (Can be completed individually, or in a team of up to 3 members): 20% of grade. This project will consist of a minimum 7-page paper (note that I'll expect more if you work in teams!). If you choose to work in a team, you will all be graded equally (i.e. team members will not receive different grades based on contribution—so if you choose this option, pick your group members carefully!)

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 there's a detailed assignment sheet on WebCT.

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 post appropriate materials to provide more guidance on expectations early in the semester.

Class Participation: 40% of grade. This component of your grade includes participation (quantity and quality), online WebCT postings, a movie character analysis project, a critique of a documentary we'll watch in class, a short-consumer diary assignment, and in-class exercises (e.g., group exercises), etc. We are not starting the semester with any quizzes on the syllabus, but I reserve the right to give them if overall class participation is consistently sub-par.

Grading Policy: final grades will be calculated as follows--

A	: 94-100%	C+	: 77-79.9%
A-	: 90-93.9%	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. If you miss a significant amount of class time (e.g., a class exercise), you won't get credit for attending that day.

- 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.
- 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!
- Every professor has "pet peeves." My biggest two are (1) students texting during class, and (2) students using laptops during class. Please don't make me close your computer, or ask you to step outside to finish your message, etc...
- 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!