

Family and Consumer Studies 3470 - Section 1:
INTERNATIONAL CONSUMER POLICY
Spring Semester / Thursday Evenings, 7:15 - 9:45 pm.
(Meets International and Behavioral Science Requirements)

Instructor: **Dr. Robert N. Mayer**, Professor
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Course Description: Globalization -- with its trans-border movement of investment dollars, production facilities, technologies, and ideas – has dramatically changed the experience of consumers around the world. In some ways, consumers are becoming better off and more alike, but many consumer problems remain, such as ensuring that products are safe (and not counterfeit), marketing methods are fair, and the environmental impact of consumption does not overwhelm us.

This course examines: (1) the economic, political, cultural factors that influence consumer policy in a variety of countries, and (2) the ways in which countries learn from and interact with each other in the process of addressing consumer problems. Some of the specific topics covered are: the role of consumers in the global recession and recovery, the impact of free trade agreements on consumers, the politics of genetically modified food, regulation of advertising directed to children, the experience of consumers under socialism and in the transition to capitalism, marketing of tobacco products, protection of intellectual property, recycling of toxic substances, water privatization, and the “new consumers” of China, Brazil, and India.



Requirements: **This class meets only once a week, so you should be committed to attending regularly.** All readings are provided on the course website, and exams consist of multiple-choice-type questions. There will be a few brief writing assignments (to help students focus on the readings) and one longer paper. This class will make extensive use of **Canvas** course management software, including the posting of lecture notes before each class.

Instructor: Professor Mayer has received both college-level and university-wide teaching awards. In student evaluations for this course from spring 2015, 95% of students strongly agreed that “this was an effective instructor,” compared to an average 62% in all University of Utah courses. Here are a few student comments:

“By far one of my favorite teachers. Very knowledgeable on the subject and he knows how to teach it.”

“Always learned a lot in the class every night.”

“He brought energy to the classroom and was very open to any of the students’ questions.”

“He was well prepared and engaging in the classroom. He is also very knowledgeable and answered follow-up questions from students with ease. If the answer was not readily available, he found it after class and posted it on Canvas. I thought that went above and beyond.”