

HACE 5100
CONSUMER PROTECTION
T/TR 2:00-3:15
LOCATION: DAWSON HALL 110

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Course Description and Overview

This course will focus on the major problems that consumers face in the marketplace and legislation that protects consumers' rights. We will examine how consumer policy is made. We also will examine the functions and effectiveness of some of the major federal and state agencies that interpret and implement consumer legislation.

There will be three exams in the course. Each student will complete one major project, which involves researching a consumer issue and participating in a series of mock public hearings, which requires an oral presentation. In addition, there will be other assignments, all due in the first few weeks of the semester.

Bulletin Description: Consumer rights and responsibilities in the private and public sector of the economy. Relationship of government, nonprofit, and corporate response to consumer problems, legislation concerning consumer information, product safety, and choice of goods and channels of appeal for the consumer.

Required Course Materials

- ❖ There will be required readings linked through the WebCT site. **THE PASSWORD FOR ELECTRONIC RESERVES ON WEBCT IS "CONSUMER".**

EXAM DATES: September 23; October 23; November 20; December 11

Course Objectives: Each student will be able to:

1. Explain and apply the economic theory underlying consumer problems addressed by public policy;
2. Discuss and analyze consumer policy issues that are the focus of consumer legislation such as monopoly power, anti-competitive business practices, unsafe products, consumer choice vs. Consumer responsibility; and the lack of adequate consumer information;
3. Describe and analyze major pieces of consumer legislation at the federal and state level;
4. Describe and critically analyze major federal and state regulatory agencies charged with implementing and interpreting consumer legislation;
5. Speculate knowledgeably about current and future consumer protection issues that may result in consumer legislation or regulation.

COURSE POLICIES—IF YOU READ NOTHING ELSE ON THIS SYLLABUS—READ THIS SECTION CAREFULLY:

1. Any papers you turn in for class or during class **MUST HAVE YOUR CLASS IDENTIFICATION NUMBER on it and your NAME on it.** Note: **your class id number is not your uga id number.** Your class id number will be assigned by me to you on your webct home page. If you turn in a paper without your class identification number on it—you will not be awarded points. It will not matter that your name or your UGA ID number was on the paper....you are EXPECTED to put your CLASS ID NUMBER on your paper work. This is for your protection.....Social Security numbers and now UGA numbers are valuable to ID thieves. I will not be responsible for having those numbers on pieces of paper lying around. Your Class ID has no worth to anyone but you.
2. **CLASS ATTENDANCE IS EXPECTED.** Much of the examination material will be presented solely during class time; therefore it is to your benefit to be present for each and every class. In-class participation opportunities may be made available throughout the semester—if you are not in class—you will not receive these points.
3. **NO EARLY EXAMINATIONS WILL BE GIVEN—UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES; OR MAKEUP EXAMINATIONS WILL BE GIVEN AT MY DISCRETION.**
4. Students are expected to have read the readings assigned—prior to class time. In-class quizzes will be based on the day's readings. Power point notes will be used to supplement your readings; they are by no means the only course content for which you are responsible.
5. Students are required to respect the learning rights of others in the class by cooperating in group discussions and activities, and exhibiting respectful classroom etiquette:
 - a. Students coming late, leaving early, talking during class, letting cell phones ring or texting during class disturb the class. Therefore,
 - i. If you expect that you will be arriving late to class don't bother to come at all. It is your responsibility to arrive on time—I have to and so do you.
 - ii. If you need to talk to a fellow student about something besides course content, don't bother to come to class. I can hear your whispers—your neighbors can hear your whispers and it's very distracting. Save your conversations until after class.
 - iii. If your cell phone rings/vibrates, you will be asked to leave. Again—an unnecessary class disturbance for which you are responsible in eliminating. Turn the things OFF.
 - b. Your laptop will be welcome in class as long as it is being used to follow along with powerpoint lectures. If you are using it to Facebook or surf, you and your laptop will be removed from class. Multitask on your own time—not class time.
 - c. Cell phones must be turned off during class. Not on vibrate—but off.
 - d. Class begins at 2:00 and ends at 3:15 AM do not begin the hoof and bag shuffle until then. I can tell time and will release you when class is over.
 - e. Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated and will be handled according to university judicial procedure.
 - i. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to:

1. Having someone else take your exam for you. **YOU MUST SHOW YOUR UGA PHOTO ID WHEN YOU TURN IN YOUR EXAMINATION. IF YOU DO NOT.....YOUR EXAM WILL NOT BE GRADED.**
 2. Signing in someone else's name if/when attendance is taken
 3. Citing someone else's work as your own—including the work of a fellow student. Working "together" does not mean you turn in the exact same answer and claim you both reached the exact same conclusion on a problem.
 4. Cheating on exams—through various means.
 5. Cheating of assignments—through various means.
6. Last minute computer problems are only a problem if you are waiting until the last minute to complete your assignment. If you experience a last minute computer problem, realize that it is solely YOUR problem, not my problem. Your quiz/assignment is due when it is due. Late is late—no matter what the problem.
 7. Late word processed papers will be penalized one letter grade for each day they are late. Papers turned in after class will be marked 1 DAY late. It is imperative that you prepare your paper well before it is due to ensure that computer problems, internet problems, personal problems, transportation problems, printer problems, family problems, friends' problems, health problems, or any other problems do not interfere with your ability to hand in a paper on time. Whether you break your leg, break up with your significant other, or your car breaks down, your paper is still due in class.
 8. Check this course's WebCT page daily. All class announcements and information will be delivered to you through WebCT, not through personal email. When applicable, lesson notes will be posted on the home page. Chat rooms for group work are available through the home page.
 9. If you need to contact me, use my WebCT address only. I teach 5 classes—I guarantee and email to my UGA account will get lost.
 10. You will have access to your individual scores through WebCT. If there is a discrepancy in your recorded score, bring this to my attention for verification. This includes any and all participation/professionalism/attendance points. If we complete an in-class project and you do not see a score for your project within a week—then YOU need to contact me and let me know your points have not been posted. After ONE week the papers will go to the shredder and you will have no proof that you were indeed in class that day.
 11. Please alert the instructor during the first two weeks if you have special documented instructional needs that need accommodated.
 12. "Late adds for this course will not be approved except under exceptional circumstances".

What I Expect of My Students

Senior-level work: Many of you expect to graduate at the end of this semester or next semester. Therefore, I expect that every assignment that you complete will be something I could show to a prospective employer as persuasive evidence that they should hire our graduates. At a minimum I expect:

- All work (except work assigned in class and due in class) to be typed, spell checked, double-spaced, with 1 inch margins and 12 point font unless otherwise instructed.
- Come to class prepared - do the reading before not after the lecture!
- Either a copy of the references attached or the complete citation for the reading – the instructions will tell you which.
- Your name, Your Class ID # and the course prefix and number to be on all work in the upper right-hand corner
- You will follow the instructions for all work, write in complete sentences, and use correct grammar and punctuation.
- Your work will be stapled if it is multiple pages - paper clips come off and folding down the corners is unprofessional.
- All work will be handed in as hard copy. **DO NOT SUBMIT ELECTRONIC COPIES WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL.**
- Thoughtful work. You will not earn full credit if your work doesn't demonstrate carefully thought on the topic or doesn't address the questions asked.
- All students will *have and regularly use an e-mail address*. I will send all e-mail through WebCT. It is your responsibility to check your WebCT e-mail before every class.
- *Word processing skills*: I assume that all of you can prepare professional-looking documents that are neatly formatted. Save your file to your hard drive and a disk or to multiple disks; your file will disappear just before your homework is due. It's also a good idea to assume that your printer won't work and/or the FACS Computer Lab will be closed if you wait until the last minute to print your homework.
- *Presentation skills*: It will be helpful if you know how to use Power Point to prepare a presentation for the public hearing.
- Follow the instructions for the homework assignments. The instructions are **very** specific and the penalties are **large** for ignoring them.
- Take responsibility for missed work. It is your responsibility to get any information, notes, handouts, etc., that you miss due to an absence from class. Ask questions when you're uncertain about assignments or course content.
- Earn your grade (I'll make every effort to help you learn the material). **If you are an HACE major, you need a C to graduate. It's your job to earn that C.**
- If you have questions about grades, put your question in writing and give it and the homework to me or the TA immediately. Each grade and the final grade you earn will be final **one week after homework is returned** unless you can show there was an error in calculation or recording. **Pick up and keep your graded homework.** If you are not in class when homework is returned, it is your responsibility to get it from the TA. You are responsible for checking WebCT to make sure the grade we have recorded is your correct grade. We will correct any errors in grades up until the end of the semester. No errors will be corrected after the grades are turned in for the course.

Privacy Rights Under FERPA

According to the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a student has the right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without the student's consent. FERPA allows disclosure of directory information without a student's consent unless the student has advised the registrar in writing that he or she wishes to restrict access to this information. Directory information includes the student's name, address, telephone listing, e-mail address, date and place of

birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student, as well as the weight and height of members of athletic teams. If you have requested that your directory information not be disclosed, please let me know, so I will not disclose your information to other persons. Unless I hear from you at the beginning of the semester, I'll assume that it's ok to disclose your name to your classmates.

Grading

Evaluation for the course will be based on three announced tests, homework assignments, and several assignments related to mock public hearings we will conduct near the end of the semester. Each grade, and the final letter grade *you earn*, will be *final, unless you can document an error in calculating or recording your score(s)*. If you have a question about how an assignment was graded, you have one week after the work is returned to ask; assignments will not be "regraded" later. You have until December 5 to report any errors in grading to me. After that, the gradebook is closed. Grades will not be curved.

There will be three exams each worth 85 points. Exam dates will be confirmed by the second week of classes and once they're set, they won't be changed. Since the exams won't cover material that we haven't yet discussed in class, I'll announce what material will be on each exam.

Near the end of the semester the class will conduct a series of public hearings on current consumer policy issues. Each of you will be assigned a primary role for one issue. For that issue, you must thoroughly research the issue, write a two page briefing paper, and then participate by presenting a consumer or industry perspective or as a public decision-maker. In the other public hearings, you will read an assigned reading and participate as a member of the public. The class will choose the topics. The assignments related to the public hearings will be worth 160 points. The number of hearings will be determined by the size of the class but is expected to be six.

Three Exams (85 each)	255 points
Assignment #1	20 points
Assignment #2	20 points
Assignment #3	20 points
Assignments Related to Public Hearings	160 points

Total 475 points

Letter grades will be assigned as follows:

A = 93.0 - 100%	C+ = 77.0 – 79.9%
A- = 90.0 - 92.9%	C = 73.0 – 76.9%
B+ = 87.0 - 89.9%	C- = 70.0 – 72.9%
B = 83.0 - 86.9%	D = 60.0 – 69.9%
B- = 80.0 - 82.9%	F = < 60.0%

NOTE: A C- IS NOT THE SAME AS A C FOR GPA CALCULATION. A C- IS ONLY WORTH 1.7 TOWARDS YOUR GPA, NOT 2.0

All academic work must meet the standards contained in [A Culture of Honesty: Policies and Procedures on Academic Honesty](#). Students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. In this course, unless specifically and explicitly instructed otherwise (such as group work authorized by me), all assignments should be done **individually**. I may require homework to be submitted electronically and use software that will check whether any substantive part of your work was “lifted” from other work. That is plagiarism and a serious violation of the University honor code. **The only group work in this class is the presentations of the public hearings; the briefing paper is an individual assignment.**

HACE 5100 Topics, Readings, and Assignments

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary

Date	Topics	Readings
August 19	Introduction to course	Index card—
August 21	Consumer Protection: Lessons from the Past	Herrmann and Mayer, “ <i>U.S. Consumer Movement: History and Dynamics</i> ”
August 26	Consumer Protection: How do We define “Consumer Interest”	Brobeck, “ <i>Defining the Consumer Interest</i> ”
August 28	Consumer Protection: In the Current Political Climate	Current Consumer Protection Issues
September 2	Making Public Policy	BMO pp. 23-25, 33-39, 48-56, 56-61 “ <i>How Do Publics Choose</i> ”
September 4	Making Public Policy	Burton, “ <i>When to Hold ‘Em, When to Fold ‘em: Choosing Consumer Protection Battles</i> ” How Consumer Issues Become Policy
September 9	Evaluating Public Policy	Patton & Sawicki, Ch. 5, pp. 186-191, 205-219 “ <i>Establishing Evaluation Criteria</i> ”
September 11	Evaluating Public Policy	Patton & Sawicki, Ch. 5, pp. 186-191, 205-219 “ <i>Establishing Evaluation Criteria</i> ”
September 16	Economic Regulation	BMO, Ch. 4: <i>Government Regulation</i>
September 18	Economic Regulation	BMO, Ch. 4: <i>Government Regulation</i>
September 23	EXAMINATION #1	
September 25	State and Local Consumer Protection	MGK: Chapter 18: <i>State and Local Consumer Protection</i>
September 30	State and Local Consumer Protection	MGK: Chapter 18: <i>State and Local Consumer Protection</i>

		Stanford Guidelines for Web Credibility
October 2	Global Economy	BMO: Chapter 6: <i>U.S Policy in a Global Economy</i> , pp. 141-143. 151-161; Parry, R. T. “ <i>Globalization: Threat or Opportunity for US economy?</i> ”
October 7	Global Economy	BMO: Chapter 6: <i>U.S Policy in a Global Economy</i> , pp. 141-143. 151-161; Parry, R. T. “ <i>Globalization: Threat or Opportunity for US economy?</i> ”
October 9	Environmental Policy	BMO: Chapter 10: <i>Environmental Policy</i> —pp. 270-284
October 11	Environmental Policy	MGK: Chapter 7: <i>Environmental Protection Regulation</i> —pp 155-180
October 14	Environmental Policy	MGK: Chapter 7: <i>Environmental Protection Regulation</i> —pp 155-180
October 16	Health Care Policy	BMO, Ch. 8: <i>The Mirage of Health Security</i>
October 21	Health Care Policy	Sullivan, “ <i>Understanding the Health Care Reform Debate</i> ” President Bush’s Plan to Make Health Care More Affordable
October 23	EXAMINATION #2	
October 28	Food Safety Policy	MGK, Chapter 10: <i>Food Safety Regulation</i> pp. 241-245, 250-256
October 30	FALL BREAK	
November 4	Food Safety Policy	MGK, Chapter 10: <i>Food Safety Regulation</i> pp. 241-245, 250-256
November 6	Drug Safety Policy	MGK, Chapter 9: <i>Regulating Drugs</i> pp. 213-224
November 11	Drug Safety Policy	MGK, Chapter 9: <i>Regulating Drugs</i> pp. 213-224
November 13	Product Safety Policy	MGK, Ch. 11; <i>Consumer Product Safety Regulation</i> pp. 259-277
November 18	Product Safety Policy	MGK, Ch. 12: <i>Automobile Safety Regulations</i> Felcher, “ <i>Product Recalls.</i> ”
November 20	EXAMINATION #3	
November 25	THANKS GIVING BREAK	
November 27	THANKS GIVING BREAK	
December 2	Public Hearings during class time	

December 4	Public Hearings during class time
December 9	NO CLASS; READING DAY
December 11	<i>FINAL = 3:30-6:30 – Two public hearings –</i>

Readings

*There is a link to each of the readings below on WebCT. Some require a password to open; that password is **consumer**. Some are required for class, some are required for homeworks and some are optional readings. These readings may change as new literature becomes available.*

American Medical Student Association. (n.d.). Theoretical models for delivering health care. Available online at <http://www.amsa.org/hp/theories.cfm> Recommended reading for health care policy analysis assignment.

Brobeck, S. (2006, Summer). Defining the consumer interest: Challenge for advocates. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 40 (1), 177-185.

Burton, M.J. (2006, Summer). When to hold ‘em; When to fold ‘em. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 40 (1), 186-195.

Consumer Reports.org. (2005, August). You are what they eat. Available online at <http://www.consumerreports.org>. Link provided on WEBCT.

Crews, C.W. (1999, August 1). Who’s getting busted: Trust or customers? *Monthly Planet*. Available at <http://www.cei.org/gencon/005,01531.cfm> Reading in Economic Regulation section

Felcher, E.M. (2003). Product recalls: Gaping holes in the nation’s product safety net. *The Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 37(1), 170-179.

Haislmaier, E.F. (2006, April 11). The significance of Massachusetts health reform. *The Heritage Foundation Web Memo #1035*.

Herrmann, R.O., & Mayer, R.N. (1997). U.S. Consumer Movement: History and Dynamics. In S. Brobeck (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Consumer Movement*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, Inc.
Leahy says NOPEC to OPEC bipartisan plan would permit legal action against oil cartel. (2000, June 30). <http://leahy.senate.gov/press/200006/00063006.html>

Mayer, R.N., & Burgon, J. (2005). Concerned consumers for consumption: The role of corporate front groups in consumer policy. Paper presented at 2005 American Council on Consumer Interests Annual Conference, Columbus, OH. Abstract on WebCT. Required reading for Consumer Organizations assignment.

Parry, R.T. (2004, May 21). Globalization: Threat or opportunity for the U.S. economy? *FRBSF Economic Letter*, pp. 1-3.

Patton, C.V., & Sawicki, D.S. (1993). *Basic Methods of Policy Analysis and Planning*, 2nd ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. Chapter 5. Establishing Evaluation Criteria.

Poole, W. (2004, September/October). Free trade: Why are economists and noneconomists so far apart? *Federal Reserve Bank of St Louis Review*, 1-6. Reading for Global Economy section.

S-276 Multi-State Research Team. (2003, Winter). The globalization of food and how Americans feel about it. *Southern Perspectives*, 1,3-9. Reading for Food Safety section.

Stanford Persuasive Technology Lab. (2002). Stanford guidelines for Web credibility. Available online at: <http://credibility.stanford.edu/guidelines/index.html> Required reading for State Agency assignment.

Sullivan, K. (2002/2003, Winter). Understanding the health care reform debate: A primer for the perplexed. *Social Policy*, 53-58. Required resource for health care policy analysis assignment.

Tanner, M. (1992, November 24). Health care reform: The good, the bad, and the ugly. *Cato Policy Analysis No. 184*. Available at <http://www.cato.org/> Recommended resource for health care policy analysis assignment.

The White House (n.d.). President Bush's plan to make health care more affordable. Available online at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/healthcare/index.html> Required resource for health care policy analysis assignment.

(TEXTBOOKS YOU DO NOT HAVE TO PURCHASE....THE READINGS ALSO ARE ON LINE)

MGK: Meier, K.J., Garman, E.T. & Kaiser, L.K. (2003). *Regulation and Consumer Protection: Politics, Bureaucracy, and Economics*, 4th edition. Mason, IA: Thomson.

*Chapter 7: E.J. Ringquist, Environmental protection regulation, pp. 155-180.

*Chapter 9: A. Grant & S. Olmstead, Regulating drugs, pp. 213-224

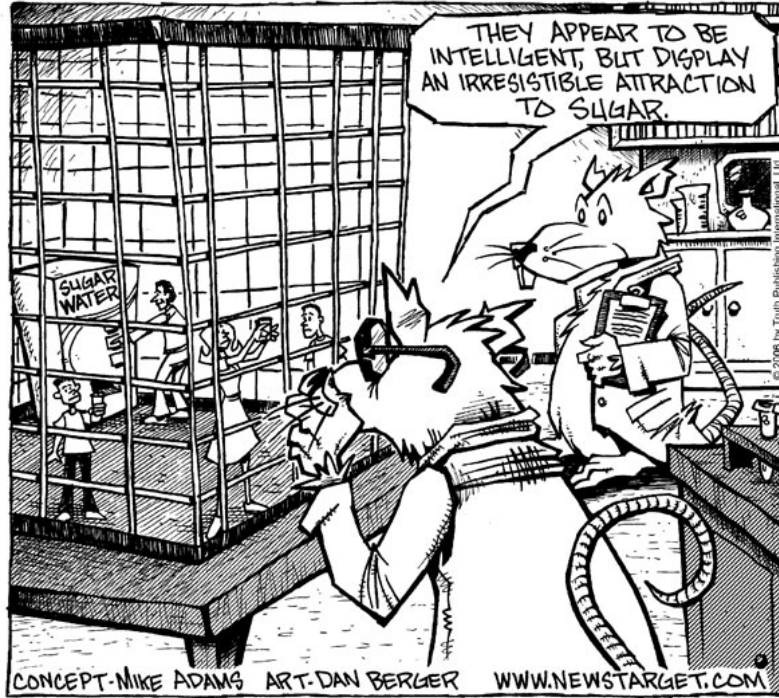
*Chapter 10: M.L. Carsky, Food safety regulation, pp. 241-245, 250-256

*Chapter 11: M.E.R. Fise, Consumer product safety regulation

BMO: Bonser, C.F., McGregor, E.B., Jr., & Oster, C.V., Jr. (2000). *American Public Policy Problems: An Introductory Guide* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

- Pp. 23-25, 33-39, 48-56, 56-21 (various topics on Making and Evaluation Public Policy in Chapters 1 and 2)
- Chapter 4: Government Regulation
- Pp. 141-143, 151-161 (various topics on Global Economy in Chapter 6)
- Chapter 8: The Mirage of Health Security
- Pp. 270-284 (various topics on Environmental Policy in Chapter 10)

COUNTERTHINK



and chocolate ☺

WELCOME BACK ☺