

# Consumer Behavior (MKT/PSY 365): Comparative Cultural Analysis Perspective The College of New Jersey

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Office Hours: By appointment

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\*Note: email is the best way to contact me outside of class. I check and respond to email daily.

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## Course Resources

**TEXT** *Thinking Fast and Slow*, Kahneman

The text is available from Amazon. Any edition or version of the text is fine. The text will serve as background reading and will be supplemented by numerous journal articles which are linked on canvas.

**CANVAS-site.** This site will have many useful things on it, including all class materials, as well as providing you with a place to post your research to get feedback from classmates as well as PDF samples of reading outside of the text.

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## Course Description

This course is designed to present a comprehensive, systematic and practical framework for understanding people as consumers – the underlying subject matter of all marketing decisions. We will not only look at the why and how of consumer purchasing, but what happens prior to the purchase (e.g., how do consumers find alternatives) and after the purchase (e.g., how do consumers use and dispose of products). Throughout the semester we will draw upon the social sciences to evaluate the influence of psychological, sociological, ecological and technological factors that affect individual consumer behaviors and behavioral models, which predict behavior. We will use basic quantitative and qualitative methodologies for evaluating consumer behavior and developing appropriate marketing strategies. This particular section will have a cross-cultural focus and will be thematically related to special issues in the European market.

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## Teaching and Learning Format

In this course we will all have fun discovering and learning about consumers. As you have been a consumer for years, I am sure you have lots to share and will be an active class participant and help create a dynamic learning environment. Throughout this course you will be developing both your content knowledge of consumer behavior theory, your analytical, critical thinking, writing, team and technology skills as well as reinforcing basic marketing strategy. I believe that learning is maximized when *you* find, synthesize and apply information, and thus, the course is comprised of several exercises and a semester-long research project.

I will provide lectures related to the topics in the text that will be supported with slides. The slides will be available on the course website. It is imperative that you have done the reading prior to class so that our classroom time is maximized and we can spend time discussing more interesting questions rather than simply reiterating the text. You should be looking and listening to the news and relating stories and experiences to our discussions.

This is your class and you are responsible for your own learning. Many of the readings and exercises will create a lively student-centered class in which we can explore various interesting topics from many perspectives. In order for you to get the most from this course, individual preparation outside of class and participation during class are of paramount importance. As we go through the semester, I will provide feedback for all students on individual and group progress and assist where necessary. If there are particular areas of interest to you (e.g., specific companies, industries or theories), please let me know as soon as possible so I can incorporate them into the course.

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## Course Objectives and Learning Goals

After successful completion of this course you should be able to do the following: (objectives are not necessarily in order of importance)

1. Be a more informed consumer and citizen.
2. Understand key psychology and consumer behavior theories and apply these theories to marketing communication, marketing strategy, and public policy decision making situations.
3. Discuss, in depth, the content area of your research as well as academic style research process.
4. Evaluate published research in the field of consumer behavior and social psychology.
5. Perform basic statistical calculations.
6. Write a contextually and grammatically sound research paper, including a comprehensive literature review, clear presentation of results and strong link to both theory and practice. Understand how to source other's work in an academic paper.
7. Make both formal multimedia presentations and informal oral presentations.
8. Serve as an active group and class participant.



## Student Responsibilities

1. Complete all reading and written assignments prior to attending class.
2. Be an active responsible group and class participant. This means taking initiative, completing all agreed upon tasks on time, coming to meetings on time and prepared, providing constructive feedback to the group, receiving and acting upon constructive feedback from the group.
3. Arrive at class on time with all necessary materials ready to learn.
4. If you must miss class, you are to email the faculty member prior to class. It is your responsibility to get any information you have missed.
5. Check the course web site at least once a week. Exercises and readings will be posted as we progress through the course.



## Instructor Responsibilities

1. Begin and end classes on time.
2. Create and maintain a classroom environment that is conducive for all student's learning.
3. Facilitate class discussions, clarify and enhance student presentations.
4. Keep office hours.
5. Maintain the course web site.
6. Provide student assistance with all course materials.
7. Provide consistent and timely feedback on all assignments.

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# Student Evaluation and Grading Policies

## Quizzes

40%

The 4 quizzes are designed to assess individual understanding of the basic theory presented in the lectures and readings and how these theories relate to marketing communication and strategy. Quizzes will be multiple-choice and short answer questions and are completed individually in class.

## Final Research Project

20%

As noted each student will be assigned to a class research team; this research project will serve as your final culminating project and will require you to synthesize both content knowledge and skills learned throughout the semester. Each team is responsible for conducting a research project throughout the semester. The projects are graded based upon the depth of understanding of the chosen topic; the quality of the research process - ability of the group to understand and complete a research project, not necessarily the outcome of the results; the quality of the writing - the ability of the group to present a contextually and grammatically sound logical presentation of their work in "academic" style writing; the quality of the oral multimedia presentation; and each individual's contribution and ability to function within the parameters and roles defined by the group. The individual portion of the grade is predominately based upon a peer evaluation. Bear in mind this is your "final exam" and thus should be reflective of a thorough understanding of the literature, the research process, and how your work fits into the body of consumer behavior literature. The research projects will be thematically related to a key issue of European customers; this might include privacy, food regulation, recycling, or sustainability labeling.

## Cross Cultural Presentations

10%

You will be required to complete 2 cross-cultural presentations throughout the semester. Guidelines will be posted on the course website. The presentations are managerially oriented and provide a springboard for discussion. A two page (max) professional brief is required for the presentations, and should summarize your findings and overall learning and a link to theory. The presentations are prepared and completed with a small group of students.

## Reading Briefs

20%

You will be required to submit 4 reading reflections on the journal readings. The reflections are a synthesis of at least 2 articles. These are to be completed individually and submitted to Canvas prior to the class in which we discuss the readings. Thus, if we have already reviewed the pieces in class, you cannot choose that week for submission.

## Class Participation and CB in Action

10%

Although I will not formally take attendance, you cannot participate if you are not in class. If you miss more than 3 classes, you are in danger of significantly adversely affecting your grade. Remember that participation and preparation is not judged solely on airtime or minimum reading requirements, but on the quality of participation and level of preparation. There are daily warm-up exercises which are typically not graded, but are used in cases where students are between grades at the end of the semester – think of it as built in extra credit. I may also give a maximum of four unannounced graded quizzes throughout the semester. These quizzes are largely from the scheduled text reading and are valued at not more than 5% of your total grade. Additionally, there are times when we will have cases/readings to prepare for discussion. Please see the college attendance policy at:

[www.tcnj.edu/~recreg/policies/attendance.html](http://www.tcnj.edu/~recreg/policies/attendance.html).

## Extra Credit, Make-up, and Special Assistance

Generally there are NO opportunities for extra credit or missed work – there are plenty of opportunities to manage your grade during the semester. If you require special assistance, it is your responsibility to see me so that the appropriate resources can be devoted to helping you be successful in this course. If you are a student athlete or have other extenuating circumstances, it is your responsibility to proactively manage your coursework. Please see the college's ADA policy: [www.tcnj.edu/~affirm/ada.html](http://www.tcnj.edu/~affirm/ada.html) for additional information on special assistance.

## Cheating/Plagiarism

Cheating and plagiarism is not tolerated and will result in the grade of "F" for the course. Please see the college academic integrity policy at: [www.tcnj.edu/~academic/policy/integrity.html](http://www.tcnj.edu/~academic/policy/integrity.html).

## Code of Conduct

The school of business adheres to the following policy: <http://business.pages.tcnj.edu/our-philosophy/code-of-conduct/>

## Grading Policies

This course follows a standard grade distribution (e.g., 93+ = A, 90-92 = A-, 88-89 = B+,...) which is noted on the CANVAS site for the course. In the case of grade disputes or appeals, it is your responsibility to see me immediately after grades are posted or work is given back. It is also your responsibility to ensure that the posted grades match your assignments. I generally turn work back within a

week. Please understand that I only grade output, not effort – although there is generally a strong correlation. There will be students who will seem to work less and do better.

It is important that all tests are returned to me as I will not enter a grade until you have reviewed and signed your graded test. The window for completing this task is typically one week. If your test is not returned to me, you could receive a zero. On all tests, students have an opportunity to write appeals for multiple choice questions. These are due on the next class period. If you miss the class that the tests are returned, you are likely to miss the opportunity to appeal.

All writing assignments are to be submitted electronically via CANVAS and a hard copy with a signature is to be submitted in class no later than the day the assignment is due. If you miss class, the writing assignment is still due. All writing assignments can be turned in early and most can be revised at least once. Additionally, it is your responsibility to keep all graded writing assignments and an electronic copy of your original submission.

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## **Quality, Group Expectations, and Time Commitment**

In that this is a four-credit three hundred level course at a selective college, there are certain quality expectations and time commitments that you need to adhere to if you want to be successful in this course. Be advised that your peers generally work hard, are prepared for class, and want to be successful – that is how they got into this school. Even on study abroad, you need to remember that study is first – at least during the week. It is your responsibility to the class to be prepared with the reading and assignments, to come on time, to participate in group meetings, and not be on the internet or doing other things during class times.

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