

MKTG 385: Consumer Behavior

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Nature and Purpose of the Course

Consumers lie at the heart of every marketing effort. As marketers, the success of our strategies depends on how well we understand consumer needs and motives, and take strategic actions accordingly. The main purpose of this course is to develop a thorough understanding of the consumer, focusing on questions such as, “What makes individuals consume things?” “How do consumers make decisions?” “How does consumption impact society?” “How is consumer behavior impacted by personal and environmental factors?” and “How can this understanding be utilized as part of a marketing strategy?” We will learn key theories from behavioral sciences that help us understand consumer behavior. Case studies and our in-class activities/discussions will provide you with real life applications of these theories. Finally, with the group project you will apply your growing knowledge to real-life marketing problems. By the end of the semester, this thorough understanding of the consumer will allow you to be not only better marketers but also better citizens and consumers yourself.

Brand Consultation Project

The purpose of this group project is to investigate a real-world marketing problem using your understanding of consumer behavior. Each group will serve as a consulting team for a local for-profit or non-profit organization (more details will follow). Mainly, your group will view itself as a brand consultation company, working for clients (brands) that may not be fulfilling their full potential for a variety of reasons. Your group will collect information from secondary sources as well as through primary qualitative research. Each group will be required to conduct two focus groups as part of their project. At the end of the semester, each group will give a formal presentation to representatives from the local organizations along with their write-up. Details on the deliverables of the project will be provided separately.