

Applied Social Psychology in Business Research Module 2, 2022-2023

Course Information

Instructor: Dandan Tong (Assistant Professor)

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Office Hour: Tue & Fri 16:00-17:00 pm (By appointment)

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Classes:

Lectures: Tue & Fri 13:30-15:20 pm (Class starts on Nov 1st)

Venue: TBD

1. Course Description

1.1 Context

Course overview:

The objective of this course is to provide students with an understanding of how to develop theories and frameworks that aid our study of business research. In addition to studying the literature, this course tries to help students identify interesting research questions, develop appropriate studies for empirical or experimental tests, and evaluate research methods in behavioral study. In each class, there are about one to two articles or book chapters that will be discussed in depth. Some additional readings are also provided for further studies. Class activities will include lectures, student presentations, and discussion. It is hoped that through this course, students can develop their own research ideas and proposals relevant to business studies, which is crucial to the successful completion of their own thesis research.

Prerequisites: None.

1.2 Textbooks and Reading Materials

Textbook

The course is not based on any one textbook. Lecture notes and supplemental materials will be provided to students through the Course Management System. The readings are picked and chosen from a variety of texts, papers, and resources.

Supplementary Reading Materials

1. Hogg, M.A. & Vaughan, G.M. (2014). *Social psychology* (6th ed.). Essex, England: Pearson.

2. Learning Outcomes

2.1 Intended Learning Outcomes

Learning Goals	Objectives	Assessment (YES with details or NO)
1. Our graduates will be effective communicators.	1.1. Our students will produce quality business and research-oriented documents.	Course Assignment
	1.2. Students are able to professionally present their ideas and also logically explain and defend their argument.	In-class discussion, Course Assignment
2. Our graduates will be skilled in team work and leadership.	2.1. Students will be able to lead and participate in group for projects, discussion, and presentation.	In-class discussion
	2.2. Students will be able to apply leadership theories and related skills.	Not applicable
3. Our graduates will be trained in ethics.	3.1. In a case setting, students will use appropriate techniques to analyze business problems and identify the ethical aspects, provide a solution and defend it.	In-class discussion, Assignment
	3.2. Our students will practice ethics in the duration of the program.	Course Assignment
4. Our graduates will have a global perspective.	4.1. Students will have an international exposure.	In-class discussion
5. Our graduates will be skilled in problem-solving and critical thinking.	5.1. Our students will have a good understanding of fundamental theories in their fields.	Course Assignment
	5.2. Our students will be prepared to face problems in various business settings and find solutions.	In-class discussion
	5.3. Our students will demonstrate competency in critical thinking.	In-class discussion

2.2 Course specific objectives

After completing this subject, students should be able to:

1. develop the ability to appreciate the influences of psychological processes on human behavior,
2. engage in micro-level analysis of human behaviors, being equipped with the methodology in social science research,
3. apply psychological factors as key variables in their research in marketing, management, and behavioral finance,
4. develop a research proposal which could be relevant to their thesis.

2.3 Assessment/Grading Details

Final grades will be based on your performance for the four main requirements, according to the following weights:

Class Participation	10%
Article review & Presentation (group)	30%
Mid-term exam	20%
Final Project	40%
Presentation (15%)	
Written Report (25%)	

Total:	100%
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2.3.1 Class Participation

Your preparation and attendance are very important for this course. Adequate preparation for, regular attendance of, and full involvement in class sessions including class discussions and group activities are required. Class participation and involvement is worth 10% of the grade and will be based on my perception of your performance and attendance list.

2.3.2 Assignments (Article Review and In-class Presentation)

This course requires an extensive reading, your creative thinking and active participation. Students are expected to attend all sessions of the course and to prepare the readings assigned for discussion in each session, prior to attending the class. General guidelines for preparing the articles for discussion are as follows (The professor will also provide more specific questions for each session to help you think through and integrate across the papers):

- 1) Understand the stated objective of the research, the conceptual framework and hypotheses.
- 2) Check to see if the methodology used is appropriate given the objective of the research. For example, do the independent and dependent variables capture the constructs they are supposed to be measuring?
- 3) What are the results relative to the hypotheses? Can you come up with alternative explanations for the data?
- 4) Identify the contribution of the research. Does it extend theory (i.e., it is theory building) or is it theory testing? Perhaps it defines boundary conditions for certain effects. Or is it applying theory to applications in marketing? Does it make a theoretical, methodological, managerial contribution? Did the authors do what they set out to do? Are you convinced given the data? What are opportunities for further research in that area?

2.3.3 Mid-term Exam

Details on the exam will be delivered in class.

2.3.4 Term Project

The objective of the project is to let students have opportunity to apply the major theories in social psychology in business research, as well as acquire experience in applying these theories in real-world problems.

For this assignment, every group or individual will submit one written document and have a 15-minute presentation. You develop a research idea either from the literature or observation of phenomenon in reality. A detailed description of the project and guidelines for presentations will be provided in class.

You are expected to conduct academic research on consumer behaviour or other human behaviors in business settings. You may consider starting off from identifying a real phenomenon or problem faced by individual consumers, companies or the industry. Then you are going to review the previous literature and find a gap in the literature. The document should include your motivation, literature review, research questions, proposal for methodology (sample/data & analyses), predicted/actual findings, and theoretical and practical contributions.

*It could be either group work or individual work, depending on the class size.

*Submission Deadline

The presentation will be in the last class on Dec 30, 2022. The written report will be due **at or before 5:00 pm on Jan 6, 2023**. Late assignments, where approval for late submission has

not been given, will be penalized at the rate of 10% of the total mark per day, for up to 10 days.

2.4 Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

It is important for a student's effort and credit to be recognized through class assessment. Credits earned for a student work due to efforts done by others are clearly unfair. Deliberate dishonesty is considered academic misconducts, which include plagiarism; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; or altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying of data, research procedures, or data analysis.

All assessments are subject to academic misconduct check. Misconduct check may include reproducing the assessment, providing a copy to another member of faculty, and/or communicate a copy of this assignment to the PHBS Discipline Committee. A suspected plagiarized document/assignment submitted to a plagiarism checking service may be kept in its database for future reference purpose.

Where violation is suspected, penalties will be implemented. The penalties for academic misconduct may include: deduction of honour points, a mark of zero on the assessment, a fail grade for the whole course, and reference of the matter to the Peking University Registrar.

For more information of plagiarism, please refer to *PHBS Student Handbook*.

3. Topics, Teaching and Assessment Schedule

Weeks	Dates	Topic/Activity
1	1 (Nov 1, Tue) 2 (Nov 4, Fri)	- Course introduction - Overview of behavioural research
2	3 (Nov 8, Tue) 4 (Nov 11, Fri)	- Culture values, diversity, and innovation process
3	5 (Nov 15, Tue) 6 (Nov 18, Fri) (tentative)	- Cross-culture research
4	7 (Nov 22, Tue) 8 (Nov 25, Fri)	- Personality and cultural influences on leadership styles
5	9 (Nov 29, Tue) 10 (Dec 2, Fri)	- The self and social identities: identity-based consumption - Mid-term exam
6	11 (Dec 6, Tue) 12 (Dec 9, Fri)	- Motivational theories: regulatory focus, interpersonal process, and symbolic consumption
7	13 (Dec 13, Tue) 14 (Dec 16, Fri)	- Contemporary topics I: Experiential consumption, money, time, and happiness - Term-paper proposal
8	15 (Dec 20, Tue) 16 (Dec 23, Fri)	- Contemporary topics II: Interpersonal attraction in match-making markets and in workplace
9	17 (Dec 27, Tue) 18 (Dec 30, Fri)	- Word-of-mouth and social media marketing - Final Presentation

4. Miscellaneous

I. Format

This class is a 2-hour lecture. This course is divided into two major parts:

- (1) The first part is composed of 9 consecutive lectures by the instructor, dealing with the major approaches to define, understand, and study business research based on social psychology theories.
- (2) The second part deals with contemporary research topics, showing how people's psychology in different domains, including personality and motivation, can influence their behaviors in business contexts.

In the second part, a typical class consists of a one-hour lecture, a 30-minute presentation by students, interspersed with frequent group discussion. For each class, a group of two or three students will be responsible for leading the discussion. The purpose of the presentation is to give background context and perspective on the week's topic. The discussion leaders will also offer comments and criticism so as to generate further discussion.

II. Topics:

1. Course introduction and overview of behavioral research 2. Cultural values, diversity, and innovation process

Innovation is now driving global marketing and business efforts. Global Innovation Index (GII) tracks the relative rank of innovation inputs and outputs of 143 countries around the world. Would better economy development and education quality necessarily lead to higher innovation outputs? How would cultural values and diversity influence creativity and innovation at organizational level and at national level?

3. Cross-cultural research

It is important to understand cultural influences in multiple business settings and to understand the cross-cultural differences. There are different approaches to cultural research. One approach (dynamic constructivist approach) contends that cultures can be understood as shared belief systems among group members and cultural influences are results of these shared belief systems being (chronically or temporarily) accessible and applicable in certain social contexts.

4. Personality and cultural influences on leadership styles

On the one hand, power is associated with access to resources and freedom, leading to assertive agency into the environment. On the other hand, powerful people often act to protect and benefit their groups by contributing more in altruistic ways than otherwise. This distinction leads to different leadership styles in Eastern and Western cultures. Effective leadership may require a balance between assertive and group-based leadership. Group-based leadership (vs. assertive) can be perceived as appropriate, especially when the company is facing threats. It is important to modify one's leadership style to match the contextual demand.

5. The self and social identities: identity-based consumption, word-of-mouth on social media, and influencer marketing

Instead of buying things that express personal preference, people may make purchase to signal their identity, their status, the social beliefs they hold, or as a way to acquire an identity they aspire to have. Choices are often identity based but the linkage to identity is not necessarily

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obvious for a number of reasons. The outcome of an identity-based motivational process may be similar to or different from the choices an individual would have made in another setting. Moreover, the recognition of one's social identities has impact on spreading of WOM in social media.

6. Motivational Theories: regulatory focus, interpersonal process, and symbolic consumption

People are motivated to approach pleasure and avoid pain. Typically, individuals in a promotion focus are eager to attain advancement and gains. In contrast, individuals in a prevention focus are vigilant to insure safety and non-losses. When individuals use means that fit their regulatory orientation, they experience a regulatory fit that increases the value of what they are doing. This has implications for people's successful goal pursuit and task enjoyment in a variety of settings, including processing of commercial information, and motivation in workplace.

7. Contemporary Topics I: Experiential consumption, money, time, and happiness

To live in the developed world is to live in a consumerist society. Although the broader forces that created this society have led to unprecedented material abundance, scholars have maintained that these benefits have come at a significant psychological cost. An important question is how these costs can be minimized. We will learn research showing that people derive greater happiness and satisfaction from experiential purchases than material purchases.

Moreover, happiness may stem in part from the way people spend money. Drawing on empirical research, we will learn principles designed to help consumers get more happiness for their money.

8. Contemporary Topics II: Interpersonal attraction in match-making markets and in workplace

Given the positive bias toward attractive people in society, social media user, employees, online sellers, and service providers are justifiably apprehensive about their appearance and perceptions of their profile photos. Although the existing literature emphasizes the "beauty premium", there are different routes that facial attractiveness may play a role in impression formation, and there are conditions when attractiveness leads to desirable effects.

9. Final Presentations