

**Department of Textiles, Merchandising & Interiors
Fall 2009**

TXMI 5260 CONSUMER & EMPLOYEE CASE STUDIES IN THE RETAIL INDUSTRY- (3 hours lecture + discussion + industry speakers) Prereq. TXMI 3210, 5250. Class meetings: Monday 3:35-6:35. Dawson Hall room 312.

Instructor: Mrs. Emily Blalock
Office and Phone: 317 Dawson Hall, 706-542-4884
Email: Eichelb@uga.edu
Office Hours: Wednesday 1:30-3:00; Thursday 1:00-3:00

Textbook: None.

Required materials:

WebCt and printer access. Hole punch and 1.5" binder required.

Course Description:

This course will be taught from a managerial perspective by combining the psychology of dealing with employees and customers with the practical realities of managing a retail business. Managing human capital is based on sound decision making, therefore, understanding the complexity of problem analysis and developing management skills is essential to be a success in the retail industry.

Objectives:

To approach the class in an academic and professional demeanor by assuming the role of a business consultant for a major retailer

To understand the basic human resource and consumer relations management and the practical applications of personnel policy and procedures

To be able to apply theory and ethics to resolve conflicts with employees and customers in both corporate and small business environments

Be able to read opposing arguments, analyze the situation, and give advice based on class principles in both a verbal and written format

To learn how to hire the right employees, while also meeting the federal employment laws

To effectively motivate and manage customers and employees to increase retention

To identify and resolve difficult customer and employee situations

To understand how to build strong customer and employee relationships while developing the ideal retail environment

To contribute to the eradication of stereotypes and prejudices that exists in the workplace, both overt and covert racism.

Course Format:

The class format will be a combination of lecture, reading circles discussion, class discussion, and an occasional guest speaker in human resource management. The beginning of class will be devoted to your reading circles and some large group discussion, and I will deliver and explain the material at the end of class. As mentioned before, you are to assume the role of a business consultant and evaluate each case study in a serious and professional manner.

Preparation and participation are required to succeed in this course. You are encouraged to ask questions, make thought provoking statements and take notes. Your participation points come from my judgment of the quality not just quantity of participation. In addition, your reading circle group members will have the opportunity to evaluate your performance from a managerial perspective.

Instructor's Note:

This class will be taught from a **student – not teacher** – orientation. My primary role is to guide you in the learning process, keep you on track, interject ideas, lecture on major academic issues, judge the quality of discussion, and act as the devil's advocate to provide a new viewpoint. You are responsible for your own learning, as are your group members. You will learn about yourself and the retail business as a group, or fall short as a group.

WebCT:

WebCT will be used in this class to post all readings and assignments. Though a textbook is not required, you will spend money equivalent to the cost of a textbook in the form of printing class readings. I recommend posting money to your Bulldogbucks now to deter future conflict with printing assignments. It is your responsibility to frequently check WebCT for updated assignments. I strongly encourage you to post questions and statements to the discussion board in order to facilitate academic discussion of class topics.

Additional expectations for Students:

1. HAVE A POSITIVE ATTITUDE! My Mama says, "*You get more flies with honey than you do with vinegar!*"
2. You will be treated as a colleague in a professional setting. Your attitude, investment in the course and all related activities, treatment of fellow peers and the Instructor, and your work performance should reflect the level of professionalism expected in a work setting.
3. **I strongly encourage students to participate in class discussions** and ASK QUESTIONS. In addition, current event articles are a major portion of the participation grade. Each student is required to prepare a brief memo on two different current **retail management blunders or successes** during the semester. The first fifteen minutes of each class will be devoted to the presentation and exploration of these articles (active and thoughtful participation is worth 30 points). Do not read the article, rather summarize its importance.
4. I will respect your thoughts and opinions even if they differ from my own. I also ask that you be respectful of your peers' opinions and my own. I will not tolerate racism or sexism in this class. Any derogatory comment or disrespect for an individual or group of people will not be tolerated.
5. Students are responsible for being on time and prepared for all class sessions. **Readings are to be completed prior to class.** Students must actively participate in class and small group discussions, and demonstrate that they have read the required text(s) before class. This is necessary because we will cover a lot of material in a short amount of time. **You will not be successful in this class, if you expect to learn everything during the class meetings.**

6. Assignments are on the date stated on the syllabus and must conform to the APA 5th Edition publication manual. (See handout or <http://library.austincc.edu/help/APA/> for help) Assignments turned in late exemplifies lack of professionalism, therefore, will not be accepted. **Not citing sources is plagiarism.** You must adhere to APA format.
7. Computers are allowed for note taking only. **DO NOT SURF THE NET WHILE I AM LECTURING.**
8. Taking a make-up exam is a privilege, not a right. Make-up exams will only be granted with proper documentation (medical) or extremely unusual circumstances. Make-up exams must be scheduled within 2 weeks of the regularly scheduled test date. It is up to the student to contact the instructor for a make-up exam.
10. I do not accept emailed assignments unless previously specified in syllabus.

Attendance:

On-time attendance is mandatory. I will take attendance at the beginning of class. Do not plan on attending class if you are **more than 30 minutes late.** *I do not have sympathy for work schedules.*

Students are expected to attend all classes. If a class is missed for any reason, students are expected to provide the instructor with their “Personal Day” reading role for that week. “Personal Day” reading role is reserved for absences (without it you will receive a reduction in points). **Students will not receive credit for other reading roles when absent.** The premise of reading roles is to discuss in groups.

There are no excused absences. (including: sickness, over sleeping, car issues, weddings, interviews etc.) But you are allowed one absence without penalty. Excuse notes are irrelevant. On the 4th absence, the student will be considered not having satisfied regular attendance policy and will receive grade of WF.

1 absence	0 pt.
2 absences	-10 pt.
3 absences	-20 pt.
4 absences	WF

University of Georgia Academic Honesty:

Learning to properly paraphrase and cite sources is essential to creative and academic scholarship. Please ask if you have questions about what is considered violations. All academic work must meet the standards contained in *A Culture of Honesty* found at <http://www.uga.edu/ovpi>. **I have zero tolerance for academic dishonesty;** those suspected of cheating, assisting others, or plagiarizing on tests, quizzes, homework, or research assignments will be turned into the University of Georgia **immediately.** (*You will not pass this class if caught cheating*).

Plagiarizing is submitting uncited materials as your own work, which was in fact produced by others.

Special Needs:

Let me know immediately if you need special accommodations in any way, and/ or feel there is anything I need to know that might improve your learning environment. There will be times that I say your name in class (when asking for feedback or to answer a question). If you feel uncomfortable with me calling your name out loud, please visit me or email me to let me know.

Grading Scale:

The plus/ minus system is the official grading system approved by the Board of Regents for a three year period. Final grades will be computed based on a total of 505 points. Below is the percentage distribution.

93% - 100%	= A
90% - 92%	= A-
87% - 89%	= B+
83% - 86%	= B
80% - 82%	= B-
77% - 79%	= C+
73% - 76%	= C
70% - 72%	= C-
60% - 69%	= D
00% - 59%	= F

Your grade will be determined based on:

Group Participation	100 points
Current Event memos @ 15pts	30 points
Reading Circle Activities @ 5 pts	65 points
Case Studies (homework) @ 10 pts	40 points
2 Case Study Quizzes @ 30 pts	60 points
Comprehensive Exam	100 points
Final Group Project & Presentation	120 points
Professional Interview (prep for project) due Oct 26	20 points
Additional assignments	<u>? points</u>

TOTAL: 535 points (subject to change)

Grading Guidelines:

Throughout the semester you will have several written assignments due. These will be graded according to the following general guidelines.

An exception paper will demonstrate:

- Extraordinary effort and creativity in completing the assignment
- A thorough understanding of the underlying concepts
- Evidence of significant internalization of the course material
- Exemplary writing style and composition

Managerial Perspective Assignments:

1. **Group Participation Points** – In the process of learning, active group participation is essential to grasping class concepts and retaining knowledge. Studies report that students learn best when they are actively involved in the process, and are appear more satisfied with their classes (Beckman, 1990). Many assignments will involve group work to complete. If your group members evaluate your performance as inadequate during any point in the semester, your participation grade (and possibly your overall points) will be drastically reduced. (*100 points*)
2. **Current Event Write-ups** – Each student is required to prepare a brief (1-2 page memo) on two different current retail management blunders or successes during the semester. These memos should outline the event or issue, discuss why the event or issue is important to the retail community, and provide some analysis as to the event or issue's impact. It would be advantageous for you to tie in the article to your weekly readings/ topic. Material for the memos should come from newspapers and magazines prominent in the fashion industry. Of course your work must be your own and references should be in APA format. (*30 total points*).
3. **Reading Circle Activities** – During the semester you will have the opportunity to interact with your group members on many different levels, assuming many different roles. Your active and **prepared** participation and critical reflection in relations to the readings, students'/ instructor comments, and other materials is the very centerpiece of the class. Your peers' success in understanding class concepts depends on your active participation and willingness to share openly. In addition, you will be required to submit each week's activity sheet assignment at 5 pts each. (*65 total points*)

Roles include:

- a. **Editorial Director-** Your job is to develop a list of questions that will facilitate group discussion that will help them understand the main points of the assigned reading(s)/ case study. Get everyone started on the right track and keep the discussion going.
- b. **Market Director-** Your job is to locate a few special passages that are important in the assigned reading/ case study. The important parts that you find in the reading may give key information, back up information given, or summarize the author's key points.
- c. **Art Department-** Your job is to make a something creative in relation to your reading. It can be a sketch, cartoon, diagram, flow chart, concept map, collage, photograph, video clip, poem, dance, song, music video, commercial, political cartoon, etc.
- d. **Research Department-** Your job is to develop a list of words and concepts that are important to the understanding of the reading.
- e. **Personal Assistant-** Your job is to help everyone make connections to other important ideas- ideas from this class and also to other cultural, social, political, and economic ideas (think movies, current events, tv shows, songs).
- f. **Copy Editor-** Your job has two parts- first, during the discussion you are to collect a list of questions, either those you might like the instructor or someone else in the class to address. Then, you are to review the group process for the class session with the group and identify highlights or problems in the group's work.

- g. **The Press-** Your job is challenging the ideas in the reading(s)/ case study by developing a list of vital, thoughtful questions and arguments that might be raised by critics of the author's or by those with different points of view.
- h. **Personal Day-** Each person is entitled to submit this sheet ONCE during the class, with no penalties in grading. [Note: Plan to use this during an absence such as work or family related events.]
4. **2 Case Study Quizzes** – The case study method is an active, problem-solving way of learning in which you have to think about the problem, use the facts provided in the case, recall academic lectures, and then decide on the most appropriate action to take. External environmental factors (outside company, perhaps events in the media) should be considered along with internal facts about the company and the situation. **You must use critical thinking, logic, and sound reasoning to develop the best solution to the problem in question.** You will have the opportunity to practice case studies prior to the first quiz (30 each; 60 total points)
5. **Final Comprehensive Exam** - There will be one comprehensive exam during finals week, Friday, Dec 4th 3:30 to 6:30. Exams will include multiple choice, short answer, and case study analysis. (100 points)
6. **Professional Interview** – Each student will select one manager in the fashion industry to interview in order to learn more about the problems and possible solutions facing supervisors in their organization. The interview can take place by email, phone or in person. A typed transcript (question & answers) from the interview is due October 26th. Keep in mind the *grading guidelines*. Remember to be professional; this could turn into a job opportunity after graduation! (20 points)
7. **Real-Life Case Study Group Project**– Each group will make a 20 minute power-point presentation on a problem facing manager(s) in a real retail organization. (Example: Gap's decreasing sales; Flirt's low UPT (unit per transaction); or Wal-mart's high employee turnover). In addition, the problem must be related to a weekly topic. The purpose of this assignment is to give each group the opportunity to assume the role of a professional consulting firm called in to solve a specific real-life problem in an organization. To arrive at a problem, each group member should interview one manager in the fashion industry. Groups should use descriptions of current management practices reported in business periodicals, readings & lecture materials. **All projects must be approved by October 26.** (120 total points)

At the time of presentation, groups must submit in a professional folder: a soft and hard copy of presentation, *Group Project Report*, *Group Member Evaluation Form*, and enough copies of the *Fact Sheet* for your peers.

NOTE: It is your responsibility to make sure that the presentation goes smoothly and on time. Have back-up copies of presentation, and make sure the file is PC compatible. If a sickness or family emergency arises with a group member, the show still must go on. Be prepared for anything. PROFESSIONAL BUSINESS CASUAL IS A MUST.