

**Commerce 3MB3
Consumer Behaviour
Winter 2023 Course Outline**

**Information, Marketing, Operations Area
DeGroote School of Business
McMaster University**

Course Objective

This course is designed to introduce you to key theoretical concepts in consumer behaviour and build your ability to apply these concepts to real-world marketing problems.

Instructor and Contact Information

Section CO3: Wednesday 14:30 - 17:20 Room: KTH B105

Instructor: Vijay Kumar

ramador@mcmaster.ca

Office hours by appointment on Microsoft Teams

CO1 Student TA: Radhika Jain

jainr40@mcmaster.ca

Course website: Avenue to Learn. Please check the course website **regularly** for announcements and course materials

Course Elements

Credit Value:	3	Leadership:	Yes	IT skills:	No	Global view:	Yes
A2L:	Yes	Ethics:	Yes	Numeracy:	Yes	Written skills:	Yes
Participation:	Yes	Innovation:	Yes	Group work:	Yes	Oral skills:	Yes
Evidence-based:	Yes	Experiential:	Yes	Final Exam:	No	Guest speaker(s):	No

Course Description

Theory, Business Application and Perspectives

How does “who” do “what” and why? The field of consumer behaviour attempts to explain and predict the ways in which consumers think and behave in given situations. How do consumers interpret advertising information? Why do people buy? Why not? Who and what are consumers relying upon for information? How can marketers predict behaviours from attitudes? How do consumers make decisions? How do we consume and dispose of products? To answer these questions, consumer behaviour draws heavily on the disciplines of psychology, economics, sociology and anthropology. In this course, you will survey the relevant theory and learn how to apply these concepts to real world marketing situations. Class-time discussion of theory always will be supported with examples drawn from past and current business practices as well as consumers’ everyday lives; we will be considering the social, ethical, regulatory, environmental and technological contexts in which consumers think and act. This course has a North American emphasis but we also will be comparing and contrasting international examples with consumer behaviour in Canada and the United States.

This course stresses understanding, application, and generalization rather than memorization. In every field that you are studying, the body of accepted knowledge is growing and changing at an increasingly rapid rate. Because your success as a marketer will depend in part on your ability to find out about new knowledge and apply it to your own marketing problems, your performance in this course will be evaluated in terms of how well you are able to integrate textbook theory with business facts to arrive at explanations and recommendations.

Learning Outcomes

Skills-related Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to complete the following key tasks:

- preparation for and participation in classroom discussion
- group project management
- preparation of assignments that demonstrate proficiency in written communication
- demonstrate proficiency in oral presentation skills.

Course Content Mastery Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- understand current psychological, sociological, and anthropological theories that provide insight into consumer behavior
- recognize which theoretical concepts are relevant to a particular decision-making context, demonstrate clearly how these principles apply, and provide responses that are supported with evidence
- be able to apply theory to address real world marketing problems.

Course Materials and Readings

Consumer Behavior: Buying, Having and Being, 8th Canadian Edition. Solomon, White and Dahl, Prentice-Hall, 2021. Print ISBN: 9780135433942, 0135433940 / eText ISBN: 9780135403129, 013540312X

You can shop with the Bookstore or look on Amazon. You also could look for an older edition. The PowerPoint slides that will be posted on Avenue provide comprehensive coverage of the theory.

Course Overview and Assessment

Learning in this course results from class discussion/engagement as well as out-of-class reading, analysis, and assignment preparation. Your performance will be evaluated on both an individual and a group basis. Group members all will receive the same mark on the group presentation, **except where poor peer evaluations indicate otherwise.**

Late short answer assignments will be penalized 20% for each day they are late, unless the two students in the group have submitted and have been approved for a Notification of Absence or MSAF, in which case a one-week extension will be granted. Extensions cannot be granted for the group presentation because groups are scheduled to run part of the virtual class on their designated presentation date.

Course Delivery

ACTIVITY	DELIVERY	DESCRIPTION	TOOL(S)
Live lectures	Synch	2-3hr. in-person lectures during class time.	KTH B105
TA / Office Hours	Asynch	By appointment Office hours, TA	Microsoft Teams
Group work/assignments	Asynch	Work on assignments and projects on students' own time	A2L

GRADE COMPONENT	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION
Individual Assignments	45%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brand Diary 20% - Classical Conditioning and Advertising 25%
Beyond the Textbook Presentation	20%	Group project where each group shares and discusses 3 peer-reviewed academic journal articles related to a consumer behaviour topic of interest.
Final Exam	35%	-

Course Deliverables

Individual Assignments (45%)

There are two individual assignments in this course. The first assignment is worth 20% and the second assignment is worth 25%. Detailed assignment briefs will be shared in due course. All assignments are due on A2L in their dedicated drop box, on their due dates before midnight (11:59 pm). Late submissions will be penalized 20% for each day they are late, unless an MSAF/email excuse is submitted prior to the submission deadline, in which case, a 1-week extension will be granted.

Group Work (20%)

Teamwork and Evaluation

Groups will consist of five students (exceptions will be made by the professor given the class size). If you have any trouble finding a group or prefer that the instructor or the TA assign you to a group, please email your request to the TA.

Peer Evaluations: To encourage equal contribution, peer evaluation will be used to assess each member's work. It is highly recommended **to set group ground rules and expectations early in the semester**. Groups are also encouraged to have a short feedback session following the completion of each assignment so that individuals are made aware if their input is less than expected by their team.

A peer evaluation form (enclosed in the appendix) can be submitted after each group project. These evaluations need only be submitted if the distribution is not equal, and must be signed by all group members (if you fail to do so, the professor will assign your evaluation marks as per their discretion based on information at their disposal.) Peer evaluations **MUST** be supported by documentation / emails that are evidence of feedback given and expectations set for the defaulting team member(s).

The result of this process is a true reflection of each group members' contribution to the project. Some members (i.e. those that contribute the most to the process) may find that their overall grade will go up as a result of the peer evaluation. Note: grades go up by no more than two grade points per student if the achieved score is B or lower; if your achieved score is B+ or higher the ratings can only add one grade point to your mark in the course. Others may find that their overall project

grade will go down - note: the peer evaluation process can impact you negatively with no cap on the grades you can drop.

Group Project Brief

Beyond the Textbook Group Presentation (20%)

In this task, your group will explore at least 3 peer reviewed journal articles on the topic of consumer behaviour. The three journal articles should be discussing consumer behaviour topics relating to the same industry or the same product (e.g., consumer acceptance of online shopping, consumer adoption of mobile payments, etc.). The deliverable for this project is a 10-15 minute presentation where your group introduces the topic being explored, and a summary of the articles in light of the theories and topics we discuss in the course. Detailed outline for the presentation is enclosed in Appendix 1.

Communication and Feedback

Students who wish to correspond with instructors or TAs directly via email must send messages that originate from their official McMaster University email account. This protects the confidentiality and sensitivity of information as well as confirms the identity of the student. Emails regarding course issues should NOT be sent to the Area Administrative Assistants. All students must receive feedback regarding their progress prior to the final date by which a student may cancel the course without failure by default.

For Level 3 courses and above, this feedback must equal a minimum of 10% of the final grade.

The instructor may solicit feedback via an informal course review with students by Week #4 to allow time for modifications in curriculum delivery.

Requesting Relief for Missed Academic Work

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar [“Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”](#) and the link below;

<http://ug.degrootemcmaster.ca/forms-and-resources/missed-course-work-policy/>

Academic Integrity

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.** Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation

reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Authenticity/Plagiarism Detection

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software.

All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster’s use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

Courses With an On-Line Element

This course uses on-line elements (e.g., e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L) and Teams). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, usernames for the McMaster email accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course.

The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online.**

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, Teams for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

Academic Accommodation For Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

Research Using Human Subjects

All researchers conducting research that involves human participants, their records or their biological material are required to receive approval from one of McMaster's Research Ethics Boards before (a) they can recruit participants and (b) collect or access their data. Failure to comply with relevant policies is a research misconduct matter. Contact these boards for further information about your requirements and the application process.

McMaster Research Ethics Board (General board): <https://reo.mcmaster.ca/>

Hamilton Integrated Research Ethics Board (Medical board): <http://www.hireb.ca/>

Acknowledgement of Course Policies

Your enrolment in Commerce 3MB3 will be considered to be an implicit acknowledgement of the course policies outlined above, or of any other that may be announced during lecture and/or on A2L. **It is your responsibility to read this course outline, to familiarize yourself with the course policies and to act accordingly.**

Lack of awareness of the course policies **cannot be invoked** at any point during this course for failure to meet them. It is your responsibility to ask for clarification on any policies that you do not understand.

**Commerce 3MB3 Consumer Behaviour
Winter 2023 Course Schedule**

Week/Date	Topic
Jan. 11	Introduction to Consumer Behaviour Individual Decision-Making Part I
Jan. 18	Individual Decision-Making Part II
Jan. 25	Buying and disposing
Feb. 1	Perceptions
Feb. 8	Learning Theories Individual Assignment 1 due
Feb.15	Memory <i>Beyond the textbook presentations</i>
Mar. 1	Motivation and Effect <i>Beyond the textbook presentations</i>
Mar. 8	The Self and Personality <i>Beyond the textbook presentations</i>
Mar. 15	Lifestyles and Values <i>Beyond the textbook presentations</i>
Mar. 22	Attitudes and Attitude Change <i>Beyond the textbook presentations</i> Individual Assignment 2 due
Mar. 29	Subcultures and Cultural Influences
Apr. 14 - 29	Final Exam

IMPORTANT NOTE: *The schedule below is tentative and can be changed by the professor during the semester.*

APPENDIX

Appendix 1.1 - COMMERCE 3MB3 - Consumer Behaviour GROUP EVALUATION FORM

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Please assign each person in your group an amount of money which represents each individual's contribution to the project, simulation and hand-in cases. You may each wish to complete a form individually and then share these forms at a group meeting but only ONE FORM is to be submitted for each group and it must be signed by all group members.
2. Your total budget to distribute among the people in your group is \$600 * (the number of people in your group). For example, if there are 5 people in your group, then pretend that you have \$600 * 5 = \$3,000 to pay to the group.
3. If everyone contributed equally, then pay each person \$600.
4. Adjust the fee according to your honest personal assessment of the value of each person's contribution. In our example, the fee could be as low as \$0 or as high as \$3,000.
5. The factor arrived at for each team member as a result of the peer evaluation will be applied to the group work in this course.
6. TREAT THIS EVALUATION SERIOUSLY.
7. MAKE SURE THAT THE FEES PAID ADD TO \$600 * GROUP SIZE.

PROFESSOR: Vijay Kumar

GROUP NAME:

GROUP MEMBER	SIGNATURE	FEE

**Appendix 1.2 - COMMERCE 3MB3 - Consumer Behaviour
NOTICE OF INTENT / GROUP
SIGN-UP FORM / TEAM CONTRACT**

Professor: Vijay Kumar

GROUP Name: _____

STUDENT NAME	EMAIL

Beyond the Textbook Presentations

Project Brief

The objective of this project is to expand your knowledge consumption beyond the course textbook and provided material, by exploring other important sources of knowledge which are peer reviewed journals. Worth 20%.

In this group project, you are required to:

1. Choose three peer reviewed journal articles studying a consumer behaviour topic related to a certain industry.
2. Explore the results of the articles considering topics and theories we discuss in the course.
3. Highlight the practical implications of the research results (how can businesses design their marketing strategies or operations considering the research results).

Instructions:

1. Choose a topic related to any of the chapters listed in the course outline. Examples include:
 1. The use of colours in ads (related to the topic of Perceptions)
 2. Store atmospherics and its effect on purchase behaviour (related to Buying and Disposing and Perceptions)
 3. Attitudes towards mobile payments (related to the topic of Attitudes)
 4. Subliminal messages (related to the topic of Perceptions)
 5. Emotional appeals in advertising (related to Attitudes and Involvement)
 6. Sustainability and Green Marketing (related to Values and Lifestyles)
 7. Buying local
 8. Global brands
 9. Or any other topic of interest
2. Share your topic in the dedicated discussion forum to make sure each group has a unique topic. Once you receive an approval on your topic from the instructor/TA, you can proceed to the following steps.
3. Search for journal articles on these topics on the McMaster Library website. If you feel the library search is not very user friendly, it can be easier to search for the journal articles on www.scholars.google.com then get full access to the articles that show up in the results page through the McMaster library website.
4. Please note that the three articles must be studying the same topic. Cross-cultural studies are allowed. Studies on the same topic, with different research populations (e.g. young adults vs. seniors), or studies on the same topic, with different geographical scopes (e.g. one study in the US vs. China) are also allowed.

5. Make sure the articles are from peer reviewed journals. Blog articles or magazine and news articles are NOT allowed. Grades for content related to ineligible articles will be deducted. You are encouraged to share your chosen articles with the instructor or the TA for confirmation.
6. When analyzing the results of your articles, check the lecture slides and echo360 videos for the course content relevant to your topic and prepare the presentation. Feel free to check with the instructor and the TA to confirm which course content relates to your topic.

Deliverable

10-15 min. presentation. All presentations are due on the same day before midnight on Avenue. The presentations will be delivered during class on the course of a month, at times and dates assigned by the professor.

The following is the recommended outline for the presentation:

1. **Introduction:** share a brief introduction on the topic and the three articles you are exploring (include full citations)
2. **Research Articles:** for each article:
 1. Summary: summarize the research objective, the research population, the geographical scope, and the research method.
 2. Commentary: explain the results of the three articles in light of the theories and concepts we discuss in the course. *Please note that explaining the results is not just reporting the results.*
 3. Marketing Implications: explain how marketers can benefit from the results of the study. Give clear examples of tactics supported by ad examples or images if possible.

Dates for the presentations will be set by the instructor depending on what course content relates to the presentation topic.

Upon the approval of the instructor, groups discussing "challenging" topics covered later during the course may be allowed to do minor edits to their presentations after submission to incorporate newly understood concepts. However, as a standard, groups are expected to review course content related to their topics and incorporate concepts from this content into their presentations before submitting the PowerPoints.