CIEE Buenos Aires, Argentina

Course title: Argentine Consumer Culture
Course code: MKTG 3101 BAAR
Programs offering course: Buenos Aires Open Campus Block
Open Campus Track: Business
Language of instruction: English
U.S. semester credits: 3.00
Contact hours: 45.00
Term: Spring Block I 2021

Course Description

Consumption, as any other human behavior, is defined by values and belief systems, grounding factors of what people feel and think. At the same time, behavior and consumption patterns respond to a context: the consumer’s conditions of living and the business plans implemented by companies. Under the assumption that qualitative research can provide much valued information on values and belief systems, this course teaches how to understand and research consumer behavior in order to identify consumption patterns in Argentina.

Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

- Design exploratory research protocols through secondary data research and ethnographic methodologies in order to determine cultural differences affecting local consumer behavior.
- Develop ethnographic research activities in order to determine hypotheses that have an impact on prospective business plans.
- Analyze findings in order to identify values and system of beliefs affecting local consumer behavior.

Course Prerequisites

None

Methods of Instruction

This course will be taught using lectures and readings (from marketing and business to social research topics), class workshops, group discussions along with the uses of marketing teams, market field-trips, exploratory and qualitative market research, group presentations, presentations by guest speakers and visits to local and foreign companies. Classroom activities include lectures and workshops on marketing planning and non-controllable variables (legal, political, economic, financial, social, cultural, demographic, environmental and competitive variables) in the local context; social and local cultural variables affecting consumer behavior and consumer decision making, methods of research in order to spot cultural differences influencing consumption, writing, setting up and executing a marketing research a plan, submitting reports and presenting findings and making recommendations.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Work-in-Progress reports 20%
2. Midterm - Marketing Research Proposal 20%
3. Group Presentation 20%
4. Final Report - Marketing Research Project Final Presentation 20%
5. Participation 20%

TOTAL 100%

Course Requirements

Work-in-Progress reports
Each report should be 375 - 750 words and must follow APA citation style if using any references. In Report 1, students will write a report on characteristics found in the local marketplace; differences are to be set vis-a-vis their home marketplace. Observations should be explored based on information obtained through secondary data research. Based on Report 1 and after exploring a marketing problem, in Report 2, students will propose different hypotheses pertaining the problem's cause or causes.

Midterm - Marketing Research Proposal

Students must present a Marketing Research Proposal under the following format: the report must be at least 2000 words, written in DIN A4 format sheets, Arial font 11, single spaced between lines, double spaced between paragraphs. The Marketing Research Proposal will cover the following items:

1. Marketing Problem
2. Marketing Research Problem
3. General and Detailed Marketing Research Objectives
4. Respondent's demographic, attitudinal and consumption patterns
5. Place / Location
6. Research Design
7. Method of Research
8. Special Considerations / Logistics
9. Dates
10. Contact

The plan's format will be explained during class; after the explanation, a handout of the plan's model will be distributed among students.

Group Presentation

Students must make a presentation on a market research problem based on secondary data research and participant / non-participant observation. The presentation will be 15 minutes long / 7 to 8 PowerPoint slides, each taking up to two minute long expositions. The presentation will be evaluated according to the following criteria: the quality of the data provided, i.e. sources used (must be from well-known organizations) and dates the data has been published; the insights reported after participant / non-participant observation research done; application of key marketing concepts; and quality of the presentation, which must follow professional criteria.

Final Report - Marketing Research Project Final Presentation

Students will conduct research as per the marketing research plan: after is completion, students will analyze findings in order to arrive to conclusions, which will be used for recommendations. The report will be formally presented to the class and discussions will be held around them. The report must be no more than 3500, written in DIN A4 format sheets, Arial font 11, single spaced between lines, double spaced between paragraphs. The presentation will be 15 minutes long / 7 to 8 Powerpoint transparencies, each taking up to two-minutes long expositions.

Participation

Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared in advance of each class session and to have regular attendance. Students must clearly demonstrate they have engaged with the materials as directed, for example, through classroom discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

Attendance

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all absences will result in a lower participation grade for any affected CIEE course. Due to the intensive schedules for Open Campus and Short Term programs, absences that constitute more than 10% of the total course will result in a written warning.

Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

For CIEE classes, excessively tardy (over 15 minutes late) students must be marked absent.
Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as to any required field placement. Students may not miss placement/work hours at an internship or service learning site unless approved in advance by the Academic Director and placement supervisor. All students must complete all of the requisite 100 minimum work hours on site at the internship or service learning placement to be eligible for academic credit.

Students who miss class for personal travel, including unforeseen delays that arise as a result of personal travel, will be marked as absent. No make-up or re-sit opportunity will be provided.

Attendance policies also apply to any required class excursion, with the exception that some class excursions cannot accommodate any tardiness, and students risk being marked as absent if they fail to be present at the appointed time.

Absences for classes will lead to the following penalties:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Total Course Hours Missed</th>
<th>Minimum Penalty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 10%</td>
<td>Participation graded as per class requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 – 20%</td>
<td>Participation graded as per class requirements, 3% grade penalty &amp; written warning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 20%</td>
<td>Automatic course failure, and possible expulsion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N.B. Course schedule is subject to change due to study tours, excursions, or local holidays. Final schedules will be included in the final syllabus provided to students on site.

**Weekly Schedule**

**Week 1**

Class: 1.1 Introduction to Class and Argentine Consumerism Culture

The first part of the lecture will be on the course introductions; this includes its description, explanation, topics covered, learning objectives and the course’s working plan. The second part of the lecture will focus on basic marketing concepts, i.e. the explanation of needs and wants, at first through the student’s personal experiences and later on according to marketing definitions, the differences between needs and wants and their relation with benefits, the concept of exchange and the marketing plan. Lamb, Charles W., Hair, Joe F., McDaniel, Carl (2011). Essentials of Marketing. South Western – Cengage Learning. Pp. 1 - 6, What is Marketing - Please be aware that this reading is to be done after the class.

Class: 1.2 An Introductory Approach to Non-Controllable Variables Affecting Marketing Plan

The class will begin with the student’s perceptions on key non-controllable variables affecting their daily life; the exercise will be done through role playing. The instructor will provide key hypothetical situations and students will note which variables they can and cannot control. Later the instructor will conduct an explanatory lecture to establish analogies with business cases, descriptions and examples. Excerpts from Lamb, Charles W., Hair, Joe F., McDaniel, Carl (2011). Essentials of Marketing. South Western – Cengage Learning. Pp. 102 - 133, The Marketing Environment.

**Week 2**

Class: 2.1 Culture Universals and Differences
The class will consist of a guided discussion addressing values, culture and belief systems; students will expose their perceptions on American vs. local values around time, space, interactions, mindsets and behaviors. During the second part of the class the instructor will take students to a market to visit an American fast food coffee shop and later to a local coffee shop. Students will observe differences between the way services are provided and what is effectively being sold beyond the obvious; these will show how the concepts of time and space across cultures influence marketing actions.


**Due date for Work in Progress Report N° 1.**

**Class: 2.2 Social and Economic Particularities Affecting Segmentation Basis**

There will be a class activity on how marketing actions target segments: the instructor will show local ads available in YouTube and ask students who they think these ads are targeted to. This activity will be followed by a lecture on segmentation basis and descriptors and a field trip to a shopping center in which students will spot multi segmentation marketing actions – that of the shopping center and that of stores.


**Class: 2.3 The Decision Making Process**

The lecture will focus on how purchases are decided for consumer, shopping, specialty and unsought products and which factors determine consumer behavior. Students will work on cases; however, discussions will follow after different values and systems of beliefs are taken into account: students will give feedback on analytical work done by classmates.


**Week 3**

**Class: 3.1 The Marketing Research Pan**

The class will examine market research plan formats and learn how to complete a market research request. The instructor will explain each of the plan’s sections and provide criteria for the selection of research designs. After covering these topics, students will learn how companies work with Marketing Research plans, how they are analyzed, adapted, approved or rejected. Students will learn, through a guided workshop, how to write a market research plan.


**Class: 3.2 The Ethnographic Record**

The class will open with a lecture on introductory concepts on market research designs, exploratory designs and ethnographies, its use, and how to analyze records (notes on participant and non-participant observation) for further marketing insights. The lecture will be followed by a class workshop on the topic in which students will determine further marketing research steps based on secondary data research.


**Class: 3.3 Organizing Observations**

During this class, the instructor will explain how findings are used when planning and setting up
qualitative research using focus groups and in-depth interviews. Student will be given a description of general requirements in the case of qualitative studies, how to set these up and how to implement them. The subject will be approached through cases given to students; they will identify and provide operational definitions, set hypotheses, spot characteristics that will determine which kind of qualitative research will be implemented, define set-up requirements and determine criteria for supervision.


**Due date for Work in Progress Report Nº 2**

**Week 4**

Class: 4.1 Discussion Guidelines

This class will focus on the relation between the objectives mentioned in the market research plan and the questions that are going to be asked to respondents; the instructors provide criteria on how to define them accordingly and how to determine if some conditions apply in order to adapt them while conducting fieldwork. Students will work on the definite set of questions they will ask respondents.


Class: 4.2 Workshop: Group Presentation

Students will make a Group Presentation as mentioned in Course Requirements. Based in this, they will participate in a workshop on interviewing: warm-up, empathy, probing, working with stimulus, concept testing, projective techniques and debriefing.

Class: 4.3 Guest Speaker

An expert on market research will talk about non-structured and structured methods and changes on data management for marketing insight. **Due: Midterm due**

**Week 5**

Class: 5.1 Company Visit

The students will visit the branch of a multinational corporation in Argentina. The goal of the visit is to explain students how they adapt marketing actions to local standards.

Class: 5.2 Recruitment and Fieldwork

The class lecture will be on technical aspects used in order to recruit respondents: operational definitions will be the base for contacting them and determine if they respond to profiles mentioned in the marketing research plan. Students will write these documents and will use them in order to recruit respondents they will be interviewing in future classes. After documents have been written they will be tested through role playing.


Class: 5.3 Fieldwork

This class will be used for role-playing interviews through Skype. One student will conduct the interviews while another one will take notes; all market research objectives will be covered and unexpected questions will be asked if needed. A third student will supervise the interview together with the help of the instructor.

Analyzing Results and Further Marketing Concepts in the local context

During the class the instructor will explain how an analysis of results is done. In order to complete the analysis, students will be shown templates they can choose from. The class will also explore concepts on price, place, product and promotion since the students will be required to use these concepts during the analysis of findings. Price will be explored as a dimension of value, which changes according to social and cultural factors. Characteristics of consumer, shopping, specialty and unsought goods will be explored; distribution issues will be explained according to the market’s physical characteristics and customs. Promotion will be explained as the ways offers are made public. Class workshop will focus on cultural differences affecting marketing activities.


The Final Report: Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

The instructor will show the students the differences between three concepts: the report of observations as close to reality as possible, interpretations around observations using sociological and marketing concepts and recommendations given to internal or external clients, i.e. the professionals the report is directed to. Students will work on the final report along the explanation of concepts.


Due: All Group Presentations are due for this day.

Final Report

Students will present their final report to the class; a group discussion will follow in the same terms it is done among members of the marketing team. At the end of the class students will submit a copy of the presentation and the final report.

Due: Presentation and Submission of the Final Report

Course Materials

Readings


Online Resources

Local newspapers and magazines needed for secondary data research


Clarín (national newspaper): http://www.clarin.com.ar


Ambito Financiero (national economic and financial newspaper): http://www.ambito.com/  
El Cronista Comercial (ditto): http://www.cronista.com/  
Mercado (national business and marketing magazine): http://www.mercado.com.ar/  
Apertura (ditto): http://www.apertura.com/secciones/target/  

Advertising campaigns in YouTube:

- Changing gender roles: Axe deodorant  
  - La Donna e Mobile: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ti0jk8aFZxg. Accessed October, 30th, 2017  