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**Department of Economics and Business**  
***Marketing Research II***  
**SYLLABUS**

**Instructor:** Prof. Maria Galli (Theory and Seminars); [maria.galli@upf.edu](mailto:maria.galli@upf.edu); Office: 20.1E46

**Degree:** ADE/ECO/EMP-MGT/IBE

**Course:** Third and Fourth

**Term:** Third

**Number of ECTS credits:** 5 credits

**Course code:** 21914/21191 (IBE)

**Language of instruction:** English

**Theory:** Mondays and Tuesdays, 5.00-6.30 pm, 40.201

**Seminars:** Wednesdays (101: 4.00-5.30 pm; 102: 5.30-7.00 pm; 103: 7.00-8.30 pm), all groups in 13.001

PLEASE READ THIS SYLLABUS CAREFULLY AND CONSULT IT BEFORE RAISING ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE COURSE.

### **1. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This advanced course for business students concentrates on scientific methods that marketers can use to obtain valid and reliable information on **how** consumers behave and, more importantly, **why** they behave the way they do. Only the scientific method allows you to draw causal inferences, and the power of being able to draw causal inferences about the behavior of consumers lies in the fact that you can make informed predictions about how consumers *will* respond to marketing stimuli. Managers who understand their customers well can develop better products and services and promote them more effectively. This is a key contribution of marketing to business practice.

Throughout the course you will learn the fundamental issues of conducting scientific research in the area of customer behavior. Knowing how to conduct scientific research on the behavior of consumers will be an extremely valuable tool also in that it will equip you with the tools to judge existing research on consumer behavior. In other words, you will know how to “read” the myriad academic articles that already exist on a variety of topics relating to the behavior of consumers—an invaluable strength for a marketing manager.

Finally, in this course you will also gain advanced-level insights concerning consumer behavior. We will focus in particular on understanding factors that make consumers act “irrationally”. For instance, you will understand how emotions, social norms, expectations, and context can often lead consumers off-track. As a bonus, you will gain insight into how these factors can affect *your* personal life, *your* business life, and the way *you* look at the world.

### **2. INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon completing this course, you should be able to:

- 1) Interpret (and present) the results of scientific research on the behavior of consumers.
- 2) Conduct (scientific) consumer behavior research on your own.
- 3) Apply theoretical frameworks (e.g., consumer behavior theories and models) to provide concrete solutions to marketing problems.

In addition, you should also have developed the following **transferable skills**:

- be able to communicate and exchange ideas in both large and small group settings;
- be able to source trustworthy information from academic sources;
- be able to critically evaluate evidence and present a balanced argument;
- be able to employ analytical and problem-solving skills;
- be able to structure, write and present an academic/scientific marketing report.

### **3. COURSE CONTENTS – TOPICS COVERED**

- The experimental method and its advantages for understanding consumer behavior
- Formulating the research question; developing the hypotheses
- Examining the research question: Basics of experimental design
- Examining the research question: Defining the variables
- Examining the research question: Collecting the data
- Examining the research question: Analyzing the results

### **4. COURSE ASSESSMENT**

I expect you to attend classes and contribute to class discussion, come to class prepared, and work **with dedication** on the group assignments. You should ask questions during class if any concepts are unclear.

Your coursework will be evaluated in the following manner:

- Class participation: 10%
- Research participation: 5%
- Partial exam 1 – Partial exam 2: Select the best out of the two; 35%
- Group work:
  - Presentation of assigned paper: 20%
  - Experimental replication – written report: 20%
  - Experimental replication – oral presentation: 10%

**IMPORTANT: the above course assessment components are non-recoverable. To pass the course, it is essential to attend a majority of the theory sessions as well as the seminars, to pass at least one of the two partial exams, and to complete all three of the group assignments.**

Class Participation: A portion of your final grade will be earned by participation in class, as sharing your points of view and experiences with other students will be an essential part of your learning. Class participation is evaluated by the quality and the frequency of your comments. Effective class participation includes: i) sharing your experience or point of view with the class; ii) building on points raised by others; iii) clarifying issues; or iv) relating topics being discussed to previous class topics. Interaction with other students is encouraged—it should be positive and respectful even when in disagreement. It is also important to ask questions if anything is unclear—remember that likely other students have the same question.

Research Participation: Another portion of your final grade will be earned by participation in actual consumer behavior research carried out by researchers at UPF. This will give you first-hand experience of the “other” (i.e., participant) side of behavioral research. Details on how to participate in research will be given in class.

Partial exams: They test your knowledge and understanding of the theories, concepts, and techniques that underlie the course. They will consist of multiple-choice questions. The partial exams will normally last 45 minutes.

Typically, there will be no carryover of topics from the first partial exam to the second. However, because topics in the course are interrelated, answering questions in a particular topic may require knowledge of topics discussed earlier.

Group Work: Presentation of academic paper: Your group will be assigned an academic paper examining an issue relevant to consumer behavior (see below), and you will have to make a detailed presentation of it during one of the first five seminars (determined by lucky draw). Guidelines as to what the presentation must cover will be given later in class.

Group Work: Experimental replication (written report and oral presentation): The group project will consist of replicating one of the experiments in the academic paper that your group was assigned to present. This assignment is a very important component of the course: By replicating an experiment you will be putting into practice the concepts covered in the theory classes, and this will cement your learning. Guidelines for preparing the experimental replication will be given later in class.

As the name indicates, the group project is a group assignment. Every group member gets the same score; thus **all members are expected to make a substantial contribution to the final result.** However, because I realize that this may not always be the case, a peer evaluation system will be in place. You will be required to evaluate your team members’ (except for your own) performance / contribution to the group project at the end of the semester, and this will be used to adjust individual team members’ group project grade.

## **5. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Required textbook: “*Predictably irrational: The hidden forces that shape our decisions*” (2008), by Dan Ariely, Harper Collins Publishers.

The academic papers listed below, six of which will be discussed in the lectures and five of which will be assigned to the different groups for the group work, will be available at the library’s front desk (most of them are also available online):

### Topic 1: Relationship norms

- **Ariely (2008), Chapter 4: The cost of social norms.**
- Vohs, Meade, and Goode (2008), “Merely activating the concept of money changes personal and interpersonal behavior,” *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 17 (3), 208-212.
- Aggarwal (2004), “The effects of brand relationship norms on consumer attitudes and behavior,” *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31 (June), 87-101.

### Topic 2: Self-control

- **Ariely (2008), Chapter 6: The problem of procrastination and self-control.**
- Baumeister (2002), “Yielding to temptation: Self-control failure, impulsive purchasing, and consumer behavior,” *Journal of Consumer Research*, 28 (March), 670-676.
- Muraven, Tice, and Baumeister (1998), “Self-control as limited resource: Regulatory depletion patterns,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74 (March), 774-789.

- Vohs and Faber (2007), "Spent resources: Self-regulatory resource availability affects impulse buying," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 33 (March), 537-547.

#### Topic 3: Ownership

- **Ariely (2008), Chapter 7: The high price of ownership**
- Carmon and Ariely (2000), "Focusing on the foregone: How value can appear so different to buyers and sellers," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 27 (December), 360-370.
- Nayahankuppan and Mishra (2005), "The endowment effect: Rose-tinted and dark-tinted glasses," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 32 (December), 390-395.

#### Topic 4: Expectations

- **Ariely (2008), Chapter 9: The effect of expectations**
- Shiv, Carmon, and Ariely (2005), "Placebo effects of marketing actions: Consumers may get what they pay for," *Journal of Marketing Research*, XLII (November), 383-393.
- Irmak, Block, and Fitzsimons (2005), "The placebo effect in marketing: Sometimes you just have to want it to work," *Journal of Marketing Research*, XLII (November), 406-409.

#### Topic 5: Social influence

- **Ariely (2008), Chapter 13: Beer and free lunches**
- Ratner and Kahn (2002), "The impact of private versus public consumption on variety-seeking behavior," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 29 (September), 246-257.
- Luo (2005), "How does shopping with others influence impulsive purchasing?," *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 15 (4), 288-294.

### **IMPORTANT NOTES, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES**

- The PowerPoint slides corresponding to each lecture will be posted in "Aula Global" shortly in advance of every theory session.
- To get the maximum out of the lectures, students should read the material (book chapters or other assigned readings) in advance.
- I do not give make-up exams, no matter how \*legitimate\* the excuse for missing the exam may be; it is impossible to make an equivalent exam without placing the student at either an advantage or disadvantage. Thus, instead of counting the two exams, I count only (the best) one. This allows you to miss one if you must.
- *Although I do not expect **cheating or plagiarism** in my class, the penalty is **failing the course**. You commit cheating when, during an exam, you talk to other student(s) or look at other student(s) answers. You commit plagiarism when you copy large sections of an author's material without referencing it. If in doubt, please consult me.*
- Attendance to theory as well as seminar sessions is required, and so is arriving on time. Absences and late arrivals (without legitimate excuses) will be penalized by deducting points from the class participation grade. Legitimate excuses include: Illness, death in family, other excuses on a case-by-case basis. Note that legitimate excuses are invalid without supporting documentation. Please do not take this personally – I require supporting documentation because there were students in the past that fabricated reasons.
- Don't miss class. Getting a classmate's notes is a poor second choice.
- Although I will try to maintain the class schedule and objectives, unforeseen circumstances may force me to make adjustments.

## TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
MARCH	31 course introduction	1 lecture 1	2	3	4	5	6
	7 lecture 2	8 lecture 3	9	10	11	12	13
APRIL	14 holiday	15 holiday	16	17	18	19	20
	21 holiday	22 <i>NO CLASS (all groups must be formed)</i>	23	24	25	26	27
	28 discussion of paper 1 (topic 1)	29 lecture 4	30 seminar 1	1	2	3	4
	5 discussion of paper 2 (topic 2)	6 lecture 5	7 seminar 2	8	9	10	11
MAY	12 discussion of paper 3 (topic 3)	13 first partial exam	14 seminar 3	15	16	17	18
	19 discussion of paper 4 (topic 4)	20 lecture 6	21 seminar 4	22	23	24	25
	26 discussion of paper 5 (topic 5)	27 lecture 7	28 seminar 5	29	30	31	1

JUNE	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	lecture 8	lecture 9	seminar 6				
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	holiday	second partial exam					

#### TOPICS TO BE COVERED IN LECTURES 1-9

- The experimental method and its advantages for understanding consumer behavior
- Formulating the research question; developing the hypotheses
- Examining the research question: Basics of experimental design
- Examining the research question: Defining the variables
- Examining the research question: Collecting the data
- Examining the research question: Analyzing the results

#### TOPICS TO BE COVERED IN SEMINARS 1-6

- Seminar 1: Presentation by group 1 of paper in topic 1 (relationship norms)
- Seminar 2: Presentation by group 2 of paper in topic 2 (self-control)
- Seminar 3: Presentation by group 3 of paper in topic 3 (ownership)
- Seminar 4: Presentation by group 4 of paper in topic 4 (expectations)
- Seminar 5: Presentation by group 5 of paper in topic 5 (social influence)
- Seminar 6: Presentation of experimental replication results (all groups) – **submission of written report**

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I have read this syllabus carefully and I have understood all the details and requirements of the course.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Student identification number (NIA): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_