This graduate seminar provides students with an introduction to topics in consumer behavior from a classic social psychological and sociological perspective. While a good deal of the content will be backward looking, some will also be forward looking, or where the field may be going.

Each week we will discuss a topic of consumer behavior research, drawing primarily upon readings from marketing and psychology. You are responsible for all primary readings, which will be discussed in a seminar-format. **Warning: It’s going to be a lot of reading!** Students will also be assigned to be the “discussion leader” for a paper each week. I will assign these sessions to students, based on stated interests, in advance.

These readings were selected to illustrate how basic social science research and consumer behavior research are related; how theories and concepts are applied, adapted, constrained and combined when applied to consumer issues; and how research streams evolve over time.

Come to seminar prepared to discuss each article in depth and to present comments about the major ideas, contributions or shortcomings of each paper, not just the one they are the discussion leader on.

Additional readings may be listed/and or provided in advance for background information and to guide students interested in further investigation of a topic.

As part of their discussion leader role, students will be asked to provide concise contribution statements for their assigned papers. In addition, students will develop their ability to professionally and constructively critique scholarly articles throughout the seminar and will be given the responsibility to lead class discussion of selected articles from the reading list.

**Evaluation:**

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<th>Component</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
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<td>Discussion Leading</td>
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<td>Idea Papers</td>
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<td>Final Research Proposal</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>Final Presentation</td>
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**Class participation:** Come to class prepared for discussion. What you get out of this course depends upon what you, and your fellow students, put into it. It’s tough to expect to develop your research skills by passively attending class and taking careful notes. You should be an active listener, thinking carefully about the concepts and issues raised, and a willing and active participant, able to present your analysis and your viewpoint to the class when opportunity presents itself.

Be prepared to discuss each article on the syllabus in depth, including your ideas about the contributions and/or shortcomings of each. A good preparation tool is an outline of the hypotheses, study designs, theoretical contributions and limitations of each paper. Ideally, you would also prepare a list of questions that you think are important to discuss. These questions should get at both high level and low-level aspects of the papers.
Each of you will be the discussion leader for one of the papers each day. This will involve overviewing the main ideas for the rest of the class and leading the class discussion on this paper. Your job is not to lecture your classmates but to help kickoff and guide the discussion. Why did we assign this paper? What does the paper show and how does that fit into the broader literature? Do you disagree with any of the conclusions or are there important boundaries about when the effects would occur? Does it raise any interesting questions for future work? How could someone build on the ideas? All of these are great places to start.

Short idea papers: Each class (outside of the first day) you should turn in a short idea paper based on that day’s topic. The paper should identify a basic problem, outline hypotheses, describe appropriate experimental design and procedure to investigate these hypotheses, and briefly discuss how to analyze the data. The paper should end with a brief contribution statement which makes it clear how the investigation would contribute to the current state of literature. These papers should not include a literature review and should be no more than 1-2 pages long. Submit them here before class on the day they are due.

Final Research Proposal: Each student will submit an 8-12-page final research proposal (written in either JCR or APA format). This proposal may be based on your research ideas or may be something entirely new. You can go outside the boundaries we cover in class but should generally relate to the topics covered in this seminar. This paper should include a clear presentation and motivation of the research question and your proposed contribution, a concise mention of key findings from the literature, well-articulated and developed hypotheses, and a plan to test your hypotheses (an experiment or model). Your proposal should reflect reading (beyond what is included in this syllabus) in your selected area. Your proposal need not have any empirical data collection or analysis. However, you are required to develop a proposal that is detailed enough in terms of hypotheses to be tested, experimental design, method and procedure, so that I am able to assess the proposal carefully and give you constructive comments.

Due dates for the paper are as follows:
- 2/18/2021: Submit a 2-page overview of your motivation, predictions and method for your research proposal here. I will provide individual feedback. Due by the start of class.
- 2/25/2021: In class presentations. Date for final papers TBD.

### COURSE DATES AND TOPICS

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<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>January 21</td>
<td>1. Consumer Research &amp; Generating Ideas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>January 28</td>
<td>2. Language and Text Analysis</td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
<td>February 4</td>
<td>3. Social Influence</td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>4. Word of Mouth</td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
<td>February 18</td>
<td>5. Self &amp; Identity</td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
<td>February 25</td>
<td>6. Final Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>March 4</td>
<td>SCP – no class – please watch some presentations</td>
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Session 1: Consumer Research and Generating Ideas  
Wednesday, January 21, 2021


Additional Reading:


Session 2: Language and Automated Text Analysis
Thursday, January 28, 2021

1. Watch this - https://compsocialscience.github.io/summer-institute/curriculum#day_3

Additional Readings:
1. https://cbail.github.io/textasdata/word2vec/rmarkdown/word2vec.html
Session 3: Social Influence & Persuasion
Thursday, February 4, 2021


Additional Reading:

Session 4: Word of Mouth
Thursday, February 11, 2021


Additional Readings:

Session 6: Self and Identity  
Thursday, February 18, 2021


Additional Readings:

Session 7: Research Presentations  
Thursday, February 25, 2021

Note that class today may last an extra hour, to allow time for all of the final presentations.

Your presentation of the research proposal in class should adhere to the following guidelines:

• Plan for no more than 10-12 minutes and allow about 5 minutes for questions at the end.

• In the time allotted, give an overview of:
  o What are you researching?
  o What is the intended contribution, given past literature?
  o What are your hypotheses and how are these derived from the literature?
  o What is your experimental methodology?
  o Highlight some unanswered questions/limitations and directions for future research.

• You should use slides, but please limit the information on each slide. This is good practice for all the research presentations that I know you have coming to you in your future lives as academics!