



Bachelor's courses School of Business and Economics

VU University Amsterdam - Student- & Onderwijszaken - Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit - 2018-2019

Consumer Behavior

Course code	E_EBE3_CBEH ()
Period	Period 4
Credits	6.0
Language of tuition	English
Faculty	School of Business and Economics
Coordinator	dr. K.M.T. Millet
Examinator	dr. K.M.T. Millet
Teaching method(s)	Lecture, Seminar
Level	300

Course objective

At the end of this course you will be acquainted with the psychological theories, concepts, methods, and research findings central to the study of consumer behavior (Bridging Theory and Practice- Knowledge). You will be able to understand

consumer decisions from different perspectives as well as to apply theoretical frameworks in different settings (Academic and Reserach Skills). In

addition, you will be able to apply these theories in order to develop effective marketing strategies to influence thinking and behavior of consumers (Bridging Theory and Practice - Application). Critical reading of and

reflection on scientific articles will give you a good sense of how behavioral experiments are set up and analyzed. Moreover, you will actively participate in experimental research as well as develop the skills needed to understand experimental research, and interpret its experimental results (Academic and Research skills).

At the end of the course students will be able to:

- explain important concepts and theories in the study of consumer behavior;
- identify different drivers of consumer decisions;
- apply fundamental psychological theories to real-world consumer decision situations;
- interpret graphical output of simple experiments;
- explain the methodology of academic articles as discussed in class.

Course content

This course has a dual purpose. It will provide you with better understanding of both (a) theory on consumer behavior and (b) the basics of experimental research methodology (an essential need to understand academic articles in the field).

We are consumers, every day, every moment of the day. We consume food, drinks, education, and television programs. It is however not always easy to understand or predict the behavior of consumers. Why do consumers choose one car or holiday destination over the other? How are advertisements processed and when are they effective? Are preferences stable or easily malleable? For successful marketing management and strategy, it is essential to get an understanding of the behavior of consumers. After all, marketing begins and ends with the consumer, from determining consumer needs to finally providing and maintaining consumer satisfaction. The course introduces you to some important psychological theories on memory, learning, perception, attitude, motivation, identity

and social influences. We do not only focus on “big theories”, but also study specific articles from top-notch journals in the field, thereby illustrating how research in this field is done, how this contributes to our knowledge on consumer decisions as well as to develop critical thinking.

As mentioned above, in addition to the conceptual part of the course, considerable attention is allocated to (experimental) research methodology.

By doing so, you will develop skills that are essential to truly understand specific academic articles in the field from A to Z (insights in methodology included).

Form of tuition

Lectures.

Tutorials.

Type of assessment

Written exam – Individual assessment.

(Interim) Assignment(s) – Individual and Group assessment.

Course reading

A customized handbook: Consumer Behavior (compiled by Kobe Millet) – Available in the VU Bookstore; ISBN 978-1-4737-5799-8

Additional readings (tba) will be announced on Canvas.

Entry requirements

None.

Recommended background knowledge

None.