

MKT 450

CONSUMER BEHAVIOR AND MARKETING

Syllabus – Spring, 2019 – Tuesday and Thursday, 10:00-11:50 a.m. –
4.00 units

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OFFICE HOURS: Monday, 10:00-11:00 a.m.
Wednesday, 1:00-3:00 p.m.
Thursday, 1:00-3:00 p.m.
And by appointment and walk-in

CRITICAL COURSE DATES

| Event | Date |
|--|------|
| Class held online as trial for emergency class reconfiguration | 1/31 |
| Midterm #1 | 2/12 |
| Case #1: Dunkin' | 2/28 |
| Case #2: Amazon | 3/21 |
| Midterm #2 | 3/28 |
| Case #3: Alibaba | 4/16 |
| Case #4: Tesla | 4/25 |
| Final: Tuesday, May 7, 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. | 5/07 |



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COURSE CATALOG DESCRIPTION: “The relationship of consumer behavior to acquisition, usage, and disposition of products and the psychological, social and cultural influences that affect these decisions.”

PREREQUISITES: None.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Identify the dynamics of consumer behavior and its implications for firm strategies;
- Recognize external factors impacting consumers and their behavior and their impact on choices and behavior;
- Identify the impact the consumer’s level of involvement in a given decision or activity and the impact of this on choices and behavior;
- Identify ethical implications of marketing to consumers; and
- Identify the dual roles of formal analysis and creativity in designing and implementing effective consumer marketing programs.

**REQUIRED
MATERIALS
(Reading):**

Wayne D. Hoyer, Deborah J. MacInnis, and Rik Pieters (2018), *Consumer Behavior*, 7th ed., CENGAGE Learning, ISBN-13: 9781305507272 . One copy will be reserve in the Crocker Library.

Richard H. Thaler (2016), *Misbehaving: The Making of Behavioral Economics*, W. W. Norton & Company, ISBN-13: 978-0393352795. One copy will be on reserve in the Crocker Library.

REMINDER

In papers and assignments, if you take more than *three consecutive words* from a source, these must be put in quotes or indented as an extended quotation.

You must also cite any source you use even if you do not quote directly.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

| Week | Day | Date | Topic | Readings |
|------|----------|------|---|-------------------------------|
| 1 | Tuesday | 1/08 | Introduction to the course | |
| | Thursday | 1/10 | Understanding Consumer Behavior | Text, ch. 1 |
| 2 | Tuesday | 1/15 | Research Methods in Consumer Behavior: Primary and Secondary | Text, Appendix to ch. 1 |
| | Thursday | 1/17 | Research Methods in Consumer Behavior: Primary and Secondary | <i>Misbehaving</i> , ch. 1 |
| 3 | Tuesday | 1/22 | Research Methods in Consumer Behavior: Primary and Secondary | <i>Misbehaving</i> , chs. 2-3 |
| | Thursday | 1/24 | Research Methods in Consumer Behavior: Primary and Secondary | <i>Misbehaving</i> , ch. 4 |
| 4 | Tuesday | 1/29 | Behavioral Economics: Differences in Perspectives Between Economists and Psychologists | <i>Misbehaving</i> , ch. 5 |
| | Thursday | 1/31 | Behavioral Economics: Differences in Perspectives Between Economists and Psychologists NOTE: This class session will be held online as a test of alternative means of holding classes in the event of a natural or other disaster. More information will be provided ahead of this class meeting. | <i>Misbehaving</i> , ch. 6 |
| 5 | Tuesday | 2/05 | Motivation, Ability, and Opportunity | Text, ch. 2 |

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

| Week | Day | Date | Topic | Readings |
|------|----------|------|--|---|
| | Thursday | 2/07 | Motivation, Ability, and Opportunity | |
| 6 | Tuesday | 2/12 | MIDTERM I | |
| | Thursday | 2/14 | Exposure, Attention, Perception, and Comprehension | Text, ch. 3 |
| 7 | Tuesday | 2/19 | Exposure, Attention, Perception, and Comprehension | <i>Misbehaving</i> , chs. 7-8 |
| | Thursday | 2/21 | Memory and Knowledge | Text, ch. 4 <i>Misbehaving</i> , ch. 9-10 |
| 8 | Tuesday | 2/26 | Memory and Knowledge | <i>Misbehaving</i> , ch. 11-12 |
| | Thursday | 2/28 | Mental Accounting CASE #1: Dunkin' (formerly Dunkin' Doughnuts) | <i>Misbehaving</i> , chs. 13-14 |
| 9 | Tuesday | 3/05 | Attitudes: High Effort | Text, ch. 5 <i>Misbehaving</i> , chs. 15-16 |
| | Thursday | 3/07 | Attitudes: Low Effort | Text, ch. 6 <i>Misbehaving</i> , chs. 17-18 |
| | Tuesday | 3/12 | SPRING RECESS | |
| | Thursday | 3/14 | SPRING RECESS | |
| 10 | Tuesday | 3/19 | Problem Recognition and Information Search | Text, ch. 7 |
| | Thursday | 3/21 | Judgment and Decision Making: High Effort CASE #2: Amazon.com | Text, ch. 8 <i>Misbehaving</i> , chs. 19-20 |
| 11 | Tuesday | 3/26 | Judgment and Decision Making: Low Effort | Text, ch. 9 <i>Misbehaving</i> , chs. 21-22 |
| | Thursday | 3/28 | MIDTERM II (covers material covered in class since Midterm I; text, chs. 3-9, and chs. 7-22 of <i>Misbehaving</i>) | |
| 12 | Tuesday | 4/02 | Post Decision Processes | Text, ch. 10 <i>Misbehaving</i> , chs. 23-24 |
| | Thursday | 4/04 | Social Influences on Consumer Behavior | Text, ch. 11 <i>Misbehaving</i> , chs. 25-26 |
| 13 | Tuesday | 4/09 | Cross-Cultural Issues in Consumer Behavior | <i>Misbehaving</i> , chs. 27-28 |
| | Thursday | 4/11 | Consumer Diversity | Text, ch. 12 <i>Misbehaving</i> , chs. 29-30 |
| 14 | Tuesday | 4/16 | Household Influences and Social Stratification CASE #3: Alibaba | Text, ch. 13 <i>Misbehaving</i> , chs. 31-32 |
| | Thursday | 4/18 | Psychographics: Values, Personality, | Text, ch. 14 |

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

| Week | Day | Date | Topic | Readings |
|---|----------|------|---|--|
| | | | and Lifestyles | <i>Misbehaving</i> , chs. 33, Conclusion |
| 15 | Tuesday | 4/23 | Diffusion of Innovation | Text, ch. 15 |
| | Thursday | 4/25 | Social Responsibility, Ethics, and Public Policy CASE #4: Tesla | Text, ch. 17 |
| FINAL: Tuesday, May 7, 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. (Covers class material covered since Midterm II; selected cumulative material [study checklist provided]; text, chs. 10-15, 17; and <i>Misbehaving</i> , chs. 23-33) | | | | |

GRADING

Grading will be based on the following course components:

| Components | Points | Percentage |
|---|------------|------------|
| Midterm #1 | 120 | 16 |
| Midterm #2 | 120 | 16 |
| Final (mildly cumulative) | 150 | 20 |
| Best 3 of 4 cases, each 100 | 300 | 40 |
| Class participation (please see Appendix G) | 60 | 8 |
| TOTAL | 750 | 100 |

Additional grading issues are discussed in [Appendix A](#).

ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES AND TIMES

Unless otherwise specified, papers and other assignments are officially due at 11:59 p.m. on the date indicated. However, things happen and technology (especially Blackboard) does not always cooperate. A grace period until 8:00 a.m. the next morning is in effect where papers can still be submitted without penalty. Blackboard will accept papers after the due date.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

USC is committed to making reasonable accommodations to assist individuals with disabilities in reaching their academic potential. If you have a disability which may impact your performance, attendance, or grades in this course and require accommodations, you must first register with the Office of Disability Services and Programs (www.usc.edu/disability). DSP provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A

letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to your TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in GFS (Grace Ford Salvatori Hall) 120 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776. Email: ability@usc.edu.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND CONDUCT

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards”

<https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one’s own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another’s work as one’s own (plagiarism). Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. All students are expected to understand and abide by the principles discussed in the *SCampus*, the Student Guidebook (www.usc.edu/scampus or <http://scampus.usc.edu>). A discussion of plagiarism appears in the University Student Conduct Code (section 11.00 and Appendix A).

Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>. Failure to adhere to the academic conduct standards set forth by these guidelines and our programs will not be tolerated by the USC Marshall community and can lead to dismissal.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://dps.usc.edu/contact/report/>. This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services* (RSVP) <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage <https://sarc.usc.edu/reporting-options/> describes reporting options and other resources.

COURSE COMPONENTS

MIDTERM #1. The first midterm is scheduled for February 12 and will cover:

- Classroom and textbook material up to and including “Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability”
- Textbook chapters 1-2
- *Misbehaving*, chs. 1-6

Study guides for the textbook and *Misbehaving* will be provided . A study checklist of material covered in class will be provided as we get closer to the midterm.

The midterm will consist of

- Thirty-five multiple choice questions (70 points) and
- Six short answer questions of out which you will be asked to answer any five (10 points each for a total of 50 points).

This and subsequent exams will tend to cover *substantive* issues and their implications for actual and hypothetical firms facing various conditions. It is unlikely that you will be asked to regurgitate definitions or provide specific numbers (unless you are specifically warned in class of specific figures that should be remembered). A sample midterm will be posted on the course web site.

MIDTERM #2. The second midterm will be of the same format as the first midterm and is scheduled for March 28. It will cover:

- Classroom material covered after the midterm up to “Judgment and Decision Making: Low Effort”
- Textbook chapters 3-9
- *Misbehaving*, chapters 7-22.

FINAL. The final, scheduled for Tuesday, May 7, 8:00-10:00 a.m. and will consist of fifty multiple choice questions (worth three points each for a total of 150 points).

The final will cover:

- Selected cumulative material covered in class as indicated on the study checklist that will be provided (a small portion of the total material covered);
- Classroom material covered since Midterm II
- Text chapters 10-15 and 17
- *Misbehaving*, chapters 23-33 and “Conclusion.”

A sample final will be provided.

MEMOS TO MANAGEMENT. We will discuss four cases this semester. A brief background description and at least one article will be posted on Blackboard for each case. You will be asked, based on these materials, ideas from the course, and additional secondary market research to discuss issues relevant managers making decisions for the firm. **You are, in a sense, doing this case for the firm rather than on the firm.** Specifically:

- You should find at least four additional sources for each case. Acceptable sources include newspaper articles, popular business or behavioral science article, trade journal articles, or research reports compiled by an objective source, including the U.S. Government. General web sites are *not* considered acceptable sources. We will discuss using periodical and other databases to find relevant articles and reports.
- You should focus on what the firm *should* be doing or consider doing. **There is generally no value added for discussing what the firm is already doing it**, except as a brief preface to ideas for modification. It may, however, be useful to discuss relevant actions, practices, and

strategies of competing firms or non-competing firms whose strategies could potentially be adapted for use by the firm.

- Your discussion should focus on consumer behavior issues. However, the analysis should be focused on practical ideas rather than maximizing the number of terms used. Fancy terms are *not* impressive if they are used superficially or incorrectly!
- When facts are cited, you should be sure to clearly articulate the *implications* of these facts. If any tables or other illustrations are included, you should be sure to articulate the *takeaway* from each.
- You should provide objective analysis articulating, as appropriate, potential advantages and disadvantages of particular strategies. Your work should be a balanced discussion rather than a “selling piece” intended to aggressively advocate one position.
- Ideas should be sufficiently developed to be meaningful. It is better to focus on a smaller number of topics than covering a large number superficially.
- **The term “etc.” should be avoided.** Use of this term is generally an indication of ideas not being well developed. It is usually *not* clear what the “so fourth” involves!
- “Stipulated excellence” is *not* acceptable. That is, it is not helpful to merely say that “The firm should make truly superior product” or that “The firm should offer excellent customer service” without developing specific ideas for achieving the respective outcome. Competitors are usually not incompetent, and there is nothing obvious about how one would achieve better performance.
- **Each memo should not exceed four double-spaced pages and must be uploaded to Blackboard before our class discussion.** Please be sure to verify that the paper has actually been uploaded. **Note that you must confirm the upload on the screen that appears after you have selected the file.** If you have difficulty uploading the case, you must bring it to class on a “flash” drive. Extensions cannot be granted, but under exceptional circumstances, a substitute case may be provided.
- You must complete at least three of the four memos. If you complete all four, the best three will count.
- It is fine to discuss the case with others before you write your memo, but the memo must be written by you. **Reading other people’s actual memos before you write your own is not acceptable.** If you rely on a discussion of the case with others in the class, the professional thing is to footnote along the lines of “I would like to thank Tracy Trojan, Joe Student, and Penny P. Profit for their insightful ideas expressed during a meeting on February 6, 2019.”

Grading of the memos will be based on overall impression, but the following criteria will be considered:

- Overall insight into the case.
- Quality of research.
- Tailoring the discussion to the specific needs of the firm.
- Focus on new ideas rather than what is currently being done.
- Organization, clarity, and quality of writing.
- Quality of analysis.
- Clear demonstration of reasoning.
- Sufficient development of ideas to be meaningful.

Memos should be uploaded to Turnitin through Blackboard.

Please note:

- Creativity (within limits of good taste) is strongly encouraged!
- All assignments must be your own work. Although it is acceptable to have other people proof-read and comment on your papers, copying other people's work or other forms of academic dishonesty will be taken very seriously. Plagiarism may result in very serious sanctions from the University and the issuance of a failing grade in this course. **If more than three consecutive words are used from a source, these words must be put in quotation marks.**

IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT AND CLASS PARTICIPATION. During a number of class sessions, one or more in-class assignments will be given out. Those who attend and complete these will usually receive credit for attending. To be eligible for points for in-class assignments, you must arrive on time and stay for the duration of the class. **It is assumed that up to three class sessions may be missed entirely or in part for legitimate reasons. Arriving "just a few minutes" late or being in the restroom when the assignment is given counts as not being present.** Late arrivals are inconsiderate to the rest of the class and very disruptive. An allowance of three missed sessions is generous enough to accommodate unusual situations. If classes beyond that number are missed for legitimate reasons, a make-up assignment may, under some circumstances, be done to receive credit for the day as discussed in [Appendix B](#). Missing more than half of the in-class assignments without approved substitute assignments will result in a failing grade for the entire course.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS/COURSE CONTINUITY

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, the *USC Emergency Information* web site (<http://emergency.usc.edu/>) will provide safety and other information, including electronic means by which instructors will conduct class using a combination of USC's Blackboard learning management system (blackboard.usc.edu), teleconferencing, and other technologies.

CLASS NOTES POLICY

Notes or recordings made by students based on a university class or lecture may only be made for purposes of individual or group study, or for other non-commercial purposes that reasonably arise from the student's membership in the class or attendance at the university. This restriction also applies to any information distributed, disseminated or in any way displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email or otherwise on the Internet, or via any other medium. Actions in violation of this policy constitute a violation of the Student Conduct Code, and may subject an individual or entity to university discipline and/or legal proceedings.

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Student Counseling Services (SCS) - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1-800-273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

Relationship & Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 - 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: <http://sarc.usc.edu/>

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. <https://equity.usc.edu/>

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/>

Student Support & Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/>

Diversity at USC – <https://diversity.usc.edu/>

Tab for Events, Programs and Training, Task Force (including representatives for each school), Chronology, Participate, Resources for Students



Disclosure of Video Taping and/or Electronic Transmission

ATTENTION: Lectures and meetings (including the administration of exams) in the Edison Auditorium are subject to audio and video recording by the USC Marshall School of Business.

As a result, your image and voice may be recorded, and/or distributed.

For further information regarding actual record times, please contact your instructor, event coordinator, or call extension 0-5424.

POLICIES

1. Classes should be missed only under truly compelling circumstances. Please see instructions in [Appendix B](#) for making up classes missed for compelling reasons. Missing an excessive number of classes may result in failing the course. Failure to attend classes regularly is considered both a moral failure and a failure to perform.
2. Extensions on assignments may be granted under compelling individual circumstances. You must petition the instructor as soon as possible after finding out the circumstances that you believe to justify an extension. The appropriate online form on the course web site should be used. **E-mail petitions omitting information requested on the online form are *not* acceptable.** An actual office hour visit may be required to discuss the circumstances involved. Unless an explicit waiver is obtained in advance, *extensions are expressly contingent on continuous attendance between the original due date and the extended deadline.*
3. Makeup examinations require serious and compelling reasons and appropriate documentation. If at all possible, makeup examinations should be requested and arranged at least two weeks in advance. The appropriate online form on the course web site should be used. **E-mail petitions omitting information requested on the online form are *not* acceptable.** An actual office hour visit may be required to discuss the circumstances involved. Please note that the university has very stringent regulations about makeup final examinations. In general, makeup final examinations are permitted only (a) if the regularly scheduled final examination time and date would conflict with the observation of a religious holiday, (b) under cases of severe illness, or (c) if an individual has three or more final examinations scheduled on the same day. Requests for makeup final examinations based on religious holidays or for students having three or final examinations on the same day should be made no later than _____.
4. University regulations on academic integrity are in effect. All work submitted must be your own. **In writing papers, if you take any more than three consecutive words from any source—even if placed in footnotes or in tables—these must be put in quotes.** Even if you do not quote directly, you must still give credit, by way of a citation, to any author’s ideas you use. The university provides serious sanctions for plagiarism. It is my policy to assign a failing grade for the course to any individual found to have engaged in plagiarism. Please see http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/pages/students/academic_integrity.html.
5. Section 11.31 of the [Student Conduct Code](#) prohibits “Dishonesty, such as furnishing false information to any university official, faculty member or office.” It is my policy to assign a failing grade for the course for such violations.
6. Individuals who wish to claim as an excuse that “the dog ate [their] homework” must furnish proof of ownership of a dog of sufficient size to be plausibly able to consume an assignment of the size in question.

PERSONAL NOTE

I have a mild case of Asperger’s Syndrome, a neurological condition that in effect involves a “trade,” albeit involuntary, of certain abilities for others. My symptoms are modest but frequently noticeable—the most significant ones involve difficulty in maintaining effective eye contact (I am often perceived as “staring”), impaired transmission and interpretation of non-verbal communication, excessive sensitivity to noise and other stimuli, poorly controlled body movements, limited spatial ability, and extreme difficulty in “learning” faces. Please understand that my mannerisms are not an indication of lack of interest or regard, that it may take me several weeks to learn your name even if I have a photograph of you available, and that I may need several extra moments to recognize you if we run into each other

outside class.

Appendix A GRADING ISSUES

University Grading Standards. The [USC Catalogue, 2018-2019](#) states:

The following grades are used: A – excellent; B – good; C – fair in undergraduate courses and minimum passing in courses for graduate credit; D – minimum passing in undergraduate courses; F – failed. In addition, plus and minus grades may be used, with the exceptions of A plus, F plus and F minus.

Please note that “excellent” refers to a standard greater than merely “good.” “Good” is better than merely “fair.”

Marshall School of Business norms. The Marshall School of Business no longer maintains an express average grade mandate for undergraduate courses. However, faculty are expected to vigorously differentiate between various levels of performance. The reality is that although standards within the School are high, there is considerable variation in the performance of students. **It is appropriate that top students receive a level of recognition greater than the ones who are merely “good.”** Thus, it is not realistic for the majority of students to expect to receive the top grades.

Over the last decade, the quality of students admitted to USC and the Marshall School of Business has improved dramatically. Although this higher quality of students should be considered to some extent in grading, the caliber of current Marshall students also means that meeting minimum standards for passing, let alone excelling relative to the norm, is a considerable accomplishment. Although it is intended that students should be appropriately rewarded for the quality of work produced, it is *not* intended that the course should be easy to pass. Individuals who perform poorly on exams, fail to produce papers and assignments of sufficient quality, or miss a significant number of classes should *not* expect to pass the course. Grades of A and A- intended only for students who do *very* high quality work. High quality work is expected for grades of B+, B, and B-. Good work is expected for C grades. Although a passing grade, D represents substandard work. Realistically speaking, however, with the intense competition within the Marshall School of Business means that some students will receive this grade, whether because of insufficient work ethic, inadequate academic preparation for this level of course work, or special difficulty with a particular subject. It is hoped that all students who work diligently will pass the course. However, students who fail to meet minimum standards cannot reasonably expect to receive credit for completing the course.

Course grades. Grades for this course will be assigned based on the total number of points accumulated by each individual throughout the term. **Only when all scores are available will it be possible to meaningfully determine grade cutoffs.** Letter grades are not assigned to specific numerical scores on papers, exams, and other material. Attempting to average letter grades on individual assignments and exams will *not* give the same result as that obtained from grades assigned based on total point accumulated for three reasons:

1. *Non-proportionality of the continuous percentage scale and the discrete four point letter grade scale.* Note both (a) the sharp breaking points between two grades—e.g., C+ and B- and (b) the difference magnitudes. For example, on a traditional straight scale, there is only a twenty absolute percentage point difference between a C and an A (e.g., 75% and 95%), but the 4.0 grade point weight is 200%

of the 2.0 weight.

2. *Regression toward the mean.* On any given project or exam, an individual's score is likely to result in part from both (a) typical performance level (which may result from study habits, aptitude, or other variables) and (b) situational factors (e.g., having a good or bad day; "luck of the draw" in the selection of questions). Therefore, in a grading environment with a mean score of 3.0, it is much more impressive to receive an A- twice in a row than it is to receive this once; and much more unimpressive to receive a D twice in a row. The result of two consecutive *Ds*, for example, may translate more into a cumulative effect of D- or F. Grades based on total points are more "diversified," and thus random fluctuations are likely to play a smaller role.
3. *Loss of precision in the conversion of continuous scores to discrete letter grades.* On a straight scale, both 83% and 87% typically represent a letter grade of B.

It is my anticipation to assign grades that, as closely as possible, reflect a "straight" scale. Some curving may be done if exam scores or points as a whole for the entire class are either exceptionally high or exceptionally low.

Philosophical issues. Some people have referred to having "points taken off" project or exam question scores. This is *not* a meaningful way to view grades. Papers and exam answers are *not* presumed to be perfect, with points being "deducted" for "deficiencies." Rather, grades are based on the overall impression of the work. It is not just a question how many "flaws" exist in the paper or answer, but rather, how much *quality* overall exists. Receiving a perfect score on anything—and especially receiving such scores repeatedly—takes a nearly superhuman person.

It should also be noted that, although for the population as a whole, there is likely to be a pronounced correlation between the amount of effort put into work and the final outcome, **effort does not guarantee outcome.** "Working hard" on an assignment—or in the class as a whole—does *not* guarantee a high grade. The amount work put into a class or a project cannot be used as a legitimate rationale for the assignment of a higher grade.

Grade changes. Once course grades have been submitted to the Registrar's office, **it is generally not possible for the instructor to change a grade except if an outright mistake has been made in recording, transcription, or computation.** As stated in the [USC Catalogue, 2018-2019](#):

A grade once reported to the Office of Academic Records and Registrar may not be changed except by request of the faculty member to the Committee on Academic Policies and Procedures on a Correction of Grade form. *Changes should be requested only on the basis of an actual error in assigning the original grade, not on the basis of a request by the student or special consideration for an individual student. Students are not permitted to complete course work after the semester has ended.* [Emphasis added.]

With the distribution of total points within the class, it may be necessary to make the cutoff between grades such that

Please show the decency and professionalism not to request grade changes that are not consistent with University guidelines.

Appendix B MAKING UP CLASSES MISSED

FOR LEGITIMATE REASONS

In general, each individual can miss up to three class sessions—or parts thereof—without direct loss of credit. Please note that you must attend a session in its entirety to be eligible for credit for an in-class assignment. **Being “only a few minutes” late or leaving early counts as missing the entire class session.** Arriving late or leaving early is disruptive and inconsiderate to the rest of the class.

If more than three in-class assignments are missed for legitimate reasons, an assignment can be completed to make up for each excess absence in whole or in part. Absences that result from sloth, unwholesome lifestyle choices (e.g., alcohol intoxication or lingering effects thereof), incarceration, or other manifestations of moral depravity are generally not eligible for make-up.

Note that the assignment provided must be of a sufficient quality to justify credit for the day. Papers of inadequate quality may receive no credit or credit for a fraction of the day, depending on the quality. This is not intended to be an easy assignment that can be completed quickly.

Makeup papers should generally be turned in no later than one week after the missed class meeting in question unless a waiver for compelling reasons is obtained in advance.

INSTRUCTIONS

Please:

1. Read
 - a) The textbook chapter(s) relevant to topic(s) covered on the day in question and
 - b) At least three articles from trade or business publications that are relevant to the implications of the topics for a firm of your choice. These articles must come from legitimate periodicals—web sites are generally not acceptable.
2. Write and upload to [Turnitin](#) through Blackboard:
 - a) A brief description of the reason for the missing the class session.
 - b) A paper—usually ranging from 4-6 pages double spaced pages—discussing implications of the textbook chapter(s) and articles you have read for the firm you have chosen. You must cite each article and the textbook at least once.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Managerial implications refer to the practical use of the information and/or observations made for making decisions--e.g., whether to go ahead with a venture, how much to invest, which distribution system to use, or how to allocate the firm's budget among items such as research and development, advertising and promotion, and market research. In other words, how is the information practically useful for a manager?

Appendix C

QUALITY OF SOURCES USED IN RESEARCH

Sources That Are Likely to Be of Higher Quality:

- **Books**
- **Periodicals**—can be found through library databases such as Lexis-Nexis and ABI/Inform
 - **General news** (Note: These sources are sometimes available online and it is fine to use any online version).
 - **Newspapers**—e.g., *Los Angeles Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Financial Times*
 - **Magazines**
 - **Business oriented**—e.g., *Business Week*, *Fortune*, *Forbes*, *American Demographics*.
 - **General**—e.g., *Newsweek*, *Time*, *Economist*
 - **Specialty magazines**—if appropriate and relevant—e.g., *PC Magazine*
 - **Trade publications**—e.g., *Air Cargo World*, *Ice Cream Reporter*
- **Reference Directories**—e.g., *Best Customers*
- **Government publications**—e.g., *Statistical Abstracts of the United States*
- **Selected web sites from credible sources:** U.S. Government, United Nations, World Bank. (Note: Most other web sites are not appropriate).

A NOTE ON WIKIPEDIA

Studies seem to suggest that Wikipedia tends to be about as accurate as established commercial print encyclopedias. It is, however, a source that is intended primarily to provide *general* information. You can use Wikipedia as *one* source (even if you consult different entries within Wikipedia). However, this source should at most account for a small percentage (e.g., 5%) of your total citations.

Sources That Are Likely to Be of Low Quality and/or to Be “Suspect” in Some Way:

- **Most web sites:**
 - **Private sites.** The person who wrote this may not be qualified to discuss this issue, may have done a sloppy job, or may have a special interest. This includes sites hosted on “.edu” domains unless the writer is clearly identified as a professor or researcher. If the source is credible this way, you must identify this fact in the citation.
 - **Company sites.** These are glorified advertisements for the firm and are intended to make the firm look good. Accuracy may be less important to the firm than coming across well!
 - **Trade group sites.** These are supposed to make the industry look good. See above!
 - **Foreign government sites.** Many of these are intended to make the country look good. Some countries do not have the resources to collect accurate information. Much of the information contained may represent wishful thinking rather than reality. In some countries, some of the “information” may also be compiled by “volunteers” from firms that have a vested interest in promoting a certain view of reality.
 - **Political, social, or organizational sites.** Sites run by religious groups, social or ethnic groups, political groups, or other groups that exist to promote one kind of viewpoint, policy, or “truth” cannot be taken at face value.
- **Company advertisements and annual reports.** Selected objective and audited information may

be useful, but management opinions and claims are suspect.

- **Trade group brochures.** Again, the publisher has an agenda!

Yes, it is easier to try to find things through search engines such as Google rather than consulting a reputable source. It is also easier to guess! Neither approach is acceptable.

FACTS ARE LITERALLY A DIME A DOZEN!

You can buy an almanac with more than 2,400 facts
for less than \$10.00.

**What counts is identifying relevant
facts and their implications.**

Appendix D: NOTES ON QUOTATIONS, PARAPHRASING, AND CITATIONS

Quotations and paraphrasing. Generally, it is better to *paraphrase* statements made in articles and other documents. **A direct quote of more than a few words should ordinarily be used only under exceptional circumstances**—e.g., when it is exceptionally succinct, insightfully phrased, ironic, otherwise forceful, or revealing, as appropriate, of a significant player’s personality, predisposition, or strategy.

Note that occasionally using just a few judiciously selected words from a quote may add a nice flavor. For example:

John Smith, lead petrochemicals analyst at Arthur Anderson & Co., remarked that it is “quite unlikely” that Nigeria will be able provide a “sufficiently dependable” supply of benzene for major industrial customers.

Frequently, direct quotes tend to be longer than a good paraphrase, and the reader will not be spending time thinking about what kind of point the direct quote was intended to make.

If you do decide to use a quote, it must be *introduced* in some way—e.g.,

According to Jack Intrascopolus, a leading authority on “hiphopponomics” (the economics of hip hop music), “The prospects for hip hop music in the Middle East, at the moment, appear to be....”

Citations. In all papers, you must cite your sources in the body of the text and provide a complete bibliography at the end of the paper. You must cite a source when you use information from it even if you do not quote directly. For example:

It appears that hip hop music has so far met success in North America, Western Europe, and certain more affluent Asian countries, with penetration in Latin America and the Middle

East so far being more limited. (Intrascopolus, 2014).

(The author's last name and the year of publication are put in parentheses at the end of the sentence). The source should be listed completely (author, title, publication, date, and, if available, page numbers) at the end of the paper. E.g.,

Intrascopolus, James Q. (2011), "Rapping Against a Cultural Wall," *International Journal of Hiphoppology*, 4(2), 423-450.



Appendix E:
INDICATORS OF SUPERFICIALITY:
AVOIDING HYPERBOLE, CLICHES, AMBIGUITY,
AND EMPTY "BUZZ WORDS"

The following are examples of statements made in cases that will tend to prejudice an educated and thoughtful reader against the writer.

MEANINGLESS AMBIGUITY

- "StarMedia should focus on the community it offers, which Latin Americans seem to be demanding, to maintain their early mover advantage."
- "... StarMedia needs to, nonetheless, persevere and to establish itself as a leader in developing and tailoring the market to appeal to Spanish speakers. However, the company must be careful to steer clear of stereotyping and must always be educated and ware of the complexities and the uniqueness of the region."

HYPERBOLE—general statements that at best represent exaggerations and ambiguity—e.g.,

- "[StarMedia] need only continue the following programs for prosperity in the future." [First of all, unless the "programs" in question have been specified very precisely, the statement is not meaningful. Secondly, the term "prosperity" is not a business term and is overly vague. Thirdly, there is authority or compelling reasoning to suggest that the programs will continue to work in the future.]
- "Having all these partnerships make it difficult for StarMedia to lose overall market share..." [In truth, losing market share (unlike body weight!) is very easy. A more meaningful statement might be that these partnerships might "help ameliorate threats to market share."]
- "Everyone has been trying to get a piece of the Spanish-speaking Internet market."

CLICHES—"over-worn" phrases or "dime-store philosophy"—e.g.,

- "... has grown by leaps and bounds."
- "Time will only tell what will become of StarMedia...."

EMPTY "BUZZ WORDS"—fancy terms mean very little when it is not demonstrated that the writer fully understands what they mean and how they apply in the respective context—e.g.,

- "Here are three factors that would allow StarMedia to succeed:
 - "Leveraging technological capabilities. [There is no indication that the writer has thought of how the term applies here—but it sounds fancy and profound!]
 - "Forging corporate partnerships early on. [When exactly should these happen? The firm has been in operation for some time now—is it too early, too late, or about time now? What kinds of partnerships should be forged?]
 - Collaborating with customers." [How?]
- "StarMedia should compete in Latin America and the U.S. by being aggressive and leveraging its brand names, advertisers, and strategic partners." [Easier said than done! Some relatively specific suggestions are needed for this mouthful to have any value.]

STATEMENTS WITHOUT ARTICULATED OR ADEQUATELY IMPLIED LOGIC [Note: Some of these conclusions might have had merit if supporting evidence or reasoning were to follow immediately after their assertions.]—e.g.,

- "[StarMedia] is the leading Internet site in Latin America, with many dependent customers, so it will continue to grow."
- "[StarMedia] has developed seven different versions ad... This is why StarMedia has survived and why it has been so popular, and why it will continue to be."
- "One way for StarMedia to generate more revenues is to advertise more."
- "With a low stock price, but with strong future annual reports, more investors will begin to invest." [What is a "strong annual report" and how do we know that these will occur in the future?]

OVERLY GENERAL OBSERVATIONS—e.g.,

- "[It] would be more advantageous for Maytag to pursue entry into the Japanese market in conjunction with enterprises that are well entrenched in the market and can bring considerable knowledge and experience to the partnership. Simply, these partnerships should share complementary strengths in business, brands, and products."

Appendix F USING TURNITIN TO SUBMIT ASSIGNMENTS

Papers and any makeup assignments should be uploaded to the Turnitin feature of Blackboard.

To upload a document to Turnitin:

1. Enter Blackboard at <http://blackboard.usc.edu> .
2. Select this course from the courses listed on "My USC."
3. Go to the "Assignments" section.
4. Select the assignment in question
5. Specify the title of the document uploaded and select the file to be uploaded.

submit paper: by file upload (step 1 of 2)

choose a paper submission method:

single file upload ▾

submission title *

Requirements for single file upload:

- File must be less than 20 MB
- File Types allowed: MS Word, WordPerfect, PostScript, PDF, HTML, RTF and plain text.

If your file exceeds 20 MB, [read suggestions](#) to meet requirements

browse for the file to upload *

N:\odata\worddoc\BUA\ Browse...

upload [cancel](#) [go back](#)

6. Click on "Upload."

7. You may see your paper in a distorted format displayed at this time. This is fine since I read the original word processing file rather than what is being displayed. **Please DO NOT e-mail another copy of the paper!**

8. **On the next screen, please be sure to click the icon to verify the upload by clicking on the "Submit" button.**

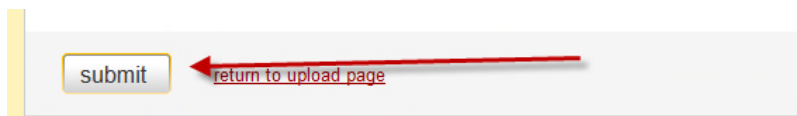
submit paper: Step 2 of 2

| | |
|--------|--------------------|
| Author | Penny Profit |
| Title | Applications Paper |

PLEASE DO NOT WORRY IF THE FORMATTING IS DISTORTED. IT WILL SHOW UP CORRECTLY WHEN THE DOCUMENT IS RETRIEVED. PLEASE DO NOT E-MAIL A COPY OF THE PAPER TO BE "SAFE."

Preview Paper

Penny Profit
BUAD 307
October 9, 2006
APPLICATIONS PAPER
OPTION #1
THE IDENTITY WIPER:
SECONDARY MARKET RESEARCH
PROPOSAL: The Identity Wiper would consist of software that would change personal information—such as the names of a child and family member, birthdays, city of residence, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses—to bogus values in order to prevent children from giving out information that might be abused by online predators or others who might abuse this information.



9. If you do not receive an e-mail receipt from Blackboard within twenty-four hours, please notify me so that I can check that the assignment was uploaded.

The Provost's office has asked that the following statement be sent to students in courses where Turnitin is used:

"USC is committed to the general principles of academic honesty that include and incorporate the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. By taking this course, students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. All submitted work for this course may be subject to an originality review as performed by Turnitin technologies (<http://www.turnitin.com>) to find textual similarities with other Internet content or previously submitted student work. Students of this course retain the copyright of their own original work, and Turnitin is not permitted to use student-submitted work for any other purpose than (a) performing an originality review of the work, and (b) including that work in the database against which it checks other student-submitted work."

Appendix G: GRADING OF CLASS PARTICIPATION

During most regular class sessions starting in the third or fourth weeks of class, it will be possible to earn "participation incidents" for constructive participation in discussion. These incidents are *not* "points" per se.

For each acceptable instance of participation, an "incident" will generally be awarded. Truly exceptional instances may be rewarded with up to four incidents. A maximum of five incidents may be earned per class. To receive your incidents, you must display the "participation ID" sign that will be distributed during the third or fourth weeks of class.

It is anticipated that the class participation score will be computed as follows:

1. Individuals who miss no more than three in-class assignments will start out with a "baseline" score of 42/60.
2. Credit for participation incidents is added, based in part of rating of participation index cards turned in throughout the semester.
3. An adjustment for quality—positive or negative—may be made for certain individuals.
4. For individuals who missed more than three in-class assignments without appropriate makeup assignments will have twenty points deducted for each assignment missed in excess of three. For example, an individual who misses seven assignments will have $(7-3) * 20 = 4 * 20 = 80$ points deducted. This may result in a negative score for class participation overall.
5. Total points will be capped at a maximum of the full 60/60.

Individuals who are severely uncomfortable participating in class discussions may perform a substitute assignment for as many discussion sections as desired. Please:

1. Find a legitimate article from a newspaper, magazine, or trade journal on the topic scheduled for the discussion session in question in a legitimate periodical. This may be accessed online, but an ordinary web site does NOT qualify.
2. Discuss what the article says (no more than one page).
3. Discuss the implications of what is being said for a firm of your choice. This discussion should not exceed 1.5 pages.

Any “discussion substitute” assignments must be turned in “hard” copy *before* the beginning of the discussion session in question. You must be present for the entire discussion section in question to receive participation incident points.