

COMM3331 Communication & Decision Making

School of Communication | Fall 2018

Online Hybrid | Mon & Wed 4:10 - 5:05pm | Denney Hall 253

Instructor: Nic Matthews, Ph.D.

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Office: 3107 Derby Hall

Office Hrs: Tues (12-1pm) & Wednesday (1-2pm)

Phone: 614.292.3288

Course Materials

1. **[Recommended not required]** Plous, S. (1993). *The Psychology of Judgment and Decision Making*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill, Inc.
2. Additional course materials and readings via Carmen
3. **[Required]** Access to a computer/laptop. You must ensure that your computer functions properly and that you use some form of data redundancy (e.g., cloud backups or physical duplication).

Note: I do not provide notes for missed lectures. Please refer to the PowerPoint slides on Carmen. Additionally, I encourage you to make arrangements with another student in class to get the materials you may have missed.

Course Description

This course will provide an overview of the psychological processes that determine decision-making, with a focus on communication contexts. We will review literature and research in communication and social psychology to understand how cognitive, affective, and motivational factors influence how we perceive meaning and influence how we construct our preferences.

Expected Learning Outcomes

Students should end the course with:

1. An increased understanding of affective and cognitive factors that influence decision-making.
2. An appreciation for the role of these factors in behavior and decision-making in students' own personal and professional lives.
3. The ability to critically analyze and evaluate decisions before, during, and after making them.

Assessments

1. **Exams.** There will be 3, non-cumulative exams. Most of the questions will be multiple choice. Some questions may be fill in the blank or short essay. Exams are closed book and closed notes. Exams must be taken during the scheduled exam time. All requests for a makeup due to athletic participation, job interviews, special religious observances, or other foreseeable purposes must be made **48 hours prior** to the exam and require documentation. A make-up exam can only be taken with proof of a valid medical excuse or extenuating circumstance.
2. **Rotating engagement activities.** 4 times this semester, I will ask you to collectively create the course study guide. This task rotates depending on which group you belong to (see syllabus or module). The engagement activities are pass/fail. However, I reserve the right to penalize with partial credit (or no credit) for substandard work. Be professional and aim to impress.
3. **Rotating local presentations.** Once this semester you will deliver a poster presentation. You will deliver a brief pitch on your idea to a couple of your peers at a time. You will pitch your idea again and again to different peer groups until we are out of time. I will grade you on your professionalism. Your peers will evaluate you on your preparedness.
4. **Rotating Essays.** Once this semester, you will compose a short essay that asks you to apply a concept/theory from class to a specific situation. You will publish your essay to a discussion board for the entire class to read. I will grade your essay using a rubric. Additionally, your peer will critique your work publicly.
5. **Rotating Critiques.** Twice this semester you will critique a peer's essay publicly using the course discussion board. The critiques are pass/fail. However, I reserve the right to penalize with partial credit (or no credit) for substandard work. Be professional and aim to impress.

Grading Plan

Exam I	15%
Exam II	20%
Exam III	20%
Engagement Activities	15%

Essay	15%
Local presentation	5%
Critiques	10%

Grading Policy

I will use the standard OSU grading scale. I will not round grades. If this course is required for you to graduate, I expect you to perform at your best to ensure the course does not prevent a timely graduation. Be proactive. Be professional.

A 93.00-100%	B 83.00-86.99%	C 73.00-76.99%	D 60.00-66.99%
A- 90.00-92.99%	B- 80.00-82.99%	C- 70.00-72.99%	F 0-59.99%
B+ 87.00-89.99%	C+ 77.00-79.99%	D+ 67.00-69.99%	

My Policies

Communication

I have designed our communication policies to ensure timeliness, collaboration, and simplicity. Please aim to adhere to the policy closely. Deviating from the policy may result in undue delays or me missing your messages altogether.

Things to avoid

- Canvas mail/messenger & Canvas' submission comments. Both of these are unreliable.
- Weekend emails and messages sent around 6PM or later on weekdays. Under most circumstances, we will respond to messages of this sort on the next business day.
- Sending emails that are not from your OSU email address. Messages to our OSU accounts from non-osu email services are regularly marked as spam and since their delivery cannot be tracked, you may not use them as evidence of communication attempts.
- Unprofessional emails. Please ensure that your email messages are professional and informative by including your course info in the subject line, a salutation, adequate yet concise body text, closing, and your full name.

First source

Your first and most important resource is the course discussion boards, because it is likely that your question has already been asked and answered. For general course questions, use the General Course Questions discussion board. For assignment specific questions, use the specific discussion board for each assignment.

Second source

If you have more sensitive questions or class requests, please email me directly using your Buckeye email address. Please avoid using Canvas' message system.

Attendance & Participation

Each unexcused absence penalizes your in-class activities grade.

I will only excuse absences if 1) you let me know that you will be absent before class begins and 2) you have a legitimate reason for missing class (e.g., school recognized activity, religious observance, family death, etc.). I will require documentation (e.g., doctors note) to excuse an absence. You must submit documentation no later 5 days after the absence.

Late work

I will accept late submissions for online engagement activities but will penalize submissions as follows.

- -25% on work turned in 1 min. to 23 hours late
- -50% on work turned in 24 to 47 hours late
- Work turned in 48 hours late or more will not be graded and will receive a 0

There are no exceptions to this rule, unless a student has made arrangements with the professor before the assignment due date/time. This policy does not apply to exams.

Professionalism

You must ensure that the work you submit is correct. Submitting files that are corrupt, the wrong version, the wrong format, missing components, the wrong file type, etc. is unprofessional. It is your responsibility to check on the integrity of your work immediately following submission. I will not inform you if your work fails these standards because under most circumstances, it is impossible for me to know your intentions. If I cannot view your work, you will not receive credit for your submission.

Grade appeals

You may appeal a grade within 1 week after the grade has been posted. Appeals must be made in person and have strong, evidence-based arguments that reference specific components of the grading rubric (when applicable). Appeals can result in an unchanged grade, a higher grade, or a lower grade.

Peer evaluation and public work.

This class relies heavily on peer evaluation and sharing your work publicly. As research suggests, the added accountability greatly increases work quality. I will not make exceptions to these policies. If you feel that this policy makes you uncomfortable, I recommend that you drop the course.

OSU POLICIES

Academic Misconduct

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/> (Links to an external site.)[Links to an external site.](#)

Academic Integrity Policy

“It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term ‘academic misconduct’ includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info_for_students/csc.asp) (Links to an external site.)[Links to an external site.](#)”

Student Academic Services

Arts and Sciences Advising and Academic Services’ website provides support for student academic success. Information on advising issues such as tutoring, transfer credits, academic standing, and contact information for Arts and Sciences advisors can be obtained through this website. The site is: <http://advising.osu.edu/welcome.shtml> (Links to an external site.)[Links to an external site.](#)

Student Services

The Student Service Center assists with financial aid matters, tuition and fee payments. Please see their site at: <http://ssc.osu.edu> (Links to an external site.)[Links to an external site.](#)

Copyright Disclaimer

The materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection and are only for the use of students officially enrolled in the course for the educational purposes associated with the course. Copyright law must be considered before copying, retaining, or disseminating materials outside of the course.

Diversity

The School of Communication at The Ohio State University embraces and maintains an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, experiences, and people. Our commitment to diversity moves beyond mere tolerance to recognizing, understanding, and welcoming the contributions of diverse groups and the value group members possess as individuals. In our School, the faculty, students, and staff are dedicated to building a tradition of diversity with principles of equal opportunity, personal respect, and the intellectual interests of those who comprise diverse cultures.

Title IX

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> ([Links to an external site.](#))[Links to an external site.](#) or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator, Kellie Brennan, at titleix@osu.edu

Accessibility accommodation for students with disabilities

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know via email immediately so that we can privately discuss options. You are also welcome to register with Student Life Disability Services to establish reasonable accommodations. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu ; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu ; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

Course Schedule

Week	Dates	Topics & Readings	Deadlines
1			<u>Submit on 8/26 before 11:59PM</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabus quiz • Class Introductions
	Wed 8/22	<u>Course intro</u> <i>Syllabus & introductions</i>	
Cognitive Processing & Decision-Making			
2	Mon 8/27	<u>Decision making intro</u> <i>Preface (skip the survey)</i> <u>Selective perception</u> <i>Ch. 1</i> <u>Framing</u> <i>Ch. 6</i>	<u>Submit on 8/31 before 5:00PM</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group 1: Engagement Activity • Group 2: Engagement Activity • Group 3: off week!
	Wed 8/29	<u>Cognitive Dissonance</u> <i>Ch. 2</i>	
3	Mon 9/3	No Class: Labor Day	<u>Submit on 9/7 before 5:00PM</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group 1: off week! • Group 2: Engagement Activity • Group 3: Engagement Activity
	Wed 9/5	Group 1: Local Presentations Group 2 & 3: Judges	

4	Mon 9/10	<u>Overconfidence</u> <i>Ch. 19</i>	<u>Submit on 9/14 before 5:00PM</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group 1: Essay • Group 2: off week! • Group 3: off week!
	Wed 9/12	<u>Representativeness</u> <i>Ch. 10</i> <u>Availability</u> <i>Ch. 11</i>	
5	Mon 9/17	<u>Dual processing models</u> <i>ELM (p.132-141)</i>	<u>Submit on 9/21 before 5:00PM</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group 1: off week! • Group 2: Critique • Group 3: Critique
	Wed 9/19	<u>Attribution Theory</u> <i>Ch. 16</i> <u>Descriptive Models</u> <i>Ch. 9</i>	
6	Mon 9/24	Catchup & Exam Review	Nothing online
	Wed 9/26	Exam I	
7	Mon 10/1	<u>Memory and Hindsight Bias</u> <i>Ch. 3</i>	<u>Submit on 10/5 before 5:00PM</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group 1: off week! • Group 2: Engagement Activity • Group 3: Engagement Activity
	Wed 10/3	<u>Correlation</u> <i>Ch. 15</i>	

Social Considerations & Decision-Making

8	Mon 10/8	Group 2: Local Presentations Groups 1 & 3: Judges	<u>Submit on 10/12 before 5:00PM</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group 1: Engagement Activity • Group 2: off week! • Group 3: Engagement Activity
	Wed 10/10	<u>Social Influences I</u> <i>Ch. 17</i>	
9	Mon 10/15	<u>Social Influences II</u> <i>Ch. 17</i>	<u>Submit on 10/19 before 5:00PM</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group 1: off week! • Group 2: Essay • Group 3: off week!
	Wed 10/17	<u>Communication Accommodation Theory</u> <i>Reading TBA</i>	
10	Mon 10/22	<u>Ethical decision making</u> <i>Reading TBA</i>	<u>Submit on 10/26 before 5:00PM</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group 1: Critique • Group 2: off week! • Group 3: Critique
	Wed 10/24	<u>Moral decision making</u> <i>Reading TBA</i>	
11	Mon 10/29	Catch up & Exam review	Nothing
	Wed 10/31	Exam II	

12	Mon 11/5	<u>Group Judgement</u> <i>Ch. 18</i>	<u>Submit on 11/9 before 5:00PM</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group 1: Engagement Activity Group 2: off week! Group 3: Engagement Activity
	Wed 11/7	<u>Disposition Theories</u> <i>Reading TBA</i>	
13	Mon 11/12	No Class: Veterans Day	<u>Submit on 11/16 before 5:00PM</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group 1: Engagement Activity Group 2: Engagement Activity Group 3: off week!
	Wed 11/14	Group 3: Local Presentations Groups 1 & 2: Judges	
Relativity & Decision-Making			
14	Mon 11/19	<u>Context Dependence</u> <i>Ch. 4</i>	<u>Submit on 11/23 before 5:00PM</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group 1: off week! Group 2: off week! Group 3: Essay
	Wed 11/21	No class: Thanksgiving Break	
15	Mon 11/26	<u>Anchoring and Adjustment</u> <i>Ch. 13</i>	<u>Submit on 11/30 before 5:00PM</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group 1: Critique Group 2: Critique Group 3: off week!
	Wed 11/28	<u>Social Judgment Theory</u> <i>Reading TBA</i>	
16	Mon 12/3	Catch up and Exam review	Nothing
	Wed 12/5	Exam III 4:00pm - 5:45pm	