

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE
NUS Business School
Department of Marketing

BMA5502 Consumer Behavior

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Session Semester I, 2008/2009

Course Objectives

Consumers make decisions regarding the acquisition, use and disposal of a variety of products, services and experiences. In this course, we seek to understand and appreciate consumers as unique individuals and as members of their social and cultural groups. We will examine the many facets of consumer behavior (e.g., from the experiential perspective, incorporating insights from sociology and anthropology), with an emphasis on symbolic forms of consumption, and the use of qualitative research methods.

Text and Readings

Selected chapters from Eric Arnould, Linda Price and George Zinkhan (2004), *Consumers*, 2nd Edition, McGraw Hill.

Additional readings from the consumer research journals can be downloaded and printed via IVLE or from LINC.

Assessment Methods

Individual Assignments

Class Participation	20%
Essay	20%
Presentation	20%
Group Project	40%
TOTAL	100%

The course operates on an interactive, discussion-based format. You will benefit most when you come to class having read and critically evaluated the readings, and are prepared to share your views. Individual and group assignments are tailored specifically to the learning goals for each semester, and are intended to provide a stimulating learning experience. Through these various avenues, you are encouraged to apply consumer behavior theories and concepts that are covered throughout the semester. Details of assignments will be given on separate handouts and discussed in class.

BMA5502 Consumer Behavior – Timetable (Tentative)
(Semester I, 2008/2009)

		<u>Tue(12-3pm)</u>
Session 1	Our Journey into Consumer Behavior	12 Aug
Session 2	Motives, Goals and Involvement	19 Aug
Session 3	Experience, Learning and Knowledge <u>Project Group Formation</u>	26 Aug
Session 4	Consumer Attitudes and Decisions	2 Sep
Session 5	Interpersonal Influence: Family, Friends and Foes	9 Sep
Session 6	The Self	16 Sep
	Recess	23 Sep (no class)
Session 7	Subcultures of Consumption I: Income and Social Class	30 Sep
Session 8	Subcultures of Consumption II: Ethnicity and Age	7 Oct
Session 9	Subcultures of Consumption III: Values and Lifestyles	14 Oct
Session 10	Consumer-Brand Relationships and Brand Communities	21 Oct
	Fieldwork	28 Oct (no class)
Session 11	Culture and Consumption	4 Nov
Session 12	The Circle of Consumption <u>Project Reports Due</u>	11 Nov
Session 13	Project Presentations	18 Nov

BMA5502 Consumer Behavior – Course Schedule (Semester I, 2008/2009) (Tentative)

This schedule outlines the weekly readings for this semester. The chapters refer to the recommended text. Discussion questions will be given in advance to guide you in your reading, contemplation and preparation for class discussion.

Session 1 – Our Journey into Consumer Behavior

Key Concepts and Applications:

The Domain and Scope of Consumer Behavior
Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Consumer Behavior
How Do We Study Consumers?

Read: Chapter 1 “Introduction: The World of Consumers”

Excerpts from Marsha L. Richins (2000), “Consumer Behavior as a Social Science”, Presidential Address, Annual Conference of the Association for Consumer Research.

Session 2 – Motives, Goals and Involvement

Key Concepts and Applications:

Motivation Theories and Consumer Motives
Consumer Involvement

Read: Chapter 7 “Consumer Motives, Goals and Involvement”

Richard L. Celsi, Randall L. Rose and Thomas W. Leigh (1993), “An Exploration of High-Risk Leisure Consumption through Sky-diving,” *Journal of Consumer Research*, 20 (June), 1-23.

Session 3 – Experience, Learning and Knowledge

Key Concepts and Applications:

The Experience Economy
A Typology of Consumer Experiences
Learning Theories and Processes
Memory and Knowledge Structures

Read: Chapter 9 “Experience, Learning and Knowledge”

Session 4 – Consumer Attitudes and Decisions

Key Concepts and Applications:

Characteristics, Dimensions and Theories of/about Attitudes
Consumer Decision Making Models

Read: Chapter 15 “Consumer Attitudes and Decisions”

Michael Wood (2005), “Discretionary Unplanned Buying in Consumer Society,”
Journal of Consumer Behavior, 4 (4), 268-281.

Session 5 – Interpersonal Influence: Family, Friends and Foes

Key Concepts and Applications:

The Family Life Cycle, and Consumer Socialization
Gender Roles and Household Decision Making
Reference Groups

Read: Chapter 13 “Organizational and Household Behaviors”, p. 540-543, 553-570
Chapter 14 “Interpersonal Influence”

Session 6 – The Self

Key Concepts and Applications

Self Concept and Body Image
Sex Role Portrayals in Advertising
The Postmodern Self

Read: Chapter 10 “The Self and Selves”
Chapter 12, p.511-516 on Gender

Rune Bjerke and Rosemary Polegato (2006), “How Well Do Advertising Images
of Health and Beauty Travel Across Cultures? A Self-Concept Perspective,”
Psychology & Marketing, 23 (10), 865-884.

Session 7 – Subcultures of Consumption I: Income and Social Class

Key Concepts and Applications:

Economic Segments: Income and Social Class

Read: Chapter 12 “Economic and Social Segments”, p. 477-492.

Press Statement on “Key Findings of the Household Expenditure Survey
2002/2003”

Session 8 – Subcultures of Consumption II: Ethnicity and Age

Key Concepts and Applications:

Social Segments: Ethnicity
Age Subcultures

Read: Chapter 12 “Economic and Social Segments”, p. 492-502.
Chapter 12, p.502-510 on Age

Session 9 – Subcultures of Consumption III: Values and Lifestyles

Key Concepts and Applications:

Values and Lifestyles (VALS)
Materialism

Read: Chapter 11 “Lifestyles: Consumption Cultures”

Miriam Tatzel (2003), “The Art of Buying: Coming to Terms with Money and Materialism,” *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 4, 405-435.

Session 10 -- Consumer-Brand Relationships and Brand Communities

Key Concepts and Applications:

Brand Image (p.120-122, 361) and Brand Personality (p.374, 376)
Consumer-Brand Relationships
Brand Communities

Read: Fournier, Susan (1998), “Consumers and Their Brands: Developing Relationship Theory in Consumer Research,” *Journal of Consumer Research*, 24 (4), March, 343-373.

McAlexander, James H. (2002), “Building Brand Community,” *Journal of Marketing*, 66 (1), 38-52.

Session 11 – Culture and Consumption

Key Concepts and Applications:

The Meaning and Nature of Culture
Cultural Values, Myths, Symbols and Rituals
Consumption Meanings
Movement of Meanings and the Meaning Transfer Model

Read: Chapter 3 “The Meaning and Nature of Culture”
Chapter 4 “Consumption Meanings”

Session 12 – The Circle of Consumption

Key Concepts and Applications:

Disposition, Recycling and Reuse Behaviors
Voluntary Simplicity
Alternative Marketplaces

Read: Chapter 19 “Disposition, Recycling and Reuse”

Mary E. Huneke (2005), “The Face of the Un-Consumer: An Empirical Examination of the Practice of Voluntary Simplicity in the United States,” *Psychology & Marketing*, 22 (7), 527-550.

Session 13 – Project Presentations