

## **COMM 3331: Communication in Decision Making**

The Ohio State University  
School of Communication

### **Instructor:**

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Office Hours:

*Please see on Carmen/Canvas Homepage*

### **Course Objectives:**

*Communication in Decision Making* is designed to explore the relevant factors and behaviors that influence people's decision making in a variety of communication and relational contexts: interpersonal, small group, organizational, and business.

The primary goals of this course are to

- (1) help you understand the relationship between communication and decision making.
- (2) provide you with a better understanding of yourself and your abilities/strategies of making important decisions.
- (3) help you build communication and analytical skills necessary for effective decision making processes.

*Why exactly should I be interested in that topic?*

We all make decisions every day. Some of them are so important that our future life is significantly influenced by them or the life of others. At work, people are asked to be decisive and able to handle even the most complex situations successfully. All that makes it necessary to understand how good and bad decisions are made and what everybody can do to improve decision making. The course offers an opportunity to learn about decision making strategies and to actively exercise decision making together with others.

*What do I need to do for class?*

Decision making skills are best learned via hands-on experiences. There will generally be at least one in-class activity each class period (e.g., assignment, role-play, simulation, etc.). These activities will help illustrate points in the lectures, and enhance further discussion and reflection. Also, the exercises will put you in new and maybe uncomfortable situations so that you will have the opportunity to try out new behaviors and skills in the relatively safe environment of the classroom to be better prepared for your next decision making tasks.

I expect students to be fully committed to all activities and to actively participate. The more you contribute to exercises and class discussions, the better the chance to make it a really good and successful learning experience for all of us.

**Class is:** Monday and Wednesday  
11:10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
Room: MacQuigg Lab 162

**Used Text:**

Readings will be posted under Files on Carmen. However, there are some additional books about decision making that may be helpful to understand the class topics:

Mullen, J.D. & Roth, B. M. (1991). Decision making: Its logic and practice. Savage, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers

Patton, B.R. & Downs, T.M. (2003). Decision-making in group interaction: Achieving quality (4th Ed.). Boston, Allyn and Bacon.

**Class Web site via Carmen/Canvas:**

*Please be sure to check Carmen at least twice a week for news, changes,...*

## **Accessibility Accommodations 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](mailto:slds@osu.edu) ; 614-292-3307; [slds.osu.edu](http://slds.osu.edu) ; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

## **Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct**

It is imperative that all work you submit be your own. When you use someone else's ideas, you must give proper credit to the original author(s). Please adhere to the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the APA manual of style when citing others' work.

According to the Committee on Academic Misconduct "Academic misconduct is defined as any activity which tends to compromise the academic integrity of the institution, or subvert the educational process." Further, the term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed and is 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). It is the responsibility of the Committee of Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (<http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>).

**Exams**

The information taught before an exam will be tested on this exam. It will be not tested on the following exams again (exams in this class are not cumulative).

Exams will be multiple-choice (please bring a #2 pencil on exam days), based on the material from the readings and class discussions. Make-up exams will only be offered for medical or other similar, legitimate reasons.

Failure to take any exam will result in a zero for the exam.

Late Arrival: I reserve the right to exclude students from the exam if they arrive late. Exclusion will result in a zero for the exam.

**In-Class Assignments (ICA)**

On most days there will be unannounced In-Class Assignments (7 over the whole semester) where you should take a few minutes to write on an assigned topic. ICAs have to be completed during class. They should help you to reflect specific topics of the actual lecture.

One of them provides you the opportunity of bonus points. Only 6 of the 7 ICAs are necessary to obtain the chance to score 100% in this class.

*(Example: You have completed all 7 ICAs successfully = 12 regular points + 2 bonus points; you have completed 6 ICAs successfully = 12 regular points and 0 bonus points.)*

**In-Class Exercises (ICE)**

There will be three in-class exercises where students are asked to work together on a bigger assignment. Those exercises will help you to better understand how class topics are perceived by other people and how to deal with different views and attitudes if you need to come to a mutual decision.

**Online Assignments (OA)**

On 5 days the class will move online. Students are asked to complete online assignments which are based on class discussions, handout, students' notes, and additional scholarly work. The online assignments have to be completed on those assigned days to receive credit. We will not meet on those days but the Professor is available to discuss the assignment and to answer questions. The overall goal

is to increase learning flexibility and effectiveness and to adapt the course to the changing environment of higher education.

### **Team Presentations**

At the beginning of the semester, students will be assigned to one of 5 different topics. In teams of four, they are asked to prepare a 15-minute presentation/statement about the topic based on reviewed literature. The presentations will take place throughout the semester (see class schedule). Further instructions will be provided at the beginning of the semester. Not attending the group presentations given by classmates is strongly frowned upon. Thus, students earn 1 point for each of those presentation days they attend. The attendance points are official points which count toward the final grade.

### **Final Paper Assignment**

You will be asked to work alone or together with other students to write a paper about an assigned topic. The assignment provides the opportunity to apply your new knowledge based on the lectures of the class.

If you are working together with other students, all team members will get the same amount of points so that it is a question of fairness and honesty that everyone contributes actively to create an excellent paper. All papers have to be submitted within the given deadline. Late submissions will be penalized.

Further details about the assignment will be announced in class.

### **Grade Distribution**

In-Class Assignments	10% (12 points – 6*2)
In-Class Exercises	8% (9 points – 3*3)
Online Assignments	13% (15 points - 5*3)
Team Presentations	7% (8 points)
Presentation Attendance	3% (4 points – 4*1)
Final Paper Assignment	9% (10 points)
Exams (weighted equally)	50% (58 points – 2*29)
<i>Total</i>	<i>100% (116 points)</i>

**Grade Change Requests**

Students are strongly encouraged to check posted points for all assignments and exams regularly on Carmen. The deadline for requesting any score changes (in case of score posting errors) for assignments or exams taken during the semester is the first day of the last week of regular classes, Monday, 04/23/2018. However, any missing points have to be reported 14 days after posting of the score in question. Later requests will not be considered.

**Makeup of missed Assignments**

Taking missed assignments late will only be allowed for serious, legitimate reasons (documentation needed like doctor's note). Students are required to inform the instructor before the originally scheduled assignment/exam time. Otherwise, a makeup opportunity cannot be granted.

**Class Schedule**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>
<b>January</b>		
M	8	Course Overview and Introduction
W	10	Team Presentation Assignment
M	15	Martin Luther King Day
W	17	Introduction to Decision Making
M	22	Limited Rationality
W	24	Limited Rationality (cont.)
M	29	Psychological Obstacles to Sound Decision Making
W	31	Evaluating the Value of Outcomes/Alternatives
<b>February</b>		
M	5	Making Complex Decisions In Class Exercise 1
W	7	Political Decision Making Team Presentation 1
M	12	Online Assignment 1
W	14	Health Decisions Team Presentation 2

M	19	Online Assignment 2
W	21	Risk in Decision Making
M	26	<b>Exam I</b>
W	28	Groups and Decision Making
<b>March</b>		
M	5	Decision Making in Groups In-Class Exercise 2
W	7	Collaborative Negotiation and Decision Making
M-F	12-16	Spring Break
M	19	Negotiation in Decision Making In-Class Exercise 3
W	21	Decisions in Consumer Behavior Team Presentation 3
M	26	Online Assignment 3
W	28	Decisions of Media Choice Team Presentation 4
<b>April</b>		
M	2	Online Assignment 4
W	4	Final Paper Assignment
M	9	Influence in Negotiating Decisions



W	11	Decisions of Occupational Choice Team Presentation 5
M	16	Online Assignment 5
W	18	<b>Exam II</b>
M	23	Final Paper Pre-Review
<b>F</b>	<b>27</b> <b>11:59 p.m.</b> <b>on Carmen</b>	<b>Deadline Final Paper</b>

**Caveat**

I reserve the right to update or change portions of this syllabus in order to make the class a better experience for everyone. Any changes will be posted to Carmen.

**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>

**Student Services**

The Student Service Center assists with financial aid matters, tuition and fee payments. Please see their site at: <http://ssc.osu.edu>

**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> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator, Kellie Brennan, at [titleix@osu.edu](mailto:titleix@osu.edu)