

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AT AMHERST  
ISENBERG SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

MARKETING 410- **Consumers: Who They Are And Why They Consume** (so much)

Professor: Doron Goldman

Classtime: Tuesday/Thursday 9:30-10:45 Room 124

Office Hours: Monday/Wednesday 10:30-12, 2-3:30

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### **Course Outline**

#### **Statement of Objectives**

Consumers are the fundamental units of Marketing. Whether they are private individuals, families, governmental entities, company buying centers, or any other singular or group entity, consumers make decisions which ultimately determine the success or failure of products and services and the organizations which sell them.

In the United States as well as in much of the rest of the world, consumers function within a market-based economy. Rarely do we question the basic consumption assumption underlying this economy: that the goal of consumers is to consume more. My goal is to present material which will stimulate students to examine this assumption and draw their own conclusions about its validity, in particular through a critical examination, both in class and in a paper, of two books offering differing perspectives on this issue.

In addition, I plan to work with students to further our understanding of consumption patterns and the different groups of consumers who establish these patterns. We will share an example of our own consumption experiences, and students will choose a consumption phenomenon to study over the semester's duration.

## Readings

- 1) Reading Packets- Handed out by Professor
- 2) **The Happiness Myth- Why What We Think Is Right Is Wrong** by Jennifer Hecht (2007) (ISBN 978-0-06-081397-0)
- 3) **American Mania- Why More Is Not Enough** by Peter Whybrow (2005) (ISBN- 0-07- 253714-0)

Both The Happiness Myth and American Mania are available at Amherst Bookshop in town. You will need both books to complete the critique of them that is assigned for this course. The reading packets are the primary course material- you will need to bring them to **Every Class** as I will often have us discuss articles in them, some of which I will have you read at the start of class.

## Schedule

Date	Topic	Assignment
<b>Module One: Experiencing</b>		
Sept 4	Opening remarks	
6	Introductory material	Begin day of consumption reports
11	The experience of consumption	Reading packet Module 1
13	<b>NO CLASS- ROSH HASHONAH</b>	
18,20	Consumption presentations “Day of consumption” reports due on the 18th	
<b>Module Two: Transmitting</b>		
25	Term Project discussion, “Buzz”	Reading packet Module 2
27,Oct.2	"Buzz" and Social Networking Hand in term paper description Oct.2 week of Oct 2- meet Prof. Goldman in office to discuss projects Oct. 2 <b>Quiz 1</b>	Reading packet Module 2
<b>Module Three: Overconsuming?</b>		
Oct.4, 11	Our Consumer Culture Comparative book critique assigned on 11th	Reading packet Module 3,
Oct. 9 - <b>NO CLASS- MONDAY CLASS SCHEDULE FOLLOWED</b>		
16,18,23	Happiness	The Happiness Myth (pages to be determined)
25,31,2	Mania	American Mania (pages to be determined)

Oct.25 **Part I of Project Due**

**Module Four: Identifying**

Nov. 6 Overview: Economic and Social Segments Reading packet Module 4  
Comparative Book Critique due on the 8th

There will probably be a guest speaker or two  
on ethnic and/or foreign culture marketing during this module

8,13 Latino Marketing Reading packet Module 4

15,20 Marketing to Gen X Reading packet Module 4  
Meetings with Prof. Goldman this week to discuss Project Part II

Nov. 20- **Quiz 2**

22 **Thanksgiving**

**Module Five: Perceiving**

27,29 Perception Reading packet Module 5

Dec. 4,6,11,13 Project Presentations

Dec.13- **Final Paper Due**

**Notes**

- 1) Additional readings will be handed out during the semester
- 2) There will be two office meetings, one after projects are assigned and one before the project presentations
- 3) Organization of course material laid out above may be altered as semester progresses
- 4) There will be two quizzes during the semester. There will be a combination of fill-in/true/false and an essay or two worth 20 points. You will be able to drop your lower of the two grades from your final grade.
- 5) If you are not satisfied with your grade from part I, you can turn in a revised version with the final paper.

**Grading**

Day of consumption reports	5%
Project	
Part I	10%
Part II	15%
Critical Book Analysis	25%
Quiz	20%
Attendance	15%
Project Presentation	<u>10%</u>
	100%

Attendance: Each student will be allowed two unexcused absences. After that, every absence will result in a deduction of 1 % from their attendance grade. In other words, a student who misses no more than two classes unexcused will receive a “15” for attendance, while a student who misses three will receive a “14”, a student who misses four will receive a “13”, and so on. Absence will be excused on a case by case basis, but generally I am much more willing to excuse on the basis of illness or family deaths than I am for interviews or planned trips during the semester.

### **Grade Distribution**

Final grades will be assigned as follows:

93 percent or higher	A	73-77.99 percent	C
88-92.99 percent	A/B	68-72.99 percent	C/D
83-87.99 percent	B	60-67.99 percent	D
78-82.99 percent	B/C	below 60	F

