

# CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

MKTG 6226 – FALL 2018

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<b>Class Location/Times:</b>	M 5:20 – 7:20 PM (270 Dodge)
<b>Office Hours:</b>	By appointment in 202F Hayden Hall
<b>Course Materials:</b>	All readings and cases will be available via Blackboard; some readings will be included in an HBR coursepack.

## Course Overview

A successful marketing strategy must be built around an understanding of consumers, and this same understanding can help consumers make better choices for themselves and for society. This course will incorporate the latest research in psychology, marketing, and other social sciences to help you develop evidence-based strategies for influencing consumer behavior.

## Course Objectives

Students in this course will have the opportunity to learn:

- How to study consumers and successfully target the right audience
- How to shape thoughts by getting consumers' attention and making a lasting impression
- How to influence attitudes by using principles of persuasion and social influence
- How to impact choices by leveraging message framing and choice architecture
- How to prompt change by practicing corporate social responsibility

## Course Format

This is an advanced level course in which you draw from the science of consumer behavior as well as your own and others' professional experiences to design effective marketing strategies for solving consumer behavior-related challenges. This course will consist of a series of in-class workshops and a semester-long final project in which you will use consumer insights to generate evidence-based recommendations for a particular client or case.

## Performance Evaluation

Your performance in this course will be evaluated based on:

- Client Workshops = 50%
  - Individual & Group Contributions = 20%
  - Pre-Workshop Blog Post = 10%
  - Client Memo = 20%
- Final Project = 50%
  - Research Report = 20%
  - Marketing Plan & Presentation = 30%

## Grading Scale

Letter grades will be assigned as follows (*Note: there will be no rounding*):

Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	F
%	> 92%	90-92%	87-89%	83-86%	80-82%	77-79%	73-76%	70-72%	<72%

## **Client Workshops = 50%**

Each class will feature a workshop in which you will apply scientific insights about a particular topic in consumer behavior to solving a consumer-related challenge for a real client. Each workshop will consist of a design sprint in which we will put theory into practice:

- 1) Individual and Group Contributions = 20%: Each class, you will work individually and in teams to generate evidence-based recommendations on behalf of real clients. You will be evaluated on the quality of both your individual and group contributions at each client workshop, as judged by the clients and by me.
- 2) Pre-Workshop Blog Post = 10%: You will do advance research for one client workshop. Before the workshop, you will attend an advance research opportunity (options denoted on the schedule with asterisks) and work individually to post observations to inform the client workshop on the course blog. Blog posts should be submitted on the day of the workshop via Turn It In, by Monday at 12:01 AM. See instructions for details. *Note: You are required to attend at least one advance research opportunity, but you may attend multiple opportunities if you wish, space permitting. If you submit multiple blog posts, I will count the blog post for which you earn the highest grade.*
- 3) Client Memo = 20%: You will serve as a project lead for one client workshop. After the workshop, you will work individually to write a 2-page memo summarizing your and your classmates' recommendations and the insights and evidence behind them. Post-workshop memos should be submitted one week after the workshop via Turn It In, by Monday at 12:01 AM. See instructions for details.

## **Final Project = 50%**

In the final project, you will synthesize the course material and apply the "STICC," model to develop a socially responsible marketing plan for a client in which you will "Study consumers," "shape Thoughts," "Influence attitudes," "impact Choices," and "prompt Change:"

- 1) Research Report = 20%: You will work individually to conduct primary and secondary research to inform your marketing plan and write a 2-page memo summarizing your key findings and takeaways. Reports should be submitted via Turn It In by Monday, Oct. 8, at 12:01 AM. See instructions for details.
- 2) Marketing Plan and Presentation = 30% (due 12/10 at 12:01 a.m.): You will work in teams to develop a marketing plan for a socially responsible initiative for a client. Your marketing plan should make recommendations that are grounded in consumer behavior insights and evidence as well as the market research that you and your teammates performed, and it should make suggestions for evaluating the success of the initiative. Your 2-page marketing plan and 15-minute slide-deck should be submitted via Turn It In by Monday, Dec. 10, at 12:01 AM. See instructions for details. *Note: Your final project grade will also reflect your individual contribution to the project. To ensure fair and objective evaluation, your individual contribution grade will rely on three assessments—yours, your peers', and mine.*

### **Attendance Policy**

Attendance in class and at your chosen client event is mandatory, but you are permitted one absence without penalty in the event of an emergency or if an excused absence is arranged in advance. For an absence to be excused, you must 1) notify me of your intention to miss class via email in advance and 2) provide a legitimate reason and documentation of that reason for the absence. Excused absences are not permitted for final project presentations.

### **Classroom Conduct**

You are expected to thoroughly prepare for each client workshop, stay engaged and on task during in-class group preparation time, and proactively contribute to class discussions and project deliverables. Your individual contribution grade for client workshops will reflect your level of preparedness, engagement, and professionalism.

### **Late Assignment Policy**

You are expected to submit assignments on time. Blackboard will automatically timestamp assignments. Late assignments will lose 10% immediately and an additional 10% for every day that they are late.

### **Academic Integrity**

You are expected to act in accordance with university policies regarding academic integrity, as outlined here: <http://www.northeastern.edu/osccr/academic-integrity-policy/>. I will check for cheating and plagiarism on all assignments. Any student found to have violated the university's academic integrity policy will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR) and will face consequences ranging from a failing grade on the assignment to expulsion.

### **Additional Resources**

Please let me know if you are experiencing difficulty with the course so we can work together to develop a plan to help you succeed. For students needing special assistance, contact the Disabilities Resource Center - 20 Dodge, x2675 to register for special accommodations. Additional tutorial help as well as English Language help/editing is available through the International Student Center - 405 Ell, x2310, and English Language Center - 10 Belvidere, x2455.

### **About the Instructor**

I am an assistant professor of marketing, specializing in consumer judgment and decision making. My research examines when people call upon others to help them make decisions, what are the barriers to accurately gauging others' preferences and effectively choosing on their behalf, and how to help people make better decisions for themselves and others. I am currently a fellow on the United States Office of Evaluation Sciences ([oes.gsa.gov](http://oes.gsa.gov)) and previously served on the White House Social and Behavioral Sciences Team ([sbst.gov](http://sbst.gov)). In this role, I translate insights from the behavioral sciences into concrete recommendations for how to improve government and work with federal agencies to rapidly and rigorously test what works and what works best. I received my Ph.D. in psychology from Princeton University in 2009 and my Ph.D. in marketing from the University of Florida in 2012. To learn more about me, visit my web site: [www.marysteffel.com](http://www.marysteffel.com).

# CONSUMER BEHAVIOR: HOW TO GET YOUR IDEAS TO...

## HOW TO STUDY CONSUMERS

Date	Topic	Client/Case	Readings/Assignments
9-10	Introduction	Lincoln Financial Group	
9-17	Research	iMotions	Marketing Intelligence How Companies Learn Your Secrets
9-24	Segmentation	DeFrame*	Rediscovering Market Segmentation 6 Reasons You Need Customer Segmentation
10-1	Project Prep	Lincoln Financial Group	Lincoln Financial Group Background
10-8	Columbus Day		<b>Research Report Due</b>

## HOW TO SHAPE THOUGHTS

10-15	Perception	Choreography for Business	Blink, Introduction How to Become an Expert in Reading Other People
10-22	Attention	Nielsen Consumer Neuroscience*	Made to Stick, Introduction Why We Make Mistakes, Chapters 1 & 5

## HOW TO INFLUENCE ATTITUDES

10-29	Persuasion	Everyday Boston*	Harnessing the Science of Persuasion Cialdini's 7th Persuasion Principle
11-5	Influence	Refine and Focus	Contagious, Introduction The Buzz about Buzz
11-12	Veterans Day		

## HOW TO IMPACT CHOICES

11-19	Pricing	Boston Symphony Orchestra*	Pricing to Create Shared Value Pricing and the Psychology of Consumption
11-26	Choice	Edmit	Option Overload: How to Deal with Choice Complexity To Keep Your Customers, Keep It Simple

## HOW TO PROMPT CHANGE

12-3	Project Prep	Lincoln Financial Group	
12-10	Presentations	Lincoln Financial Group	<b>Marketing Plan &amp; Presentation Due</b>

\*Advance research opportunities available