

University of Manitoba  
Department of Sociology and Criminology

## **SOC 3460 T07 Sociology of Consumption**

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1.00-2.15pm

Location: 229 St Paul's College

Winter 2019, 3 Credit Hours

Instructor: Dr. Sonia Bookman

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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 2.30-3.30pm or by appointment



### **Course Summary**

This course will provide a broad introduction to the sociology of consumption. Engaging key classical and contemporary sociological theories of consumption, the course will outline some of the major perspectives, ideas, and debates in the field. Students will be introduced to a range of central topics and substantive areas in the sociological study of consumption, including (but not limited to): the rise and nature of consumer culture; the mediatization of consumption; the role of consumption and taste in shaping identities, lifestyles, and social structures; the sites and spaces of consumption; as well as the politics and ethics of consumption in contemporary society. The course is designed to enable students to appreciate the scope of the field and the extensive role consumption plays in contemporary social and cultural life.

### **Course Objectives**

- To introduce students to key theoretical approaches and perspectives within the field.
- To offer students ways of understanding the relationship of consumption to the formation and expression of social and cultural identities and belonging.

- To provide students with conceptual tools to critically analyze how consumption is bound up with social inequalities.
- To familiarize students with key concepts in the sociology of consumption, such as 'taste', 'brand community', 'consumer culture', 'aestheticization', and 'commodity'.
- To explain the rise and nature of contemporary consumer culture.
- To look at some new developments in consumption, such as digital consumption.
- To develop an appreciation of the significance of consumption in contemporary social and cultural life.

### **Required Textbooks**

Required readings will be made available through **UMLearn**, and will also be on **reserve in the Dafoe library**.

### **Assessment**

#### Assignments

- Students will complete two short written assignments designed to provide an opportunity to explore the topics covered in class in more depth, and to help develop the quality of your research, writing, and communication skills. Instructions will be handed out in class.
- Assignment #1 Due **January 29, 2019**.
- Assignment #2 Due **February 26, 2019**.

#### Term Paper

- Students are required to write an essay of 2500 words. The essay topic will be chosen by the student from a list of possible essay questions, which will be distributed in class, OR the student can choose to write on a topic of his or her choice, subject to approval by the instructor. Students are responsible for contacting the instructor to obtain approval of such independently selected essay topics **PRIOR** to writing the essay.
- Due **March 19, 2019**.

#### Final Test

- A test of 60 minutes will be held in-class. Students will be presented with a list of possible questions, and asked to choose a fixed number of questions and answer these in mini-essay format. Questions will cover material presented in lectures, readings, films, and class exercises. Study questions will be provided at least one week prior to the test. For this class there will be no exam held during the examination periods. *Students should note that the instructor will not reschedule this test for any reason other than medical.*
- Scheduled for **April 9, 2019**.

#### Participation

- Participation marks will be based on student submissions to informal, in-class or take-home exercises. Instructions will be handed out in class. There will be at least two of these exercises throughout the term. Assignments will be carried out either individually or collaboratively in small groups, with the group submitting one finished product and all members of the group receiving the same grade for that assignment. Students may be asked to hand in questions following a film, or analyze one of the course readings, or apply their sociological knowledge to a question given by the instructor.

**Note:** Students are required to submit papers in *hard copy* format! Electronic copies will not be accepted. **Do not submit assignments or essays by email.** Students are instructed to *always keep a personal copy of any submitted work* in the case that they are required to submit another copy.

**Grade Weights**

Assignments 40% (20% each)

Term Essay 30%

Final Term Test 20%

Participation 10%

**Grade Distribution**

<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>GPA</i>	<i>Description</i>
A+	91-100%	4.5	Exceptional
A	80-90%	4.0	Excellent
B+	75-79%	3.5	Very Good
B	70-74%	3.0	Good
C+	65-69%	2.5	Satisfactory
C	60-64%	2.0	Adequate
D	50-59%	1.0	Marginal
F	49% or less	0	Failure

**Late Submissions, Missed Tests, and Missed Participation Exercises**

Late assignments or papers will be penalized 3% per day late (including weekends). Medical documentation will normally be required to waive this penalty. However, if you know before the due date that a paper will be late you should contact me immediately. Extensions may be granted under extenuating circumstances, entirely at the instructor’s discretion, **ONLY** if the student contacts the instructor **PRIOR** to the deadline.

Missing the final test is a serious problem and is likely to result in a grade of 0.

Only documented reasons will be accepted for missing the test. If you miss the test for health-related or emergency reasons, you should a) provide advance notice, if possible, by phoning or emailing the instructor, then b) directly contact the instructor *as soon as possible* to arrange a makeup test. Note that it is the student’s responsibility for initiating a makeup test. Ordinarily, arrangements must be made within one week of the missed test; requests made later than one week will normally be denied. Under no circumstances will a makeup test be offered more than two weeks after the scheduled test.

If you miss an in-class participation exercise for *legitimate reasons only* (medical or other emergency reasons), you must contact the instructor and arrange for a make-up exercise within one week of the missed exercise. Documentation supporting the reason for missing the exercise may be requested by the instructor.

**Missed Films**

If you miss a film during a lecture you will need to view it at an alternative time. Making this arrangement is a student responsibility. To view a missed film, you will need to arrange to view the film by borrowing a copy from the library.

## **Evaluative Feedback**

Students can expect to receive written comments and grades within three weeks of the date assignments, essays, or tests are submitted to the instructor. Accordingly, and if submitted by the due dates published, students will receive feedback on between 40% and 45% of the required coursework (Assignments, Participation Assignments) before the voluntary withdrawal deadline.

## **Academic Integrity**

Students should acquaint themselves with the University's policy on plagiarism, cheating, exam personation, ("**Personation at Examinations**" (**Section 5.2.9**) and "**Plagiarism and cheating**" (**Section 8.1**)) and duplicate submission by reading documentation provided at the Arts Student Resources web site at:

[http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/student\\_resources/student\\_responsibilities\\_integrity.html](http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/student_resources/student_responsibilities_integrity.html).

Ignorance of the regulations and policies regarding academic integrity is not a valid excuse for violating them.

**Note:** The Faculty of Arts also reserves the right to submit student work that is **suspected of being plagiarized** to Internet sites designed to detect plagiarism.

- *The minimum penalty for plagiarism on a written assignment is F on the paper and may result in and F-DISC (discipline) in the course. This notation appears on the student's transcript. For repeat violations, this penalty can also include suspension from the Faculty of Arts for a period of up to 1 year.*
- *The minimum penalty for academic dishonesty in a test or final examination is F for the test/examination, and an F-DISC (discipline) in the course plus a suspension from the Faculty of Arts for a period of one year. The F grade and disciplinary notation appears on the student's transcript. For repeat violations, the penalty may include suspension from the Faculty of Arts for a period of up to 5 years*

## **Religious Holidays**

The University of Manitoba acknowledges the right of all students to observe recognized holy days of their faith. You will need to inform the instructor in writing of your intended absence(s) at least three weeks in advance, particularly if such absence(s) coincide with the set final test date.

## **Special Learning Needs**

Students with special learning needs (who, for legitimate reasons, require extra time to write a test, or who require aids or other supports) should introduce themselves to the instructor during the first week of the course in order to organize suitable accommodation and assessment arrangements.

## **Student Accessibility Services**

If you are a student with a disability, please contact SAS for academic accommodation supports and services such as note-taking, interpreting, assistive technology and exam accommodations. Students who have, or think they may have, a disability (e.g. mental illness, learning, medical, hearing, injury-related, visual) are invited to contact SAS to arrange a confidential consultation.

Student Accessibility Services <http://umanitoba.ca/student/saa/accessibility/>

520 University Centre  
204 474 7423

[Student\\_accessibility@umanitoba.ca](mailto:Student_accessibility@umanitoba.ca)

### **Recording Class Lectures**

Sonia Bookman and the University of Manitoba hold copyright over the course materials, presentations and lectures which form part of this course. No audio or video recording of lectures or presentations is allowed in any format, openly or surreptitiously, in whole or in part without permission from Sonia Bookman. Course materials (both paper and digital) are for the participant's private study and research.

### **Course Technology**

It is the general University of Manitoba policy that all technology resources are to be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical and legal manner. The student can use all technology in classroom setting only for educational purposes approved by the instructor and/or the University of Manitoba Disability Services. Students should not participate in personal direct electronic messaging / posting activities (e-mail, texting, video or voice chat, wikis, blogs, social networking (e.g. Facebook) online and offline "gaming" during scheduled class time. If student is on call (emergency) the student should switch his/her cell phone on vibrate mode and leave the classroom before using it. (©[S Kondrashov](#). Used with permission)

### **Disruptions**

Disruptions due to excessive talking or early departures from the classroom are especially distracting to large classes. Please be considerate and respectful to the needs and rights of others in the class. Students should be aware that persistent disruption may result in disbarment from the course. Any student who has a legitimate reason for leaving class early should inform the instructor at the beginning of class.

### **Unclaimed Term Work Disposal**

Any term work that has not been claimed by students will be held for four (4) months from the end of the final examination period for the term in which the work was assigned. At the conclusion of this time, all unclaimed term work will become property of the Faculty of Arts and be destroyed according to FIPPA guidelines and using confidential measures for disposal.

### **Voluntary Withdrawal**

Last day for voluntary withdrawal from the course without academic penalty is **March 20, 2019**

### **Student and Instructor Responsibility**

My responsibility as your instructor begins with the University's ROASS Policy and extends to creating a safe, cooperative and stimulating learning environment for students. As your instructor, I have selected texts and organized classroom time to meet the objectives of this course. Lectures are designed to help you understand and extend the concepts and ideas discussed in your texts and in the films. I comply fully with all University of Manitoba policies regarding teaching.

Student responsibilities include:

- Students are responsible for their own learning. You are expected to do readings in advance of class and are required to come prepared. You will often need to independently cover material in the textbooks (since not everything in the textbook will be directly addressed in class). Tests will draw on assigned readings as well as the lectures.

- If you are unclear about material or have academic concerns or questions, it is your responsibility to ask for help. I will be pleased to provide help during my office hours or by appointment. Students are warmly invited to drop by during office hours or to arrange an appointment to discuss any issues, concerns, or questions related to the course. Students are also responsible to track their own progress in the course, and to take action if you discover you are failing tests or papers.
- Students are responsible for complying with the policies on grades and tests, including policies on missed tests. You will find all course policies listed in this syllabus – please review it regularly. If you misplace this syllabus or a term schedule, you can download a copy from the course website.
- Students are asked to contribute to the creation and maintenance of a collegial learning environment; one in which all can develop as individuals and scholars, and in which the free and respectful exchange of ideas occurs. In order to achieve this, students are especially asked to be considerate and respectful of the needs and rights of other students in the class. Whispering and talking is especially inappropriate, since it bothers other students. Students who talk in class will be asked to leave the classroom. Other disruptions include late arrivals, early departures, mobile phone use, and other behaviour deemed inappropriate by the instructor or other students. Students should be aware that persistent disruption may result in disbarment from the course. Any student who has a legitimate reason for leaving class early should inform the instructor at the beginning of class and sit in a seat near the door to minimize disruption.

**Lecture Topics and Readings**  
***Handed out on the first day of term***