Course Objectives

- To familiarize you with research in social psychology and marketing that may help you to understand how different marketing strategies affect consumer behavior.
- To give you a strong foundation for critical thinking in the area of consumer behavior.

Therefore, the focus 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. This means that you have to actively read prior research in different areas -- try to understand the authors' ideas and develop the habit of constructive criticism of the research. To encourage this habit, the role of author of some papers may be assigned to some students in the class and the role of reviewer assigned to others.

Readings

The readings represent past and present work mostly in consumer behavior. I have made a conscious attempt to include readings primarily from marketing journals. (I assume that if you have an intrinsic interest in this kind of research, you will be taking other related courses in psychology.) When you read each article, make sure you understand the boundaries, i.e., what are the questions that the paper seeks to address, and more importantly, what questions remain unanswered. Also pay specific attention to the methodologies employed by empirical papers in addressing the research objectives. Come to class with your own ideas on each topic that we can then discuss. (Please note that the readings are classified into two major groups: assigned readings that you have to do for class discussion, and other recommended readings that you could go to as a starting point, should you seek to research a particular topic in greater depth.)

Guests

This semester we have the pleasure of interacting with several guests who are going to be visiting us with the purpose of discussing their specific areas of research. This is a unique opportunity to learn from the experts themselves, and I hope you enjoy this process as much as I’m sure I will!
Assignments

1. Class Participation (30%).

For every class session, each person will have the responsibility to briefly present one assigned paper. As the “presenter”, you will need to summarize what was done in the paper, and as well as make a critical assessment of the paper. Besides the “required” list, I have also recommended other readings that are relevant to the topic. (In some cases, I have listed papers in the recommended vs required list simply because I had to limit the number of required readings.) Feel free to go to these papers, and possibly others, in developing your critique. In addition, please read all the papers that have been assigned for each day.

Your class participation grade will be determined by:

- active discussion of the papers, as well as
- your presentation and critique of the assigned papers.

2. Assignment: Play Reviewer (20%).

The second component of your grade is an assignment where I will give you a paper that is currently under review at a journal. You will be asked to pretend that you are the reviewer of this manuscript. You will then write a 2-3 page review of this paper for the authors (see http://wiscinfo.doit.wisc.edu/jcr/special.htm and http://wiscinfo.doit.wisc.edu/jcr/RRF.htm for JCR’s instructions to reviewers and reviewing criteria), and a letter to the Editor with your recommendations. Your review is to be critical and constructive, and you have to point out the theoretical and practical value of the paper, and how these could be enhanced with more experiments, theory-building, etc. Since I will be getting back reviews on some of these manuscripts by then, we can compare your comments with those. Please note that this assignment is to prepare you for your life as an author and reviewer, rather than to create anxiety.

The paper you will review is:


Whenever you feel ready to start reviewing, please access this paper from my website (http://www.stern.nyu.edu/~gmenon/); it is available under “Selected Working Papers” as a PDF file.

3. A Research Proposal (50%).

This is the final component of your grade.

You can choose a topic of interest to you, and in doing so feel free to go beyond the topics that we discuss in class. Please understand that in this seminar we merely scratch the surface as far as breadth of topics and depth within a topic are concerned. I had to exercise severe restraint in deciding on topics and papers. Your research paper should reflect in-depth reading in your selected area and this involves going beyond papers discussed in class. This will allow you to gain knowledge in areas that interest you as the course provides an overview of each area only.

A brief outline of your research idea is due around the fourth week of class. You will be required to hand in preliminary drafts of your research proposal in two parts: (a) a literature review of the area in which you seek to submit a research proposal, together with the basic propositions you seek to
investigate; and, (b) a write-up of the experimental design and methodology that you propose to employ to address your research question. Please check the course schedule for exact dates.

You are not required to conduct any empirical data collection or analysis for this project. However, you are required to develop a proposal that is detailed enough in terms of hypotheses to be tested, experimental design, method and procedure, so that I am able to assess the proposal carefully and give you constructive comments. Your complete proposal is due on the last day of class when you will also present your proposal to the class. Please follow the JCR style-sheet in preparing this paper. The style-sheet is available at [http://wiscinfo.doit.wisc.edu/jcr/stylesheet.pdf](http://wiscinfo.doit.wisc.edu/jcr/stylesheet.pdf)
## COURSE OUTLINE

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<td>In-class Presentation of Research Proposals</td>
<td>Final research proposals due*</td>
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*Note. We will meet in the Marketing Department conference room for all sessions.*

* These tasks pertain to the Research Project.
**Highly Recommended Reference Book:**

(Comment: Very integrative and current.)

**Other Recommended Reference Books:**


COURSE INTRODUCTION TO INFORMATION PROCESSING

Assigned readings:

Reviewing the Status of Consumer Behavior:


Information Processing:


Other recommended readings:


CONSUMER LEARNING

**Assigned readings:**

**Classical conditioning:**


**Categorization:**


**Preference formation:**


**Other recommended readings:**

**Classical conditioning:**


**Categorization:**


**Preference formation:**


Assigned readings:

Learning And Attention


Visual Attention And Search


Amount Of Search & Consumer Knowledge / Experience


Continuing Search Vs Decision Deferral


Price Search


Search As A Hypothesis Testing Process


Other recommended readings:

Learning And Attention


Visual Attention And Search

**Amount Of Search & Consumer Knowledge / Experience**

Miyake, Naomi and Donald A Norman (1979), “To ask a question, one must know enough to know what is not known” *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior*, Vol 18(3), 357-364.


**Continuing Search Vs Decision Deferral**


**Price Search**


**Search As A Hypothesis Testing Process**


CONSUMER KNOWLEDGE

Assignment:

Go to the following website: [http://buster.cs.yale.edu/implicit/]

Do one of the Implicit Association Tests for discussion in class.

Assigned readings:

Overview paper:


Empirical papers:


Other recommended readings:

Huffman, Cynthia and Michael J. Houston (1993), Goal-Oriented Experiences and the Development of Knowledge, Journal of Consumer Research, 20 (September), 190-207.


Dickson, Peter, and Alan Sawyer (1990), The Price Knowledge and Search of Supermarket Shoppers, Journal of Marketing, 54, 42-53.

MEMORY AND JUDGMENT

Assigned readings:

Background reading:


Recall and judgment:


Interference effects:


Other recommended readings:


INFORMATION ACCESSIBILITY AND MEMORY-BASED JUDGMENTS

**Assigned readings:**

**Background reading – Theoretical papers:**


**Background reading – Methodological paper:**


**Empirical papers:**


**Other recommended readings:**


Biehal, G. and D. Chakravarti (1983), Information Accessibility as a Moderator of Consumer

Assigned Readings:

Background reading:


Context Effects:


Menon, Geeta, Lauren Block and Suresh Ramanathan (2002), We’re at As Much Risk As We’re Led to Believe… Effects of Message Cues on Judgments of Health Risk, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 28 (March).


Other recommended readings:


Assigned Readings:


EMOTIONS AND AFFECT
Guest: Patti Williams, Wharton

Assigned Readings


- Pham, Michel Tuan, Joel B. Cohen, John W. Pracejus, G. David Hughes (2001), Affect Monitoring and the Primacy of Feelings in Judgment, *Journal of Consumer Research*, (September), pp. 167-188

**AUTOMATIC PROCESSES**

*Guest: Suresh Ramanathan, NYU*

### Assigned readings:


Ramanathan, Suressh and Geeta Menon (2001), Don't Know Why, But I Just Had This Craving: Goal-Dependent Automaticity in Impulsive Decisions, New York University working paper.

### Other recommended readings:


**Assigned Readings:**


**Other recommended readings:**


Dick et al. (1990), Memory-Based Inferences During Consumer Choice, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 17, 82-93.


ATTITUDES AND PERSUASION

Assigned readings:

Overview paper:

Empirical papers:


Other recommended readings:

Attitudinal Components:


Note: See JCP 1997, 6 (1) for a debate on cognitive versus noncognitive determinants of attitude.

Attitude Strength and Relationship to Behavior:


**Persuasion:**

Chaiken, Shelly, Akiva Liberman and Alice H. Eagly (1989), Heuristic and Systematic Information Processing within and beyond the persuasion context, in J.S. Uleman and J.A. Bargh (Eds.), *Unintended Thought*, 212-252, New York: Guilford Press.


**Mere Exposure Effects:**