

**IMPORTANT**

The unprecedented public health and economic crisis related to the Covid-19 pandemic is a disruptive force. The University of North Texas – Denton is deeply committed to your wellness and safety. In our collective efforts to ensure continuity in learning and teaching, please carefully review <http://vpaa.unt.edu/return>.”

On your Canvas learning and teaching platform, you will see a special section titled **“Wellness and Safety.”** There are URL links that you should read about our protocols and policies. This information is provided by the Office of the Provost/VPAA in consultation with public health experts.



**In this course, we will critically examine shifts in American demography, psychography and identity impact consumers. We will also explore consumer culture theory.**

**The Matter at Hand**

This is a particularly timely and relevant course subject. As you begin this course, consider the renewed dominance of political and economic issues that have manifested protests, debate and national discourse addressing divisiveness in our nation. Media and political discourse discuss legislative initiatives that challenge issues such as biological (or birth certificate-designated) gender for bathroom use, the possibility of destruction or relocation of National and State monuments, and the marital status for same-sex marriages. The media attention afforded to the politics of immigration policy and staunch opposing positions between President Trump and many Congressional legislators as well as a multitude of national opinion leaders reinforces the timeliness of this course. Despite all presidential and Congressional actions, Pew Research reports that 88% of the U.S. population will be composed of immigrants by the Year 2050. The following illuminates the shifting American population, according to Pew Research:

Marketers must gain a better understanding of the seismic changes in U.S. demography and the ensuing shifts in consumers' attitudes and buying behaviors. Generations within the workplace are encountering challenges understanding different perspectives, values and approaches to communications and productivity. This is not a political science or sociology class; however, there are a myriad of current events that influence the marketing of peoples, places and perspectives.

This course specifically confronts the challenges of the nexus between culture (diversity) and consumption (the exchange of market offerings). To fully appreciate the nature and scope of this course, allow me to introduce you to a professor named Dr. Julius Sumner Miller. His somewhat windswept hairstyle and horn-rimmed glasses were not too unlike his mentor and teacher. Although, he earned a Ph.D. in physics and worked as a physics professor at a number of universities, ranging from Dillard University to the U.S. Air Force Academy, his “fame” was far removed from university settings.

The American physicist Julius Sumner Miller was better known by his television persona on *Disney's “Professor Wonderful,”* a popular children’s show in the 1960s, and on Canada’s *“The Hilarious House of Frightenstein”* in the 1970s.

Although he was born in Massachusetts, his Mom was Lithuanian and she spoke twelve languages; his Dad was Latvian. Why do we begin this course with this unusual biographical sketch of a television personality who died one-quarter century ago? Is it because “Professor Wonderful” studied under Albert Einstein? *No*. Is it because this American physicist was able to enlighten the masses about serious science? *No*. It is largely because this second-generation Eastern European had an inimitable impact on the way we engage in learning and teaching. Professor Julius Sumner Miller asserted the following about teaching:

***“What we do, if we are successful, is to stir interest in the matter at hand, awaken enthusiasm for it, arouse a curiosity, kindle a feeling, fire up the imagination.”***

Think about how this second-generation immigrant changed the way millions of people across the world garnered an appreciation for physics. The contributions of first- and second-generation immigrants in American society are well-documented. But, it is especially germane to the nature and scope of this course. In this course, we will critically examine how the ever-changing demographics and lifestyle characteristics of “American” consumers are changing the nature and scope of the U.S. marketplace. Some of the most influential immigrants in the U.S. include America’s “First Lady” Melania Trump, former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, publisher and author Joseph Pulitzer, basketball superstars like Hakeem Olajuwon and Dirk Nowitzki, tennis great Martina Navratilova, baseball “hall of Famer” Ivan Rodriguez and screenwriter/director Ang Lee. Consider that over 25% of all players in Major League Baseball are first-generation immigrants. The U.S. Census report suggests that:

*“Sometime around 2050, non-Hispanic Whites will cease to be a majority. Each group in the new “minority- majority” country has longstanding grievances against whites. How this will all play out has been the subject of passionate speculation and debate. Will America be “balkanized” or even torn apart like observers as diverse as Georgie Anne Geyer, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., and Richard Lamm have conjectured? Or will the much- maligned melting pot continue to function, forming a new, more colorful and diverse American blend?”*

Simply, how do shifts in the population of consumers change their values, attitudes and lifestyles, as well as ensuing shopping behaviors? *What does America look like according to the U.S. Census projections?* Now, ask yourself, how old will you be in the Year 2050, and how will my life cycle stage be impacted by a grossly different ethnic demographic profile

Projected U.S. Population Growth From 2010 to 2050



in the U.S.?

### On-line Learning

This course challenges you to **engage in experiential learning, an opportunity to self-direct and manage your interests, enthusiasm and curiosity about the peoples, places and perspectives that constitute the American consumer population.** This course is designated as 100% online delivery (asynchronous).

Experiential education is often contrasted with *didactic education*, in which the teacher's role is to 'give' information and build knowledge to the student and to prescribe study/learning exercises which have information/knowledge transmission' as the main goal. Blended delivery is a mix of face-to-face lectures and conversations; audio-visual presentations; Web-based course content delivery; and hands-on, self-directed learning. A major component of this course is what may call experiential learning. Experiential learning positions the instructor as a conduit through which you will reflect on everyday experiences to glean important outcomes about consumers' states of mind (i.e., attitudes and values), states of being (i.e., cultural identity, demographics) and states of action (i.e., shopping behaviors and brand preferences). **Accordingly, it is your responsibility to login to the Canvas course web site every week!**

### Course Introduction

*"The meaning of consumer goods and the meaning of creation accomplished by consumer processes are important parts of the scaffolding of present realities." -- Grant McCracken*

Indeed, we will critically examine the ideas of ethnic identity cast against a backdrop of significant shifts in *demographics, psychographics* (i.e., values, attitudes and lifestyles) and *market positioning* impact ensuing consumer decision behaviors in an ever-changing globally- connected market setting. The focus in this course is on the shifting cultural identities (especially) in the State of Texas. The focus is germane to the examination of cultural identities because: (1) the University of North Texas is a multicultural student, faculty and higher education "community" located in the State of Texas, (2) the state's population is illustrative of national trends that demonstrate unprecedented shifts in the composition of the nation, and (3) a disproportionate number of our students enrolled in this course are Texans. *So, what does it mean to identify a as Texan or even as an American?* Specifically, we will critically examine consumer role sets in culturally- diverse settings, brand preference formation in different cultures, and cultural imperatives in the marketing of products and services. Special emphasis is placed on issues and challenges marketers face in addressing a diverse set of cultural identities of consumers and *households – the chief consumption unit for many goods and services –* in managing consumption. In this course, you will acquire skills in creative and critical thinking, working in groups, appreciating other cultures and harnessing your own values within the university community and the larger society. Class exercises, quizzes and presentations will enhance your self-awareness and openness to different perspectives.

### Learning Objectives

The overarching mission of this course is to afford the knowledge, experience and skills to attain the following learning outcomes:

- Students will comprehend the relevance of demography and cultural identity on consumers' behaviors.
- Students will investigate the impact of immigration patterns on the U.S. consumer population.
- Students will identify with the *real self*, the *looking glass-self* and the *aspirational self* in a culturally diverse environment.
- Students will have knowledge of how cultural identities impact individuals, households and reference groups.
- Students will understand the impact of cultural identity on consumer lifestyles and decisions.
- Students will recognize diverse consumer role sets in consumers' brand preferences and retail patronage behaviors.

## Course Support Materials

There are a multitude of readings and videos that are required and posted on the Canvas learning and teaching platform.. It is imperative that you actively engage and “stay connected” to the Canvas course web site. There are also important Canvas functions that are available and useful. You will need to connect with your team members, all students (enrolled in the course section), your professor and administrative support personnel. They are all available on the Canvas course Web site. It is your responsibility to check the course Web site at least twice each week. I check the course Web site on a daily basis; so, I am always available via the Canvas course Web site. Please note that your frequency and duration of engagement in Canvas is recorded, and the data is reviewed by me on a bi-weekly basis.

## Experiential Exercises and Team Assignments

Since all of the experiential exercises will be conducted in teams, you will be assigned to a team on/before the tenth day of class. All team assignments are posted on the Canvas course Web site. So, it is important that you communicate with your team members immediately to exchange contact information and discuss your personal academic, personal and/or professional responsibilities and schedules. You should be prepared to perform approximately 10 hours/learning module outside of scheduled class sessions with your team members.

*Failure of any team member to participate and engage fully in any experiential exercise will result in a grade of zero (0) for that individual experiential assignment grade. Absolutely no individual assignments will be accepted for experiential exercises.*

## Professor Access

**Dr. Lou E. Pelton**

**358-M Business Leadership Building**

University of North Texas (Denton) Campus Office (940.565.3124) • Mobile (972.333.3132)

**Access & Office Hours Policy.** As stated on the Canvas course learning and teaching platform, please feel free to contact me anytime. I prefer not receiving telephone calls after 10:00 p.m. You are welcome to schedule a face-to-face meeting with me. However, please ensure that you have a mask. I will accommodate your schedule. We will likely meet outside my office in the “lounge area” or outside to ensure social distancing. Of course, we will all wear masks in compliance with University of North Texas – Denton policy.

The availability of and access to technologies such as Zoom and Skype afford Internet-enabled meetings off-campus. I request that you send me an Outlook invitation to schedule a Zoom or Skype meeting. Here is a summary of contact points:

<i>Mobile Telephone, Google Duo</i>	972.333.3132
<i>Email</i>	pelton@unt.edu
<i>WhatsApp, LINE</i>	loupelton
<i>Zoom, Skype</i>	please send Outlook invitation

**Email Communications.** I am available via email at [loue.pelton@unt.edu](mailto:loue.pelton@unt.edu) or [pelton@unt.edu](mailto:pelton@unt.edu) ; however, there are a great number of filters used in the University email system. Accordingly, your email may be routed to a “junk mail” folder and automatically deleted. For this reason, **you MUST use your official UNT email address**. If you do not receive a response within 24 hours, I recommend that you call me on my mobile telephone at 972.333.3132.

**Telephone Access.** This is very important. I have a spam protection application [RoboKiller] that may block your call. If this

happens, please send me a text, and I will ensure that ensuing calls are not “blocked.” may be reached on my mobile (972.333.3132) between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. In the event that I am unavailable, a voice mail system will instruct you on the procedures for leaving a message. Please speak slowly and clearly, and remember to leave a number where I can reach you. I will make every effort to return telephone calls within 24-hours of the message recording.

### Course Policies and Procedures

**Academic Integrity.** Each course participant should be fully aware of the policies and guidelines for academic honesty in the University of North Texas Student Guidebook and on UNT web page ([www.unt.edu](http://www.unt.edu)). The Student Code of Conduct and an abbreviated list of other rules, regulations and policies are available from the Dean of Students. Please be sure to visit <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003> in the event that you have any questions about these issues.

Plagiarism is a serious compromise of academic integrity. Please be certain to cite any references used in written assignments. Materials copied verbatim must be in quotation marks with a correct citation documented within the text. This applies to any and all materials taken from Internet sites.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).** The College of Business Administration and Honors Program comply with the ADA, and we make every effort to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a special need in accordance with ADA guidelines, please inform me immediately. Every effort will be made to accommodate your special needs. The Office of Disability Accommodations (ODA) assists faculty members and students in addressing special needs.

**Cellular Telephones and Sound-activated Pagers** To ensure a high-quality learning and teaching environment, please silence your mobile phone or any other device that might be disruptive

**Classroom Behavior.** Each course participant is responsible for classroom behavior that is conducive to the teaching-learning process. Each course participant should be fully aware of the policies and guidelines for academic honesty and classroom behavior discussed in the University of North Texas Student Guidebook and on UNT Web page ([www.unt.edu](http://www.unt.edu)). The Student Code of Conduct and an abbreviated list of other rules, regulations and policies are available from the Dean of Students. Anyone compromising the integrity of the learning process will receive a failing grade in this course and be referred to the Dean of Student Affairs for disciplinary action.