BUS 51
Neuromarketing: How Brain Science Is Changing Marketing As We Know It

Neuromarketing is an emerging cross-disciplinary field that studies how consumers' brains respond to marketing, brands, products, and shopping. Recent advances in brain science have been applied by neuromarketers to help marketers and market researchers find new answers to the age-old question: why do consumers buy?

During this six-week course, students will gain a thorough understanding of this new field, covering both the hope and the hype. Topics focus on how neuromarketing can help businesses achieve a deeper understanding of their consumers – how they think, how they decide, and how they buy. This is not a course on brain anatomy.

We start with the fundamentals – how do consumers really think, feel, and act? We highlight several crucial nonconscious processes that underlie consumer choice and behavior. We then explore how neuromarketing measures and metrics capture consumer responses in ways that differ fundamentally from traditional marketing methods, using real world examples from advertising, branding, product development, shopping, and entertainment. Finally, we dig into the practical implications of neuromarketing – how lessons from brain science are causing marketers to rethink traditional marketing practices, how organizations can best succeed with neuromarketing research, and how neuromarketing can be done ethically and responsibly.

Instructor
Steve Genc

Textbooks for this course


Grade options and requirements

Letter Grades will be based on the following criteria:

- To receive a passing letter grade, students must submit a 3-5 page, double-spaced paper describing a marketing challenge of their choice and how they would use neuromarketing – either principles or research methods – to address that challenge. **Papers must be submitted by the end of the final class session.**
- Letter grades will also be based on attendance and participation:
  - Students must attend at least 4 sessions to receive a passing grade.
  - Students who attend only 4 sessions and submit a paper will receive a C or a B, depending on the quality of the paper.
  - Students who attend 5 or 6 sessions and submit a paper will receive at least a B.
  - Students who attend 5 or 6 sessions and (1) write a particularly thoughtful paper, and/or (2) make significant contributions to class discussions and Q&A, will receive an A.

**Credit/No Credit** will be based on attendance. To receive credit for the class, students must attend at least 4 of the 6 sessions. Students who attend 3 or fewer sessions will not receive credit for the class.

No Grade Requested (NGR): No work will be required; no credit shall be received; no proof of attendance can be provided.

*Please Note: If you require proof that you completed a Continuing Studies course for any reason (for example, employer reimbursement), you must choose either the Letter Grade or Credit/No Credit option. Courses taken for NGR will not appear on official transcripts or grade reports.*

Course summary

This course will give students all the tools they need to understand and leverage neuromarketing in their businesses or organizations. Over six weeks, students will learn:

- How "intuitive consumers" differ from "rational consumers"
- What nonconscious mechanisms underlie consumer responses
- How brain science illuminates the processes of consumer thinking
- How attention, emotion, memory and goals impact marketing and sales
- New insights into consumer decision making and purchase behavior
- The pros and cons of different neuromarketing methodologies and technologies
- How neuromarketing is being used today in several business areas, including advertising, branding, product development and design, traditional shopping, and online shopping
• How neuromarketing changes the ways marketers need to think about persuasion and influence
• How to incorporate neuromarketing into your marketing research program
• The ethics of neuromarketing

Weekly outline

Classes are held on-campus. Sessions will include a mixture of lectures, Q&A, and discussions of reading assignments and example materials presented in class.

Week 1: How consumers think
• Topics covered
  o Introducing the intuitive consumer
  o The cognitive timeline
  o Six unconscious mechanisms that drive consumer responses to marketing, brands, and products
• Class assignment
  o Read Neuromarketing for Dummies, Chapters 1-2.
  o (Optional) Read Decoding the Irrational Consumer, Chapter 01.

Week 2: What neuromarketing measures
• Topics covered
  o The core consumer responses: attention, emotion, memory
  o The drivers of behavior: approach-avoidance, goals, habits
• Class assignment
  o Read Neuromarketing for Dummies, Chapters 5 and 7.
  o (Optional) Read Decoding the Irrational Consumer, Chapter 02.

Week 3: How neuromarketing measures capture signals from the body and the brain
• Topics covered
  o The problem with asking questions
  o The neuromarketer's toolbox: capturing signals from the body
  o The neuromarketer's toolbox: capturing signals from the brain
  o Neuromarketing on a budget
• Class assignment
  o Read Neuromarketing for Dummies, Chapters 15-18.
  o (Optional) Read Decoding the Irrational Consumer, Chapters 06-08, 13.
Week 4: How consumers decide: cognitive misers and lazy controllers

- Topics covered
  - Decision making and consumer choice: System 1 vs. System 2
  - Judgment heuristics and consumer choice: Framing, loss aversion, anchoring, and more

- Class assignment
  - Read Neuromarketing for Dummies, Chapter 8.
  - (Optional) Read Decoding the Irrational Consumer, Chapter 04.

Week 5: Neuromarketing at work and play

- Topics covered
  - Brands on the brain
  - Advertising to the intuitive consumer
  - Creating brain-friendly products and packages
  - Decoding the shopping brain
  - When brains go online
  - Entertaining our brains

- Class assignment
  - Read Neuromarketing for Dummies, Chapter 3.
  - (Optional) Scan examples in Chapters 9-14.

Week 6: Living with neuromarketing

- Topics covered
  - Succeeding with neuromarketing
  - Neuromarketing ethics and standards
  - Can brain science change marketing for the better?

- Class assignment
  - Read Neuromarketing for Dummies, Chapters 21-22.
  - (Optional) Read Decoding the Irrational Consumer, Chapter 14.