DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER, APPAREL, AND RETAIL STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO

CRS 721 CONSUMER BEHAVIOR IN APPAREL AND RETAILING
SPRING 2021

MONDAY 5:30 – 8:20 P.M.
215 STONE BUILDING

PROFESSOR: Dr. Elena Karpova
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Office Hours: Monday, 2 – 3 pm, or by appointment

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 theorizing, designing, and implementing 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 theorizing, designing, and implementing 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:

The breakdown for evaluation is as follows:

- 100 points (17%) In-class participation
- 100 points (17%) Discussion leadership (including 2-3 page summary and discussion questions; 40 points x 2 weeks = 100 total)
- 140 points (23%) Critical thinking papers (20 points per paper x 7)
- 25 points (4%) Critique of critical thinking papers (5 points per critique x 5)
- 50 points (8%) Term paper presentation
- 135 points (23%) Term paper
- 50 points (8%) Exam

For a total of 600 points.

Critical Thinking Papers (140 points = 7 x 20 points)

Students are expected to submit a weekly Critical Thinking paper (3 double-spaced pages maximum) in preparation for each in-class discussion. Due on Mondays by 5 pm on Canvas, Critical Thinking papers should present your reflection and thinking about all the readings for the week. It should NOT be a summary of the readings. Summaries will receive a maximum of a C grade. 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 must indicate a thorough and critical reading of all articles 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.

Most but not all weeks, instructor will provide questions to address in the Critical Thinking paper. Some of the questions will focus on the “721 Conceptual Framework” assignment. There is a total of 10 weeks of discussion but only 7 Critical Thinking papers. Critical thinking paper is not required for the two weeks that you are discussion leader (you will hand in your summary instead—see below). You 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.

Critique of Critical Thinking Papers (25 points = 5 x 5 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 six-eight 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.

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 class. 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. 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 briefly presenting the key issues pertaining to the consumer behavior concepts during the assigned week. 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. The role of the leader is to gently but firmly move discussion forward and engage all students.

Term Paper and Presentation (185 points)

A term paper that modifies/extends 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 Instructor 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.

Exam (50 points)

Exam consisting of one open-ended question over the concepts covered in the course (refer to the learning outcome) will be given in-class during Week 14. The question will be similar to a preliminary doctoral examination.

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.

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 Two: January 25
- Introductions & course overview
- Assignment of weekly discussion leadership
- Discussion of the assigned readings
- CRS 721 Conceptual Framework – Intro & selection of topic

Required Reading:

Week Three: February 1

Topics:
- Identity, the Self and Society: Understanding the Consumer
- CRS 721 Conceptual Framework – Identifying research gap

Required Readings:

Week Four: February 8

Topics:
- Consumer Groups:
  - Demographics
  - Psychographics
- Cross-Cultural Consumer Research
- CRS 721 Conceptual Framework – Borrowing from other disciplines

Required Readings:


### Week Five: February 15

**Topics:**

- Motivation
- Values
- Involvement
- CRS 721 Conceptual Framework – Purpose & research constructs’ justification

**Required Readings:**


### Week Six: February 22

**No Class – Individual meetings for Term Paper**

**DUE: Term paper concept due by the end of Sunday, February 21**

### Week Seven: March 1

**Topics:**

- Attitudes
- Intentions
- Behavior
- CRS 721 Conceptual Framework – Defining research constructs

**Required Readings:**


**Week Eight: March 8**

*Topics:*
- Consumer decision-making
- *CRS 721 Conceptual Framework – Justification for construct relationships*

*Required Readings:*

**Week Nine: March 15**

*Topics:*
- Innovation and Diffusion
- Impulse Buying
- *CRS 721 Conceptual Framework – ITAA abstract draft*

*Required Readings:*
Week Ten: March 22

Topics: Doing Consumer Research

- Focus on Data Collection Techniques:
  - Surveys
  - Experiments
  - Observation
- **CRS 721 Conceptual Framework – Final ITAA abstract**

Required Readings:

Week Eleven: March 29

Topics: Doing Consumer Research

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

Required Readings:

Week Twelve: April 5

DUE: Term Paper—DRAFT

Week Thirteen: April 12

Topics: Doing Consumer Research
Data Analysis Fundamentals

Required Readings:

Week Fourteen: April 19
Topics:
- Issues in consumer research
- Synthesis

Required Readings:

Exam – 40 minutes to answer one open-ended question on a course topic.

Week Fifteen: April 26

- DUE: Term Paper Presentations
- Course wrap-up

Week Sixteen:

Monday, May 3: Final Term Paper Due by 5:00 p.m.