

**MARK 3420 Consumer Behavior**  
**(Fall Semester 2017-18)**

**Section L1**

Course Syllabus

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**INSTRUCTOR AND INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT**

**Professor Joseph SALVACRUZ**

*Office* : LSK 4007  
*Phone* : 2358-7697  
*Email* : [mkjcs@ust.hk](mailto:mkjcs@ust.hk)  
*Office hours* : Wednesdays  
2:00 -3:00 pm (or by appointment)

**Ms Lily WONG**

*Office* : LSK 4025  
*Phone* : 2358-7705  
*Email* : [lilywong@ust.hk](mailto:lilywong@ust.hk)

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of this course is to study the process of consumer decision making and its determinants, and the resulting implications for marketing strategy. Concepts and theories covered in this course are essential for consumer analysis and the development of effective marketing strategies. A strategic orientation will permeate most facets of this course. At the same time, knowledge of consumer behavior requires an understanding of important theoretical concepts borrowed from fields such as psychology, sociology, economics etc. Accordingly, while marketing applications will be stressed throughout, you may expect this course to be a little heavier in theory than other marketing courses.

**TEXTBOOK AND LEARNING RESOURCES**

Michael R. Solomon. Consumer Behavior- Buying, Having, and Being (12th ed). Pearson. 2018

Supplementary reading materials will be occasionally assigned. It is the responsibility of students to search and reproduce a hardcopy of the relevant material if necessary. Videoclips, on the other hand, will only be shown in class once and will not be kept in the library. It is important, therefore, that students attend all lecture sessions so as not to miss any video material.

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

Our class meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:30 – 2:50 PM at LSK 1001. Attendance will be checked every session.

Tuesday evening tutorials will be used for consultations with individual students and / or groups concerning class projects/ activities, and for make-up class sessions as necessary (Please watch out for announcements).

## EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

I expect you to be an active thinker, reader, observer and doer. Several of the ideas presented in this course were developed in Western countries in the expectation that basic theories of human behavior would apply to human beings all over the world. Throughout this course, I would like you to be alert to any differences you may note between what is taught, and what you have observed from your own experience as a consumer in Hong Kong/Asia, and raise these issues for discussion in class.

## COURSEWORK COMPONENTS

The coursework requirements for this course are listed below:

<i>Coursework</i>	<i>Weighting (%)</i>	<i>Nature of Activity</i>
Term Test 1	15	Individual
Term Test 2	15	Individual
Term Test 3	15	Individual
Project Written Report	15	Group (peer-assessed)
Project Presentation	10	Group (peer-assessed)
Research Exercise	10	Small Group
Class Participation/ Cases/ In-class Exercises	20	Individual
Research Participation	2*	<i>Individual</i>

*\* Students enrolled in MARK3420 are required to earn 2 research credits (worth 2% of the course grade). This can be done through participation in 2 marketing experiments (of 1 hour each) OR by completing 2 research assignments. This is a departmental policy, and non-compliance with this requirement, or any part thereof, will merit a corresponding percentage-point deduction from the student's final grade. For example, if the student completes only 1 hour of experiment, then 1 percentage-point will be deducted from his/ her final course grade. If he misses all 2 hours, then 2 percentage-points will be taken off his/ her final course grade.*

Scores on each of the above components will be summed to arrive at an overall score for each student. Based on this overall score, grades will be assigned based on the School's grade distribution policy.

### **Term Tests**

There will be 3 term tests at various points during the semester. The tests will primarily consist of objective questions, such as multiple-choice and fill in the blanks, plus short essay/ problem solving. All the questions will be based exclusively on assigned chapter readings and class lectures. There will typically be no carry over of substantive topics for the tests. However, it should be kept in mind that most topics in the course are interrelated; thus, answering questions relating to a particular topic may require some knowledge of topics discussed earlier.

Term tests have been scheduled IN-CLASS on the test dates that are reflected in the timetable.

***Note: Make-up test arrangements can only be made with a valid medical excuse, in which case a medical certificate should be presented.***

### **Research Exercise**

The purpose of this exercise is to help you appreciate how consumer behavior is not an abstract subject that exists only as definitions in your textbook. This assignment requires you to use your skills as a consumer researcher, analyzing some specific consumer activities as they happen around you. Details are on a separate document on CANVAS. Deadline for submission is listed on the timetable of activities at the end of this document.

### **Group Project**

Students are required to form groups consisting of **either five or six members each (I will grant no exceptions to this rule)**. Students will self-select their group membership through CANVAS.

The project is briefly described below. More detailed instructions will be provided later.

Project details. Select a product category that is likely to be relevant to a group of consumers that you have easy access to. For example, if it is easy for you to interview students, you could select jeans, fast food restaurants, cell phones, etc. If it is easier for you to interview housewives, you could select detergent, shampoo, vacuum cleaners etc. Assume that your group has been hired as a consultant to the marketer of a particular brand within this product category, to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the brand relative to the competition. In order to do so, you decide to utilize the *Fishbein model of attitude formation*. Spend a few hours observing the behavior of consumers who are or may potentially be in your target segment. Then conduct depth interviews with five different consumers in order to identify five different attributes that consumers use to evaluate brands in that product category. Next, construct a questionnaire containing scales to measure: a) beliefs about the brand under study and one other competitive brand (which should have a good market position); and b) the importance of each attribute. While questions relating to the Fishbein model form the core of this assignment, your questionnaire should also contain other questions, such as product involvement measures, as well as demographic questions relating to age, marital status, occupation, etc. Administer the questionnaire to two distinct segments of 20 people each (total number of questionnaires = 40). How you choose the segments is up to you – you can use classifications such as gender; age; education; lifestyle etc. What is important is that you have a good prior reason for believing that these two segments differ in some important respect in terms of their preferences or opinions about the product category you have chosen. Analyze the responses to the questionnaire using simple software such as Excel or SPSS. Analysis will primarily consist of getting average scores for the various responses in your questionnaire (e.g., average attitudes towards a brand). Based on your analysis, prepare a report for the brand manager of your brand. The report should cover the following two major questions:

1. What are your brand's strengths and weaknesses based on a comparison of your brand with the competing brand, for each of the two segments? (criteria you can use: overall attitude scores; ratings on each individual attribute; recall scores, etc.)
2. Based on your answer to the above question, what recommendations can you make to the brand manager?

*Page Limit for Report: 10 double spaced typed pages in Times Roman (11 Point), including tables and appendices, with 1 inch border on all sides. This limit is to be strictly followed. A soft copy of the report should be uploaded on CANVAS.*

***Due Dates: See timetable at the end of this document. No late report will be accepted***

### **Project Presentation**

Each group will be required to make an oral presentation of the report in class. Each presentation should take about 10 minutes and a further 5 minutes for a question-answer session. Attendance is mandatory at all presentations, and every group may be required to mark every presentation (including their own).

Presentation slides of all groups should be uploaded on CANVAS not later than the time and date listed on the timetable at the end of this document. Once submitted, no changes may be made in the slides.

### **Peer Assessment/Group Evaluation**

In order to recognize individual contributions in the group project, and to prevent free-loading problems, peer evaluation results will be used to adjust group grades leading to the calculation of the final individual grades.

Each student is required to evaluate his/ her team members' performance/contribution to the team via the *iPeer* system. The student will also conduct self-evaluation, although the self-evaluation score will not contribute towards the calculation of the student's average evaluation score.

Evaluation criteria include:

- Attendance during team meetings/ activities
- Contribution of useful ideas
- Quality of work done
- Quantity/ volume of work done
- Overall contribution

This iPeer event will open on 21 November and will close on 24 November (11:59 p.m.)

A student who fails to submit his/her peer assessment on time will automatically earn a score of zero ("0") in this particular coursework component.

Individual peer assessment scores will be released on CANVAS by 5:00 p.m. on **01 December**. Students have until 5:00 p.m. on **06 December** to consult with the professor in case there are questions about his/ her peer assessment score. No queries or challenges will be entertained after 5:00 p.m., 06 December.

### **Class Participation**

The classroom experience is very important in your learning process. In addition to lectures, time will be allocated to in-class group exercises. These exercises will be in the form of small caselets (written or video), or discussion questions that will be handed out in class. Each group of students will then get some time (10-15 minutes) to discuss the assignment with one another. Following this, I will ask one group to provide the solution to the assignment. The other groups will be expected to add their comments and join in a discussion of the assignment. *In order to facilitate this type of discussion, each group of students is required to sit together for all lectures. Group participation points will only be given to members of the group who are present for the discussion.* All students are required to display a card kept in front of them **during class**, containing their group number and their name (We will provide the name card).

All members of the same group will receive the same marks for the in-class exercises. There will **also** be individual class participation points – i.e., marks given for individual comments and answers to questions asked in class. Individual class participation will be graded on a scale from 0 (lowest) through 4 (highest points), using the criteria below. The criteria focus on what you demonstrate and do not presume to guess at what you know but do not demonstrate.

Points	Criteria
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Absent.</li> </ul>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present, not disruptive.</li> <li>• Tries to respond when called on but does not offer much.</li> <li>• Demonstrates very infrequent involvement in discussion.</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates adequate preparation: knows basic case or reading facts, but does not show evidence of trying to interpret or analyze them.</li> <li>• Offers straightforward information (e.g., straight from the case or reading), without elaboration or very infrequently (perhaps once a class).</li> <li>• Does not offer to contribute to discussion, but contributes to a moderate degree when called on.</li> <li>• Demonstrates sporadic involvement.</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates good preparation: knows case or reading facts well, has thought through implications of them.</li> <li>• Offers interpretations and analysis of case material (more than just facts)</li> <li>• Contributes well to discussion in an ongoing way: responds to other students' points, thinks through own points, questions others in a constructive way, offers and supports suggestions that may be counter to the majority opinion.</li> <li>• Demonstrates consistent ongoing involvement.</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates excellent preparation: has analyzed case exceptionally well, relating it to readings and other material (e.g., readings, course material, discussions, experiences, etc.).</li> <li>• Offers analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of case material, e.g., puts together pieces of the discussion to develop new approaches that take the class further.</li> <li>• Contributes in a very significant way to ongoing discussion: keeps analysis focused, responds very thoughtfully to other students' comments, contributes to the cooperative argument-building, suggests alternative ways of approaching material and helps class analyze which approaches are appropriate, etc.</li> <li>• Demonstrates ongoing very active involvement.</li> </ul>

### **Research credit**

Students enrolled in this class are expected to earn 2 research credits (worth 2% of the grade). This can be done through participation in 2 *marketing experiments* (of 1 hour each) OR by completing 2 *research assignments*.

*Marketing experiments* will be scheduled throughout the semester and students can sign up for these experiments. Instructions on how to sign up will be given to you once the add/drop period is over. You will receive an email giving you the instruction. Instructions will also be posted on your course website. (It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the procedures so you are notified of experiments when they are posted). Note that all research experiments begin on time and if you are late, you will miss your chance. If you sign up and then fail to show up (and this occurs several times), you might be blocked from further participation.

If you choose to do research *assignments*, you can pick them up from the Marketing Department Office (pick-up schedule to be announced). These assignments can be turned in on the last day of class to the **MARKETING MAIN OFFICE**. Please do not give it to me (your instructor) since they are evaluated by the department.

*Note that the department requires that students earn 2 research credits for each marketing elective that they are enrolled in. Given that a few of you are enrolled in multiple marketing electives, the department has placed a cap on the number of research credits (experiments/assignments) you have to do. The maximum that each student does is 4 experiments/assignments. Thus, if you are enrolled in three marketing classes, you do NOT have to do 6 experiments or 6 assignments.*

#### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Academic integrity is a critical value of the university community. Integrity violations destroy the fabric of a learning community and the spirit of inquiry that is vital to the effectiveness the University. I have absolutely no tolerance for cheating and there are no acceptable excuses. Anyone caught cheating or plagiarizing in any form will fail the class. Plagiarism is copying anything from another source without citing that source.

Assignments identified as individual tasks must be completed without the assistance of others. For assignments identified as group work, it is expected that all members of the group will have contributed to the final output, and that only members of the group will have contributed to that output. A group may not collaborate with a group from another section of the course.

Extreme care must be taken to avoid passing of other's work as one's own. You are required to provide appropriate citations when you use ideas and arguments or otherwise draw on others' work.

Tests are to be written without the assistance of notes, other material, or the help of others during the exercise.

In general, any student who violates academic integrity, through such activities as duplication of another students' work in whole or in part, plagiarism, etc. or other means of cheating, will receive an F for the course. There is no honor in taking someone's work as your own.

The HKUST Academic Integrity site can be accessed at <http://www.ust.hk/vpaa/integrity/>

#### **LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

Your professor makes strong efforts to make the class a comfortable and productive experience for everyone. Students are expected to do their part in maintaining such pleasant classroom environment.

- Please arrive on time. If you must be late, please minimize disturbance by arriving quietly.
- Please avoid leaving the classroom unless the class is finished.
- Switch off your mobile phones.
- Observe courtesy. Maintain silence when the class is in progress.
- In the event that a wireless connection to the internet is available in the classroom, you are expected not to connect to the internet except for course-related materials (i.e., lmes course material download).

**MARK 3420- L1 TENTATIVE TIMETABLE (v 04 SEPTEMBER 2017)**

Wk	Dates	Topics	Chapters	Notes/ Comments
1	05 Sept (T)	Course Introduction		
	07 Sept (Th)	Consumer Behavior: An Overview	1, 2	
2	12 Sept (T)	Consumer Behavior: An Overview	1, 2	
	14 Sept (Th)	Judgment and Decision Making: The Consumer Decision Process	9, 10	
3	19 Sept (T)	Judgment and Decision Making: The Consumer Decision Process	9, 10	<i>Group Formation Finalized</i>
	21 Sept (Th)	Judgment and Decision Making: The Consumer Decision Process	9, 10	
4	<b>26 Sept (T)</b>	<b>TEST 1 (Ch 12, 9, 10)</b>		
	28 Sept (Th)	Internal Influences: Perception	3	<i>Group Project Topics due.</i>
5	03 Oct (T)	Internal Influences: Learning and Memory	4	
	<b>05 Oct (Th)</b>	<b>HOLIDAY</b>		
6	10 Oct (T)	Internal Influences: Motivation and Affect	5	<b>Research Exercise due 5:00 p.m.- uploaded on CANVAS</b>
	12 Oct (Th)	Internal Influences: The Self, Personality, Lifestyle, Values	6, 7	
7	<b>17 Oct (T)</b>	<b>Test 2 (Ch 3-7)</b>		
	<b>19 Oct (Th)</b>	<b>FREE DAY</b>		
8	24 Oct (T)	Attitudes and Persuasive Communications	8	
	26 Oct (Th)	Attitudes and Persuasive Communications	8	
9	31 Oct (T)	External Influences: Groups and Social Media	11	
	02 Nov (Th)	External Influences: Income and Social Class	12	
	07 Nov (T)	External Influences: Culture	14	
	09 Nov (Th)	External Influences: Subculture	13	
10	14 Nov (T)	Special Topics	TBA	
	<b>16 Nov (Th)</b>	<b>TEST 3 (Ch 8, 11, 12, 13, 14)</b>		<b>Written report and presentation files (Powerpoint) should be uploaded on CANVAS not later than 5:00 p.m. on 20 November.</b>
11	21 Nov (T)	Group Project Presentation		
	23 Nov (Th)	Group Project Presentation		<i>iPeer Event closes at 11:59 p.m. on 24 Nov</i>
12	28 Nov (T)	Group Project Presentation		
	30 Nov (Th)	Group Project Presentation		iPeer evaluation scores released on CANVAS on 01 December 06 December (5:00 pm)- Professor stops entertaining any questions/ queries about individual iPeer scores.