CRS 721: CONSUMER BEHAVIOR IN APPAREL AND RETAILING
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER, APPAREL, AND RETAIL STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO
SPRING 2020
MONDAYS 5:30 – 8:20 P.M.
217 STONE BUILDING

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Office Hours: Wednesdays, 1 – 2 pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Current theories and approaches to research in consumer behavior. Application of consumer behavior models to apparel, apparel-related products, and retailing through individualized research projects.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:
Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

• Describe trends within consumer behavior research as a whole and specifically as applied to apparel and retailing.
• Define the philosophical foundations of consumer behavior research.
• Evaluate and discuss the use of theoretical and conceptual models within the consumer behavior research.
• Apply knowledge and understanding of the different methodologies used and their appropriate applications within research on consumer behavior.
• Assess the diverse research techniques and topics within contemporary consumer behavior research.

CONTENT OUTLINE:
The course is focused on analyzing current research in consumer behavior. Concepts important to the design and implementation of research in consumer behavior form the foundation for material covered throughout the semester. You will be expected to glean from the readings the key components of designing, implementing, and theorizing about contemporary research in consumer behavior, and to then synthesize and apply this knowledge through a development of a conceptual framework that can be used in consumer behavior research and is pertinent to your particular research topic/interest.

EVALUATION:

Participation (100 points)
The course is conducted in seminar format, with several content related readings assigned for discussion each week. Learning is emergent, in that it is the result of reading and discussing the ideas and concepts that surface within the articles. It is therefore expected that ALL students will contribute to the discussion each night. Do not underestimate the impact that lack of participation has not just on one’s grade, but on the overall learning outcomes that one gains from being actively engaged in discussion. Will be assessed twice during the semester (40 & 60 points).
Discussion Leadership (100 points)
Students will be assigned discussion leadership for two weeks of readings. This involves presenting the key issues pertaining to the consumer behavior concepts dealt with during the assigned weeks. These issues should be presented in summary form and based on research using source material outside of the readings assigned for the week. This also involves developing discussion questions to lead the discussion and facilitate dialogue about the assigned readings. CB textbooks can be consulted in order to locate background information on the topic. At the end of the class period for which the student is discussion leader, they will be expected to hand in a 2-3 page summary of background research (along with reference list) on the topic as well as the discussion questions that they developed for each reading.

Critical Thinking Papers (70 points)
All students are expected to submit a weekly Critical Thinking paper (3 double-spaced pages maximum) in preparation for each in-class discussion. Due by the end of Sunday on Canvas, Critical Thinking papers must address all of the readings covered for the week. It should NOT be a summary of the readings. Critical Thinking papers should be based on thoughts, questions, insights, and ideas (and can be organized as a “thematic interpretation” of reading content—analysis and synthesis—rather than an annotated bibliography). Paper content should indicate a thorough and critical reading of each article and thoughtful preparation for the week’s discussion. Paper content should NOT consist of simply “I like this paper/I hate this paper/This paper was hard,” or similarly lame and superficial comments. A total of 7 Critical Thinking papers will be submitted.
There are a total of 10 weeks of discussion. A reaction paper is not required for the two weeks that you are discussion leader (you will hand in your summary instead—see above). You therefore have one week “off,” wherein you do not have to hand in a reaction paper. Use it wisely. However, you must still be prepared for and participate in the discussion for that week.

Note: it is best to read the articles in the order listed on the syllabus. Readings are not only assigned relative to the topic for the week, but relative to other readings within the week.

Critique of Critical Thinking Papers (35 points)
Students will be randomly assigned one critical thinking paper to critique (during the weeks when you submit the papers). Critique should: (a) constructively point out how the Critical Thinking paper can be strengthened by noting specific recommendations pertinent to the paper; (b) be brief—about four-six sentences. Critique should be completed by the end of Wednesday of the week when critique was assigned on Monday, at the end of the class.

Term Paper and Presentation (195 points)
A term paper that modifies an existing conceptual framework or develops a new conceptual framework to apply to your consumer behavior topic of interest must be an original student work. This paper will be evaluated based on depth of perspective and insight into the framework as well as integration of relevant concepts covered during the course. Each student will work with the Professor to determine an appropriate topic for the paper. APA guidelines must be followed in the preparation of the paper.

A succinct, professional presentation of the research paper during class time is also required. Presentations will occur during the final class meeting.

The breakdown for evaluation is as follows:
• 100 points (20%)  In-class discussion participation
• 100 points (20%)  Discussion leadership (including 2-3 page summary and discussion questions; 50 points x 2 weeks = 100 total)
• 70 points (14%)  Critical thinking papers (10 points per paper)
• 35 points (7%)  Critique of critical thinking papers (5 points per critique)
• 50 points (12%)  Term paper presentation
• 145 points (27%)  Term paper
For a total of 500 points.

Grades are assigned on a scale of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, and F. As this is a doctoral core course, late work will not be accepted. There is no final exam.

The UNCG Academic Honor Code and Integrity Policy will be followed. Students are expected to be informed of the guidelines of the UNCG Academic Integrity Policy and will be required to sign their names indicating their adherence to the stated guidelines on all major work submitted. Students are expected to follow APA guidelines for referencing ideas taken from published work.
TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE

Week One: January 13
- Introductions
- Course overview
- Topic Assignments
- Discussion: What, exactly, is a conceptual framework?

Required Reading:

Week Two: January 20
No class – Martin Luther King Holiday

Week Three: January 27
Topics:
- Identity, the Self and Society: Understanding the Consumer

Required Readings:

Week Four: February 3
Topics:
- Consumer Groups:
  - Demographics
  - Psychographics
- Cross-Cultural Consumer Research

Required Readings:


**Week Five: February 10**

No Class – Individual meetings for Term Paper

DUE: Term paper concept due by the end of Sunday, February 9

**Week Six: February 17**

Topics:
- Motivation
- Values
- Involvement

**Required Readings:**


**Week Seven: February 24**

Topics:
- Attitudes
- Intentions
- Behavior

**Required Readings:**


**Week Eight: March 2**
*No Class: Spring Break*

**Week Nine: March 9**
*DUE: Term Paper—DRAFT*
*Topics:*
  - Consumer decision-making

*Required Readings:*

**Week Ten: March 16**
*Topics:*
  - Innovation and Diffusion
  - Impulse Buying

*Required Readings:*

**Week Eleven: March 23**
*Topics: Doing Consumer Research*
  - Focus on Data Collection Techniques:
    - Surveys
    - Experiments
    - Observation

*Required Readings:*


**Week Twelve: March 30**

*Topics: Doing Consumer Research*

- Focus on Data Collection Techniques:
  - Focus Groups
  - Interviews
- The Internet and Consumer Research

**Required Readings:**


**Week Thirteen: April 6**

*Topics: Doing Consumer Research*

- Data Analysis Fundamentals

**Required Readings:**


Beverland, M. B., & Farrelly, F. J. (2010). The quest for authenticity in consumption: Consumers’

**Week Fourteen: April 13**

**Topics:**
- Issues in consumer research
- Synthesis

**Required Readings:**

**Week Fifteen: April 20**

NO CLASS - Individual meetings for Term Paper

**Week Sixteen: April 27**
- **DUE:** Term Paper Presentations
- **Wrap-up**

**Monday May 4th:** Final Term Paper Due by 5:00 p.m.