

**COURSE OUTLINE - Consumer Behaviour (CB) – BUS 312 – 001 Fall 2023**

Class Time: MW from 10am to 11:15am in ED 619  
Instructor: Magda Cismaru, Ph.D., Professor of Marketing  
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Office Hours: MW before or after class and by appointment  
Prerequisites: Bus 210

**1. Course Description and Objectives:**

Marketing begins and ends with the consumer – from determining consumer needs to providing consumer satisfaction. Thus, a clear understanding of consumers is critical in successfully managing the marketing function. This course is a survey of noteworthy contributions of the behavioural sciences to the understanding and prediction of consumer behaviour.

The study of consumer behaviour is intended to acquaint you with both what it means to be a consumer in a market-orientated society and what, as a marketer, you need to know to understand the role of meeting the consumer's needs and wants in the development of marketing strategy. Accordingly, you will be asked to:

1. Learn key terms, definitions, and concepts used in the field.
2. Identify and discuss the major ideas and processes that characterize the consumer.
3. Practice critical thinking in CB by working on cases and experiential exercises.
4. Become familiar with some marketing tools used to measure and characterize CB.
5. Complete a project that demonstrates both your working knowledge and analytical skills in assessing the consumer behaviour process.
6. Engage in your own consumer behaviour with an increased self-consciousness of the forces at work, both internally and externally, whenever you make a decision, being it to purchase a product or choose a service, or change your behavior.

My goals are for you to learn and understand these concepts and, more importantly, to develop your intellectual ability to apply them in analyzing marketing situations and developing appropriate marketing strategies. We will focus on creatively using concepts and theories (a) to understand people's behaviours and (b) to develop and evaluate self-strategies and marketing strategies intended to influence those behaviours.

**2. Textbook:**

Michael Solomon, Kelley J. Main, Katherine Whyte, & Darren W. Dahl. *Consumer Behaviour: Buying, Having and Being*, 8<sup>th</sup> Canadian Edition. Pearson Education Canada, Toronto.  
<https://www.pearson.com/en-ca/subject-catalog/p/consumer-behaviour-buying-having-and-being-canadian-edition/P200000002685/9780136578123>

**3. Course Details:**

The textbook and the powerpoint slides available on UR courses provide the bulk of the material you need to study. The course will be a combination of lectures, discussions, case

studies, and in-class experiential exercises. Lectures will be designed to emphasize the main points of the chapter. In-class discussions and exercises are scheduled every class. All students are encouraged to actively participate in class discussions by asking and answering questions and by offering ideas and suggestions. Several sessions are dedicated for project work.

#### **4. Grading:**

Your course performance will be evaluated as follows:

- Midterm exam no 1 – Chapters 1-5 25%
- Midterm exam no 2 – Chapters 6-10 25%
- Consumer Behavior Project 25%
- Final exam – Chapters 11-15 25%

#### *Grades*

- Requests for grade changes will be considered only if the instructor made a procedural or administrative error. No changes of the weights will be considered.
- “Extra credit” work may be available from Faculty of Business Administration Participant Pool that provides students with the opportunity to participate in research and to earn research credits that they can allocate toward eligible business classes, including the CB class (to a maximum of 2% per eligible class). For more information about our participant pool please visit the faculty website.
- Grades will be posted on UR Courses only. For your security, grades cannot be provided by phone or email.

#### *Exams*

- Please come 5 minutes early and bring a picture ID with you.
- Exams are scheduled in designated class time (please make sure you check the schedule and are available those times). Exams are based on the notes, textbook, and what was discussed in class. They will likely be in the multiple choice format and short answer format, closed-book and notes, individual, and timed. There may be one applied subject (short case, experiential exercise, or application).
- Missed Exams - An excused absence for exams may be granted to students on the basis of illness, accident, or other extreme and legitimate circumstances beyond their control. If a student is granted an excused absence for an examination he/she will have the weight assigned to that examination added to the weight for the final exam. The authority to approve deferrals of final examinations rests with the Associate Dean Undergraduate in the student’s Faculty. Supporting documentation is required and must be submitted before a deferral is approved. To be granted a deferred final exam a student has to be in good standing (passing marks) in the class.

#### **Consumer Behavior Project**

*Decision Making Process Project – teams of 2 students*

- Objective: to describe, understand, and analyze the consumer decision making process involved in the purchase of a high value and high involvement item (medium is also fine) (this semester the item is a laptop or a piece of furniture) with the purpose of applying the

theoretical notions learned in class and providing specific and useful marketing recommendations.

- Overview: one person, the “consumer”, actually goes through the process of purchasing (without necessarily purchasing) the laptop. Choose the person in your team who might be needing a laptop soon and really cares about a laptop. The other student in the team acts as “researcher”, making notes of the consumer’s behavior and the marketing environment, interviewing the consumer, and describing and understanding the whole process. These notes should be detailed and should cover all the stages of the problem-solving process (i.e., problem recognition, search for relevant information, evaluation of alternatives, choice decision, purchase, and post-purchase use and re-evaluation). Based on these notes, both students analyze the decision-making process.
- Instructions:
  - Form your team of 2 students by Sept. 18. You choose based on your schedules and preferences. If you don’t know anybody, tell me.
  - Assign the role of “consumer” and “researcher”. The consumer should really care about a laptop and be motivated to make an elaborate search and an informed decision. An uninvolved consumer who does not care about the product and the decision or one that already knows a lot about the particular choice might not lead to a strong project.
  - The only difference between the consumer and the researcher is the role they play in the field activity. Past that point, every portion of the project document should be generated together.
- Field notes (very important since the whole project is based on them):
  - The consumer initiates the shopping process. The researcher follows the consumer through the process by making notes of consumer’s actions, thoughts, feelings and the interactions he/she has with the environment. All significant events in the shopping process and the marketing environment surrounding the decision should be described in detail. When the researcher is unsure what the consumer is thinking or feeling, simply ask the consumer and document the question and the response. The researcher also needs to inquire about reasons for making a particular decision, for choosing or rejecting a particular website, store, brand name, product, etc. The consumer stops when he/she has arrived at a final decision and imagines purchase and post-purchase evaluation.
- Problem Solving Process:

Identify the following elements based on the field notes:

  - Problem Recognition
  - Search for Relevant Information (consider perceived risks)
  - Evaluation of Alternatives (check to see if when evaluating the alternatives, the consumer has in mind his most important attributes)
  - Choice Decisions (identify the decision rule used)
  - Purchase (imaginary)
  - Preparation (imaginary)
  - Post-purchase Use and Re-evaluations (imaginary)

Make a maximum two page table (single spaced, font 12) to show the problem solving process.
- Discussion and Marketing Implications:

Using the consumers’ experience (field notes) as a basis and your decision making table, provide suggestions for the marketer. State what can be done to facilitate things that will help

the consumer and remove obstacles that hinder the consumer. Please refer to anything we have discussed in class that can be used to help the marketer perform better.

Page length suggestions (single spaced, font 12):

Title Page	1 page
Field Notes	No restriction (5-10 pages)
Problem-solving process	2 pages (maximum)
Marketing implications	3-5 pages or more

Bring your *Decision Making Process Project* on October 18 and November 15, in class to show it to me and discuss it with me. Please do not e-mail me your projects as attachments in advance of the due date and ask for general feedback. Instead, ask for specific questions that can be quickly and easily responded to in a return e-mail or come to my office for more extensive issues.

Print your project and submit it by November 22, at the beginning of the class. Also, save it as a pdf with your last names and first names and submit it on UR courses (in the assigned folder). Late submissions are not accepted and will receive a grade of zero (0%) unless approved in advance and /or proper documentation is provided. Electronic submissions will only be accepted as requested by the professor or under exceptional circumstances (e.g., medical emergencies, extreme weather conditions).

*\*This course uses Turnitin software to identify plagiarism and collaboration among students. This project has to be ORIGINAL work.*

### **5. Other General Information:**

#### UR Courses

Class notes, grades, messages, discussion boards, etc will be on UR Courses. I recommend that you check UR Courses at least before every class.

#### Class Attendance

Students are expected to attend classes. If you miss classes, please understand that you are responsible for all course materials and announcements discussed in that class. Some of the exam or tests questions will be based on examples given in class, cases and experiential exercises or other material that is not available in the textbook. Make sure to exchange contact information with a fellow student who can take notes for you if you are absent.

#### Class Policies

##### Class Policies

- Come to class a few minutes before the class starts. Students coming or leaving during the sessions disturb their colleagues and the instructor. I can understand occasional circumstances where you may be late or need to leave, as long as they are not a habit.
- As a courtesy to your fellow students and your instructor, please turn off all your electronic devices before classes begin. You may use laptops as long as you are using them for class only.
- Name tags are mandatory. In this way we can know our names faster and have a more enjoyable experience. They also help with discipline.
- Please refrain from unacceptable behaviour such as talking (unless it is to make a direct class contribution), reading the newspaper, sleeping, or working on unrelated material.

Recording of any kind or taking pictures is not allowed unless the instructor approves it.

#### Student Accessibility

If there is any student in this course who may have a need for special accommodation, please come and discuss this with me and also contact the Centre for Student Accessibility at 306-585-4631 or [accessibility@uregina.ca](mailto:accessibility@uregina.ca).

#### Other Specifications

If necessary, I will change aspects of the information in this syllabus. If I do, I will notify you in class and on UR Courses. Please read the syllabus carefully and note the grading system and attendance policy. I will assume that every student who remains enrolled in my course after the syllabus has been distributed has fully understood the class rules. Please also read the e-mails I am sending you. They may contain important information and are part of our class communication. The course is in-person, but we will switch to remote if necessary.

#### Tentative Class Schedule

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>
August 30	Course Outline. Project. Marketing, CB, Segmentation	Outline
Sept. 6	An Introduction to Consumer Behavior	Ch. 1
Sept. 11	Perception	Ch. 2
Sept. 13	Learning and Memory	Ch. 3
<i>Sept. 18</i>	<i>Review, experiential exercises, project work – teams</i>	
Sept. 20	Motivation and Affect	Ch. 4
Sept. 25	The Self, <i>Review</i>	Ch. 5
<b>Sept. 27</b>	<b>Midterm Exam no 1</b>	<b>Ch. 1-5</b>
Oct. 2	Personality, Lifestyles and Values	Ch. 6
Oct. 4	Attitudes	Ch. 7
Oct. 16	Attitude Change and Interactive Communication	Ch. 8
<i>Oct. 18</i>	<i>Cases and experiential exercises, project work</i>	
Oct. 23	Individual Decision Making	Ch. 9
Oct. 25	Buying and Disposing	Ch. 10
<i>Oct. 30</i>	<i>Review, applications, cases, project work</i>	
<b>Nov. 1</b>	<b>Midterm Exam no 2</b>	<b>Ch. 6-10</b>
Nov. 6	Group Influence and Social Media	Ch. 11
Nov 8	Income, Social Class and Family Structure	Ch. 12
Nov. 13	Subcultures	Ch. 13
<i>Nov. 15</i>	<i>Project work</i>	
Nov. 20	Cultural Influences on CB	Ch. 14
<b>Nov. 22</b>	<b>Project Due</b> The Creation and Diffusion of Culture	Ch. 15
<i>Nov. 27</i>	<i>Review, applications, cases</i>	
<i>Nov. 29</i>	<i>Project feedback, review for the final exam</i>	
<i>Dec. 4</i>	<i>Wrap up day</i>	
<b>Dec. 13</b>	<b>FINAL EXAM – 9am – 10:15am</b>	<b>Ch. 11-15</b>