

FCHD 2450
CONSUMER AND FAMILY ECONOMIC ISSUES
Fall 2016

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Class Time and Place: Tuesday/Thursday, 9:00-10:15, FL 206

Textbook: Goldsmith, E.B. (2008). *Consumer Economics: Issues and Behaviors* (2nd edition), Pearson Publications.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

In this course, students will:

1. Learn to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions) as it relates to consumer and family economic issues.
2. Acquire skills in working with others in a team to find solutions to complex issues related to consumers and families.
3. Gain factual knowledge (including terminology, classifications, strategies, trends) in the field of consumer and family issues.

COURSE POLICIES

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students with documented physical, sensory, emotional or medical impairments may be eligible for reasonable accommodations. If a student has a disability that will likely require some accommodation by the instructor, the student must contact the instructor and document the disability through the Disability Resource Center (DRC) in Room 101 of the University Inn, (435)797-2444 voice, (435)797-0740 TTY, or toll free at 1-800-259-2966. Please contact the DRC during the first week of the course. In cooperation with the DRC, alternate format materials (Braille, large print or digital) are available with advance notice.

HONOR PLEDGE: As stated in The Student Code, "Each student has the right and duty to pursue his or her academic experience free of dishonesty. The Honor System is designed to re-enforce the higher level of conduct expected and required of all Utah State University students." Upon admission to the university, you agreed to abide by this Honor Code by signing the Honor Pledge, which reads: "I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity."

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS: In the case of a drill or real emergency, classes will be notified to evacuate the building by the sound of a fire/emergency alarm system or by a building representative. In the event of a disaster that may interfere with either notification, evacuate as the situation dictates (i.e., in an earthquake when shaking ceases or immediately when a fire is discovered). Turn off computers and take any personal items with you. Elevators should not be used; instead, use the closest stairs.

GRIEVANCE PROCESS: Students who feel they have been unfairly treated may file a grievance through the channels and procedures described in the Student Code: <http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=1080&hl=%22grievance%22&returnto=search>

EXPECTATIONS:

1. Come to class on time and participate in class.
2. Read the chapter to be discussed before coming to class.
3. All assignments are to be typed or word processed. KEEP a copy of all assignments submitted; retain graded assignments until final course grade is received.
4. All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date specified. Two points per day will be deducted for late work. Late assignments will not be accepted after assignment papers have been returned to other students. Late projects will not be accepted after the final exam is given.
5. Coordinate with the instructor for missed assignments, etc.
6. Ask for help when needed; give feedback when appropriate.
7. Properly cite all published resources used to prepare written assignments. Paraphrase often, quote when necessary, but never plagiarize.
8. Written work should be neat and grammatically correct.
9. Questions about any grade must be brought up within one week after the exam.
10. Any questions about final grades must be resolved within one month.

EVALUATION

Exams/Assignments	Possible Points	Due Date
Rip-off/Fraud Report.....	20	Sept. 8
Exam 1	50	Sept. 20
Redress Letter	30	Sept. 27
Current Affairs	30	Oct. 4
Exam 2.....	50	Oct. 11
Market Analysis	20	Nov. 1
Comparison Shopping Project.	100	Nov. 3
Exam 3.....	50	Nov. 8
Ads/CC/ Risk Tolerance Activities	30	Various
Exam 4.....	50	Dec. 15
Others..... (Approximately)	70	
Total		500 Points

A : 93.50%-above A⁻ : 90.0-93.49% B⁺: 87.5-89.99% B : 82.5-87.49% B⁻ : 80.0-82.49%
 C⁺ : 77.5-79.99% C : 72.5-77.49% C⁻ : 70.0-72.49% D⁺: 67.5-69.99% D : 60.0-67.49%

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

1. Rip-off & Fraud Experience (20 points)

You need to write about your experience (or someone else's) with rip-offs and/or frauds in the marketplace. Consider responding to some of the following questions: What store, establishment, or person ripped you off or engaged in fraudulent behavior toward you? How did you respond to the situation? In retrospect, how might you have avoided being victimized in this way? Grading will be based on the following: summary and analysis of the information (15 points); neatness and correct grammar (5 points). This report should be 2 pages in length, typed, and double-spaced.

2. Redress Letter (30 points)

Write and send a letter to a business addressing a problem you have had. Please refer to the example posted on Canvas. Turn in a copy of the letter you sent and share any response with the class. Grading will be based on the following: content of the letter, including statement of the problem (10 points), pertinent information (10 points), and suggested redress (5 points); proper form, neatness and correct grammar (5 points). This report should be 1 full page single-spaced.

3. Current Affairs (30 points)

Turn in 3 recent news articles (e.g., from The Herald Journal, New York Times, etc.) concerning consumer and family economic issues. **For each article**, document its source and write a **one-page report**, containing a summary of the article and discussion of how it applies to you as a consumer. To earn full credit, your complete assignment must be **at least 3 pages**, double-spaced.

4. Market Analysis (20 points)

Based on what you learn during our in-class exercise about Market Analysis, you will complete the market analysis exercise that is included on page 6 of the syllabus. There are three parts in the worksheet.

5. Comparison Shopping Project (100 points)

1) Select a major big ticket item that you would like to purchase for your own use; 2) Research the item in published sources and at a minimum of three retail stores; 3) Submit a well-organized, 7-page written report of your findings (with a spreadsheet and market analysis); 4) Prepare a 7-minute presentation of your findings; and 5) Use the cover page/grading sheet provided on page 7 of the syllabus for your cover page as a guide for grading of your project.

6. In-Class Activities (THREE) - Advertisement/Credit Card/Risk Tolerance (30 points)

Each assignment is worth 10 points and is found on Canvas with directions. Due dates are found on the schedule part of the syllabus (page 5). Upload the finished worksheets for each activity to Canvas and bring your copy to class for discussion.

7. Others (Approximately 70 points)

Points will be given throughout the course for in-class work/quizzes/class discussions/attendance. There is no make up for these points.

8. Exams (200 points total)

Each exam will have MC/TF/Short Essay questions delivered in class on the scheduled dates.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Assignments
Aug. 30	Introduction	Syllabus Overview
Sept. 1	Consumers in the Changing World	Chapter 1
Sept. 6	The Consumer Movement	Chapter 2
Sept. 8	Consumer Theories and Development of a Model	Chapter 3 Rip-Offs and Fraud Report Due
Sept. 13	Consumer Theories and Development of a Model	Chapter 3
Sept. 15	Consumer Responsibilities, Redress, And Fraud	Chapter 4
Sept. 20	Exam 1	Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4
Sept. 22	Government Protection, Nongovernmental Pro-Consumer Groups, and the Media	Chapter 5
Sept. 27	Food and Beverage Issues	Chapter 8 Redress Letter Due
Sept. 29	Food and Beverage Issues	Chapter 8
Oct. 4	Health and Wellness Issues	Chapter 9 Current Affairs Due
Oct. 6	Ownership, Safety, and Repairs	Chapter 10
Oct. 11	Exam 2	Chapters 5, 8, 9, 10
Oct. 13	The Internet and Issues of Identity Theft And Fraud	Chapter 11
Oct. 18	Buying Process, Brands, and Consumer Development	Chapter 6
Oct. 20	Friday's classes	<i>Fall break</i>

Date	Topic	Assignments
Oct. 25	Buying Process, Brands, and Consumer Development	Chapter 6
Oct. 27	Decision Making and the Influence of Advertising	Chapter 7 In-class Advertisement Activity
Nov. 1	Being a Better Consumer of Housing and Vehicles	Chapter 12 Market Analysis Due
Nov. 3	Being a Better Consumer of Housing and Vehicles	Chapter 12 Comparison Shopping Project Due
Nov. 8	Exam 3	Chapters 6, 7, 11, 12
Nov. 10	<i>Class Presentation</i>	Comparison Shopping Project
Nov. 15	<i>Class Presentation</i>	Comparison Shopping Project
Nov. 17	Saving, Banking, Debt, and Credit Issues	Chapter 13
Nov. 22	Saving, Banking, Debt, and Credit Issues	Chapter 13
Nov. 29	Saving, Banking, Debt, and Credit Issues	Chapter 13 In-class Credit Card Activity
Dec. 1	Insurance and Investment Issues	Chapter 14
Dec. 6	Insurance and Investment Issues	Chapter 14 In-class Risk Tolerance Activity
Dec. 8	Consumer Issues, Ethics, and Globalization	Chapter 15
Dec. 15	Exam 4 9:30-10:45 am	Chapters 13, 14, 15

NOTES: This schedule or content can be changed as needed by the professor. On Canvas, you will see an icon on the class home page titled “Lecture PowerPoint”. These notes are available for you to print off and bring to class. However, these notes are not sufficient for you to do well on the exams. You still need to come to class and make notes for further information.

Market Analysis Exercise (20 pts.) – **Due 11/01/16**

Ashley is just finishing up her senior year of college and will be moving across the state for a job. Her parents want to make sure she buys a good car and are willing to contribute \$5,000 towards her purchase. They want her to do some comparison shopping for the car so they know she will be happy with her selection for years to come. Ashley’s parents have selected fuel economy and engine condition and mileage as their primary concern to insure that her car will last for years to come and so Ashley can afford the fuel. Ashley selected car styling, color, and included features as additional important characteristics.

She shopped around and found four different vehicles that she would like to compare their features to their prices. Complete the following market analysis:

Characteristics	Weight	2014 Honda	2012 Hyundai	2015 Chevy	2012 Toyota
-----Characteristic Score (1-10 scale)-----					
Fuel Economy (MPG)	.4	8	8	8	7
Engine Cond. / Miles	.3	5	7	9	4
Car Styling / Color	.2	7	9	8	6
Vehicle Features (Leather, Heated Seats, sunroof, alloy wheels, etc.)	.1	6	8	9	7
Price		\$13,000	\$8,500	\$12,000	\$10,000

1. Calculate the quality score for each of these used cars, showing your work. 5 pts.

2. Clearly plot this information and identify the Perfect Information Frontier (PIF). 5 pts.

3. Advise Ashley on which car(s) she should consider and why. Should she eliminate any from consideration -- if so, why? 5 pts

Name _____

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Comparison Shopping Project– Due 11/03/16
Cover Page/Grading Sheet

RESEARCH: (/30)

- 1) Use at least one published source. It should be from Consumer Reports if possible. Include full bibliographic information. Sources must be no older than 2011. (10 points)
- 2) Visit a minimum of three retail stores. Document which stores were visited, salespersons consulted, and the information obtained through your search. (10 points)
- 3) Do an Internet search and document which sites were visited and the information obtained through Internet search. (10 points)

WRITTEN REPORT: (/50)

- 1) Neatly organize your findings on a spreadsheet, similar to the type found in Consumer Reports. Include description of the products, warranties and service contracts, feature comparison, positive aspects, limitations, etc. (10 points)
- 2) Do the market analysis exercise for the product you selected. (10 points)
- 3) Write a 7 page report (including a spreadsheet and market analysis). It should be well organized, informative, complete, and based on fact, not opinion. The report should be an unbiased presentation documenting your findings. Justify your choice on your findings. (20 points)
- 4) The report must be neat and utilize correct grammar and spelling. (10 points)

ORAL PRESENTATION: (/20)

Day 1, November 10: Prepare presentation material (7-minutes-in-length) and present your findings to your group. Make the presentation precise, understandable, well organized, interesting and informative. At the end, your group will choose one person who will present her/his project to the entire class on Day 2.

Day 2, November 15: One student from each group presents his/her project to the class. The presentation should be 8-12 slides in length.

COMMENTS: **Total points:** (/100)

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY POLICIES

SEXUAL HARASSMENT: Sexual harassment is inappropriate and illegal. Concerns should be addressed to the instructor and/or the Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Office, Main 161, 797-1266.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: The Instructor of this course will take appropriate actions in response to Academic Dishonesty, as defined in the University's Student Code: Acts of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

1) **Cheating:** (1) using or attempting to use or providing others with any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, examinations, or in any other academic exercise or activity, including working in a group when the instructor has designated that the quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity be done "individually"; (2) depending on the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; (3) substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, in taking an examination or preparing academic work; (4) acquiring tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty member, staff member, or another student without express permission; (5) continuing to write after time has been called on a quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity; (6) submitting substantially the same work for credit in more than one class, except with prior approval of the instructor; or (7) engaging in any form of research fraud.

2) **Falsification:** altering or fabricating any information or citation in an academic exercise or activity.

3) **Plagiarism:** representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one's own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes using materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the sale of term papers or other academic materials. Full text of the Student Code is available at: <http://www.usu.edu/student-services/student-code/article6.cfm>

COURSE COMPLETION: Students are required to complete all courses for which they are registered by the end of the semester. In some cases, a student may be unable to complete all of the coursework because of extenuating circumstances, but not due to poor performance or to retain financial aid. The term "extenuating" is specifically defined in the University's General Catalog www.usu.edu/ats/generalcatalog. Documentation of the circumstances cited to justify the incomplete is required. Also, a formal plan for completing the incomplete should be in writing and signed by both faculty and student.