

USC Marshall

School of Business

MKT 450 - Consumer Behavior and Marketing

EXAMPLE – ACTUAL SYLLABUS WILL BE POSTED ON BRIGHTSPACE

Professor

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Office hours: Fridays 2.30 – 3.30 pm and by appointment
<https://uscmarshall.zoom.us/my/kristindiehl>

Course web page: <https://brightspace.usc.edu/>
Electronic reserves: <https://reserves.usc.edu/ares>

Department

Marketing Department
Hoffman Hall, Room 331
Phone: (213) 740-5033
Hours: Monday to Friday 9 am – 5 pm

Course Description

People are consumers. You are a consumer and your friends and families are consumers. However, in our role as *marketers* we need to know which products or services people want to buy, how they use them, and how they will dispose them. We need to understand why consumers act certain ways and how we can change their behaviors. Finally we want to be able to predict how consumers will react to our marketing activities.

Consumers are humans. They are affected by their perceptions, attitudes, motivations, goals, personality, culture and peer groups, and many other factors. Even though we are all consumers ourselves, we still may not always have the best insight into *why* we or others behave in certain ways. Therefore we need to systematically study how different psychological characteristics and processes affect people when they buy, use or experience products or services.

By taking this class you should learn to analyze consumer behavior and recommend marketing strategies based on theories and empirical evidence, not just your personal experience or intuition.

As we will see in this class many factors affect consumers as they make their consumption and usage decisions. We will begin by studying psychological determinants and processes that are inherent to the *individual* consumers such as motivation, attention, attitudes, etc.

Later in the course we will broaden our perspective to investigate how the social environment and societal structures further affect what consumers do.

Learning Objectives

At the end of the class, students will be able to

1. Identify the psychological processes influencing common behaviors consumers engage in.
2. Apply consumer behavior theories to novel consumption situations.
3. Analyze consumer perceptions using qualitative and quantitative tools.
4. Design marketing tactics that take the underlying consumer behavior into account.
5. Evaluate opportunities and threats for businesses and non-profits based on a systematic understanding of consumer behavior.

Course Format

This class will consist of lectures, discussions, short student presentations, and in-class exercises. Your participation is crucial to the success of this class. The more each of you contributes to this class, the more we will all get out of it.

Your active participation is critical to the success of this class. The more each of you will contribute to this class, the more we will all get out of it. Please bring examples and questions you come across to class or email me about them and I will be happy to discuss them.

Course Materials

Required Readings

All readings will be electronic and accessible through electronic reserves (<https://reserves.usc.edu/ares>). It will be the student's responsibility to obtain these materials and read them when indicated in the syllabus or in class.

If you read this: please email me a picture that represents your most enjoyable or most special or most meaningful consumption experience with a one sentence explanation.

Thanks for reading.

Supplementary Text

Hoyer, Wayne D., Deborah J. MacInnis, and Rick Pieters (2017), [*Consumer Behavior*](#), 7th Ed. Houghton Mifflin Co: Boston: MA.

Required Online Resources

You will need to use Brightspace to access materials, submit assignments, etc.

To Log in go to <https://brightspace.usc.edu/d2l/login> and use your USC Net ID to log in.

You can also find Brightspace on myUSC.

You can find a student guide here: [Brightspace Student Guides](#)

If you have any questions or need assistance with the Brightspace Course Pages, please contact the Marshall HelpDesk at 213-740-3000 (option 2) or HelpDesk@marshall.usc.edu." Alternatively, (213) 740-5555 will get you the USC ITS Help Desk.

Optional Materials

Note, all USC students have free access to the Wall Street Journal through a [school-sponsored membership](#). I highly recommend taking advantage of that subscription.

Lecture Notes

Lecture notes will be posted on Brightspace. I will post a subset of the slides I use in class on Brightspace. No, I will NOT post all slides or all examples. These slides will be available by 8pm the night before our class. It is the student's responsibility to print out lecture notes and bring them to class if so desired. However, slides do not substitute for thoughtful note taking. If you miss class, make sure you get somebody's notes.

No recording and copyright notice.

Pursuant to the USC Student Handbook (<https://policy.usc.edu/studenthandbook/>, pages 13 and 27), students may not record a university class without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class. In addition, students may not distribute or use notes, recordings, exams, or other intellectual property based on USC classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than personal or class-related group study by students registered for the class. This restriction on unauthorized use applies to all information that is distributed or displayed for use in relationship to the class. Distributing course material without the instructor's permission will be presumed to be an intentional act to facilitate or enable academic dishonesty and is strictly prohibited. Violation of this policy may subject an individual or entity to university discipline and/or legal proceedings.

Communication:

The best way to reach me outside class is via email. **Please use MKT 401 in the subject line** so that your email gets flagged.

Official office hours are Tuesdays 4 pm to 5 pm. You can always email me and set up an appointment at a different time that works with your schedule

I will use Brightspace's email system to contact you individually or as a group about the class (e.g. changes in the syllabus, assignments, etc.). **It is your responsibility to make sure that emails sent via Brightspace can reach you at an email address you check on a regular basis.**

Attendance Policy

Class attendance is not mandatory (exceptions are guest speakers where I expect everybody to be in attendance), but please keep in mind:

- Attendance is a necessary to participate in class.
- Assignments are due at the beginning of class and late assignments will be penalized.

- It is the student's responsibility to be aware of all handouts and announcements given in class.

If you have to miss class, you are responsible for getting notes, etc. from other students and for making up the material we covered that day. You do not need to notify me if you cannot make it to class unless it is an exam day, required attendance day, or if you are not able to attend for an extended period of time or an assignment is due that day.

Course Conduct and Technology Policy

This should be an exciting, challenging and fun class for everybody. However, there are certain rules that I hope will help all of us to have a good experience.

- Don't be late or leave early, otherwise we will all feel like we are at the airport – not a place conducive to learning.
- **Unless part of the class exercises (noted in syllabus) laptop and Internet usage is not permitted in class.**
Exceptions to this policy may be granted to individual students with appropriate documentation on a case-by-case basis
- ANY e-devices (cell phones, other texting devices, laptops, I-pods) must be completely turned off during class time.
 - When you come to class, be prepared to actively participate.
 - Eating and drinking during class is acceptable as long as you are still able to actively participate
- Do (respectfully) disagree with what others say (including me) and be open to others (including me) disagreeing with you. Critical thinking requires evaluating different perspectives!

Should they become necessary (e.g., illness or other emergencies), during synchronous Zoom sessions, the following netiquette is expected, as if you were in a physical classroom.

Please do:

- Log into class early or promptly via your USC account
- Arrange to attend class where there is a reliable internet connection and without distractions
- Keep your camera on. Speaking to the void is so depressing.
- Dress respectfully. Video conference business meetings are and will be the norm, so practice your professional telepresence.
- If you use a virtual background, please keep it respectfully professional.
- Display both your first and last name during video conferencing and synchronous class meetings.
- Minimize distractions by muting and or turning off video if necessary and when appropriate.
- Engage in appropriate tone and language with instructors and classmates.

Please try not to:

- Engage in a simultaneous activity not related to the class.

- Interact with persons who are not part of the class during the class session.
- Leave frequently or not be on camera for extended periods of time.

Open Expression and Respect for All

An important goal of the educational experience at USC Marshall is to be exposed to and discuss diverse, thought-provoking, and sometimes controversial ideas that challenge one's beliefs. In this course we will support the values articulated in the USC Marshall "Open Expression Statement" (<https://www.marshall.usc.edu/open-expression-statement>).

Academic Integrity

The University of Southern California is foremost a learning community committed to fostering successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Academic misconduct is in contrast to the university's mission to educate students through a broad array of first-rank academic, professional, and extracurricular programs and includes any act of dishonesty in the submission of academic work (either in draft or final form).

This course will follow the expectations for academic integrity as stated in the USC Student Handbook. All students are expected to submit assignments that are original work and prepared specifically for the course/section in this academic term. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s). Students suspected of engaging in academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Other violations of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

Academic dishonesty has a far-reaching impact and is considered a serious offense against the university. Violations will result in a grade penalty, such as a failing grade on the assignment or in the course, and disciplinary action from the university itself, such as suspension or even expulsion.

For more information about academic integrity see the student handbook or the Office of Academic Integrity's website, and university policies on Research and Scholarship Misconduct.

Please ask me if you are unsure what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment or what information requires citation and/or attribution.

Use of AI Generators

Since creating, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all assignments should be prepared by the student working individually or in groups. Students may not have another person or entity complete any substantive portion of the assignment. Developing strong competencies in these areas will prepare you for a

competitive workplace. Therefore, using AI-generated tools is prohibited for individual assignments and exams, will be identified as plagiarism, and will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

For the Final Project you are welcome to use AI tools (ChatGPT, Gemini, etc.) to help you brainstorm questions or revise work you have already written. However,

- Proceed with caution when using AI tools and do not assume the information provided is accurate or trustworthy. If it gives you a fact, assume it is incorrect unless you either know the correct answer or can verify its accuracy with another source. You will be responsible for any errors or omissions provided by the tool. It works best for topics you understand.
- Note, generative AI tools make up sources, hence track down anything you will build on. Your Reference section will require working links to each source.
- AI is a tool, but one that you need to acknowledge using. Please include a paragraph at the end of your project submission that states whether you used any AI tools and explain how (and why) you used AI and indicate/specify the prompts you used to obtain the results what prompts you used to get the results. Failure to do so is a violation of academic integrity policies.
- Be thoughtful about when AI is useful. Consider its appropriateness for each application.
- To adhere to our university values, you must cite any AI-generated material (e.g., text, images, etc.) included or referenced in your work and provide the prompts used to generate the content. Using an AI tool to generate content without proper attribution will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Extra Credit Policy

Please note that there will be no opportunities to improve your grade through the completion of extra credit work. If you keep up with the class during the semester there should not be any need for this either.

Emergency Preparedness

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

Grading

Each Student will be assigned a final course grade based on his/her performance in the class. The average GPA in this class will conform to the grading guidelines for undergraduate elective courses issued by the Marshall School of Business.

Each student will be evaluated on the following basis:

Class Contribution	10%	Exam 1	26%
Individual Assignments	16%	Exam 2	26%
Speaker Reflections	5%	Final Project	16%

If you join the class after the first class, you are responsible for all content and deliverables that have already been assigned, covered, or were due!

Class Contribution

Class contribution will be assessed based on the relevance, depth, and consistency of participation. Attendance is expected but not per se part of in-class contribution. If you cannot attend class, you will be responsible for everything covered or announced in class. When discussions take place, the quality of comments is weighted more heavily than quantity. It is quite possible to make good use of only a modest amount of „air time“ and receive a high grade for class contribution. Class contribution also takes into account student activities that disrupt and/or hamper good class discussion.

I use a scale of (2) for strong, relevant, and meaningful participation, (1) for average, relevant, and meaningful participation, and (0) for below average or negative participation (e.g., checking your phone).

When we have guest speakers, I will use a similar scale to encourage you to engage with the speakers.

My goal is for all of us to not *just* think about what we study and learn in this class during our class sessions but also during the rest of the week. Keep your eyes open for things that relate to class and feel free to share them throughout the semester.

I may ask you to complete a short task prior to class to facilitate our class discussion.

Whether you did or did not complete this task on time may also enter your in-class work.

CB Minute

Each person will pick a date during the semester (list of available dates will be posted on Google docs) to briefly (ca. 5 min) present to the class a new to the class, real-world example they encountered. That examples should come from the news of the last 7 days and needs to clearly relate to consumer behavior (not just marketing in general and definitely not just advertising). Make sure to clearly explain to the class how consumer behavior is critically involved!

Available dates are spread across synchronous and asynchronous class session. So if you pick the former you will present live to the class, if you choose the latter you will be asked to prepare a roughly five minute video to be shared with the class as part of the asynchronous session. For asynchronous sessions, please share the link with me 24 hours prior to the session

Examples presented/learned in other classes are not eligible! You cannot use more than 30 seconds of external video material.

Within 48 hours after your presentation upload any slides you used or a brief summary of your presentation and any links you used (if you did not use slides) on Brightspace

Individual Assignments

Throughout the semester, you will be asked to complete several short, individual assignments to practice and demonstrate your knowledge. Many of these assignments are based on class demonstrations and discussions. Assignments and their due dates are already listed in the class schedule (and below).

All assignments are due via Brightspace by the beginning of class. Assignments handed in late will lose points. Your grades will be posted on our course page on Brightspace.

Detailed information about each of the assignments will be provided when the assignment is discussed in class.

Date due	Assignment	% of assignment grade
	ZMET assignment	20
	Just Noticeable Difference assignment	15
	Perceptual Map assignment	15
	Attitudes assignment	20
	Decision Processes assignment	20
	Top Ten assignment	10

Consumer Behavior in the Real World

The goal of this assignment is for you to talk to somebody who in their professional life needs to understand consumer behavior on a daily basis. This could be somebody who works in a marketing function, but there are many functional and professional jobs that require an understanding of consumer behavior. This person should work in a company, non-profit, or in government (i.e. not your professors) and cannot be your parents or other close relatives. This assignment can be submitted any time during the semester. More details will be announced in class.

Top Ten Lessons Every Marketer should know

The final, integrative individual assignment for this course will be for you to prepare a list of the top 10 lessons for marketers that you have taken away from this course. What are the top 10 things you believe all marketers need to understand about consumer behavior? You will have to pick specific concepts and idea covered in class or the readings and explain why you feel this was an important lesson and how knowing about this concept, theory, or empirical evidence would change marketing practice. You may be asked to present some of your points in class. More details will be announced in class.

Exams

There will be two exams during the course. The exams will include material covered in lectures, assigned readings, and exercises. Student presentations (e.g., CB Minute presentations will not be part of the exam). The second exam is not directly cumulative, although knowledge of material acquired in the classes before the first exam is expected. Each exam will consist of multiple choice and short essay questions.

Allowed materials will be discussed in class. You are not permitted to discuss the exam with classmates or any other individuals.

Students are expected to take exams at the scheduled times. Consistent with University policy, makeup exams will be given only to students who cannot take the exam for religious reasons or who have written proof of illness or other emergencies. If you cannot take a scheduled exam due to an official University activity, it is your responsibility to let me know at least one week prior to the scheduled exam and have official documentation. If you fail to attend an exam without prior notice and without a medical or other emergency excuse you will receive a grade of zero on that exam.

Final Project

The final project allows you to apply theories you learned throughout the semester to solve an actual consumer behavior project.

This project is a team project. My expectations are that everybody in the team does their fair share of the work. Please keep in mind that your responsibility as a group member includes to encourage others in your group to contribute and to listening to what they have to say even if you do not agree. Also, it is each student's responsibility to keep in touch with their group members!

Team members will evaluate each after the final project. I will take this feedback into account when determining each team member's individual grade.

Detailed instructions for the final project will be distributed and discussed when the project is formally assigned towards the second half of the semester.

Contribution to group work and peer evaluation

My expectations are that everybody in a team does their fair share of the work. Please keep in mind that your responsibility as a group member includes encouraging others in your group to contribute and listening to what they have to say even if you do not agree. Also, it is each student's responsibility to keep in touch with their group members!

Team members will evaluate each other. Peer evaluations will be considered within the grading process, they are not per se part of the final grade.

Peer evaluations will ask team members to allocate 100 points among all team members (including themselves) for a) performing their agreed upon role and b) facilitating the progress of the team.

Peer evaluation form

This brief survey will allow you to evaluate the contributions of the individual members to the group's effort on this project.

Remember, there are many ways in which team members can contribute virtually and through in person meetings.

Therefore, please try and take a holistic view of the entire group effort over the course of this project as you consider how the individual parts sum to a whole.

These evaluations are completely confidential and will not be shown to your team members, so respond as honestly as possible.

Note, I will not factor this part into the group assignment grade until all other components are graded!

- 1) Please indicate all member of your team (including yourself)
- 2) Please allocate a total of 100 points among your team members including yourself. If you are not included on the list below, please use the back button in the survey (bottom right of the page, not the browser), to return to the previous page. Please allocate points such that members who contributed more to the project will receive more points. In the case of equal contribution, points should be allocated equally among all team members.
- 3) Please explain your division here, particularly if they deviate from an equal allocation. Please be as specific as possible.

Students and Disability Accommodations:

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. [The Office of Student Accessibility Services](#) (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Student Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress:

To be eligible for certain kinds of financial aid, students are required to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) toward their degree objectives. Visit the [Financial Aid Office webpage](#) for [undergraduate](#)- and [graduate-level](#) SAP eligibility requirements and the appeals process.

Support Systems

[Counseling and Mental Health](#) - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

[988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#) - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline consists of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

[Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services \(RSVP\)](#) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

[Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX \(EEO-TIX\)](#) - (213) 740-5086

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

[Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment](#) - (213) 740-2500

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

[The Office of Student Accessibility Services \(OSAS\)](#) - (213) 740-0776

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

[USC Campus Support and Intervention](#) - (213) 740-0411

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) - (213) 740-2101

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

[USC Emergency](#) - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

[USC Department of Public Safety](#) - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call

Non-emergency assistance or information.

[Office of the Ombuds](#) - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

[Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice](#) - (323) 442-2850 or otfp@med.usc.edu

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.

Week	Date	Day	Topic	Assignment (due at Noon)
1			Introduction to class	
			Consumer Journey and Marketing	Your profile slide due in Google Drive
2			What do consumers want? Motivation and needs	
			<u>Tools</u> : How to know what consumers want?	
3			Gaining Exposure and Attention	
			Perception is reality - Psychophysics	
4			Perception is reality - Framing	ZMET assignment due
			<u>Tools</u> : How to know what consumers perceive?	
5			Categorization	JND assignment due
			Learning and memory	
6			Guest Speaker:	Perceptual map assignment due
			Review and Catch up	
7			Exam 1	
			Guest Speaker:	

Week	Date	Day	Topic	Assignment (due at Noon)
8			Attitudes	
			Consumer decision making	
9			Project Work Day	Attitudes assignment due
			Nudges and influence	
10			<u>Tools</u> : Causality and experimentation	Decision Process assignment due
			Guest Speaker	
11			Consumption	
			Sharing experiences with others	
12			Review and Catch up	
			Exam 2	
13			*Optional* Lounge for Project Questions, Check-In	Consumer Behavior in the Real World / Google certification due
			Class Wrap-up	"Top Ten List" due
14			Project Presentations	Final Project due