CONSUMER BEHAVIOR MKTG 329

Professor: Dr. Rhonda Mack
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Prerequisites: ECON 200 and 201, MKTG 302


Course Description
To be successful, businesses need many individual consumers to decide to purchase their products/services. To be successful, not-for-profits need enough individual consumers to buy-in or to support their cause. Many organizations’ marketing strategies are unsuccessful in this regard; thus, businesses often fail or do not earn a sufficient profit and many not-for-profits fall short of desired objectives.

Simultaneously, there is also considerable failure from the consumer’s perspective. Many of us do not act in the marketplace as we should, or as we feel we should, leading to personal, social, and sometimes ethical issues. In practice, we find that consumers are frustratingly human, they are irrational, emotional and often unpredictable. THOSE PERPLEXING CONSUMERS!

We study consumer behavior to assist in understanding just what it is that leads to individual purchase/support decisions that are crucial to organizational profitability/success as well as to personal and social well-being. This study of consumer insight includes psychological theory and concepts that impact the consumer’s decision-making journey. We will also address various types of research designs often employed in the study of consumer behavior.

This course will be taught from two perspectives: That of a Customer-Centric Marketing Perspective and that of a Sustainable Business Perspective. We will explore the meaning of each of these throughout the course. Overall, MKTG 329 Consumer Behavior will examine theories and concepts for understanding, developing, and implementing consumer marketing strategies in the modern world. Through readings, cases, and applications, students will study consumer behavior and the consumer decision making process with the goal of improving the multiple components of marketing strategy with a focus on informed and responsible consumption.

As consumers ourselves, it is important to be aware of the influence that marketing has on our own purchasing behavior and on the lifestyle decisions we make. It is equally important to be aware of the impact that our decisions have on the world.

School of Business Learning Goals:
- Communication Skills: Students demonstrate the ability, via both written and spoken word, to effectively Present, critique, and defend ideas in a cogent, persuasive manner.
- Quantitative Fluency: Students demonstrate competency in logical reasoning and data analysis skills.
- Global and Civic Responsibility: Students identify and define social, ethical, environmental and economic challenges at local, national and international levels. Students integrate knowledge and skills in addressing these issues.
- Intellectual Innovation and Creativity: Students demonstrate their resourcefulness and originality in addressing extemporaneous problems.
- Synthesis: Students demonstrate the ability to integrate knowledge from multiple disciplines
incorporating learning from both classroom and non-classroom settings in the completion of complex and comprehensive tasks.

PARTICIPATION, ATTENDANCE, AND CLASS EXPECTATIONS
I don’t want to do this alone, guys! Much of the success of this course depends on your engagement and participation. Although obligation to speak up can be intimidating to some, this class relies on informed engagement for learning.

Preparation and engagement are crucial. You should be prepared for each class and ready to contribute to class discussions by raising issues and asking questions that are relevant to the course.

Your assignments may include reading journal publications—you may occasionally get lost in the methodology but continue to plow through and look for what was studied, how, why, results and implications.

We may have guest speakers coming to class. First, show them professional respect. Always research them and their organizations before they arrive and be ready to ask questions as they allow during/after their presentation.

High quality participation in class discussions includes questions, ideas and comments which are based on logic, evidence or data, that show curiosity or are creative, that consider ideas offered by others in the class, that move the discussion forward, and that help others feel safe about participating. Questions/comments that are vague, unrelated, or disrespectful of others are discouraged and frankly unwelcome.

Excessive absences will impact your final class grade.

This will be an “unplugged” class. Once class starts, all electronics should be turned off and put away with the exception of their use for presentation purposes or other approved tasks.

Course Learning Objectives
1. To understand concepts and theories of consumer behavior and decision making and their application in marketing strategy decisions.
2. To become familiar with some of the various methods by which consumer behavior is studied and develop an understanding of the types of conclusions that might be drawn from these designs.
3. Identify social and ethical issues involving buyer behavior and organizational strategy.

*Grading (See Attendance Policy and Project Group peer review which may impact you grade as well)

Exams = 70pts total (35pts each)  Group Projects = 40pts (20pts each)  Statement = 10pts

120 points total

Grading Scale
A  108 or more  A- (I do not give A- grades. If you make 108 points, you deserve to get an A.
B+  106-107  B  97-105  B-  96
C+  94-95  C  85-93  C-  84
D  72-83
F  71 or less
Class Attendance Policy

Class Attendance: Because class attendance is crucial for any course, students are expected to attend all classes and laboratory meetings of each course in which they enroll. Instructors maintain the authority to determine how absences will be addressed, which should be detailed in their attendance policies. Participation in college-sponsored activities, where students are official representatives of the College of Charleston, may result in absence(s). Instructors will recognize absences in which students are official representatives of the College of Charleston (such as intercollegiate academic or athletic team competition, or academic program sanctioned research presentation or artistic performance) as excused. During the first week of classes, instructors will announce and distribute their attendance policies, including criteria to be used in determining excused absences. Instructors determine whether absences are excused or unexcused for the purposes of participation grades, in-class assignments, and laboratories. Regarding formal graded work (such as exams, presentations, papers), instructors will make “reasonable accommodations” when a student misses class for an event at which s/he is an official representative of the College of Charleston. Examples of reasonable accommodations might include: rescheduling an exam, altering presentation times, or flexibility in assignment submission dates. Students are required to submit documentation of their College representation related commitment from the appropriate College authority at least one week prior to the scheduled absence in order to be eligible for reasonable accommodations by the instructor. Regardless of any accommodation granted, students are responsible for satisfying all academic objectives, requirements, and prerequisites as defined by the instructor and the College. Instructors ascertain whether both excused and unexcused absences count in determining the basis for a grade of “WA,” which stands for ‘withdrawn excessive absences” and is equivalent to a failing grade. If attendance is used for grading purposes, the instructor is responsible for keeping accurate attendance records. If a student has more than the maximum allowed absences as defined in the course syllabus, the professor may assign a “WA.” Instructors are required to submit an electronic “WA” form (located in MyCharleston faculty tab) to the Registrar on or before the last meeting day of the class. The Registrar will then send an email notification to the student. The student is responsible for keeping personal addresses and contact information current through the Office of the Registrar. All students, whether absent or not, are responsible for all information disseminated in the course.

The above the CofC official attendance policy. With respect to this class (MKTG 329), attendance is required. The class includes a high amount of group discussion and project work, therefore, it is important to your group members, as well as to yourself and your grade, that you attend. Poor attendance (more than two absences) will impact your grade. The only exceptions are official absences due to academic program sanctioned activities as specified in the College’s policy. If you are absent more than twice (except CofC sanctioned absences—student health center excuses are not sanctioned absences), your grade will go down one grade category (this includes “+ and –” for each absence beyond two.

School of Business Learning Goals

➢ The SB learning goals are:
  
  COMMUNICATION SKILLS: Students demonstrate the ability, via both written and spoken word, to effectively present, critique, and defend ideas in a cogent, persuasive manner.

  QUANTITATIVE FLUENCY: Students demonstrate competency in logical reasoning and data analysis skills.

  GLOBAL AND CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY: Students identify and define social, ethical, environmental and economic challenges at local, national and international levels. Students integrate knowledge and skills in addressing these issues.

  INTELLECTUAL INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY: Students demonstrate their resourcefulness and originality in addressing extemporaneous problems.

  SYNTHESIS: Students demonstrate the ability to integrate knowledge from multiple disciplines incorporating learning from both classroom and non-classroom settings in the completion of complex and comprehensive tasks.
Reflective of School of Business Learning Goals, this class addresses the following of these goals:

**Global and Civic Responsibility:** Students will be able to identify and define social, ethical, environmental and economic challenges at a local, national and international levels. Students will also be able to integrate knowledge and skills in addressing these issues. **Implementation:** Students will be required to complete human subjects protection certification training targeted to ethical and legal requirements for working with human subjects research and will discuss these issues in class. **Demonstration of Achievement:** Passing of certification test.

**Communication skills:** Students demonstrate the ability, via both written and spoken word, to effectively present, critique, and defend ideas in a cogent, persuasive manner. **Implementation:** Students will write their written report based on their semester long project, and present the results of this project in class. **Demonstration of Achievement:** Presentation of a concise and effective report.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities or Special Needs**
The College will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. If there is a student in the class who has a documented disability and has been approved to receive accommodations through the Center for Disability Service/SNAP, please come and discuss this with me during my office hours during the First Two Weeks of class.

**Disability Statement from the SNAP Office**
Students approved for SNAP Services are instructed to meet with each of their professors during the first two weeks of classes or as soon as they are approved for services to discuss accommodations and present a copy of their SNAP-issued Professor Notification Letter (PNL).

**Honor Code** (I have zero tolerance for honor code violations.)

**College of Charleston Honor Code and Academic Integrity**
Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when identified, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved.

Incidents where the instructor determines the student’s actions are related more to a misunderstanding will handled by the instructor. A written intervention designed to help prevent the student from repeating the error will be given to the student. The intervention, submitted by form and signed both by the instructor and the student, will be forwarded to the Dean of Students and placed in the student’s file.

Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive a XF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This grade will appear on the student’s transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the X to be expunged. The student may also be placed on disciplinary probation, suspended (temporary removal) or expelled (permanent removal) from the College by the Honor Board.

Students should be aware that unauthorized collaboration—working together without permission—is a form of cheating. Unless the instructor specifies that students can work together on an assignment, quiz and/or test, no collaboration during the completion of the assignment is permitted. Other forms of cheating include possessing or using an unauthorized study aid (which could include accessing information via a cell phone or computer), copying from others’ exams, fabricating data, and giving unauthorized assistance.

Research conducted and/or papers written for other classes cannot be used in whole or in part for any assignment in this class without obtaining prior permission from the instructor.

Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook at [http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php](http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php)

**Need Communications Help??**
College Skills Writing Lab and Speaking/Presentation Lab located in the in the Center for Student Learning (Addlestone Library, first floor). Trained writing consultants can help with writing for all courses; they offer one-to-one consultations that address everything from brainstorming and developing ideas to crafting strong sentences and documenting sources. For more information, please call 843.953.5635 or visit [http://csl.cofc.edu/labs/writing-lab/](http://csl.cofc.edu/labs/writing-lab/).
MY TEACHING PHILOSOPHY
My teaching philosophy is simple. I believe that students learn best (as do I) when they talk about and experience the topics and processes which they are studying. Thus, I will not lecture class the entire time nor recite everything you need to learn. Instead, I have developed a course that covers major topics in consumer behavior which you need as a student of marketing and I will assume that you will be responsible in our learning partnership. I will bring up major issues from your readings and from the current business environment and lead class discussions and/or assign projects that emphasize the important points. Thus, YOU MUST BE ACTIVE in the learning process. Do not expect a PowerPoint regurgitation.

MY EXPECTATIONS OF YOU are that you come to class prepared (have completed all readings and assignments before the class), that you work hard and give this class your full attention and effort, that you show integrity, and you are honest and treat everyone in this class with respect, that you enjoy yourself while we learn together. I expect that every student will speak up in class, ask questions and be part of an active learning environment.

I expect you to spend around 2 hours outside of class for every hour in class. More time will be needed when preparing for exams and your project work.

Your failure to meet these expectations will likely result in a less than ideal grade from your perspective.

For any class that you miss--make sure that on the first day or so of class, you identify a class “buddy” who you can contact to get any class notes or assignments from that you may have missed.

MY OVERALL OBJECTIVE for you is that, when you leave this course, you will have a new set of knowledge and tools; and, that in your future professional role, you will be able to identify the aspects of consumer behavior that are relevant to your organization’s decision making and understand how to begin gathering the relevant consumer information. I also want to encourage you to be a more involved, more aware, and more socially responsible consumer.

CLASS STRUCTURE
Our class consists of readings (textbook and articles), group projects (presented in class) based on our readings, lecture, and a great deal of class discussion. I fully expect you to read the chapters and other assignments before the class for which they are assigned. Failure to do so will greatly impact your grade via your knowledge of exam content.

We may introduce an occasional activity or assignment that diverges from the schedule outlined on the syllabus as time and marketing practices evolve during the semester. You never know what may be happening in the public arena that can be quite valuable to our study of consumer behavior.

EXAMS
There are two formal Exams this semester. Each exam will be largely multiple choice with options for short “essay” questions as well. The purpose of these exams is to measure your comprehension and retention of reading assignments, including theory, facts presented, terminology and practices. These quizzes will be quite detailed and you are responsible for everything in the chapters and other assigned readings unless otherwise indicated.

These exams will be taken online via OAKS. They are timed and will be open at specified times (for a specified length of time) as announced.
CLASS GROUP PROJECTS AND PRESENTATIONS

There are two major projects in this class. The purpose of these is to have you delve deeper into consumer behavior and behavioral perspectives of sustainability issues as well as to view organizational practices regarding sustainability in today’s marketplace.

The primary bases of the project grades will be:

- **Use of consumer behavior principles and terminology** used in your work. You should use the tools/theories that you have learned from the class.
- **Clarity of points and arguments**. Your arguments should follow logically and should lead smoothly to the overall point you are making.
- **Addressing of counterarguments**. You should be able to answer obvious counterarguments preferably using consumer behavior principles.
- **Presentation style**. Everyone has their own style, but it is important to be succinct and clear in your presentation, to talk loud enough that everyone can hear you, not to repeat yourself (or others in your group). Professionalism will be expected. Please remember that humor is sometimes difficult to incorporate into a serious business presentation.
- **Reports are expected to be grammatically correct** and with appropriate spelling. Use of headings and sub-headings are a must for structural soundness and logical reading.
- **Group effort**. Projects are a group effort and will be graded accordingly. Make sure that the report reads well, are not overlapping, are consistent in format and nomenclature (I, we, John, they, etc). Each group member should be familiar with the entire project/report content.

**REFERENCES AND CITATIONS**  All papers should use citations within paper with full references provided in reference section at end. Papers without this will be received no higher than 6 points.

Failure to “give your fair share of the group effort” as perceived by your peers will lower your grade.
DESCRIPTION OF PROJECTS

1. Sustainability Topic Assignment Report (20 points)
Groups of 2-4 students each will select one of the assigned Sustainability Topics listed below. Each group will research the topic thoroughly and prepare a written report and a formal class presentation using PowerPoint. Expectations are that you will delve deeply into written literature (academic and professional sources) and ideally you will interview relevant stakeholders regarding your topic based upon clear objectives of your topical report. (For instance, if your topic is food waste, you may interview families regarding their food usage and disposal of, as well as interview restaurants and grocery retailers to gain a better understanding of the topic that you are also researching via literature. You should also consider any regulatory policies or guidelines in place regarding your topic.)

The “Deliverables” of the project will be a very well organized, subtitled, bulleted report (with introductory paragraphs to the sections), citations and a fully-referenced bibliography, as well as a copy of your PowerPoint presentations. A summary, somewhat diary-like showing progression, of group effort is to accompany the deliverables and this is to be signed by all members of the group. “Deliverables” are to come to me via HARD COPY. Class presentation: up and down less than 18 minutes each group.

- Footprints (ecological, water, carbon)
- Food Waste
- Fast Fashion and slavery footprint
- E-Waste
- FTC Green Guides, regs and issues
- Life Cycle Analysis
- Packaging, plastic and the sea
- Lever BROTHERS & Sustainability
- Health (unhealthy food and products)
- Pharmaceutical drugs & their pricing
- Global Comparisons: Legal and ethical issues
- Sustainability on American Campuses
- Consumer attitudes (why we do/do not engage in sustainable behaviors)

2. Company Product/Service Redesign Project (15 points)
In a “team” of two to four members, you will create a proposal for the redesign of a product or service produced by a Fortune 1000 company that improves on the existing product’s ecological footprint, while maintaining mainstream appeal and commercial viability. The proposal will include a “rough” outline of your go-to-market plan. Deliverables for the term project include a 10-15 page report, as well as an abbreviated class highlights oral presentation. Hard Copy. Topics to include:

Background Research
- Product/service level market analysis, competitive, segmentation & targeting
- Corporate/organizational sustainability profile and sustainability context
- SWOT analysis

Redesign Concept:
- Description of redesign
- Consideration of Life Cycle Analysis
- Ecological impact of redesign
- Commercial viability of redesign and anticipated consumer response to redesign

Go-To-Market Plan
- Marketing strategy for redesign
- Articulation of target segments and focus on benefits to, messaging to, target customer
- Highlight strategic changes reflective of redesign

3. Point-of-View Statement (10 points)
Carefully think of what we have studied over this semester, our readings, and our discussions. Your assignment is to develop your own personal statement, point of view, of our coverage and ideas of how you, yourself, can decrease your own footprint(s). Consider and share your own consumer profile indicating how marketing strategy could be developed to encourage you to reduce your footprint. Feel free to select any specific footprint and any specific industry. Be specific with your suggested strategy. This report (hard copy) is to be thoughtfully planned and concisely organized into no more than three type-written pages.

4. CLASS assignment: Consumer Qualitative Research: friends/family. Using Appendix A and methods discussed in class, use at least two qualitative methods to explore the behaviors/attitudes of your friends or family toward some topic of sustainable behavior. Agree in your “group” on a common topic and as a group pool your finds (ideally 3-5 subjects per student).
# TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/21</td>
<td>Introduction to class structure</td>
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<tr>
<td>8/23</td>
<td>An Overview of the Consumer Behavioral Model</td>
<td>CONSUMER BEHAVIOR MODEL (TEXT CHPT 1)</td>
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<td>8/28</td>
<td>How consumers are influenced?</td>
<td>Articles: “Nudge”, “Companies are Happy when Consumers Are Trapped”</td>
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<td><strong>SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT TOPIC ASSIGNMENTS</strong></td>
<td>CLASS DISCUSSION: POSITION W/EXAMPLES</td>
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<td><strong>EXTERNAL INFLUENCES</strong> (Culture, Subculture, Demographics, Social Status, Reference Groups, Family)</td>
<td>CLASS DISCUSSION</td>
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<td>9/4</td>
<td>Literature Search</td>
<td>Amanda Kraft, CofC Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/6</td>
<td>Culture/Subculture</td>
<td>Chpt 2,</td>
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<td>9/11</td>
<td>Demographics &amp; Social Stratification</td>
<td>Chpt 4, Chpt 5 Page 147-151</td>
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<td>9/13</td>
<td>Families &amp; Households</td>
<td>Chpt 6</td>
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<td>9/18</td>
<td>Group Influences</td>
<td>Chpt 7</td>
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<td>9/20</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td><strong>REDESIGN PROJECT TOPICS DUE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>9/25</td>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>Previous reading assignments and class discussions</td>
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<td>9/27</td>
<td>Consumer Perceptions</td>
<td>Chpt. 8</td>
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<td>10/2</td>
<td>Learning, Memory &amp; Product Positioning</td>
<td>Chpt. 9</td>
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<td>10/4</td>
<td>Motivation, Personality and Emotion</td>
<td>Chpt. 10</td>
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<td>10/9</td>
<td>Attitudes &amp; Influencing Attitudes,</td>
<td>Chpt. 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/11</td>
<td>Self Concept and Lifestyle</td>
<td>Chpt. 12</td>
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10/16  Consumer Research Methods  Appendix A (pp. 734-744)
10/18  Exam 2  Chpts 8-12
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10/23  CATCH OUR BREATH  finalize upcoming presentations
10/25  Sustainability Project Presentations  All sustainability projects hard copy due in class
Footprints (ecological, water, carbon)
Fast Fashion and slavery footprint
FTC Green Guides
10/30  Continue SP Presentations  Life Cycle Analysis
Food Waste
Health (unhealthy Food and Products)
11/1   Continue SP Presentations  E-Waste
Packaging, plastic and the sea
Consumer attitudes (why we do/do not engage in Sustainable behaviors)
11/6   FALL BREAK (Nov 5/6)
11/8   Consumer Decision Making  Skim Chapters 14-18
11/13  Consumer Qualitative Research  Study of your family/friends
11/15  Class Discussion on Point of View  Point of View Individual REPORTS DUE IN CLASS
11/20  Redesign Company Product/Service Presentations
11/22  Thanksgiving Holiday (W 11/21-Sun 11/25)
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11/27  Redesign Company Product/Service Presentations  ALL Redesign projects due
11/29  Redesign Company Product/Service Presentations  Last day of this class
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Mon.12/3 Last day CofC classes; Tuesday 12/4 Reading Day; Exams: W12/5-W12/12; Sat.12/15,commnct