Course Objectives

1. To familiarize you with research in consumer behavior with special focus on social psychology to help you appreciate some of key psychological processes that potentially influence consumer behavior.
2. To give you a strong foundation for critical thinking in the area of consumer behavior.

The focus of this course is on understanding current theoretical and methodological approaches to various aspects of consumer behavior, as well as advancing this knowledge by developing testable hypotheses and theoretical perspectives that build on the current knowledge base. For each topic considered, a range of articles from “old classics” to new research will be assigned. In each session we will discuss three to five articles in depth. All of the required readings should be read carefully by everyone attending the class.

All students must write a ‘summary’ for each class. The summary must address the following issues:
   1. What is the key contribution of this research?
   2. Are there any confounds? Can you explain the results in a different way?
   3. What would you have done differently to test the hypotheses?
   4. When reading multiple papers on the topic, how do the different papers relate to each other, or are different? Is there a way to integrate the ideas?
   5. What is the single most interesting future research direction? Just pick one.

The summaries are to be submitted by EACH student every week. The summaries will count towards (but not substitute for) the class participation for that week.

However, one student will be responsible to lead the discussion each week. Discussion leaders can ask questions of the other students, focus on central theoretical or methodological issues, or think about additional questions that are raised by the readings. The purpose of this is to get all students to really think carefully about the papers and take responsibility for discussion in the class. Note that those who are not selected to lead the discussion are also responsible for participating, and either the discussion leader or the instructor may call on them with questions at any time. For those who are
leading the discussion, make sure to examine the stated objective and positioning of the research, the hypotheses, the methodology, and the results, before getting into the more interesting aspects such as the paper’s contribution, critiques, and future research directions. In addition to getting a good understanding of the topic of interest, my goal is that each week you should generate a new ‘idea’ for at least one new study in the focal topic. Therefore, we will spend a fair bit of time brain-storming on research ideas on the topic.

In addition to summarizing, leading discussions and of course class participation, students are responsible for THREE additional elements as part of the course deliverables.

One, each student must submit a ‘Thought Paper’ and present their thoughts to the class (around the middle of the semester).

Two, to help you get ‘practice’ of writing a review and critically evaluating a manuscript, you will be expected to write a review of a First Round Submission of a JCR manuscript, and submit your ‘review’ one week before the class. Once your review is submitted to me, you will get access to the actual reviews, and the multiple rounds of submissions. We will discuss these actual reviews, and your reviews in one of the sessions.

Three, each student must submit a written paper and present it as your Final Research Paper at the end of the semester. The paper must be submitted one week before the presentation date so that everyone has had a chance to read everyone else’s paper.

Together, with your class participation these three components will comprise the course grade for the students alongside the class participation.

See grading scheme below for more details.

Grading Scheme:

1. **Class participation (30%).** All students are required to read all papers scheduled for each session, ready to discuss them. In addition, in every class, each participant shall read one article in depth and summarize this for the rest of the class: orally (driven by the questions 1-5 above) as well as in writing.

2. **A “Thought” paper (10%).** You will develop a research idea and “position” it within the context of one of the topics under discussion in the previous weeks, or a different topic within the Consumer Behavior domain. Your idea paper could build on your paper summary. It should either extend the original paper theoretically (maybe through developing boundary conditions), empirically (conceptual replication research or methodological replication research by tackling the same problem using a more appropriate research approach), or lead to a reversal of the findings of the original research. We will discuss these ideas in class. The idea paper should be of **approximately 2 pages** in length, and read like the front end of a JCR article - with the motivation for the idea, brief description of prior research, and the proposed hypothesis. Importantly, however, this idea piece should not be the same as your research paper - although the topic could be related, please make this research idea distinct.

3. **Paper Review (10%).** To help you better experience the review process of a journal, you will write a review for a paper, and subsequently read the actual reviews received from the journal – multiple rounds. We will discuss your reviews and the actual reviews in class. The reviews will count for 10% of the grade.

4. **Research paper (50%).** You will develop a research idea, collect data for it (if possible but not necessary) and submit the final written paper as an end-of-the-semester assignment. This is an opportunity to conduct in-depth reading in your selected area, and gaining knowledge
in that particular area. You are encouraged to discuss a brief outline of the research ‘idea’ with the instructor for feedback as well as formal approval. Conducting literature review, identifying the research question, developing the theory, framing the hypotheses, conducting a study, reporting the results as well as writing the general discussion would be key components of the paper. Please follow the JCR style-sheet (http://wiscinfo.doit.wisc.edu/jcr/stylesheet.pdf) in preparing this paper. (You could also use APA Formatting if you prefer). The paper should not exceed 15 pages of text (you can exceed this limit with only references, tables and/or figures). Your final paper is due at the end of the semester ONE WEEK BEFORE your in-class presentation.
Course Outline

Sep 15: Course Introduction. Overview of the course, readings, format. Sign up for papers to be presented each week by you. What is Consumer Behavior Research?

Sep 22: Culture

Sep 29: Time

Oct 06: Money

Oct 13: Self and Relationships

Oct 20: Anthropomorphism

Oct 27: No Class – ACR

Nov 03: ‘Thought paper’ and Presentations

Nov 10: Choice

Nov 17: Morality

Nov 24: Mental Accounting and Endowment Effect

Dec 01: Review Process

Dec 07: Final Paper and Presentations
**Sep 15: Course Introduction.**

Introductions about each other including research interests.

Overview of the course.

General discussion about academic research, esp. in marketing.

*What is good research?*

*What is Consumer Behavior Research?*

Sign up for papers to be presented each week by you.

**Readings:**


Sep 22: Culture

Required Readings:


Other Readings:


**Sep 29: Time**

**Required Readings:**


**Other Readings:**


Oct 06: Money

Required Readings:


Zhou, Xinyue; Vohs, Kathleen D.; Baumeister, Roy F.(2009), ”The symbolic power of money: Reminders of money alter social distress and physical pain,” *Psychological Science*, 20(6), 700-706

Quoidbach, Jordi; Dunn, Elizabeth W.; Petrides, K. V.; Mikolajczak, Moïra (2010), “Money giveth, money taketh away: The dual effect of wealth on happiness,” *Psychological Science*, 21(6), 759-763

Briers, Barbara; Pandelaere, Mario; Dewitte, Siegfried; Warlop, Luk (2006), “Hungry for Money: The Desire for Caloric Resources Increases the Desire for Financial Resources and Vice Versa,” *Psychological Science*, 17(11), 939-943


Other Readings:


Oct 13: Self and Relationships

**Required Readings:**


**Other Readings:**


Oct 20: Anthropomorphism

Required Readings:


Other Readings:


Oct 27: No Class – ACR Conference
Nov 03 – ‘Thought paper’ and In-Class Presentations
Nov 10: Choice and Preference

**Required Readings:**


**Other Readings:**


Shiv, Baba; Carmon, Ziv; Ariely, Dan (2005), “Placebo effects of marketing actions: Consumers may get what they pay for,” *Journal of Marketing Research*, 42(4), 383-393

Nov 17: Morality

**Required Readings:**


**Other Readings:**


Zhong, Chen-Bo; Strejcek, Brendan; Sivanathan, Niro (2010), “A clean self can render harsh moral judgment,” *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 46(5), 859-862
Nov 24: Mental Accounting and Endowment Effect

**Required Readings:**


**Other Readings:**


Dec 01: Reviewing for a Journal

**Review Process**

**Required Readings:**

First Submission: Maeng, Ahreum and Pankaj Aggarwal “Facing Dominance: Anthropomorphism and the Effect of Product Face Ratios on Consumer Preferences”
   Reviews + AE Report + Editor’s Letter
   Reviews + AE Report + Editor’s Letter
   Reviews + AE Report + Editor’s Letter
Dec 08: Research Paper + Presentation

Required Readings:

Papers submitted by the students (We read all papers being submitted).