
CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR I

Course Logistics:

Classroom: TBD
Dates: See detailed calendar
Office Hours: By appointment only

Instructor:

Chiara Longoni, Ph.D.
 Department of Marketing
 chiara.longoni2@unibocconi.it

Course objectives

- Establish a strong theoretical and empirical foundation in psychology, marketing, and key areas of behavioral science research relevant to consumer behavior.
- Develop the ability to critically evaluate theoretical frameworks, methodologies, and empirical findings in behavioral research.
- Strengthen skills in conceptualizing, operationalizing, and developing research ideas, while identifying opportunities for original contributions to the field.
- Enhance the ability to systematically review, synthesize, and present research, fostering rigorous academic discourse and engagement.

Course description

This Ph.D. seminar provides a rigorous foundation for critical thinking and research on the information processing and social psychology aspects of consumer behavior. The course explores key theoretical frameworks, empirical research, and methodological approaches drawn from marketing, psychology, and related disciplines.

Seminars will center on in-depth discussions of assigned readings, with each session organized around a foundational topic in consumer behavior research. Students will be expected to critically evaluate the theoretical contributions, methodological rigor, and empirical support of each paper. Special emphasis will be placed on the craft of academic writing, examining how research ideas are structured and communicated effectively.

To develop essential research skills, the course includes exercises in reviewing, synthesizing, and presenting research, helping students refine their ability to engage with the academic literature and contribute meaningfully to scholarly discourse. As a culminating component, students will integrate the knowledge and skills acquired throughout the course to develop a research proposal, positioning their ideas within the broader field of consumer behavior.

Grading

- Class participation: 40%
- Discussion sheets of assigned readings: 10%
- Research paper: 50%

Class participation (40%). Individual participation will be evaluated based on your ability to lead and contribute to an engaging and informative discussion during seminars. There are two aspects of this class participation. First, for some readings, you will briefly introduce the article and then lead the entire discussion of the article. Second, for all other readings, you will act as a discussant rather than leader. You should come to the seminar prepared to present your perspective about the major ideas, contributions, and/or shortcomings of each article. You must actively listen and think critically about the concepts and issues discussed, and for each reading, you must be willing and able to present your analysis and viewpoint to the class.

Discussion Sheets of Assigned Readings (10%). It is very important that you read all

of the assigned papers thoroughly. They will form the basis for the class discussion. For each topic, I have made a conscious effort to select review or conceptual papers that provide a broad overview, classic empirical papers, and contemporary empirical papers.

To help you organize and clarify your thoughts about the readings, you must submit a Discussion Sheet for each assigned paper unless specified otherwise. Discussion Sheets are brief summaries (1–2 pages, single-spaced) of the key aspects of the article, any questions that arise from the article, and any further thoughts that the article inspires. The summary is intended to assist you in introducing the article to the class and discussing it. Do not use summaries that students wrote in previous years or generative AI platforms (e.g., ChatGPT); writing the summaries yourself is what will help you form clear thoughts about the papers. Note: Discussion Sheets must be submitted to the professor before each seminar starts.

Research Proposal Paper (50%). Each student will develop a research proposal addressing a novel and meaningful question in consumer behavior. The proposal should introduce an original research idea, situating it within existing literature and outlining a structured plan for empirical investigation.

Specifically, the proposal should:

- **Define the research question** and provide a concise review of relevant literature. This review should establish the study's contribution rather than serve as an exhaustive summary, focusing on (a) how the research builds on prior work and (b) how it informs hypothesis development.
- **Develop a conceptual model**, clearly identifying and defining the key constructs under investigation.
- **Formulate testable hypotheses**, grounded in logical reasoning and existing research, that articulate expected relationships within the conceptual model.
- **Design a research plan** to empirically test these hypotheses through at least three studies. This section should specify (a) the study design, (b) the procedures participants will follow, and (c) the independent, dependent, mediator, moderator, and control variables, including how they will be manipulated or measured.
- **Outline the data analysis strategy**, detailing the statistical techniques that will be used to evaluate the hypotheses.

Structure this research proposal similarly to an academic journal article (e.g., JCR). Actual data collection is not required.

The proposal will be assessed based on:

- (a) Completion of key components: How well each of the above tasks is executed.
- (b) Creativity and originality: The extent to which the project presents an innovative and thought-provoking research idea.
- (c) Logical and empirical grounding: The use of sound reasoning and established research principles to develop the study.
- (d) Clarity and effectiveness of writing: The proposal should be well-organized, articulate, and adhere to academic writing standards

The evaluation criteria will align closely with those applied to the academic papers discussed throughout the course.

Classroom Etiquette

Checking and/or using a mobile phone during class is extremely rude and disrespectful to others. Such behavior is strictly forbidden during our seminars, and failure to fully engage in the discussions at all times will result in a grade of zero for class participation.

Faculty Bio

I am a social scientist and Associate Professor of Marketing at Bocconi University in Milan, Italy. I conduct interdisciplinary, empirical research that investigates adoption of artificial intelligence as a tool for social good, with direct applications for companies, law, and policy. A secondary area of research looks at the determinants of positive behavior change and the drivers of sustainability and climate action.



Sessions by Topic & Assigned Readings *subject to change*

Session 1: Introduction & Overview of Behavioral Marketing Research: What it is, How to evaluate it, and How to make it interesting

Simonson, Carmon, Dhar, Drolet & Nowlis (2001). Consumer Research: In Search of Identity. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52(1), 249-275
(<https://www.annualreviews.org/content/journals/10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.249>)

McGuire (1997). Creative Hypothesis Generating in Psychology: Some Useful Heuristics. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 48, 1-30
(<https://www.annualreviews.org/docserver/fulltext/psych/48/1/annurev.psych.48.1.1.pdf?expires=1770541017&id=id&acname=guest&checksum=DCC97B993FBE3529F9ED1D679966F520>)

Session 2: Cognitive & Affective Factors

Adams et al. (2021). People systematically overlook subtractive changes. *Nature*, 592, 258-61.
(<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-021-03380-y>)

O'Donnell & Evers (2019). Preference Reversals in Willingness to Pay and Choice. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 45(6), 1315-30
(<https://academic.oup.com/jcr/article-abstract/45/6/1315/5033711?redirectedFrom=fulltext>)

Lerner et al. (2004). Heart Strings and Purse Strings: Carryover Effects of Emotions on Economic Decisions. *Psychological Science*, 15(5), 337-41
<https://www.cmu.edu/dietrich/sds/docs/loewenstein/HeartStrings.pdf>

Scott et al. (2023). Revealing and Mitigating the Effects of Racial Bias and Discrimination in Financial Services. *Journal of Marketing Research*

Schwarz (2012). Feelings-as-Information Theory. *Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology: Volume 1*, ed. Paul A. M. Van Lange, Arie W. Kruglanski, and E. Tory Higgins, London: Sage Publications, 289-308.

Lerner et al. (2015). Emotion and Decision Making. *Annual Review Psychology*. 66:799-823
(<https://www.annualreviews.org/docserver/fulltext/psych/66/1/annurev-psych-010213-115043.pdf?expires=1770541259&id=id&acname=guest&checksum=40884126617E2C00EA3381FAC54483AE>)

Session 3: Memory & Identity

Winterich et al. (2017). Keeping the Memory but not the Possession: Memory Preservation Mitigates Identity Loss from Product Disposition. *Journal of Marketing*, 81(5), 104-120

Sheehan & Dommer (2020). Saving your self: How Identity Relevance Influences Product Usage. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 46(6), 1076-1092

Chugani et al. (2015). Happily Ever After: The Effect of Identity-consistency on Product Satiation. *Journal of Consumer Research* 42, no. 4 (2015): 564-577

Trudel et al. (2016). The Recycled Self: Consumers' Disposal Decisions of Identity-linked Products. *Journal of Consumer Research* 43, no. 2 (2016): 246-264.

Session 4: Attitudes, Persuasion, & Goals

Tormala & Briñol (2015). Attitude Change and Persuasion: Past, Present, and Future Directions. *The Cambridge Handbook of Consumer Psychology*, ed. Michael I. Norton, Derek D. Rucker, and Cait Lambertson, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 29-64

Petty et al. (1983). Central and Peripheral Routes to Advertising Effectiveness: The Moderating Role of Involvement. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 10(2), 135-46

Friestad & Wright (1994). The Persuasion Knowledge Model: How People Cope with Persuasion Attempts," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 21 (1), 1-31

Bonezzi et al. (2011). Stuck in the Middle: The Psychophysics of Goal Pursuit," *Psychological Science*, 22(5), 607-12

Session 5: AI & Technology

Longoni et al. (2019). Resistance to Medical Artificial Intelligence. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 46(4), 629-50



Tully et al. (2025). Lower Artificial Intelligence Literacy Predicts Greater AI Receptivity. *Journal of Marketing*

Castelo et al. (2019). Task-dependent algorithm aversion. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 56(5), 809-825

Bonnefon et al. (2024). The moral psychology of Artificial Intelligence. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 75(1), 653-675

Session 6: Research Proposal Workshop

