

**MAR 3503: Customer Behavior
Fall 2001
Course Syllabus**

College of Business Administration
University of Central Florida

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Course Overview

What is marketing? The purpose of running a business used to be stated as ‘**generating profits**’ in the old textbooks. It was a firm-oriented perspective of marketing that focused on what to do as a firm to maximize its bottom line. As business administration evolves as a well established discipline, the official goal of business operation in the marketplace has changed to ‘**providing value to customers**’. In other words, the focus has been shifted from firms to customers who are on the receiving side of the goods and services exchanged in the transaction. Obviously the importance of marketing has considerably grown in business practice because of the function’s direct relationship with customers.

Sub-disciplines of marketing Marketing, in modern era, has developed three major sub-disciplines; consumer behavior, modeling, and management. Consumer behavior tries to tap into our mind to explain the behind the scene stories of economic behavior of consumers based on various fundamental disciplines such as psychology, sociology, anthropology, history, linguistics, etc. Modeling develops mathematical models that describe business transactions, and management follows the firm oriented approach to its marketing function such as distribution channels, sales force management, budgeting, etc.

Customer behavior This course is one piece of the puzzle for understanding the principles of marketing. We focus on the question ‘why buyers behave as they do in the marketplace?’ It is conventionally called as consumer behavior course, but the reason for using ‘customer’ instead of ‘consumer’ in the course title means we focus more on the transaction side of the story. When you buy a pet product, the consumer is not you, it’s the pet. What we are interested in is how you as a buyer think and act instead of how the pet would think and act. One more distinction that should be made is another difference between a ‘consumer’ and a ‘customer’. Marketing is responsible for developing relationships with people to turn them from consumers to customers. Therefore, what captures our attention is what is going on in consumers’ minds than the customers who actually buy the goods or services in the marketplace. It does not mean that customers are not important. It only points out that the actual purchasing behavior and the purchaser are not the only issues this course is designed to tackle. In summary, this course presents the principles from various behavioral disciplines to understand how consumers’ psychological processes and social/situational influences lead to certain consumer perceptions, decision making processes and behaviors.

Cyber customer Since we are living in a cyber age, the ‘digital’ buyer behavior has become a hot issue in marketing. Sometimes the ‘digital’ behavior is an extension of conventional buyer behavior, and sometimes it is

not. We will spend about 15 to 20 minutes at the end of every chapter to discuss the cyber implications of the materials covered in the chapter.

Course Objective

1. Understand the key **concepts** and **theories** of buyer behavior in pre-purchase, during-purchase, and post-purchase stages.
2. Develop the ability to identify **applications** of these concepts and theories and to apply them in developing viable marketing strategies.
3. Develop the necessary **skills** to execute the applications identified in objective 2. Having a great strategy is not enough. You should know how to implement, maintain, and adjust the strategy.

You Will Learn from The Course,

1. The knowledge of buyer behavior in making **strategic** marketing decisions (e.g., market segmentation, target market identification, and product positioning)
2. The knowledge of buyer behavior to develop effective marketing **tactics** (e.g., promotion, product design, pricing, and distribution).
3. The knowledge of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting **data** from consumers to guide strategic and tactical marketing decisions.
4. The knowledge of assessing the public policy and ethical **implications** of marketing practices for consumer welfare.

Course Materials

Textbook : **Michael Solomon**, *Consumer Behavior*, 4th Ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1999

Lecture Notes : <http://www.bus.ucf.edu/ywhang/mar3503/> (under construction)

Course Requirements

This is a course you should take after taking an introductory marketing course (MAR 3023). It is assumed that you already possess the basic knowledge of marketing. Instead of reiterating the content that is covered in the introductory course, we will focus on the extension of the basic marketing principles into the context of buyer behavior. There are considerable materials to be covered. There are two exams (midterm and final), one group term project, and five short assignments throughout the semester. This is not a course in which you can do all the assignments and projects in a couple of days before the due dates. Please plan ahead and allocate your time to maximize the learning experience.

1. Attendance

Your presence in class is essential to your ability to understand and apply the material covered in this course. Treat this class as you would any other professional obligation. By accepting a job you are making an implicit commitment to attend work regularly. By registering for this class you make a similar commitment. Also, try to avoid being consistently late for class. This tends to be quite distracting and disruptive for the rest of the students. If you are late, please wait until the break or the end of the class to collect any handouts or returned assignments.

Absence from class does not exempt you from being responsible for all the material covered in class and being aware of any announcements made in class. If you miss class it is your responsibility to obtain the lecture or discussion notes and handouts, if any, from your classmates.

2. Class Participation

As in your forthcoming career, you are expected to regularly participate in class discussions, which will be led by the instructor. Class participation is graded and the following guidelines will help you be an effective participant.

- (1) Make sure to read the assigned readings, and think about them in depth before coming to class.
- (2) Provide inspiration by,
 - applying conceptual materials from the book chapters, lectures, and past marketing classes to the issue being discussed,
 - applying external business world knowledge to the issue being discussed,
 - integrating comments of previous students
 - reaching back to something said previously in the discussion that is pertinent at the present moment,
 - taking issue with classmate's analysis (civily!),
 - pulling together material from several places in the text and readings,
 - drawing parallels from previous lectures and chapters read earlier,
 - tying in briefly an experience you have had that is relevant to the discussion
 - by generally demonstrating that you have read and given careful thought to the readings for the day.
- (3) While implementing the above guidelines, always try to be logical and structured.
- (4) Finally, I will cold-call students to assess the level of preparation and involvement. So, please be prepared to participate in every class.

Another component of class participation is the article/ad presentation on every Monday. Students are asked to bring an interesting article from newspaper, magazine, etc. or an interesting advertisement that is relevant to the class material covered in the class. We will start the class on Mondays discussing about the articles or ads brought by students and their linkage to our course materials. It is highly recommended that students keep the articles or ads in a file with notes taken during the discussion in the class.

Students who turn in a half page summary will receive 5 points for class participation. You do not have to attach a copy of the article or ad to your summary. Simply summarize what the article or ad is about and state clearly why you find it interesting. You should also try to make a linkage to the class material in your summary.

Please note that class participation also takes into account student activities that disrupt and/or hamper good class discussions. These include engaging in private conversations with fellow students, making discourteous remarks about other students, reading outside materials during class, and arriving late for class. Engaging in these kinds of activities will greatly lower one's class participation grade, regardless of how valuable a student's contributions are.

3. Exams

Exams will assess knowledge of key concepts and the ability to apply these concepts to marketing problems. There will be two in-class exams with multiple-choice questions (check the schedule for exam dates). The final exam will be a comprehensive exam covering all the materials including the textbook, guest lectures, and class discussions throughout the whole semester. All exams are closed-book and open-notes. Consistent with University Policy, no make-up exams will be offered except for documented medical emergencies. In such case the instructor reserves the right to change the content and format of the make-up exam.

4. Short Assignments

There are 8 short assignments, which will be announced a week before its due date. Students are asked to form a group of 3 to do the short assignments. The assignments are closely tied to the lectures of the due dates. You can select any five of them to receive the full credit. If you do more than 5, you will receive extra credit. All short assignments are due at the beginning of the class.

5. Group Project

Students are asked to form a group of 6 to conduct a semester long group project. The group members may or may not overlap with the short assignment group. Students will be asked to evaluate their group members for their contribution to the project at the end of the semester. The grades will be equally distributed among the group members unless there is a dispute regarding the amount of individual contributions. Further details of the group project can be found on the course web site.

Grading

1. Class Participation	75 points
2. Exams	200 points
Midterm	50 points
Final	150 points
3. Short Assignments	75 points+
Each	15 points
Extra	10 points
4. Group Project	150 points
Paper	100 points
Presentation	50 points

Grand Total	500 points

Grade Distribution

Over 90%	451 – 500+	A
81% to 90%	401 – 450	B
71% to 80%	351 – 400	C
61% to 70%	301 – 350	D
60% and Under	– 300	F

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism, communicating with fellow students during an exam and other forms of academic dishonesty will be dealt within a manner consistent with University policy.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Tasks
8/20	Course Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Just Show Up!
Part One: Consumers in The Marketplace		
8/22	What is Customer Behavior???	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read Chapter 1.
Part Two: Consumers as Individuals		
8/27	Perception I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read Chapter 2. ▪ Prepare an article or ad for discussion.
8/29	Perception II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Student Information Sheet due.</u>
9/3	No Class (Labor Day)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enjoy!
9/5	Learning and Memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read Chapter 3. ▪ <u>Short Assignment 1 due.</u>
9/10	Motivation and Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read Chapter 4. ▪ Prepare an article or ad for discussion. ▪ <u>Term project group formation due.</u>
9/12	The Self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read Chapter 5. ▪ <u>Short Assignment 2 due.</u>
9/17	Personality and Lifestyles I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read Chapter 6. ▪ Prepare an article or ad for discussion.
9/19	Personality and Lifestyles II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Short Assignment 3 due.</u>
9/24	Attitude Formation and Change I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read Chapter 7. ▪ Prepare an article or ad for discussion
9/26	Attitude Formation and Change II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read Chapter 8. ▪ <u>Short Assignment 4 due.</u>
10/1	Midterm Review	
10/3	Midterm Exam	
10/8	Individual Decision Making I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read Chapter 9. ▪ Prepare an article or ad for discussion
10/10	Individual Decision Making II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Short Assignment 5 due.</u>

Date	Topic	Tasks
Part Three: Consumers as Decision Makers		
10/15	Purchase, Postpurchase, and Disposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read Chapter 10. ▪ Prepare an article or ad for discussion.
10/17	Group Influence and Opinion Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read Chapter 11. ▪ <u>Group project interim report due.</u>
10/22	Organizational and Household Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read Chapter 12. ▪ Prepare an article or ad for discussion.
Part Four: Consumers and Subcultures		
10/24	Income and Social Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read Chapter 13. ▪ <u>Short Assignment 6 due.</u>
10/29	Ethnic, Racial, and Religious Subcultures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read Chapter 14. ▪ Prepare an article or ad for discussion.
10/31	Age Subcultures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read Chapter 15. ▪ <u>Short Assignment 7 due.</u>
Part Five: Consumers and Culture		
11/5	Cultural Influences on Consumer Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read Chapter 16. ▪ Prepare an article or ad for discussion.
11/7	The Creation and Diffusion of Consumer Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read Chapter 17. ▪ <u>Short Assignment 8 due.</u>
11/12	No Class (Veteran's Day)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enjoy!!!
11/14	Group Project Presentation I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Group Term Paper due.</u>
11/19	Group Project Presentation II	
11/21	Group Project Presentation III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Group Project Peer Evaluation due.</u>
11/26	Special Topic: Cyberbuyer	
11/28	Special Topic: Sports and Entertainment Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wear your favorite team jersey!
12/3	Final Exam Review	
TBA	Final Exam	

Important Dates

Month	Day	Task
August	29	Student Information Sheet due.
September	5	Short Assignment 1 due.
	10	Term project group formation due.
	12	Short Assignment 2 due.
	19	Short Assignment 3 due.
	26	Short Assignment 4 due.
October	3	Midterm exam
	10	Short Assignment 5 due.
	17	Group project interim report due.
	24	Short Assignment 6 due.
	31	Short Assignment 7 due.
November	7	Short Assignment 8 due.
	14	Group term paper due.
	21	Group project peer evaluation due.
December	TBA	Final Exam