



**Carleton**  
UNIVERSITY

**SPROTT**  
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

**CARLETON UNIVERSITY  
SPROTT SCHOOL OF BUSINESS  
BUSI 4209  
WINTER SEMESTER 2021  
CONSUMER CULTURE THEORY  
LAST REVISED: 22 DECEMBER 2020**

**Instructor: Dr. Leighann Neilson**

**Office: 913 Dunton Tower (NOTE: Due to Covid 19 I will be working from home during winter semester; please email me if you wish to contact me)**

**Office Hours: TBA**

**Email: leighann.neilson@carleton.ca**

**TA: Narmin Banu**

**Office Hours: TBA**

**Email: narminbanu@cmail.carleton.ca**

**Modality: \*Online (\_\_\_ hrs asynchronous and/or 36 hrs synchronous)**

**Course Meets: Tuesdays, 2:35 to 5:25 p.m.**

**Pre-requisites & precluded Courses:**

Third year standing and BUSI 3209 (with a grade of C or better). The School of Business enforces all prerequisites. Precludes additional credit for BUSI 4206 (no longer offered).

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**Course Calendar description from the 2020/2021 University calendar:**

Consumer behaviour from a macro and interpretive approach, as a social and cultural phenomenon; the relationships between consumers, the marketplace and cultural meaning. Lecture three hours a week.

**Course Description:**

This course is designed to provide you with:

- ❑ an understanding of consumer behaviour from a social and cultural perspective;
- ❑ an ability to apply consumer behaviour theories to a variety of marketing contexts;
- ❑ the skills to design, conduct, interpret, and convey the results of consumer behaviour research in written form.

**Learning Outcomes:**

To achieve these objectives, you will be asked to:

- ❑ learn the key terms, definitions and concepts used in the field;
- ❑ identify and discuss the major concepts and processes that characterize consumer behaviour from social and cultural perspectives;
- ❑ demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of the course material by conducting consumer research projects;
- ❑ engage in your own consumer behaviour with an increased awareness of the internal and external forces at work, and
- ❑ share with the class your applications of consumer culture theory.

**Reading(s)/Textbook(s)/Required Materials (incl. technical requirements, i.e., webcam):**

There is no required textbook for this course. Instead, we will be reading journal articles and watching videos you can access through the Carleton library. To access the readings, login to cuLearn and click on this course site. Scroll down until you see the ‘Library Reserves’ heading on the right hand side. Click on ‘View course in Ares’ and scroll through the list of readings on reserve until you find the one you want.

Alternatively, you can find most of the articles for yourself by using the Business Source Complete database from the library’s website and entering the appropriate search terms.

Some of the videos we will watch are available on YouTube. For others, you will need to follow the link under Course Reserves on cuLearn.

**Zoom Classes**

Classes will be held using the ZOOM platform. The link to the ZOOM session will be posted on cuLearn prior to class.

To fully participate in the course, you will need to have access to the Internet, a webcam and a microphone. If you do not already have a ZOOM account, you must create a free ZOOM account. This can be done by going to (<https://zoom.us/>) and using your Carleton email address (e.g., [Firstname.Lastname@carleton.ca](mailto:Firstname.Lastname@carleton.ca)) – **DO NOT** use your gmail account. When ZOOM classes are scheduled, a class/group meeting link and passcode will be posted on cuLearn. At the appointed time (preferably a minute or two before) you can click on the Zoom meeting link and enter the meeting passcode and sign in using your Zoom account and password. I will then admit you to the class/meeting. To make things simple, you have the option to download a Zoom meeting app to your device (<https://zoom.us/download>) and this will give you near instantaneous access.

Zoom classes may be recorded by the professor. The red light in “record” found on the Zoom toolbar will inform you that the class is being recorded. The instructor and the TA may view the recordings for grading and any other academic and/or administrative reasons.

**COURSE NORMS****Use of cuLearn**

The course website runs under the cuLearn course management system and contains all the pertinent course information. This site will be the primary source for course announcements and distribution of materials including assignments, supplemental readings, etc. Grades will be posted to cuLearn as soon as they become available. In line with Sprott policy, it is your responsibility to check your grades by clicking on ‘Grades.’

In case of class cancellation, an announcement will be posted on cuLearn as soon as possible.

### **Email Policy**

In keeping with Carleton University policy, your @cmail accounts must be used for any enquiries which involve confidential student information (e.g., about grades or health issues). Please be aware that I respond to email between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday to Friday. I will endeavor to answer your emails within 48 hours; you should not expect an immediate response. I will not answer by email questions that have already been asked and answered in class. Please use the cuLearn course discussion group to ascertain whether your classmates can assist you.

### **Late Penalty**

Late assignments are penalized at the rate of 5% of the value of the assignment per day (e.g., an assignment worth 15 marks will be penalized 0.75 marks per day). All assignments should be uploaded via the assignment function in cuLearn before midnight Ottawa time on the day they are due.

### **Intellectual Property Rights**

Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s). **I claim my intellectual property rights over all materials I have prepared for this course. I do not grant permission to anyone to share these materials in digital or hard copy via course note sharing websites or in person.**

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS & METHODS OF EVALUATION:**

A variety of evaluation methods will be used over the course to allow you to demonstrate your mastery of the material. These methods include:

### **1. Consumption Reflection Assignments (Individual Assignments)**

During the semester you will complete two assignments in which you will interpret your own consumer behaviour in light of the readings we have done in class. Descriptions of these assignments will be posted on the cuLearn site, along with grading rubrics.

### **2. Class Discussion Leadership (Pairs Assignment)**

Working with a partner, you will be responsible for reviewing one of the required readings and leading the class discussion of that paper. A detailed description is available on the course cuLearn site. You can sign up with a partner for this assignment on cuLearn (look in the section called Class Discussion Leadership. Please note that given the number of students enrolled in the class, if you miss your assigned Discussion Leadership week, I may not be able to arrange an alternative date for you to complete this assignment.

### **3. Consumer Behaviour Research Project (Group Assignment)**

Working as a part of a group of 4 to 5 students, you will select a consumer behaviour topic to research in further detail. I anticipate that you may need to collect data for this project, thus the required research ethics forms will be made available on cuLearn, along with a description of the minimum requirements for the final research paper. You can self-select into a group on cuLearn. Look under the section called Consumer Behaviour Research Project.

#### 4. Take Home Exam (Individual Assignment)

During the last week of classes, we will watch a video together in class. Following that, I will outline the requirements for the take home exam, which will be based, in part, on that video. All take home exams are due on the last day of exams, April 27, 2021 for Winter semester 2021.

#### Inability to Complete a Group Assignment Due to Illness or Other Emergencies:

The situation of students who cannot contribute to the group marketing plan assignments due to illness or family emergency will be dealt with according to the provisions of your Group Contract. Please be sure that you contribute to and are aware of the provisions outlined in your group's contract.

#### Infractions of Academic Integrity

As part of your group assignment, you must complete and upload the 'Declaration of Academic Integrity' form available on cuLearn. Since you are considered to be working on the entire assignment together, **you are all jointly and individually responsible for any infractions of academic integrity**. This means that if one of you plagiarizes or fails to cite sources, all of you will receive the same penalty. You do not have recourse to the excuse that you personally did not complete that portion of the assignment – this is GROUP work.

#### SUMMARY OF EVALUATION COMPONENTS

Assignments	Marks	Due Date
<b>Individual work (45%)</b>		
- "The Storied Life Of..." Consumption Reflection Assignment 1	15	February 9, 2021
- "Food Consumption & Sustainability" Consumption Reflection Assignment 2	15	March 16, 2021
- Take Home Exam: "Consumption & the Role of the Marketer"	15	April 27, 2021
<b>Pairs work (20%)</b>		
- Leading class discussion	10	TBA
- Article/Video summary & critique	10	Same day as class discussion
<b>Group work (35%)</b>		
- Research proposal	5	January 26, 2021
- Research ethics application & forms	0	February 2, 2021
- Research paper	20	April 6, 2021
- Presentation of research results	10	TBA
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	

#### Satisfactory In-term Performance

- The criteria and the standards for Satisfactory In-term Performance are as follows:
  - Minimum grade of 50% on Research proposal, paper and presentation (overall, after any peer evaluations have been taken into account)
- Unsatisfactory In-term Performance in this course will lead to:
  - Failure in this course Yes  No

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

While every attempt will be made to keep to the schedule listed below, unforeseen circumstances may necessitate modifications throughout the semester.

<b>Session/ Date</b>	<b>Discussion Topic</b>	<b>Assigned Reading</b>	<b>Discussion Leader(s)</b>
	Pre-course preparation	1. <i>Video: Symbols, Values &amp; Norms: Crash Course Sociology #10:</i> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kGrVhM_Gi8k&amp;feature=emb_logo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kGrVhM_Gi8k&amp;feature=emb_logo</a>	
		2. <i>Video: Cultures, Subcultures &amp; Countercultures: Crash Course Sociology #11:</i> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RV50AV7-Iwc&amp;feature=emb_logo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RV50AV7-Iwc&amp;feature=emb_logo</a>	
1 Jan 12	Overview of course requirements  <b>Other Ways of Studying Consumer Behaviour</b>	1. <i>Journal Article: Arnould, Eric J. and Craig J. Thompson (2005), "Consumer Culture Theory (CCT): Twenty Years of Research," Journal of Consumer Research, 31 (March), 868-882.</i>	Prof Neilson
		2. <i>Journal Article: Holbrook, Morris B. and Elizabeth C. Hirschman (1982), "The Experiential Aspects of Consumption: Consumer Fantasies, Feelings, and Fun," Journal of Consumer Research, 9 (September), 132-140.</i>	
2 Jan 19	<b>Central Concepts in Consumer Culture Theory</b>  <b>Discussion of Group Research Project (including research ethics)</b>	1. <i>Journal Article: Firat, et. al. (2013), "Consumption, Consumer Culture and Consumer Society," Journal of Community Positive Practices, 13(1), 182-203.</i>	
		2. <i>Journal Article: Holt, Douglas B. (1995), "How consumers consume: a typology of consumption practices," Journal of Consumer Research, 22 (June), 1-16.</i>	

		3. Overview of Research Ethics process	Prof Neilson
3 Jan 26	<b>Consumers' Identity Projects</b>  <b>Group Research Project Proposal DUE</b>  <b>Discussion of 1<sup>st</sup> Individual Assignment</b>	1. <i>Journal Article</i> : Belk, Russell W. (1988), "Possessions and the Extended Self," <i>Journal of Consumer Research</i> , 15 (2), 139-168.	
		2. <i>Journal Article</i> : Ahuvia, Aaron C. (2005), "Beyond the Extended Self: Loved Objects and Consumers' Narratives," <i>Journal of Consumer Research</i> , 32 (June), 171-184.	
		3. <i>Journal Article</i> : Epp, Amber M. and Linda L. Price (2009), "The Storied Life of Singularized Objects: Forces of Agency and Network Transformation," <i>Journal of Consumer Research</i> , 36 (Feb), 820-837.	
4 Feb 2	<b>Marketplace Cultures</b>  <b>Group Ethics Applications Due</b>	1. <i>Journal Article</i> : Muniz, Jr., Albert M. and Thomas C. O'Guinn (2001), "Brand Community," <i>Journal of Consumer Research</i> , 27 (4), 412-432.	
		2. <i>Journal Article</i> : Goulding, Christina, Avi Shankar and Robin Canniford (2013), "Learning to be tribal: facilitating the formation of consumer tribes," <i>European Journal of Marketing</i> , 47 (5/6), 813-832.	
		3. <i>Journal Article</i> : Schouten, John and James H. McAlexander (1995), "Subcultures of Consumption: An Ethnography of the New Bikers," <i>Journal of Consumer Research</i> , 22(1), 43-61.	
5 Feb 9	<b>Food Consumption &amp; Sustainability</b>	1. <i>Video</i> : The Scandalous Supermarket Waste that Stays Invisible: <a href="https://medium.com/eat-grim/the-">https://medium.com/eat-grim/the-</a>	

	<p><b>First Individual Assignment Due</b></p> <p><b>Discussion of Second Individual Assignment</b></p>	<p><a href="https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wasman.2015.07.022">scandalous-supermarkets-waste-that-stays-invisible-778223339762</a></p>	
		<p>2. <i>Journal Article</i>: Parizeau, K., M. von Massow and R. Martin (2015), “Household-level dynamics of food waste production and related beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours in Guelph, Ontario”, <i>Waste Management</i>, 35, 207-217.</p>	
		<p>3. <i>Journal Article</i>: Loebnitz, N., G. Schuitema and K.G. Grunert (2015), “Who buys oddly shaped food and why? Impacts of food shape abnormality and organic labeling on purchase intentions,” <i>Psychology &amp; Marketing</i>, 32(4), 408-421.</p>	
<p>6 Feb 16</p>	<p><b>Reading Week – No Classes</b></p>		
<p>7 Feb 23</p>	<p><b>Socio-Historic Patterning of Consumption</b></p>	<p>1. <i>Journal Article</i>: Thompson, Craig J. (1996), “Caring Consumers: Gendered Consumption Meanings and the Juggling Lifestyle,” <i>Journal of Consumer Research</i>, 22 (March), 388-407.</p>	
		<p>2. <i>Journal Article</i>: Crockett, David (2017), “Paths to Respectability: Consumption and Stigma Management in the Contemporary Black Middle Class,” <i>Journal of Consumer Research</i>, 44 (3), 554-581.</p>	
		<p>3. <i>Journal Article</i>: Joy, Annamma (2001), “Gift Giving in Hong Kong and the Continuum of Social Ties,” <i>Journal of Consumer Research</i>, 28 (September), 239-256.</p>	
<p>8 Mar 2</p>	<p><b>Mass-Mediated Marketplace Ideologies and Consumers’</b></p>	<p>1. <i>Journal Article</i>: Thompson, Craig J. and Diana Haytko (1997), “Speaking of Fashion: Consumers’ Uses of Fashion Discourses and the</p>	

	<b>Interpretive Strategies</b>	Appropriation of Countervailing Cultural Meanings,” <i>Journal of Consumer Research</i> , 24 (June), 15-42.	
		2. <i>Journal Article</i> : Lee, Ji Young, Holly Halter, Kim K.P. Johnson and Haewon Ju (2013), “Investigating fashion disposition with young consumers,” <i>Young Consumers</i> , 14 (1), 67-78.	
		3. <i>Journal Article</i> : Gregson, Nicky, Alan Metcalfe and Louise Crewe (2009), “Practices of Object Maintenance and Repair,” <i>Journal of Consumer Culture</i> , 9 (2), 248-272.	
		4. <i>Video</i> : The true cost of fast fashion: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tLfNU0-8ts">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tLfNU0-8ts</a>  5. <i>Video</i> : The True Cost: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxhCpLzreCw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxhCpLzreCw</a>	
9 Mar 9	<b>Conspicuous Consumption and Status</b>	1. <i>Journal Article</i> : Wang, Yajin and Vladas Griskevicius (2014), “Conspicuous Consumption, Relationships, and Rivals: Women’s Luxury Products as Signals to Other Women,” <i>Journal of Consumer Research</i> , 40 (February), 834-854.	
		2. <i>Journal Article</i> : Walther, Carol S. and Jennifer A. Sandlin (2013), “Green capital and social reproduction within families practising voluntary simplicity in the US,” <i>International Journal of Consumer Studies</i> , 37 (1), 36-45.	
		3. <i>Journal Article</i> : Bellezza, Silvia, Neeru Paharia, and Anat Keinan (2017), “Conspicuous Consumption of Time: When Busyness and Lack of Leisure Time Become a Status	



		Symbol,” <i>Journal of Consumer Research</i> , 44 (June), 118-138.	
10 Mar 16	<b>Disposition or Not?</b>  <b>Second Individual Assignment Due</b>	1. <i>Journal Article</i> : Lastovicka, John L. and Karen V. Fernandez (2005), “Three Paths to Disposition: The Movement of Meaningful Possessions to Strangers,” <i>Journal of Consumer Research</i> , 31 (March), 813-823.	
		2. <i>Journal Article</i> : Cherrier, Helene (2010), “Custodian Behaviour: A material expression of anti-consumerism,” <i>Consumption, Markets &amp; Culture</i> , 13 (3), 259-272.	
		3. <i>Journal Article</i> : Cherrier, Helene and Teresa Ponnor (2010), “A study of hoarding behavior and attachment to material possessions,” <i>Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal</i> , 13 (1), 8-23.	
		4. <i>Video</i> : Beyond Hoarding (see Course Reserves for the link)	
11 Mar 23		Research Project Presentations	
12 Mar 30		Research Project Presentations	
13 Apr 6	<b>Take Home Exam Assigned</b>  <b>Group Research Project Paper Due</b>	<i>Video</i> : Consumed: Identity and Anxiety in an Age of Plenty (see Course Reserves for the link)  Followed by discussion of take home exam	Prof. Neilson
April 27, 2021		<b>Take Home Exam Due</b>	

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### Course Sharing Websites

Materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s).

### Required calculator in BUSI course examinations

If you are purchasing a calculator, we recommend any one of the following options: Texas Instruments BA II Plus (including Pro Model), Hewlett Packard HP 12C (including Platinum model), Staples Financial Calculator, Sharp EL-738C & Hewlett Packard HP 10bII

### Group work

The Sprott School of Business encourages group assignments in the school for several reasons. They provide you with opportunities to develop and enhance interpersonal, communication, leadership, follower-ship and other group skills. Group assignments are also good for learning integrative skills for putting together a complex task. Your professor may assign one or more group tasks/assignments/projects in this course. Before embarking on a specific problem as a group, it is your responsibility to ensure that the problem is meant to be a group assignment and not an individual one.

In accordance with the Carleton University Undergraduate Calendar (p 34), the letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C+ = 67-69	D+ = 57-59
A = 85-89	B = 73-76	C = 63-66	D = 53-56
A - = 80-84	B - = 70-72	C - = 60-62	D - = 50-52
F = Below 50			

Grades entered by Registrar:

WDN = Withdrawn from the course

DEF = Deferred

### Academic Regulations

University rules regarding registration, withdrawal, appealing marks, and most anything else you might need to know can be found on the university's website, here:

<http://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/>

### Requests for Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows:

### Pregnancy obligation

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: [carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf](http://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf)

### Religious obligation

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known

to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: [carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf](https://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf)

### **Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. [carleton.ca/pmc](https://carleton.ca/pmc)

### **Survivors of Sexual Violence**

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and its survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: [carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support](https://carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support)

### **Accommodation for Student Activities**

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

For more information on academic accommodation, please contact the departmental administrator or visit: [students.carleton.ca/course-outline](https://students.carleton.ca/course-outline)

### **Academic Integrity**

Violations of academic integrity are a serious academic offence. Violations of academic integrity – presenting another's ideas, arguments, words or images as your own, using unauthorized material, misrepresentation, fabricating or misrepresenting research data, unauthorized co-operation or collaboration or completing work for another student – weaken the quality of the degree and will not be tolerated. Penalties may include; a grade of Failure on the submitted work and/or course; academic probation; a refusal of permission to continue or to register in a specific degree program; suspension from full-time studies; suspension from all studies at Carleton; expulsion from Carleton, amongst others. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and follow the Carleton University Student Academic Integrity Policy which is available, along with resources for compliance at: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>.

### **Sprott Student Services**

The Sprott student services office, located in 710 Dunton Tower, offers academic advising, study skills advising, and overall academic success support. If you are having a difficult time with this course or others, or just need some guidance on how to successfully complete

your Sprott degree, please drop in\* any weekday between 8:30am and 4:30pm. Our advisors are happy to discuss grades, course selection, tutoring, concentrations, and will ensure that you get connected with the resources you need to succeed!  
<http://sprott.carleton.ca/students/undergraduate/learning-support/>

*\* Note that the office is physically closed. However, e-drop in is available between 8:30-4:30 until social distancing requirements are updated by the Province.*

### **Centre for Student Academic Support**

The Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS) is a centralized collection of learning support services designed to help students achieve their goals and improve their learning both inside and outside the classroom. CSAS offers academic assistance with course content, academic writing and skills development. Visit CSAS on the 4th floor of MacOdrum Library or online at: [carleton.ca/csas](http://carleton.ca/csas).

### **Important Information:**

- Students must always retain a hard copy of all work that is submitted.
  - All final grades are subject to the Dean's approval.
  - For us to respond to your emails, we need to see your full name, CU ID, and the email must be written from your valid CARLETON address. Therefore, in order to respond to your inquiries, please send all email from your Carleton CMail account. If you do not have or have yet to activate this account, you may wish to do so by visiting <https://carleton.ca/its/get-started/new-students-2/>
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