

**EXAMPLE SYLLABUS FROM  
PRIOR SEMESTER**



CONSUMER BEHAVIOR  
IN A DIGITAL WORLD

SPRING 2021

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<b>Course Web Page</b>	via Canvas
<b>Course Time and Location</b>	M / W, 11:00am-12:30pm, Zoom (via Canvas)
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**ALL INFORMATION IN THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

THE SYLLABUS WILL BE UPDATED TO REFLECT ANY CHANGES  
ANY AND ALL CHANGES WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN CLASS

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course centers on perhaps the most complex aspect of marketing: the consumer.

Studying consumer behavior involves asking—and answering—the fundamental question of *why* people do the things they do. It enhances understanding of the cognitive, affective, and social mechanisms consumers bring to purchasing, usage, and disposition decisions—and what decisions they make.

In this course, you will gain an understanding of the foundations of consumer behavior. You will also explore how these foundational concepts apply to the “digital world” inhabited by modern consumers—one defined by the interaction of “new” technologies with “old” psychological processes and environments. The digital world is constantly evolving, and the ability to see the “old” behind the “new” will allow insight into consumer behavior no matter what technological innovations or societal shifts the future brings.

Because the study of consumer behavior is the study of *human* behavior, principles from this class are applicable to all aspects of the marketing process.

Finally, because you are (probably) human, principles from this class may also yield insight into your own beliefs, experiences, and decisions. Psychology, the core of consumer behavior, is unique among the sciences in that it is reflexive (that is, it refers to oneself). It urges us to dissect our own experiences and subject our beliefs to the scrutiny of science.

## **LEADERSHIP AND THIS COURSE**

The Texas MBA program is designed to develop influential business leaders. The MBA Program has identified four fundamental and broad pillars of leadership: knowledge and understanding, communication and collaboration, responsibility and integrity, and a worldview of business and society.

In this course, you will enhance your knowledge and understanding of consumer behavior—or why people (“consumers”) do the things they do. Through class discussion, informal study groups, and formal group projects, you will enhance your communication and collaboration skills. You will learn how insights from consumer behavior can be an asset for understanding myriad marketing problems, as well as how these insights can be used to increase consumer wellbeing and satisfaction. Finally, this course will discuss both social and cultural influences on consumer behavior, affording you a global perspective on consumer behavior in a “digital world.”

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

This course is intended to give you the tools to understand, investigate, and influence consumer behavior “in the wild.” When you are finished with this class, you will take with you:

1. A knowledge base. You will know and understand existing marketing-relevant theory and data in consumer behavior, psychology, and other social sciences.
2. A skillset. You will be able to identify, analyze, interpret, and evaluate data related to consumer behavior.
3. A perspective. You will recognize how foundational concepts related to consumer behavior apply in various contexts (e.g., in the “digital world”)—and how your knowledge and skills can be used to ask novel questions and create novel solutions.

## **READING MATERIALS**

You do not have to purchase any reading materials for this class.

Readings for each class period will be uploaded to Canvas no later than one week in advance of the relevant class. These readings include excerpts from consumer behavior textbooks, chapters from popular press books, news articles, and peer-reviewed research papers. This system minimizes irrelevant/redundant information (and cost!), while enabling exposure to a wide range of sources that may be useful for understanding consumer behavior both during this course and in the future.

You are expected to read all required materials prior to the start of the relevant class. You are not required to read any of the “optional readings;” these are provided for your own edification.

## ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

Your grade in this course will be determined by the following factors:

Individual Assignments	35 points
Group Project	25 points
Test One	15 points
Test Two	15 points
Contribution	10 points
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<b>Total</b>	<b>100 points</b>

Grade basis:

A+	93-100%	B+	87-89%	C+	77-79%	D+	67-69%
A	93-100%	B	83-86%	C	73-76%	D	63-66%
A-	90-92%	B-	80-82%	C-	70-72%	D-	60-62%
						F	Below 60%

## OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS

### Individual Assignments

You will complete three short homework assignments, each related to a different research technique used to analyze consumer behavior (Laddering, Conjoint Analysis, Experiments). Detailed instructions for each assignment will be provided both during class and on Canvas. You will write a brief “white paper” for each assignment, and should be prepared to (informally) present your findings to the class on the specified due date.

The Laddering and Conjoint assignments are worth 10 points each; the Experiments assignment is worth 15 points. Assignments must be submitted via Canvas before the beginning of the class period on the specified due date; late papers will receive a 10% grade reduction for every day late, as well as a flat 20% reduction due to ineligibility for peer review. (Peer review is discussed in detail on page 6 of this syllabus.)

For the first two assignments (Laddering, Conjoint), you will collect, analyze, and interpret data from real consumers.

For the third assignment (Experiments), you will propose a behavioral experiment related to a topic of your choice. Your research proposal will be evaluated on its own merits, and will also be used to assign research teams for the Group Project. I encourage you to use this assignment as an opportunity to think both critically and creatively about a personally interesting question—that is, one that you *actually* want to answer. I also encourage you to take advantage of office hours and discuss your ideas with me. I love research!

## Group Project

During the second half of the course, you will be assigned to a group of 3-4 people (depending on class size). Group membership will be determined by me, and will be based on the content of your individual research proposals.

Your group will work together to extract *one* research question from the ideas presented in each individual research proposal. This research question may be created by combining elements of several individual proposals, or may be adapted from just one proposal—in this course, as in business, the goal is to identify the most interesting, important, and tractable idea. Your group will write a 3-5 page group project proposal based on this idea.

After consulting with me, your group will collect and analyze the data necessary for completing your proposed research.

You will report the results of your research in two forms: a group project report, and a group presentation. The group project report may be adapted from the group project proposal, but should be updated to include details about the collection and analysis of data for your group project, as well as a treatment of the implications of these data—you should be making an argument, as opposed to asking a question. Your group's report will be due no later than the start of class on the first group project presentation day, even if your group is scheduled to present at a later date.

Each group presentation will be ~10 minutes long (including time for brief class discussion or comments/questions) and will include: an overview of your idea/question, how this question relates to consumer behavior, why this question is important, how the question might be answered, and what the implications might be. Unlike your proposal, your group presentation must include the collection and analysis of real-world data.

The group project is intended to encourage you to think about your own questions, the connections between different areas of personal interest within your group (e.g., psychological concepts, technologies, industries), and how foundational concepts from consumer behavior can be used to resolve real-world challenges, drive real-world innovation, and offer insight into a diverse set of real-world marketing problems.

A detailed grading rubric for the group project will be uploaded to Canvas when appropriate. Note that your individual grade for the group project will be determined by a combination of (1) a grade assigned to your group by the class, (2) a grade assigned to your group by me, and (3) a grade assigned to you individually by your fellow group members.

### **Some tips for a successful group project:**

Cite all prior work discussed in your presentation and/or report. Do not just say, for example, “research shows X” or “X causes Y.” Provide the full citation (author and year), and convey a sense of whether the point is generally accepted by experts or is up for debate. Innovative arguments can spring from contentious ideas—but it's important to be honest about the foundations of your approach.

You are permitted to divide labor within the group any way you like, keeping in mind that your individual contribution to the group project will likely be reflected in the grade assigned to you by your fellow group members. Although part of the purpose of the project is to enhance presentation skills, it is up to your group to decide who will speak during the presentation; any or all of the members of the group may speak, and no individual will be forced to speak. Note that the group project proposal, report, and presentation afford ample opportunities for all group members to contribute equally.

Resolve disputes within your group (if any) as early as possible. If you are unsatisfied with the direction the group is taking, make your voice heard. If you believe a member of the group is not contributing sufficiently, tell this person as soon as you can. Groups should try to resolve any disputes on their own if at all possible. I will intervene only if intra-group resolution efforts fail, and only if requested by one or more group members. I reserve the right to lower the individual grade of any group member who has not contributed a reasonable share to the group project.

## Tests

There will be two tests: one immediately before spring break and one on the last day of class. Test questions will focus on both the lecture and the required readings. Each test will include a mix of multiple choice and scenario-based short-answer questions. The second test will be comprehensive; however, there will be a heavier focus on newer course material (i.e., content discussed after spring break). More information about the structure of each test will be provided prior to each test date.

## Contribution

Contribution to the course will be evaluated based on the *quality* of your contribution to the learning environment. Despite the virtual context, you will have ample opportunity to contribute to the class by asking questions and providing insights from your own experiences during lectures, presenting the results of your research to the class, participating in breakout rooms, responding to warm-calling\*, and demonstrating respect for your peers.

\*“Warm-calling” is differentiated from “cold-calling” by the fact that you should *expect* warm-calling. I will randomly select students to summarize course-related reading material, and you should be prepared to do so at any time. You should also be prepared to discuss in-class assignments when called on throughout the term.

The default contribution grade is a 9/10. Consistent positive contributions to the class will raise this grade; consistent negative contributions (i.e., behavior that demonstrates disrespect toward your peers and/or the learning environment) will lower it.

## Attendance policy:

I strongly encourage you to “attend” class live. However, I believe that you are ultimately in charge of your own learning, and I will not take attendance.

## PEER REVIEW

Each **individual assignment** will be evaluated using peer review. Peer review accelerates the learning process by allowing you to see how others think and get feedback from a variety of perspectives. Plus, knowing your work will be seen by your peers is often a good motivator!

All peer review will take place on the Canvas platform. Within 24 hours of the due date for each assignment, you will receive three randomly selected white papers completed by your peers. You will be provided with an evaluation rubric, as well as a few questions to guide your feedback.

Peer reviews for the Laddering and Conjoint assignments will be due by 11:59pm Saturday of the week in which they are received. This allows you (the student) at least five days to complete your reviews, and gives us (the professor and TA) approximately one day to review the reviews and lock in the grades. Keeping to this schedule will ensure that all white papers have been reviewed and graded within one week of their original due date.

Peer reviews for the Experiment assignment will be due by 11:59pm Friday of the last week of spring break. However, you are welcome to complete them sooner.

Peer reviews constitute 20% of your grade for each assignment. If you score a 100% on the white paper but fail to complete your peer reviews, you will receive an 80% for the assignment as a whole.

Please see the Peer Review Guidelines on Canvas for further details.

### Revisions following peer review

If you wish to revise your white paper after receiving feedback from your peers, you have one week to do so. Grades for revised assignments may be adjusted by up to 50% of the points lost on the original submission (e.g., an assignment with an original grade of 7/10 can be brought up to an 8.5/10).

### Challenges to peer review

If you believe that the grade provided by your peers is inaccurate and/or unfair, you may challenge the grade by (1) grading your own work using the assigned rubric and (2) explaining why your self-evaluation diverges from those provided by your peers. If you wish to pursue this option, please contact your TA within one week of receiving your grade.

## **POLICIES AND RESOURCES: Diversity, Accessibility, and Inclusion**

### **Diversity and Inclusion**

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed and that the diversity that students bring to this class can be comfortably expressed and be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit to all students. Please come to me at any time with any concerns.

### **Students with Disabilities**

If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). You may refer to SSD's website for contact and more information: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with SSD, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations.

### **Religious Holy Days**

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

### **Harassment Reporting Requirements**

[Senate Bill 212 \(SB 212\)](#), which goes into effect as of January 1, 2020, is a Texas State Law that requires all employees (both faculty and staff) at a public or private post-secondary institution to promptly report any knowledge of any incidents of sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, or stalking "committed by or against a person who was a student enrolled at or an employee of the institution at the time of the incident". Please note that both the instructor and the TA for this class are mandatory reporters and MUST share with the Title IX office any information about sexual harassment/assault shared with us by a student whether in-person or as part of a journal or other class assignment. Note that a report to the Title IX office does not obligate a victim to take any action, but this type of information CANNOT be kept strictly confidential except when shared with designated confidential employees. A confidential employee is someone a student can go to and talk about a Title IX matter without triggering that employee to have to report the situation to have it automatically investigated. A list of confidential employees is available on the [Title IX website](#).

## **POLICIES AND RESOURCES: Course Materials and Recordings**

### **Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited**

No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class unless you have my explicit, written permission. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. I am well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in sanctions, including failure in the course.

### **FERPA and Class Recordings**

Class recordings are reserved only for students in this class for educational purposes and are protected under FERPA. The recordings should not be shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings. Guidance on public access to class recordings can be found [here](#).



## MCCOMBS CLASSROOM PROFESSIONALISM POLICY

The highest professional standards are expected of all members of the McCombs community. The collective class reputation and the value of the Texas MBA experience hinges on this.

**You should treat the Texas MBA classroom as you would a corporate boardroom.**

Faculty are expected to be professional and prepared to deliver value for each and every class session. Students are expected to be professional in all respects.

The Texas MBA classroom experience is enhanced when:

- **Students arrive on time.** On time arrival ensures that classes are able to start and finish at the scheduled time. On time arrival shows respect for both fellow students and faculty and it enhances learning by reducing avoidable distractions.
- **Students display their name cards.** This permits fellow students and faculty to learn names, enhancing opportunities for community building and evaluation of in-class contributions.
- **Students are fully prepared for each class.** Much of the learning in the Texas MBA program takes place during classroom discussions. When students are not prepared, they cannot contribute to the overall learning process. This affects not only the individual, but their peers who count on them, as well.
- **Students respect the views and opinions of their colleagues.** Disagreement and debate are encouraged. Intolerance for the views of others is unacceptable.
- **Students do not confuse the classroom for the cafeteria.** The classroom (boardroom) is not the place to eat your breakfast tacos, wraps, sweet potato fries, or otherwise set up for a picnic. Please plan accordingly. Recognizing that back-to-back classes sometimes take place over the lunch hour, energy bars and similar snacks are permitted. Please be respectful of your fellow students and faculty in your choices.
- **Students minimize unscheduled personal breaks.** The learning environment improves when disruptions are limited.
- **Students attend the class section to which they are registered.** Learning is enhanced when class sizes are optimized. Limits are set to ensure a quality experience. When section hopping takes place some classes become too large and it becomes difficult to contribute. When they are too small, the breadth of experience and opinion suffers.
- **Technology is used to enhance the class experience.** When students are surfing the web, responding to e-mail, instant messaging each other, and otherwise not devoting their full attention to the topic at hand they are doing themselves and their peers a major disservice. Those around them face additional distraction. Fellow students cannot benefit from the insights of the students who are not engaged. Faculty office hours are spent going over class material with students who chose not to pay attention, rather than truly adding value by helping students who want a better understanding of the material or want to explore the issues in more depth. Students with real needs may not be able to obtain adequate help if faculty time is spent repeating what was said in class. There are often cases where learning is enhanced by the use of technology in class. Faculty will let you know when it is appropriate.
- **Phones and wireless devices are turned off.** We've all heard the annoying ringing in the middle of a meeting. Not only is it not professional, it cuts off the flow of discussion when the search for the offender begins. When a true need to communicate with someone outside of class exists (e.g., for some medical need) please inform the professor prior to class.

Remember, you are competing for the best faculty McCombs has to offer. Your professionalism and activity in class contributes to your success in attracting the best faculty to this program.

## ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

I have no tolerance for acts of academic dishonesty. Such acts damage the reputation of the school and the degree and demean the honest efforts of the majority of students. The minimum penalty for an act of academic dishonesty will be a zero for that assignment or exam.

The responsibilities for both students and faculty with regard to the Honor System are described on the following pages of this syllabus. As the instructor for this course, I agree to observe all the faculty responsibilities described therein. As a Texas MBA student, you agree to observe all of the student responsibilities of the Honor Code. If the application of the Honor System to this class and its assignments is unclear in any way, it is your responsibility to ask me for clarification.

### Honor Code Purpose

Academic honor, trust and integrity are fundamental to The University of Texas at Austin McCombs School of Business community. They contribute directly to the quality of your education and reach far beyond the campus to your overall standing within the business community. The University of Texas at Austin McCombs School of Business Honor System promotes academic honor, trust and integrity throughout the Graduate School of Business. The Honor System relies upon The University of Texas Student Standards of Conduct (Chapter 11 of the Institutional Rules on Student Service and Activities) for enforcement, but promotes ideals that are higher than merely enforceable standards. Every student is responsible for understanding and abiding by the provisions of the Honor System and the University of Texas Student Standards of Conduct. The University expects all students to obey the law, show respect for other members of the university community, perform contractual obligations, maintain absolute integrity and the highest standard of individual honor in scholastic work, and observe the highest standards of conduct. Ignorance of the Honor System or The University of Texas Student Standards of Conduct is not an acceptable excuse for violations under any circumstances.

The effectiveness of the Honor System results solely from the wholehearted and uncompromising support of each member of the McCombs School of Business community. Each member must abide by the Honor System and must be intolerant of any violations. The system is only as effective as you make it.

### Faculty Involvement in the Honor System

The University of Texas at Austin McCombs School of Business Faculty's commitment to the Honor System is critical to its success. It is imperative that faculty make their expectations clear to all students. They must also respond to accusations of cheating or other misconduct by students in a timely, discrete and fair manner. We urge faculty members to promote awareness of the importance of integrity through in-class discussions and assignments throughout the semester.

### Expectations Under the Honor System

#### Standards

If a student is uncertain about the standards of conduct in a particular setting, he or she should ask the relevant faculty member for clarification to ensure his or her conduct falls within the expected scope of honor, trust and integrity as promoted by the Honor System. This applies to all tests, papers and group and individual work. Questions about appropriate behavior during the job search should be addressed to a professional member of the Career Management Office. Below are some of the specific examples of violations of the Honor System.

#### Lying

Lying is any deliberate attempt to deceive another by stating an untruth, or by any direct form of communication to include the telling of a partial truth. Lying includes the use or omission of any information with the intent to deceive or mislead. Examples of lying include, but are not limited to, providing a false excuse for why a test was missed or presenting false information to a recruiter.

#### Stealing

Stealing is wrongfully taking, obtaining, withholding, defacing or destroying any person's money, personal property, article or service, under any circumstances. Examples of stealing include, but are not limited to, removing course material from the library or hiding it from others, removing material from another person's mail folder, securing for one's self unattended items such as calculators, books, book bags or other personal property. Another form of stealing is the duplication of copyrighted material beyond the reasonable bounds of "fair use." Defacing (e.g., "marking up" or highlighting) library books is also considered stealing, because, through a willful act, the value of another's property is decreased. (See the appendix for a detailed explanation of "fair use.")

#### Cheating

Cheating is wrongfully and unfairly acting out of self-interest for personal gain by seeking or accepting an unauthorized advantage over one's peers. Examples include, but are not limited to, obtaining questions or answers to tests or quizzes, and getting assistance on

case write-ups or other projects beyond what is authorized by the assigning instructor. It is also cheating to accept the benefit(s) of another person's theft(s) even if not actively sought. For instance, if one continues to be attentive to an overhead conversation about a test or case write-up even if initial exposure to such information was accidental and beyond the control of the student in question, one is also cheating. If a student overhears a conversation or any information that any faculty member might reasonably wish to withhold from the student, the student should inform the faculty member(s) of the information and circumstance under which it was overheard.

### **Actions Required for Responding to Suspected and Known Violations**

As stated, everyone must abide by the Honor System and be intolerant of violations. If you suspect a violation has occurred, you should first speak to the suspected violator in an attempt to determine if an infraction has taken place. If, after doing so, you still believe that a violation has occurred, you must tell the suspected violator that he or she must report himself or herself to the course professor or Associate Dean of the McCombs School of Business. If the individual fails to report himself or herself within 48 hours, it then becomes your obligation to report the infraction to the course professor or the Associate Dean of the McCombs School of Business. Remember that although you are not required by regulation to take any action, our Honor System is only as effective as you make it. If you remain silent when you suspect or know of a violation, you are approving of such dishonorable conduct as the community standard. You are thereby precipitating a repetition of such violations.

## **The Honor Pledge**

The University of Texas at Austin McCombs School of Business requires each enrolled student to adopt the Honor System. The Honor Pledge best describes the conduct promoted by the Honor System. It is as follows:

"I affirm that I belong to the honorable community of The University of Texas at Austin Graduate School of Business. I will not lie, cheat or steal, nor will I tolerate those who do."

"I pledge my full support to the Honor System. I agree to be bound at all times by the Honor System and understand that any violation may result in my dismissal from the McCombs School of Business."

## **Plagiarism Detection**

Students should be aware that all required writing assignments may be submitted to a plagiarism-detection tool such as Turnitin.com. Turnitin is a software resource intended to address plagiarism and improper citation. The software works by cross-referencing submitted materials with an archived database of journals, essay, newspaper articles, books, and other published work. In addition, other methods may be used to determine the originality of the paper. This software is not intended to replace or substitute for the faculty member's judgment regarding detection of plagiarism.

**The following pages provide specific guidance about the Standard of Academic Integrity at the University of Texas at Austin. Please read it carefully and feel free to ask me any questions you might have.**

**This guidance is excerpted from the University of Texas at Austin Office of the Dean of Students website ([http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint\\_student.php](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php))**

## **The Standard of Academic Integrity**

A fundamental principle for any educational institution, academic integrity is highly valued and seriously regarded at The University of Texas at Austin, as emphasized in the standards of conduct. More specifically, you and other students are expected to "maintain absolute integrity and a high standard of individual honor in scholastic work" undertaken at the University ([Sec. 11-801, \*Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities\*](#)). This is a very basic expectation that is further reinforced by the University's [Honor Code](#). At a minimum, you should complete any assignments, exams, and other scholastic endeavors with the utmost honesty, which requires you to:

- acknowledge the contributions of other sources to your scholastic efforts;
- complete your assignments independently unless expressly authorized to seek or obtain assistance in preparing them;
- follow instructions for assignments and exams, and observe the standards of your academic discipline; and
- avoid engaging in any form of academic dishonesty on behalf of yourself or another student.

For the official policies on academic integrity and scholastic dishonesty, please refer to [Chapter 11](#) of the *Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities*.

## What is Scholastic Dishonesty?

In promoting a high standard of academic integrity, the University broadly defines scholastic dishonesty—basically, all conduct that violates this standard, including *any act designed to give an unfair or undeserved academic advantage*, such as:

- Cheating
- Plagiarism
- Unauthorized Collaboration
- Collusion
- Falsifying Academic Records
- Misrepresenting Facts (e.g., providing false information to postpone an exam, obtain an extended deadline for an assignment, or even gain an unearned financial benefit)
- Any other acts (or attempted acts) that violate the basic standard of academic integrity (e.g., multiple submissions—submitting essentially the same written assignment for two courses without authorization to do so)

Several types of scholastic dishonesty—[unauthorized collaboration](#), [plagiarism](#), and [multiple submissions](#)—are discussed in more detail on this Web site to correct common misperceptions about these particular offenses and suggest ways to avoid committing them.

For the University's official definition of scholastic dishonesty, see [Section 11-802](#), *Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities*.

## Unauthorized Collaboration

**If you work with another person on an assignment for credit *without the instructor's permission to do so*, you are engaging in unauthorized collaboration.**

- This common form of academic dishonesty can occur with all types of scholastic work—papers, homework, tests (take-home or in-class), lab reports, computer programming projects, or any other assignments to be submitted for credit.
- For the University's official definitions of unauthorized collaboration and the related offense of collusion, see Sections [11-802\(c\)\(6\)](#) & [11-802\(e\)](#), *Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities*.

**Some students mistakenly assume that they can work together on an assignment as long as the instructor has not expressly prohibited collaborative efforts.**

- Actually, students are expected to complete assignments independently unless the course instructor indicates otherwise. So working together on assignments is *not* permitted unless the instructor specifically approves of any such collaboration.

**Unfortunately, students who engage in unauthorized collaboration tend to justify doing so through various rationalizations. For example, some argue that they contributed to the work, and others maintain that working together on an assignment "helped them learn better."**

- The instructor—not the student—determines the purpose of a particular assignment *and* the acceptable method for completing it. Unless working together on an assignment has been specifically authorized, always assume it is not allowed.
- Many educators do value group assignments and other collaborative efforts, recognizing their potential for developing and enhancing specific learning skills. And course requirements in some classes do consist primarily of group assignments. But the expectation of individual work is the prevailing norm in many classes, consistent with the presumption of original work that remains a fundamental tenet of scholarship in the American educational system.

**Some students incorrectly assume that the degree of any permissible collaboration is basically the same for all classes.**

- The extent of any permissible collaboration can vary widely from one class to the next, even from one project to the next within the same class.
- Be sure to distinguish between collaboration that is authorized for a particular assignment *and* unauthorized collaboration that is undertaken for the sake of expedience or convenience to benefit you and/or another student. By failing to make this key distinction, you are much more likely to engage in unauthorized collaboration. To avoid any such outcome, always seek clarification from the instructor.

**Unauthorized collaboration can also occur in conjunction with group projects.**

- How so? If the degree or type of collaboration exceeds the parameters expressly approved by the instructor. An instructor may allow (or even expect) students to work together on one stage of a group project but require independent work on other phases. Any such distinctions should be strictly observed.

**Providing another student unauthorized assistance on an assignment is also a violation, even without the prospect of benefiting yourself.**

- If an instructor did not authorize students to work together on a particular assignment *and* you help a student complete that assignment, you are providing unauthorized assistance and, in effect, facilitating an act of academic dishonesty. Equally important, you can be held accountable for doing so.
- For similar reasons, you should not allow another student access to your drafted or completed assignments unless the instructor has permitted those materials to be shared in that manner.

## Plagiarism

**Plagiarism is another serious violation of academic integrity. In simplest terms, this occurs if you represent *as your own work* any material that was obtained from another source, regardless how or where you acquired it.**

- Plagiarism can occur with *all* types of media—scholarly or non-academic, published or unpublished—written publications, Internet sources, oral presentations, illustrations, computer code, scientific data or analyses, music, art, and other forms of expression. (See [Section 11-802\(d\)](#) of the *Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities* for the University's official definition of plagiarism.)
- Borrowed material from written works can include entire papers, one or more paragraphs, single phrases, or any other excerpts from a variety of sources such as books, journal articles, magazines, downloaded Internet documents, purchased papers from commercial writing services, papers obtained from other students (including homework assignments), etc.
- As a general rule, the use of any borrowed material results in plagiarism if the original source is not properly acknowledged. So you can be held accountable for plagiarizing material in either a final submission of an assignment *or* a draft that is being submitted to an instructor for review, comments, and/or approval.

**Using *verbatim* material (e.g., exact words) without proper attribution (or credit) constitutes the most blatant form of plagiarism. However, other types of material can be plagiarized as well, such as *ideas* drawn from an original source or even its *structure* (e.g., sentence construction or line of argument).**

- Improper or insufficient paraphrasing often accounts for this type of plagiarism. (See additional information on [paraphrasing](#).)

**Plagiarism can be committed intentionally *or* unintentionally.**

- Strictly speaking, any use of material from another source without proper attribution constitutes plagiarism, regardless why that occurred, and any such conduct violates accepted standards of academic integrity.
- Some students deliberately plagiarize, often rationalizing this misconduct with a variety of excuses: falling behind and succumbing to the pressures of meeting deadlines; feeling overworked and wishing to reduce their workloads; compensating for actual (or perceived) academic or language deficiencies; and/or justifying plagiarism on other grounds.
- But some students commit plagiarism without intending to do so, often stumbling into negligent plagiarism as a result of sloppy notetaking, insufficient paraphrasing, and/or ineffective proofreading. Those problems, however, neither justify nor excuse this breach of academic standards. By misunderstanding the meaning of plagiarism and/or failing to cite sources accurately, you are much more likely to commit this violation. Avoiding that outcome requires, at a minimum, a clear understanding of plagiarism *and* the appropriate techniques for scholarly attribution. (See related information on [paraphrasing](#); [notetaking and proofreading](#); and [acknowledging and citing sources](#).)

**By merely changing a few words or rearranging several words or sentences, you are *not* paraphrasing. Making minor revisions to borrowed text amounts to plagiarism.**

- Even if properly cited, a "paraphrase" that is too similar to the original source's wording and/or structure is, in fact, plagiarized. (See additional information on [paraphrasing](#).)

**Remember, your instructors should be able to clearly identify which materials (e.g., words and ideas) are your own *and* which originated with other sources.**

- That cannot be accomplished without proper attribution. You must give credit where it is due, acknowledging the sources of any borrowed passages, ideas, or other types of materials, and enclosing any verbatim excerpts with quotation marks (using block indentation for longer passages).

## Plagiarism & Unauthorized Collaboration

[Plagiarism](#) and [unauthorized collaboration](#) are often committed jointly.

By submitting *as your own work* any unattributed material that you obtained from other sources (including the contributions of another student who assisted you in preparing a homework assignment), you have committed plagiarism. And if the instructor did not authorize students to work together on the assignment, you have also engaged in unauthorized collaboration. Both violations contribute to the same fundamental deception—representing material obtained from another source as your own work. Group efforts that extend beyond the limits approved by an instructor frequently involve plagiarism in addition to unauthorized collaboration. For example, an instructor may allow students to work together while researching a subject, but require each student to write a separate report. If the students collaborate while writing their reports *and* then submit the products of those joint efforts as individual works, they are guilty of unauthorized collaboration as well as plagiarism. In other words, the students collaborated on the written assignment without authorization to do so, and also failed to acknowledge the other students' contributions to their own individual reports.

## Multiple Submissions

**Submitting the same paper (or other type of assignment) for two courses *without prior approval* represents another form of academic dishonesty.**

You may not submit a substantially similar paper or project for credit in two (or more) courses unless expressly authorized to do so by your instructor(s). (See [Section 11-802\(b\)](#) of the *Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities* for the University's official definition of scholastic dishonesty.)

You may, however, re-work or supplement previous work on a topic with the instructor's approval.

**Some students mistakenly assume that they are entitled to submit the same paper (or other assignment) for two (or more) classes simply because they authored the original work.**

Unfortunately, students with this viewpoint tend to overlook the relevant ethical and academic issues, focusing instead on their own "authorship" of the original material and personal interest in receiving essentially double credit for a single effort.

Unauthorized multiple submissions are inherently deceptive. After all, an instructor reasonably assumes that any completed assignments being submitted for credit were actually prepared for that course. Mindful of that assumption, students who "recycle" their own papers from one course to another make an effort to convey that impression. For instance, a student may revise the original title page or imply through some other means that he or she wrote the paper for that particular course, sometimes to the extent of discussing a "proposed" paper topic with the instructor or presenting a "draft" of the paper before submitting the "recycled" work for credit.

The issue of plagiarism is also relevant. If, for example, you previously prepared a paper for one course and then submit it for credit in another course without citing the initial work, you are committing plagiarism—essentially "self-plagiarism"—the term used by some institutions. Recall the broad scope of [plagiarism](#): all types of materials can be plagiarized, including unpublished works, even papers you previously wrote.

Another problem concerns the resulting "unfair academic advantage" that is specifically referenced in the University's definition of scholastic dishonesty. If you submit a paper for one course that you prepared and submitted for another class, you are simply better situated to devote more time and energy toward fulfilling other requirements for the subsequent course than would be available to classmates who are completing all course requirements during that semester. In effect, you would be gaining an unfair academic advantage, which constitutes academic dishonesty as it is defined on this campus.

Some students, of course, do recognize one or more of these ethical issues, but still refrain from citing their authorship of prior papers to avoid earning reduced (or zero) credit for the same works in other classes. That underlying motivation further illustrates the deceptive nature of unauthorized multiple submissions.

An additional issue concerns the problematic minimal efforts involved in "recycling" papers (or other prepared assignments). Exerting minimal effort basically undercuts the curricular objectives associated with a particular assignment and the course itself. Likewise, the practice of "recycling" papers subverts important learning goals for individual degree programs and higher education in general, such as the mastery of specific skills that students should acquire and develop in preparing written assignments. This demanding but necessary process is somewhat analogous to the required regimen of athletes, like the numerous laps and other repetitive training exercises that runners must successfully complete to prepare adequately for a marathon.



## SCHEDULE

★SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE / TESTING AND DUE DATES WILL NOT CHANGE★

### Why and how to investigate consumer behavior

Class	Date	Topic	Readings (to be completed <i>before</i> class)
1	Wed, Jan 20	Introduction to Consumer Behavior and Consumer Research	--
2	Mon, Jan 25	Research Methods in Consumer Behavior	<p><i>How We Know What Isn't So</i> (Gilovich, 1991)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction</li> <li>• Chapter 11: Challenging dubious beliefs: The role of social science</li> </ul> <p><i>The Why Axis</i> (Gneezy and List, 2013)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 11: Why is today's business manager an endangered species? Creating a culture of experimentation at your business (pp. 212-239)</li> </ul> <p><b>Optional Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "The fourfold path to figuring out what your customers really want" (Billington, <i>Harvard Management Update</i>, 1998)</li> <li>• "Big data is only half the data marketers need" (Rasmussen and Hansen, <i>Harvard Business Review</i>, 2015)</li> </ul>

### Goal pursuit and limited resources

Class	Date	Topic	Readings (to be completed <i>before</i> class)
3	Wed, Jan 27	Motivation, Ability, and Opportunity	<p><i>Consumer Behavior</i> (Hoyer, MacInnis and Pieters, 2013)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 2: Motivation, ability, and opportunity (pp. 44-65)</li> </ul>
4	Mon, Feb 1	MAO in the Digital Age: Overloaded and Fatigued	<p style="color: red;"><b><u>DUE: Laddering White Paper (10:59am Monday)</u></b></p> <p><i>The Smarter Screen</i> (Benartzi and Lehrer, 2015)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 1: The mental screen (pp. 9-37)</li> </ul> <p><b>Optional Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Do you suffer from decision fatigue?" (Tierney, <i>New York Times Magazine</i>, 2011)</li> <li>• "Ego depletion, motivation and attention: A new model of self-control" (McNerney, <i>BigThink</i>, 2012)</li> </ul>

## Attention and perception

Class	Date	Topic	Readings (to be completed <i>before</i> class)
5	Wed, Feb 3	Attention and Perception, Part I (Attention)	<p><i>The Smarter Screen</i> (Benartzi and Lehrer, 2015)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 3: Display biases (pp. 62-79)</li> </ul> <p><b>Optional Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“The rising cost of consumer attention: Why you should care, and what you can do about it” (Teixeira, <i>HBS Working Paper</i>, 2014)</li> <li>“The brand-ness of strangers” (Walker, <i>The New York Times</i>, 2008)</li> </ul>
6	Mon, Feb 8	Attention and Perception, Part II (Perception)	<p><b><u>DUE: Laddering Peer Review (11:59pm Saturday)</u></b></p> <p>“Try it, you’ll like it” (Lee, Frederick and Ariely, <i>Psychological Science</i>, 2006)</p> <p>“What placebo science shows about the importance of marketing” (Dooley, <i>Forbes</i>, 2014)</p> <p><b>Optional Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Predictably Irrational</i> (Ariely, 2008), Chapter 9: The effect of expectations (pp. 155-172)</li> <li><i>Predictably Irrational</i> (Ariely, 2008), Chapter 10: The power of price (pp. 173-194)</li> </ul>

## Learning and memory

Class	Date	Topic	Readings (to be completed <i>before</i> class)
7	Wed, Feb 10	Learning and Memory	<p><i>The Smarter Screen</i> (Benartzi and Lehrer, 2015)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 5: Desirable difficulty (pp. 117-137)</li> </ul> <p>“The seven sins of memory” (Schacter, <i>Psychology Today</i>, 2001)</p> <p><b>Optional Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Thinking Fast and Slow</i> (Kahneman, 2011), Chapter 4: The associative machine (pp. 50-58) and Chapter 5: Cognitive ease (pp. 59-70)</li> <li>“The seven sins of memory and their implications for advertising” (Percy, <i>Advances in Consumer Research</i>, 2003)</li> </ul>



8	Mon, Feb 15	Cognitive Offloading and the “Google Effect”	<p><b><u>DUE: Conjoint White Paper (10:59am Monday)</u></b></p> <p>“How smartphones hijack our minds” (Carr, <i>Wall Street Journal</i>, 2017)</p> <p>“How Google is changing your brain” (Wegner and Ward, <i>Scientific American</i>, 2013)</p> <p><b>Optional Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Natural Born Cyborgs</i> (Clark, 2003), Introduction (pp. 3-11)</li> <li>• “Transactive memory: A contemporary analysis of the group mind” (Wegner, in <i>Theories of Group Behavior</i>, 1986)</li> <li>• “The rise and impact of digital amnesia” (Kaspersky Labs, 2015)</li> </ul>
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### Attitudes and persuasion

Class	Date	Topic	Readings (to be completed <i>before</i> class)
9	Wed, Feb 17	Attitudes	<p><i>Consumer Behavior and Marketing Strategy</i> (Peter and Olson, 2010)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 6: Attitudes and intentions (pp. 126-145)</li> </ul> <p>“How to think about implicit bias” (Payne, Niemi and Doris, <i>Scientific American</i>, 2018)</p> <p><b>Optional Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Track customer attitudes to predict their behaviors” (Reinart, <i>Harvard Business Review</i>, 2014)</li> </ul>

10	Mon, Feb 22	Workshop: Hypothesis Testing with Experimental Research	<b><u>DUE: Conjoint Peer Review (11:59pm Saturday)</u></b>
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11	Wed, Feb 24	Persuasion (Attitude Change)	<p>“Central and peripheral routes to advertising effectiveness” (Petty, Cacioppo and Schumann, <i>Journal of Consumer Research</i>, 1983)</p> <p>“Why consumers rebel against slogans” (Laran, Dalton and Andrade, <i>Harvard Business Review</i>, 2011)</p> <p><b>Optional Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Can training eliminate biases?” (Scheiber and Abrams, <i>The New York Times</i>, 2018)</li> </ul>
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**Review and test one**

<b>Class</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b> (to be completed <i>before</i> class)
12	Mon, March 1	Test One Review	<u><b>DUE: Expt. White Paper (10:59am Monday)</b></u>
13	Wed, March 3	<b>TEST ONE</b>	--
	March 8 March 10	No Class!	
	March 15 March 17	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	<u><b>DUE: Expt. Peer Review (11:59pm Friday, March 19)</b></u>

### Behavioral research “in the wild” (pt. 1)

Class	Date	Topic	Readings (to be completed <i>before</i> class)
14	Mon, March 22	A/B Testing	<p>“The A/B Test: Inside the technology that’s changing the rules of business” (Christian, <i>Wired</i>, 2012)</p> <p>Podcast: “The trust engineers” (<i>Radiolab</i>, 2015)</p>

### Judgment and decision-making

Class	Date	Topic	Readings (to be completed <i>before</i> class)
15	Wed, March 24	Judgment and Decision-Making, Part I	<p><b>NOTE:</b> Readings below cover Classes 15 <i>and</i> 16</p> <p><i>Thinking Fast and Slow</i> (Kahneman, 2011)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 1: The characters of the story (pp. 19-30)</li> <li>• Chapter 2: Attention and effort (pp. 31-38)</li> <li>• Chapter 3: The lazy controller (pp. 39-49)</li> </ul> <p>“The brain in your pocket: Evidence that smartphones are used to supplant thinking” (Barr et al., <i>Computers in Human Behavior</i>, 2015)</p> <p><b>Optional Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Online decision making: What really drives customers to choose one option over another” (Margalit, <i>Forbes</i>, 2014)</li> <li>• <i>Predictably Irrational</i> (Ariely, 2008), Chapter 1: The truth about relativity (pp. 1-21)</li> </ul>
16	Mon, March 29	Judgment and Decision-Making, Part II	(see above)

### Consumers and consumption, in context

Class	Date	Topic	Readings (to be completed <i>before</i> class)
17	Wed, March 31	Post-Purchase Processes: Satisfaction and Regret	<p><b><u>DUE: Group Project Proposal (10:59am Wed.)</u></b></p> <p>“The tyranny of choice” (<i>The Economist</i>, 2010)</p> <p><b>Optional Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “How to delight your customers” (Berman, <i>California Management Review</i>, 2005)</li> <li>• “Online retailers should care more about the post-purchase experience” (Sharma, <i>Harvard Business Review</i>, 2016)</li> </ul>
18	Mon, April 5	Social Influence	<p><i>Nudge</i> (Thaler and Sunstein, 2009)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 3: Following the Herd</li> </ul> <p><b>Optional Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The science of persuasion” (Cialdini, <i>Scientific American Mind</i>, 2001)</li> </ul>

### Data matter(s)

Class	Date	Topic	Readings (to be completed <i>before</i> class)
19	Wed, April 7	Digital Footprints	<p>“The data that turned the world upside down” (Grassegger and Krogerus, <i>Motherboard</i>, 2017)</p> <p>“Amazon knows what you buy. And it’s building a big ad business from it.” (Weise, <i>The New York Times</i>, 2019)</p> <p><b>Optional Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “How companies learn your secrets” (Duhigg, <i>The New York Times Magazine</i>, 2012)</li> <li>• “How Netflix is turning viewers into puppets” (Leonard, <i>Salon</i>, 2013)</li> </ul>
20	Mon, April 12	Artificial Intelligence and the “Internet of Things”	<p>“The dark secret at the heart of AI” (Knight, <i>MIT Technology Review</i>, 2017)</p> <p>“Researchers combat gender and racial bias in Artificial Intelligence” (Bass and Huet, <i>Bloomberg</i>, 2017)</p>

			<p><b>Optional Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “What if online movie ratings weren’t based almost entirely on what men think?” (Hickey, <i>FiveThirtyEight</i>, 2018)</li> <li>• “Machine bias” (Angwin et al, <i>ProPublica</i>, 2016)</li> <li>• “Algorithm may decide who is a ‘contributing member of society,’ civil rights group warn” (Weill, <i>Daily Beast</i>, 2017)</li> <li>• “What is the Internet of Things?” (Burgess, <i>Wired</i>, 2018)</li> <li>• “This thermometer tells your temperature, then tells firms where to advertise” (Maheshwari, <i>The New York Times</i>, 2018)</li> </ul>
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Our digital future			
Class	Date	Topic	Readings (to be completed <i>before</i> class)
21	Wed, April 14	“Virtual” Reality: How Tech Distorts Truth, Desire, and Connection	<p>TBD</p> <p><b>Optional Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Supernormal: How the Internet is Changing Our Memories and Our Minds” (Ward, <i>Psychological Inquiry</i>, 2013)</li> <li>• “Welcome to Hyperreality: Where the Physical and Virtual Worlds Converge” (Bakhtiari, <i>Forbes</i>, 2020)</li> </ul>
22	Mon, April 19	Consumer Behavior in a (post)-COVID World	<p>“How Jobs, Bosses and Firms May Improve After the Crisis” (Grant, <i>The Economist</i>, 2020)</p> <p>“Why Coming Up with Effective Interventions to Address COVID-19 Is So Hard” (Lewis Jr., <i>FiveThirtyEight</i>, 2020)</p> <p><b>Optional Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Beyond Politics—Promoting Covid-19 Vaccination in the United States” (Wood and Schulman, <i>The New England Journal of Medicine</i>, 2021)</li> </ul>

### Technology and consumer welfare

Class	Date	Topic	Readings (to be completed <i>before</i> class)
23	Wed, April 21	Happy and Healthy in a Digital World	<p>“If money doesn’t make you happy, then you probably aren’t spending it right” (Dunn, Gilbert and Wilson, <i>Journal of Consumer Psychology</i>, 2011)</p> <p>“Increasing Social Connection While Social Distancing” (Lieberman and Schroeder, <i>Behavioral Scientist</i>, 2020)</p> <p><b>Optional Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Why Zoom Meetings are So Dissatisfying” (Johnson, <i>The Economist</i>, 2020)</li> </ul>

### Behavioral research “in the wild” (pt. 2)

Class	Date	Topic	Readings (to be completed <i>before</i> class)
24 + 25	April 26 + April 28	Group Project Presentations	<p><b><u>DUE: Group Project White Paper (ALL papers due at 10:59am Monday, April 26)</u></b></p>

### Course wrap-up and test two

Class	Date	Topic	Readings (to be completed <i>before</i> class)
26	Mon, May 3	Course Wrap-Up and Review	--
27	Wed, May 5	<b>TEST TWO</b>	--

## QUICK REFERENCE: ASSIGNMENTS & DUE DATES

★ ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE ON THE DATE/TIME SHOWN IN THE “DUE” COLUMN ★

CLASS		ASSIGNMENT		
Date	Topic	Open	Due	
Jan 20 (Wed)	Intro			
Jan 25 (Mon)	Consumer Research	Laddering		
Jan 27 (Wed)	MAO			
Feb 1 (Mon)	Overload & Fatigue		Laddering White Paper (10:59am, Feb 1)	
Feb 3 (Wed)	Attention			
Feb 8 (Mon)	Perception	Conjoint	Laddering Peer Review (11:59pm, Feb 6)	
Feb 10 (Wed)	Learning & Memory I			
Feb 15 (Mon)	Learning & Memory II		Conjoint White Paper (10:59am, Feb 15)	
Feb 17 (Wed)	Attitudes			
Feb 22 (Mon)	Research Workshop	Experiment	Conjoint Peer Review (11:59pm, Feb 20)	
Feb 24 (Wed)	Persuasion			
Mar 1 (Mon)	Test I Review		Expt. White Paper (10:59am, Mar 1)	
Mar 3 (Wed)	Test I			
Mar 8 (Mon)	No Class		Experiment Peer Review	
Mar 10 (Wed)	No Class			↓
Mar 15 (Mon)	Spring Break			↓
Mar 17 (Wed)	Spring Break		DUE 11:59pm Friday, March 19	
Mar 22 (Mon)	A/B Testing	Group Project		
Mar 24 (Wed)	JDM I			
Mar 29 (Mon)	JDM II			
Mar 31 (Wed)	Satisfaction & Regret		Project Proposal (10:59am, Mar 31)	
Apr 5 (Mon)	Social Influence			
Apr 7 (Wed)	Digital Footprints			
Apr 12 (Mon)	AI and IoT			
Apr 14 (Wed)	Virtual Reality			
Apr 19 (Mon)	Covid-19			
Apr 21 (Wed)	Tech and Well-Being			
Apr 26 (Mon)	Project Presentations		Project Report (10:59am, Apr 26)	
Apr 28 (Wed)	Project Presentations			
May 3 (Mon)	Test II Review			
May 5 (Wed)	Test II			