This syllabus is designed to be as complete as possible. Students are responsible for reading this syllabus and are accountable for all of the requirements contained therein.

**SYLLABUS**

**MBA 722-001**

**Consumer Behavior**

**Fall 2014**

**Instructor:** Dr. Laurie Meamber

**Day, Time, Location:** Wednesday, 6:30 -10:05 pm, ARL 468

**Office Hours:** Wednesday 6:00-6:30 pm, Room 435 or Room 436 or nearby and by appointment

**Office:** 128 Enterprise Hall, Fairfax campus

**Telephone:** (703) 993-1847

**Fax:** (703) 993-1809

**E-mail:** lmeamber@gmu.edu

**Web page:** Bb 9.1 available through courses tab at MyMason portal (http://mymason.gmu.edu)

**Course prerequisites:** Completion of MBA core or permission of instructor

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**Course Description**

“Marketing decisions based on explicit consumer behavior theory, assumptions, and research are more likely to be successful than those based on hunches or intuition, and thus they create competitive advantage….Most economically developed societies are legitimately referred to as consumption societies. Most individual in those societies spend more time engaged in consumption than in any other activity, including work or sleep (both of which also involve consumption). In addition, marketers spend billions to influence consumer decisions….It is important that consumers accurately understand the strategies and tactics being used so they can be more effective consumers.” (Hawkins and Mothersbaugh 2013: 8-9)

The quote from the authors of many of the chapters found in the Consumer Behavior Reader encapsulates why I, as the instructor of this course, feel that consumer behavior amongst all of the MBA courses you will take, is relevant for your professional and personal lives. First, we are all consumers and can use the material to reflect upon our own behavior. Second, we will examine concepts, processes and approaches that inform marketing strategy as to what, how, when, where and why people consume, and more generally, make decisions as related to being consumers. It is the aim of this course to equip you with current knowledge of how individual psychology and socio-cultural factors influence consumer behavior.

In order to supplement and broaden the discussion of consumer decision-making, we will also use a couple of supplementary books. These are bestsellers; one is written by a consumer psychologist and the other is by a behavioral economist/consumer researcher. They discuss the interrelated topics of "persuasion" and "predictably irrational" behavior. In prior semesters, students enrolled in the course have not necessarily worked in consumer marketing or even marketing per se, but have indicated that as a result of taking the course, they have learned more about their own decision-making as consumers. Students have also applied the knowledge gained in the course when they have been involved with negotiations and other types of decision making at work.
**Objectives**

The objectives of the course are to introduce students to important concepts, approaches and processes in consumer behavior and to demonstrate their practical use in the development of marketing strategy; and to provide students with opportunities to further develop their analytical skills, critical skills, written skills, and verbal presentation/discussion leadership skills.

**Learning Objectives**

On completion of this course, the student will be able to …

| Explain the impact of social processes on consumer behavior (including demographics, household influences, group influences, culture, subcultures, and opinion leadership). | Selected questions on case, discussion leadership, and final exam | Knowledge of Functional Business Disciplines: Our graduates will demonstrate the ability to integrate knowledge from all functional areas of business into a meaningful firm-level perspective. |
| Explain the impact of psychological processes on consumer behavior (including, but limited to: attitude, lifestyle, and self-concept). |  |
| Explain how marketing messages are processed in high- and low-involvement situations (including learning, motivation, and memory). |  |
| Apply consumer-related frameworks and tools to marketing strategy formation, including: the diffusion of innovations, consumer-market segmentation and relationships, and multi-attribute decision models and decision rules. |  |
| Discuss marketing and consumer behavior implications of knowledge gained from psychology and behavioral economics including, but not limited to: reciprocation, commitment and consistency, social proof, liking, authority, scarcity, relativity, supply and demand, zero cost, social norms, arousal, procrastination, ownership, doors open, expectations, price, character. |  |
| Understand, synthesize and integrate all course knowledge to explain consumer behavior. |  |

**Required Course Materials**

Hard copies of first two books listed on the next page are available at the campus bookstore or from others sources. Note: If you buy the books from any retailer other than the Mason bookstore, make certain you purchase the correct edition. If you have any questions, please ask.


3. READER: CONSUMER BEHAVIOR FALL 2014 (will be known as “Reader” in this class). This is a custom e-book available for purchase at the McGraw-Hill Education online bookstore. https://create.mheducation.com/shop/#/catalog/details/?isbn=9781308245256
   Please note: there are several custom readers listed under my name at the mcgraw-hill ebook bookstore. The link above brings you to the correct reader for this class. Please double check prior to purchase that you are buying the correct reader – it has the following characteristics: ISBN is 9781308245256, 244 pages, and cost is $42.61.

4. Exercises. These are consumer behavior exercises that we will do in class and are available on Bb. These exercises must be downloaded (and printed if preferred) to use in class. A preliminary schedule is provided at the end of the syllabus but please double check the agenda posted on Bb prior to coming to class. Exercises will not be turned in nor graded, but will assist in learning process and be useful in completing course deliverables.

Additional readings may be announced along with instructions on how to obtain them. The final exam may include one or two additional case(s) not found in the list above of required course materials and will need to be purchased separately online at the appropriate time.

**Cancelled Classes**

Any assignment or presentation due on the day of a cancelled class will be moved to the next regularly scheduled class meeting. The course schedule will be modified by the instructor accordingly and will be communicated to the class. We will operate in accordance with official University decision about inclement-weather cancellations. Please check the Mason web site or the information line (703-993-1000) if the weather is questionable.

Students can sign up for the Mason Alert system to provide emergency information of various sorts at https://alert.gmu.edu.

An emergency poster exists in each classroom explaining what to do in the event of crises and that further information about emergency procedures exists on http://www.gmu.edu/service/cert.
Course Requirements

In addition to the graded assignments, students will be required to come to each class prepared to discuss course topics according to the attached course schedule. Reading is expected to be done before class on the date listed in the schedule. Students will be judged on how well they contribute to each other’s learning and on the extent to which they push themselves to analyze, synthesize, and apply what they have learned. There may be occasions when students are required to complete additional assignments to prepare for an upcoming session. The instructor will announce these requirements.

Course Format

Learning style research tells us different individuals learn in different ways. We will use a variety of techniques in order to increase learning opportunities for each student regardless of learning style. Class sessions will include lecture, video, book chapter discussion, case discussion and in-class exercises. An interactive learning environment will be standard in the classroom. There may or may not be small group work in this course, depending upon enrollment. Sessions will highlight key issues from the text, but lectures will not simply rehash text material. In-class exercises may be completed inside or outside of class on selected topics. The PowerPoint slides available on Bb may include additional topics that may or may not be discussed in depth in class, depending on time limitations but which students will be required to learn about on their own. While in class, students should be engaged with the course material and not with other activities, such as working on assignments from other courses, work obligations, email, social media updates, etc..

Participation

Given that class sessions involve a variety of activities, attendance and active participation are essential to gain maximum benefit.

Grading

In-Class Participation (Individual) 10% (10 points)
In-Class Discussion Leadership (Individual or Group) 20% (20 points)
J.C. Penney’s “Fair and Square” Pricing Strategy Case Write-Up (Individual) 30% (30 points)
Consumer Behavior Exercise Write-Up/Analysis (Individual) 15% (15 points)
Consumer Behavior Exercise Transcript (Individual) 5% (5 points)
Final Examination (Individual) 20% (20 points)

100% (100 points)

Grades Given A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C, F
In general, here is how you can think about grades. There are generally three levels of understanding you can demonstrate. The first level is a correct explanation and application of concepts (B level work). The second level is a correct explanation of the concepts along with a demonstration of creative thinking and synthesis of course material (B+/A- level work). The third level is a correct explanation of the concepts, synthesis of course material, and demonstration that you have through enough about the concepts and their application to have significantly learned from that thinking and gained insight (A level work). Things that are missing or incorrect will earn C’s or lower. To earn A grades in this class, it therefore means that you not only have to know the material and be able to synthesize (combine ideas into a coherent whole), but you have to challenge your thinking on the topics, engage the material at a deep level, and be willing to think critically about the implications of what you are studying.

**In-Class Participation:** This will constitute 10% of your grade (10 points). Be prepared and willing to complete in-class exercises, answer questions, ask questions, and discuss course topics in class. The standards for receiving full credit are the following: 1) active attendance of most class sessions and participation in every class at which present; 2) being well prepared for each session in terms of keeping up with: readings, case preparation and discussion, and other course materials, including exercises; 3) attentively following discussions and actively contributing useful ideas each day that followed the flow of the conversations; 4) providing remarks that show insightful analysis of the materials, and that occasionally challenge the class to think more deeply about particular issues. Students who participate at a standard less than the above description will be given 1-9 points based on their level of participation. Students who do not come to class at all and do not contribute in any way will be given 0 points. No points will be given for comments which do not contribute to the class learning (i.e., do not say something just to receive participation points). At the end of the semester students will be asked to complete a Self-Evaluation of Class Participation Form to turn in by **October 15th.** The self-evaluation will be used in conjunction with the instructor’s evaluation to determine in-class participation grades.

**In-Class Discussion Leadership:** Students will work individually or will work in pairs or other sized small teams (depending on the course enrollment) to be determined by the instructor at or after the first class session (August 20th). After the second class (August 27th), each person/team will be assigned a topic (corresponding to a date as outlined) and lead a class discussion on the material assigned from the Cialdini and Ariely books. **The topics will be allocated based on preferences – so please rank order preferences from #1-11 (or #1-13 if announced) with 1 equaling most preferred topic. Note: incomplete rankings will not be accepted.** The rank ordering is due no later than August 27th. Discussions must be led on the date assigned, unless class is cancelled.
or an emergency, therefore, please take the schedule into consideration when rank ordering your preferences.

A note on Discussion Leadership: Because being able to lead a discussion is important in the business world, each individual or team will practice these skills with this deliverable. Do not be intimidated, but use this opportunity to further your development in leadership.

The individual/team assigned to lead the discussion will be responsible for developing discussion questions, for finding marketing/consumer behavior/business examples outside of what is presented by the authors as related to the topic, and for integrating the topic of the chapter with other course material found in the readings and class discussions. [Notes: Each member of the class is expected to have done the reading prior to the discussion, so presenting merely a summary of the material with examples found in the readings is insufficient to receive a passing grade. It is also unacceptable to use examples found online by either author. The goal is for each person/team to think about their own and others behavior and come up with examples to share. It is also forbidden for any person/team to conduct their own research studies.]

The individual/team will lead the in-class discussion (30-40 minutes in length – time limitations will be strictly enforced, and discussions shorter than 30 minutes strongly discouraged) on the day listed in the schedule. The format for the discussion should demonstrate knowledge of the subject matter but should be conducted in an interactive manner – i.e., it should be a discussion rather than a presentation. The instructor will take notes but in the spirit of peer to peer learning, will not participate in the discussion except when invited and/or if there is an issue with the discussion. Students will be graded on the quality of their leadership skills and their discussion points. Students must prepare an outline (e.g., list of topics or PPT slides) of the discussion and make hard copies to hand out to the class on the day of the discussion. After the student/team has finished leading the discussion, a copy of the presentation or outline must be provided to the instructor (via e-mail) to post on the course Bb site. A list of the references used in creating the discussion must be provided to the instructor as well. The discussion will count towards 20% of your grade (20 points). Please refer to the grading template for the criteria to be used in evaluating the discussion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Discussion Material</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/24</td>
<td>Reciprocation</td>
<td>Cialdini, Chapter 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/24</td>
<td>Commitment &amp; Consistency</td>
<td>Cialdini, Chapter 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/24</td>
<td>Social Proof</td>
<td>Cialdini, Chapter 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/24</td>
<td>Relativity, &amp; Supply/Demand</td>
<td>Ariely, Chapters 1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/1</td>
<td>Zero Cost, &amp; Social Norms</td>
<td>Ariely, Chapters 3, 4, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/1</td>
<td>Ownership, &amp; Keeping Options Open</td>
<td>Ariely, Chapters 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/1</td>
<td>Expectations, &amp; Price</td>
<td>Ariely, Chapters 10, 11, 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/1</td>
<td>Scarcity</td>
<td>Cialdini, Chapter 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/8</td>
<td>Liking</td>
<td>Cialdini, Chapter 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/8</td>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Ariely, Chapters 13, 14</td>
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</tbody>
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If necessary (depending upon enrollment – will be announced after 8/20):

| 10/8  | Arousal, & Beer and Free Lunches | Ariely, Chapters 6, 15 |
| 10/8  | Authority                       | Cialdini, Chapter 6     |
A note on Writing Deliverables: Because good writing skills are so important in the business world, each of your deliverables should be clearly written and completely free of spelling and grammatical errors. I cannot stress how important good writing is for your personal success. Use your MBA program to continue to work on your writing as much as you possibly can.

**J.C. Penney’s “Fair and Square” Pricing Strategy:** All students will read and be prepared to discuss the case on **September 10th**. Participation in the case discussion will count towards individual in-class participation. Be prepared to volunteer and to be called on to answer questions. Students will prepare a write up on the case according to the guidelines below. It is mandatory to turn in a hard copy on the day it is due (unless prior arrangements are made with instructor) and an electronic copy (via Blackboard). Since we will discuss the write-ups on the day they are due, no late papers will be accepted.

Students shall write 6-9 pages (double-spaced, 1 inch margins, top and bottom, left and right, 12 point font), due in class on **September 10th** and will count 30% (20 points) towards the course grade. The write-up should answer the following questions integrating ideas learned from the course to date as listed below and other additional knowledge gleaned from other course materials [make certain these ideas are explicitly noted in your paper, for example, by underlining the idea or citing its source]:

1. Describe “core” J.C. Penney consumers versus the “new” customer target corresponding with the changes taking place in February 2012 using demographic, lifestyle (e.g., VALS), and family structure or household lifestyle categories discussed in class. [Refer to: Reader and PPT: Self-concept & Lifestyle; Demographics & Social Stratification; Families & Households; note: to add to the discussion in the case, you may wish to visit http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2013-04-10/j-dot-c-dot-penneys-shoppers-are-older-poorer-than-you-thought]

2. Based on our discussions of motivation class, what motivated “core” J. C. Penney consumers versus what is supposed to motivate the “new” customer target? [Refer to PPT: Motivation – including needs fulfilled – biogenic, psychogenic, utilitarian, and/or hedonic]

3. Which American Values (self-oriented, environment-oriented, other-oriented) did J.C. Penney tap into prior to Johnson taking over as CEO, and what American values (self-oriented, environment-oriented, other-oriented) is J.C. Penney attempting to tap into after Johnson becomes CEO? [Refer to PPT: Values]

4. Articulate, in your own words, J.C. Penney’s value proposition at this point in time Johnson as CEO) and discuss it. In your discussion of the value proposition, please use the concept of customer value as defined and discussed in class. [Refer to PPT: Introduction]

5. Which category of innovation (based on behavioral demands) does J.C. Penney belong to at this point in time (Johnson as CEO)? Explain. [Refer to Reader and PPT: Group Influences]

6. Discuss the “store atmospherics” of J.C. Penney as re-designed and experienced by shoppers after February 2012 when Johnson was CEO. Please describe as many aspects of the physical surroundings as possible using only the case material. Please organize your answer according to the elements of atmospherics as found in the course reader. [Refer to Reader and PPT: Situational Influences – pages 467-476]

7. As part of the changes identified in the case, in February 2012 J. C. Penney ends its traditional high-low pricing and institutes a new pricing scheme called “Fair and Square.” What type(s) of reinforcement schedule(s) would characterize the high-low pricing approach, including use of sales promotions, such as weekly advertised specials, clearance aisles, doorbuster specials, and JCP Cash coupons? [Refer to Reader: Learning and Memory]
8. Based on what you know about “source characteristics” and balance theory (consistency between brand (object), spokesperson, and consumer – both core and new), please identify the pros and cons of choosing Ellen DeGeneres as brand spokesperson. [Refer to PPT: Attitude; Exercise: balance theory and spokesperson strategies exercise]

9. In terms of attitude formation and change, how based on your answers to questions #1-7, what would you recommend to the next CEO, Ullman (replaces Johnson), in order to develop a deeper connection with customers? (Refer to PPT: Attitudes)

Consumer Behavior Exercise Write-Up/Analysis and Transcript: Students shall provide their preferences for completing one of the consumer behavior exercise options: Exercise (A) – (F) at the third class (September 3rd). It is important that all 6 conditions have been selected to facilitate discussion, so the exercises will be allocated based on preferences – please rank order your preferences from #1-6 with 1 equaling most preferred condition. Note: incomplete rankings will not be accepted. Students will find a person who is not a member of course and who has recently bought a product or service of the kind defined in the exercise. The assignment is to conduct a depth interview (30-60 minutes in length) with the individual.

Students can use the suggested “general discussion areas” questions to guide the interview, but can deviate from them with additional follow-up questions as necessary. The goal of the interview is to analyze, understand and describe the decision process that governed the purchase (A-C) and/or factors influencing the use/experience of this product or service (D-F) in terms that will be useful to a marketing manager.

Students will prepare a transcript of the interview (note: it does not have to be a word for word transcription, but can be an accurate summary of the interview) and turn it in with their write-up/analysis on October 15th that will count towards 5% (5 points) of the course grade. There are no restrictions on the number of pages or format of the transcript. Please turn in both a hard copy (unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor) and an electronic copy (via Blackboard). The transcript should provide the foundation for the write-up/analysis.

The write-up/analysis will be a comprehensive application and synthesis of course knowledge to describe the decision process the consumer used when making the purchase and/or factors influencing the use/experience of the purchase. The write-up should be approximately 3-5 pages total (double-spaced, 1 inch margins, top and bottom, left and right, 12 point font). Please turn in both a hard copy (unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor) and an electronic copy (via Blackboard) on October 15th. The write-up will count towards 20% (20 points) of the course grade.

Students will also report to the class the key insights from the interview and analysis in class on October 15th which will count towards the In-Class Participation grade. Since the transcript and write-up/analysis are due on the same day as the discussion, no late papers will be accepted.

Instructions for Consumer Behavior Exercise Conditions A-C
(adapted from Harvard Business School case 9-596-042)
The purpose of this exercise is to broaden your understanding of consumer behavior by bringing you face-to-face with a customer. The first step is to find a person who is not a
member of this course, and who has recently bought a product or service as defined by the letter below. The customer could be an institutional/industrial buyer if you prefer.

Your assignment is to conduct a depth interview of about 30-60 minutes in length with this customer. The goal of the interview is to understand the decision process that governed the purchase of this product or service in terms that can be useful to a marketing manager.

The list of questions is intended as a broad guide around which you can structure your depth interview. It is not to be followed dogmatically. Nor is it complete and exhaustive of the types of questions you need to ask, or the level of detail for which you need to probe. Rather you should try to stimulate a lively and open discussion around these three key question areas from which you can: (a) develop a deep understanding of the purchase process; and (b) surface the factors, in the environment and in the customer’s psyche, that really determined why the customer acted the way s/he did.

A. Choice process for a mundane product or service (as defined by the person being interviewed) costing less than $10
B. Choice process for a product or service costing over $100 that performs a utilitarian function (as defined by the person being interviewed)
C. Choice process for a product or service costing over $100 that the customer feels reveals something about the kind of person he or she is

General Discussion Areas
Your task is to audit the choice process.

Who was the decision making unit?
• Who bought the product or service?
• Identify all those who played a role in the decision process. What role did they play?

What motivated the purchase?
• What problems did the product/service solve? What functions would it facilitate?
• What attributes seemed important?

Characterize the decision.
• Was it a first-time decision? A review of a previous decision? A careful decision? A casual decision? Was the amount of deliberation appropriate to the decision?

Characterize the decision-making process.
• What triggered the process?
• Was there an information search? How was the search conducted? How much information was collected? What sources were used? When in the process was information gathered?
• How many alternatives were evaluated? Why those?
• How was the final choice determined?

Where did the consumer buy?
• Why there?
• Which came first: where to buy or what to buy?
Instructions for Consumer Behavior Exercise Conditions D-F (adapted from Harvard Business School case 9-596-042)
The purpose of this exercise is to broaden your understanding of consumer behavior by bringing you face-to-face with a customer. The first step is to find a person who is not a member of this course, and who has recently bought a product or service as defined by the letter below. The customer could be an institutional/industrial buyer if you prefer.

Your assignment is to conduct a depth interview of about 30-60 minutes in length with this customer. The goal of the interview is to understand how the owner or user feels about the product or service in terms that can be useful to a marketing manager.

The list of questions is intended as a broad guide around which you can structure your depth interview. It is not to be followed dogmatically. Nor is it complete and exhaustive of the types of questions you need to ask, or the level of detail for which you need to probe. Rather you should try to stimulate a lively and open discussion around these three key question areas from which you can: (a) develop a deep understanding of the ownership/usage experience; and (b) surface the factors, in the environment and in the customer’s psyche, that really determined why the customer acts, thinks, and feels the way s/he does.

D. Product/service-person relationship (use) for a mundane product or service (as defined by the person being interviewed) costing less than $10
E. Product/service-person relationship (use) for a product or service costing over $100 that performs a utilitarian function (as defined by the person being interviewed)
F. Product/service-person relationship (use) for a product or service costing over $100 that the customer feels reveals something about the kind of person he or she is

General Discussion Areas
Your task is to audit the relationship between the consumer and the product/service.

How would you describe the consumption experience?
• How is the product/service used or consumed? Who uses it? When? Where? How often? What feelings and opinions surround the consumption experience?

What type of relationship does the customer have with the product or service?
• How long has the relationship been going on? How has it evolved and changed over time? What terms best describe the relationship: good, bad, mixed, love-hate, dependency, casual, partners, exploited, exploitative, good friends?

What kinds of things have gone wrong in the relationship?
• Stockouts, unavailability of parts of service, inappropriate communication, quality lapses, violations of norms or expectations or values.

What positive surprises have occurred?
• Exceptional service, welcome communication, performance above expectations, affirmation of values.
• Is the customer satisfied or dissatisfied with the product or service?
• What factors influence the level of felt (dis)satisfaction? How were expectations formed? Did the product exceed them or fall short? How?
• What is the meaning of this product or service to the customer?
• How does the product fit into the consumer's life? What role does it play?
What role does the brand play in all of this?

Take-Home Final Examination: The final examination will be a take-home, essay exam covering the material discussed in class and may include ideas from the cases, exercises, and readings.

A portion of the exam will be dedicated to the following, so please start thinking about/recording pertinent material on the following: Discuss what you have learned both about yourself and about consumers in general during the semester. Do you see persuasion attempts differently now? Do you pay more attention to your own buying decisions? Have you been able to put what you have learned to work at your job and if so, how? How do you expect to use what you have learned in the future?

The exam will count for 20 points or 20% of the overall grade. The exam questions will be given out on October 15th and the answers will be due no later than (electronically via Blackboard) by 12 pm the day after the scheduled final exam date – so it is due Sunday, October 26th at 12 noon, no exceptions, so plan accordingly. Note: I will be at a conference and will be able to provide limited advice/help on Friday, October 24th and Saturday, October 25th.

Honor Code
GMU is an Honor Code university; please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The Honor System and Code adopted by George Mason University will be enforced for this class. http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/

What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else’s work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

In your work on all written assignment, keep in mind that you may not present as your own words, the work or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgement. You also may not borrow the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgement. The use of online translators, however limited, is included in the definition of scholastic dishonesty and is strictly forbidden. Any help obtained from another person on work submitted for a grade (unless specified as a team assignment in which team members only may work together), or any help given to another students for the same, including but not limited to composing text, proofreading, correcting or editing (except for assistance from the Writing Center), is considered collusion and will also be reported as cheating.

Please note: Faculty are obligated to submit any Honor Code violations or suspected violations to the Honor Committee without exception.
**Diversity Statement**

George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth.

An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieve these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard and respected.

The reflection of Mason’s commitment to diversity and inclusion goes beyond policies and procedures to focus on behavior at the individual, group and organizational level. The implementation of this commitment to diversity and inclusion is found in all settings, including individual work units and groups, student organizations and groups, and classroom settings; it is also found with the delivery of services and activities, including, but not limited to, curriculum, teaching, events, advising, research, service, and community outreach.

Acknowledging that the attainment of diversity and inclusion are dynamic and continuous processes, and that the larger societal setting has an evolving socio-cultural understanding of diversity and inclusion, Mason seeks to continuously improve its environment. To this end, the University promotes continuous monitoring and self-assessment regarding diversity. The aim is to incorporate diversity and inclusion within the philosophies and actions of the individual, group and organization, and to make improvements as needed.


**School of Business Community Standards**

The mission of the School of Business at George Mason University is to create and deliver high quality educational programs and research. Students, faculty, staff, and alumni that participate in these educational programs contribute to the well-being of society. High quality educational programs require an environment of trust and mutual respect, free expression and inquiry, and a commitment to truth, excellence, and lifelong learning. Students, program participants, faculty, staff, and alumni accept these principles when they join the School of Business community. In doing so, they agree to abide by the following:

**Community Standards of Behavior:**

- Respect for the rights, differences, and dignity of others
- Honesty and integrity in dealing with all members of the community
- Accountability for personal behavior

Integrity is an essential ingredient of a successful learning community. Ethical standards of behavior help promote a safe and productive community environment, and ensure every member the opportunity to pursue excellence.
The School of Business can and should be a living model of these behavioral standards. To this end, community members have a personal responsibility to integrate these standards into every aspect of their experience at the School of Business.

Through our personal commitment to these Community Standards of Behavior, we can create an environment in which all can achieve their full potential.

**Email Accounts**
Students **must** use their MasonLIVE email account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class as per university policies. **THIS IS MANDATORY IN ORDER TO COMPLY WITH STUDENT PRIVACY LAWS.** See [http://masonlive.gmu.edu](http://masonlive.gmu.edu) for more information. Your MasonLIVE email and Blackboard will be used to communicate with you in class. If you do not use/respond to your MasonLIVE email address and/or Blackboard you may miss out on important information that may affect your grade.

**OTHER USEFUL CAMPUS RESOURCES:**

*Writing Center:* A114 Robinson Hall; (703) 993-1200; [http://writingcenter.gmu.edu](http://writingcenter.gmu.edu)

*University Libraries:* “Ask a Librarian” [http://library.gmu.edu/ask](http://library.gmu.edu/ask)

*Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS):* (703) 993-2380; [http://caps.gmu.edu](http://caps.gmu.edu)

*Learning Services:* [http://caps.gmu.edu/learningservices/](http://caps.gmu.edu/learningservices/)


*University Policies:* The University Catalog, [http://catalog.gmu.edu](http://catalog.gmu.edu), is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other policies are available at [http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/](http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/). **All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.**

*Religious Holidays:* It is the student’s responsibility to speak to the instructor in advance in the event that their religious observances will impact their participation in class activities and assignments. Calendar of Religious Holidays: [http://ulife.gmu.edu/calendar/religious-holiday-calendar/](http://ulife.gmu.edu/calendar/religious-holiday-calendar/).

**Students with Disabilities**
If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at (703) 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS.
This syllabus is designed to be as complete as possible. Students are responsible for reading this syllabus and are accountable for all of the requirements contained therein.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Dates and Deliverables Due</th>
<th>Class Topics</th>
<th>Reading Due</th>
<th>PowerPoint to Review</th>
<th>Exercises to Bring &amp; Complete in Class</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 8/20</td>
<td>Course and Syllabus Introduction</td>
<td>Syllabus</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Overview of Consumer Behavior</td>
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<td>Ariely: Introduction</td>
<td>Ariely: Introduction</td>
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<td>Ariely: Procrastination</td>
<td>Ariely: Chapter 7</td>
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<td>Culture</td>
<td>Culture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 8/27</td>
<td>Values</td>
<td>Values</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership Topic</td>
<td>Attitude</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preferences Due</td>
<td>Self-concept &amp; Lifestyle</td>
<td>Reader: Self-Concept and Lifestyle</td>
<td>Self and Lifestyle</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Situational Influences/Outlet Selection</td>
<td>Reader: Situational Influences (specifically – textbook pages 467-476)</td>
<td>Situational Influences</td>
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<td>Cialdini: Introduction</td>
<td>Cialdini: Introduction</td>
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<td>Cialdini: Weapons of Influence</td>
<td>Cialdini: Chapter 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 9/3</td>
<td>Demographics</td>
<td>Reader: Demographics and Social Stratification</td>
<td>Demographics</td>
<td>• social class exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consumer Behavior Exercise Preferences Due</td>
<td>Families and Households</td>
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<td>Families and Households</td>
<td>• family decision making exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Influences</td>
<td>Reader: Group Influences on Consumer Behavior</td>
<td></td>
<td>Group Influences</td>
<td>• reference group influence exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning &amp; Memory</td>
<td>Reader: Learning, Memory, and Product Positioning</td>
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<td>Learning and Memory</td>
<td>• associative network exercise;</td>
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<td>• behavioral learning theories exercise;</td>
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<td>• reinforcement schedule exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 9/10</td>
<td>Case discussion</td>
<td>Case – J.C. Penney’s “Fair and Square” Pricing Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case Write-Up Due – J.C. Penney’s “Fair and Square” Pricing Strategy</td>
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| Wednesday, 9/17                  | Problem Recognition                  | Reader: Consumer Decision Process and Problem Recognition | Consumer Decision Process and Problem Recognition          | • customer experience management exercise;  
                                                                                                                                          | • customer experience management flow chart |
| Information Search               |                                     | Information Search                              | Information Search                                         |                                        |
| Consumer Decision-making & Brand Loyalty | Reader: Consumer decision-making and brand loyalty | Consumer decision-making and brand loyalty | • decision rules exercise;  
<pre><code>                                                                                                                                      | • decision rules (table) exercise |
</code></pre>
<p>| Wednesday, 9/24                  | Cialdini: Reciprocation             | Cialdini: Chapter 2                             |                                                           |                                        |
| In-Class Discussion Leadership (electronic and hard copies) | Cialdini: Commitment &amp; Consistency | Cialdini: Chapter 3                             |                                                           |                                        |
| Cialdini: Social Proof           | Ariely: Social Proof                | Cialdini: Chapter 4                             |                                                           |                                        |
| Ariely: Relativity, &amp; Supply/Demand |                                   | Ariely: Chapters 1, 2                         |                                                           |                                        |
| Wednesday, 10/1                  | Ariely: Zero Cost &amp; Social Norms    | Ariely: Chapters 3, 4, 5                        |                                                           |                                        |
| In-Class Discussion Leadership (electronic and hard copies) | Ariely: Ownership, &amp; Keeping Options Open | Ariely: Chapters 8, 9                         |                                                           |                                        |
| Ariely: Expectations &amp; Price     | Ariely: Chapters 10, 11, 12         | Ariely: Chapters 8, 9                         |                                                           |                                        |
| Cialdini: Scarcity               | Ariely: Chapters 1, 2               | Ariely: Chapters 8, 9                         |                                                           |                                        |
| Wednesday, 10/8                  | Cialdini: Liking                    | Cialdini: Chapter 5                             |                                                           |                                        |
| In-Class Discussion Leadership (electronic and hard copies) | Cialdini: Authority                | Cialdini: Chapter 6                             |                                                           |                                        |
| Ariely: Character                | Ariely: Chapters 13, 14             | Ariely: Chapters 13, 14                        |                                                           |                                        |
| Ariely: Arousal, &amp; Beer and Free Lunches | Ariely: Chapters 6 (focus on use of emotions in marketing context), 15 | Ariely: Chapters 6 (focus on use of emotions in marketing context), 15 |                                                           |                                        |</p>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 10/15</td>
<td>Consumer Behavior Exercise</td>
<td>Cialdini: Instant Influence</td>
<td>Cialdini: Epilogue</td>
<td>Take Home Final Distributed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consumer Behavior Exercise Write-Up/Analysis and Transcript Due; Individual In-Class Participation From Due</td>
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<td>Wednesday, 10/22</td>
<td>Hold for makeup class (if necessary)</td>
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<td>Sunday, 10/26</td>
<td>Take Home Final</td>
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<td>Take Home Final Due by 12 noon</td>
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