P: Only open to LAMP students.

It may be said that consumerism is one of the defining features of contemporary American culture: discarding the old, acquiring the new, going to the mall, shopping online, keeping up with the Joneses, buying goods and services to fulfill desires, and so on characterize common American experience.

In this course, we shall explore various topics pertaining to consumerism, including what it means to be an American consumer, how advertising is gendered, the politics and power of the American food industry, the high cost of discount culture, and what viable alternatives might exist to the consumerist culture to which we belong.

As an intensive writing course, L416 requires students to write a good deal: weekly short responses, three formal essays, a research summary and a final researched essay will figure as the written work for the course. Class meetings are designed to give students ample opportunity to discuss, debate, and process the ideas from the readings.

Course materials will include books, essays and articles from diverse sources, and visual media, including documentaries, full-length feature films, and shorter on-line productions.