Course Syllabus - BA 591
Special Topics in Consumer Research
Jim Bettman – Spring 2007

Purpose:

The purpose of this seminar is to examine recent work in, or relevant to, consumer research. We will select a set of topics to be considered over the semester, often triggered by a new article of particular interest or student interests. For each topic considered, a few articles will be chosen, and we will read and discuss those. Our goals will be to gain exposure to the latest ideas in consumer research and to develop research ideas. In particular, each week we should generate in class the design/idea for at least one new study in the focal topic area.

Classes will be held in Seminar Room 2 of the Academic Center of the Fuqua School on Wednesdays from 1:15-3:45. The first class is Wednesday, January 17. There is no class on March 14, which is Duke’s spring break, and the last class is April 18.

Student Responsibilities:

Each student should come to the seminar prepared to discuss each article in depth and to present their ideas about the major ideas, contributions, or shortcomings of each article if asked to do so. Students should also examine the research ideas of the other students, as described next.

As noted above, we will also generate an idea for a study each week. Each student will be responsible for writing up an approximately one-page (double-spaced) note for each class focusing on an idea for a study that relates to that week’s readings, e.g., a new study or studies designed to extend a particular paper or to build a bridge between papers. Please specify the research question, why it is important, and a brief overview of the proposed design (e.g., the independent and dependent variables) and hypotheses. I may call on people in class to outline their ideas. Please submit your ideas to me no later than 5 pm on the Tuesday before the class so that I and the other students can examine them. I will forward these ideas to each class member. I will also send out copies of the papers for each session via email.

Finally, each student will be expected to do a research paper, which can be a critical literature review, a design for a study, etc. I will set aside 1-2 hours at specific times during the semester when we will discuss preliminary ideas for the papers, and I will ask each student to present an idea at those times. Papers are typically 20-30 pages in length and will be due by 12n on May 4, the Friday of exam week. On March 28 we will have each student present their paper idea for roughly 10-15 minutes; please prepare a brief set of overheads outlining your idea (no more than 2-3) that you will present; try to keep your presentation to 5 minutes or so in order to allow time for feedback from me and the others in the class.
Session 1 – Recent Research on Emotion – January 17, 2007


Session 2 – Choice and Self-Expression – January 24, 2007


Session 4 – Non-Conscious Goals – February 7, 2007


Session 5 – Self-Control and Glucose – February 14, 2007


**Session 6 – Moral Hazard in Consumer Behavior – February 21, 2007**


**Session 7 – What Makes Ideas “Sticky?” – February 28, 2007**


**Session 8 – Disgust, the Sequel – March 7, 2007**


**Session 9 – Significant Others and Goals – March 21, 2007**


**Session 10 – Student Paper Idea Presentations – March 28, 2007**

**Session 11 – Health Communication – April 4, 2007**


**Session 12 – Regret – April 11, 2007**


**Session 13 – Emotion and Self-Focus – April 18, 2007**