

## 80237 - Consumer behaviour

### Teaching Guide Information

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**Subject:** Elective

**Teaching language:**

Plenary session: Group 1: English

**Number of credits:** 6.0

**Term:** Second quarter

### 1. Basic description

**Academic center:** Escola Superior de Comerç Internacional

**Degree / Course:** International Business Programme

**Contact hours:** 45

**Total number of hours committed:** 150

**Lecturer:** Erick Suarez ([erick.suarez@esci.upf.edu](mailto:erick.suarez@esci.upf.edu))

**Timetable:** [Sigma schedule](#)

**Office hours:** Mondays 15:00-16:00

### 2. Presentation of the course

The goal of this course is to use a variety of insights from the social psychology literature in order to understand how consumers behave and, particularly, the reasons behind such behavior. With this knowledge, students should be better equipped to answer important marketing questions such as how to boost product awareness or how to increase purchase intentions.

Consumer Behavior is divided in three blocks:

1. In the first block, students will learn about perception, memory, motivation and personality. These topics have important marketing applications in the contexts of brand awareness, brand recall, and product/brand attitude formation.
2. In the second block, students will learn about decision-making models and influence techniques. These topics have important marketing applications in the contexts of product/brand choice and brand loyalty.
3. In the third block, students will learn about several contemporary strategies to reach consumers, about the differences between online and offline consumer behavior, and about how consumer behavior can and should be used to inform branding strategy. The aim of this last block is to show students that consumer behavior is an ever-evolving discipline that has deep implications in other marketing areas such as branding.

*Advised Prerequisite:* Introduction to Marketing

### 3. Educational and learning process outcomes

General competences

Instrumental competences

G.I.1. Ability to search, analyse, assess and summarise information.

G.I.2. Ability to relate concepts and knowledge from different areas.

General personal competences

G.P.2. Ability to manage behaviour and emotions.

G.P.4. Critical attitude.

G.P.5. Ability to empathise.

G.P.6. Ability to foresee events.

Specific competences

Professional competences

E.P.1. Ability to understand the decisions taken by economic agents and their interaction in the markets.

E.P.5. Ability to take strategic managerial decisions while taking into account the economic, cultural, social and political determinants specific to a particular area.

Generic systemic competences

G.S.1. Ability to apply creativity.

G.S.7. Promotion of and respect towards multicultural values: respect, equality, solidarity and commitment.

G.S.8. Promotion of and respect for gender, environment and safety-at-work issues.

Competences for applicability

G.A.2. Ability to use quantitative criteria and qualitative insights when taking decisions.

G.A.3. Ability to search and exploit new information sources.

G.A.4. Ability to understand and apply the network concept.

The above competences reflect the basic competences set out in Royal Decree 1393/2007, namely:

- a. Competence to comprehend knowledge, on the basis of general secondary education.
- b. Competence to apply knowledge to day-to-day work in international management or marketing, in particular the ability to develop and defend arguments and to solve problems.
- c. Competence to gather and interpret relevant data, enabling the development of critical judgements on the economic and social reality.
- d. Competence to communicate and transmit information (ideas, problems, solutions) to a specialist and non-specialist audience.
- e. Competence to develop learning activities in a relatively autonomous manner.

The competences worked on in the course are divided into two groups: those seen as a development or specification of a basic competence; and those that hone graduates' professional profile with respect to general and specific competences.

Basic competence: understanding of knowledge

I. General competences G.A.2

II. Specific competences E.P.1

Basic competence: application of knowledge

I. General competences G.I.2, G.S.1

Basic competence: gather and interpret data

I. General competences G.I.1, G.P.6, G.A.3

Basic competence: communicate and transmit information

I. General competences G.P.5

Basic competence: develop learning activities

I. General competences G.P.4

Competences that hone graduates' professional profile which are not included under basic competences

In general, these competences combine the following key elements for honing students' professional profile in the area of international business and marketing:

- Provide students with the capacity to adapt to dynamic teams and environments.
- Provide students with the capacity to create their own integral vision of the operation of a business or international marketing project.
- Provide students with the capacity to take complex decisions and carry out negotiation processes.

Learning outcomes

Students will be able to interpret the factors that affect consumers' behaviour and will understand the decisions they take in response to the stimuli created by companies. They will also be able to interpret trends and create strategies to match

identified consumer behaviour.

The competences, the learning outcomes, the assessment elements and the quality of the learning process included in this Teaching Plan will not be affected if during the academic trimester the teaching model has to switch either to an hybrid model (combination of face-to-face and on-line sessions) or to a complete on-line model.

## **4. Contents**

### **Unit 1: The Perceptual Process**

- How do consumers make sense of the world? Defining perception, attention and comprehension.
- The limits of perception: what are our sensory thresholds and how can Marketers take advantage of them? Introducing subliminal advertising.
- Focusing our attention: what kind of stimuli are we most likely to notice and feel attracted to?

### **Unit 2: Learning and Memory**

- How do consumers learn to associate certain products with certain characteristics? The power of classical conditioning.
- How are desirable consumer behaviors incentivized? Understanding operant conditioning.
- Memory: a requirement for learning. How does the process of storing and retrieving information work? What are its limitations and how can those be exploited?

### **Unit 3: Motivation and Emotion**

- A simple framework of motivation: needs, wants and goals.
- Motivation and how it influences behavior: the valuation and devaluation effects.
- What do consumers need? An overview of need theories.
- Emotions and how they influence product attitudes.
- Manipulating emotions: Discrepancy-Interruption Theory and Affect Transfer Theory

### **Unit 4: Belief and Attitude Formation**

- Types of product beliefs.
- Product attitudes and their sources.
- Measuring product beliefs and attitudes.
- The Theory of Reasoned Action: how product attitudes and subjective norms influence purchase intentions.

### **Unit 5: Self-concept and Personality**

- Self-concept: understanding how consumers define themselves.
- Self-esteem: what it does and what it does not.
- Self-concept, self-esteem, product attitudes, and marketing
- Extended-self and 'loved objects': when the line between a consumer and his possessions blurs.
- Personality: just one of the many factors that influence consumer purchase decisions.
- Consumer personality: how to measure it and how to design persuasion strategies around it.
- Understanding the notion of brand personality.

### **Unit 6: Consumer Decision Making**

- Different types of decisions: classifying consumer decision mindsets based on cognitive effort and involvement.
- The 'brand laziness' mindset; when consumers keep buying out of habit
- The 'brand loyalty' mindset: what makes consumers loyal to a brand?
- The 'variety seeking' mindset
- The 'problem solving' mindset: from problem recognition to post-purchase evaluation.

### **Unit 7: Consumer Decision Making, part 2: Heuristics-based choice**

- What are heuristics and when are they used?

- Persuasion heuristics, choice heuristics and prediction heuristics: advantages, pitfalls, and marketing implications.

#### Unit 8: Persuasion techniques

- Seven psychological principles to manipulate consumer behavior.

#### Unit 9: Consumer behavior and branding strategies

- Brand adoption factors.
- Brand equity management: how can brand image be measured and strengthened?
- Brand management strategies throughout the product life cycle: acquisition vs. retention strategies, market leaders vs. market underdogs.

#### Unit 10: Contemporary strategies to reach consumers

- Word of mouth
- Consumer-generated advertising
- Celebrity and athlete endorsers
- Product placement

#### Unit 11: Online consumer behavior

- Online marketing vs. traditional marketing
- The core of online marketing: the website
- Consumer empowerment: reduced search costs, the consumer advocacy paradigm, and the two-way communication between consumers and brands.

### 5. Assessment

Assessment Criteria	Weight (%)
Final Exam	60%
Assignments	30%
Participation	10%

Taking the final exam is a necessary condition to pass the subject. In case of not attending the final exam, the student will obtain the “no show” qualification.

**Total or partial copy and/or plagiarism will imply a failure in the subject with a final grade of zero points and no access to the make-up exam. According to the academic regulations specified in the Disciplinary rules for students of Universitat Pompeu Fabra, other additional sanctions may apply depending on the seriousness of the offence.**

In case of divergence between the evaluation criteria established in the Learning Plan and the Teaching Guide, those established in the Learning Plan will prevail.

### 6. Sustainable Development Goals

The course contents and competencies are related to the following sustainable development goals (SDG):

**SDG 3:** Good Health and Well-being

**SDG 4:** Quality education

**SDG 5:** Gender equality

**SDG 12:** Responsible consumption and production