



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

SYLLABUS: COMM 3331 COMMUNICATION AND DECISION MAKING SUMMER 2018 ONLINE

Course overview

What is the role of communication in the decision-making process? This course will provide an overview of the communication factors and processes that influence decision-making. We will review how cognitive, affective, and motivational factors influence how we construct our preferences, and how information expressed in messages can affect our decisions. The course will then cover models of communication and decision-making in groups and organizations, and the role of social influence and leadership in decision-making.

Instructor

Instructor: Kate (Tran) Luong

Email address: luong.31@osu.edu

Online Office hours: 1 – 4PM Thursday and by appointment

Teaching assistant: Wenbo Li

Email address: li.8852@osu.edu

Course description

Decision-making as a process; comparisons between interpersonal, bargaining-negotiation contexts, groups and organizations; descriptive and prescriptive models of decision-making in small groups and organizations. This course is delivered entirely online. Prereq: Not open to students with credit for 631.

Course learning outcomes

Students should end the course with:

1. An understanding of the major theoretical approaches to communication and decision-making.
2. An increased understanding of affective, motivational, cognitive, and social factors that influence decision-making.
3. An increased ability to analyze and design communication strategies to influence decision making in real world communication contexts, including interpersonal, group, organizational, and strategic communication.
4. An increased ability to think critically to derive recommendations for how to solve decision-making problems and provide leadership.

Course materials

Required

- Readings to be provided as digital copies on Carmen.

Course technology

For help with your password, university e-mail, Carmen, or any other technology issues, questions, or requests, contact the OSU IT Service Desk. Standard support hours are available at <https://ocio.osu.edu/help/hours>, and support for urgent issues is available 24x7.

- **Carmen:**
 - Carmen, Ohio State's Learning Management System, will be used to host materials and activities throughout this course. To access Carmen, visit [Carmen.osu.edu](https://carmen.osu.edu). Log in to Carmen using your name.# and password. If you have not setup a name.# and password, visit my.osu.edu.
 - Help guides on the use of Carmen can be found at <https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/carmen>
 - **This online course requires use of Carmen (Ohio State's learning management system) and other online communication and multimedia tools. If you need additional services to use these technologies, please request accommodations with your instructor.**
 - [Carmen \(Canvas\) accessibility](#)
- **Carmen Connect:**

- Carmen Connect, Ohio State’s webinar tool, will be used to host online office hours and other meetings by appointments. Log in to Carmen Connect using your name.# and password. If you have not setup a name.# and password, visit my.osu.edu.
 - My office hours can be accessed here <http://carmenconnect.osu.edu/katet/>
 - Help guides on the use of Carmen Connect can be found at <https://odee.osu.edu/resourcecenter/carmenconnect>
- **Self-Service and Chat support:** <http://ocio.osu.edu/selfservice>
 - **Phone:** 614-688-HELP (4357)
 - **Email:** 8help@osu.edu
 - **TDD:** 614-688-8743

Baseline technical skills necessary for online courses

- Basic computer and web-browsing skills
- Navigating Carmen

Technology skills necessary for this specific course

- CarmenConnect text, audio, and video chat

Necessary equipment

- Computer: current Mac (OS X) or PC (Windows 7+) with high-speed internet connection

Assignments & Grading

Grades

<u>Assignment or category</u>	<u>Points and Percent</u>
<u>Syllabus and Carmen Quiz</u>	<u>25/ 5%</u>
<u>Weekly Discussion</u>	<u>150/ 30%</u>
<u>Decision Journal</u>	<u>50/10%</u>
<u>Reflection Papers</u>	<u>150/30%</u>
<u>Final Paper</u>	<u>125/ 25%</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>500 Points and 100%</u>

See course schedule, below, for due dates

Assignment guide

Weekly Discussions

Students will be asked to respond to a question about either lecture or media assigned. The initial post will be due by 11:59pm on **Thursday** of each week. A post responding to the initial post of another student will be due by 11:59pm **Saturday** of each week.

Writing Assignments

Each writing assignment's detailed description and rubric will be provided throughout the course. Please read through the description and rubric carefully while working on each assignment, and let me know if you have any questions.

The order of the assignments here is the same as the order in which these assignments are due in the class, meaning **the Decision Journal will be your first writing assignment. It is due the 3rd week of class**, and as such, I included more details for it here.

- **Decision Journal** – In this assignment, you will document three choices that you personally made related to communication within the past month. You will write about a decision with regards to MEDIA MESSAGES (either a choice to engage with a media message, or a choice prompted by a media message); a decision with regards to INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION (either a choice to communicate either in person or on social media with someone, or a choice prompted by interpersonal communication); and a decision with regards to GROUP COMMUNICATION (a choice to communicate either in person or on social media with a group of people, or a choice prompted by group discussion). For each of these decisions, briefly describe what factors or context(s) led you to make the choice you did. This assignment will be used to launch our discussion of judgment and decision-making by encouraging you to reflect critically on how decision-making influences communication, and vice versa, how communication influences decision-making.
- **Reflection Papers** – At three points throughout the term, you will write concise (700-750 words) reflection papers on the material covered in class and in the readings. These reflection papers will provide you with an opportunity to discuss how the concepts we cover in class might be applicable to your own personal and professional life, and how you might incorporate your new knowledge about decision-making and communication to make better decisions with others. Reflection papers will be graded for content, clarity, grammar, and syntax. Specific prompts will be provided for each reflection paper. These prompts will be announced in class and posted on Carmen.

- **Final Paper**– Your final assignment for the term will be to pick one of four communication contexts (advertising, health communication, political communication, and group/organizational communication) to which your knowledge of communication and decision-making can be applied. In the context of your choice, you will act as the choice architect to design effective communication strategies that can influence people’s decision making. You will be asked to apply at least 3 theories or concepts that you have learned in this class to design these strategies. In-depth analysis and careful consideration of the different cognitive, affective, contextual, and social factors in the decision-making process are required. Your Choice Analysis paper should not exceed 2000 words.

***A Note on Formatting:** Should you choose to do additional research for any of these papers, all references and citations should be formatted according to the style manual of the American Psychological Association (6th edition). Resources to assist you in the research and formatting process are available through the OSU Library system (library.osu.edu/find/resources/).

Late assignments

Late assignments without a valid medical excuse will incur a letter-grade penalty (10% of the assignment’s total points) for each day they are late. Assignments 3 or more days late will not be accepted and will receive a 0. This policy applies for the written assignments as well as discussion posts.

Grading scale

At the end of the course, dividing your total number of points by 500 will yield your final course grade percentage. Letter grades will be assigned using the following grading scheme. **THERE WILL BE NO ROUNDING UP OF GRADES.**

93–100: A
90–92.9: A-
87–89.9: B+
83–86.9: B
80–82.9: B-
77–79.9: C+
73–76.9: C
70–72.9: C-
67–69.9: D+
60–66.9: D
Below 60: E

Class Policies

Class Communication Policy

All class announcements will be communicated via Carmen and emails. It is your responsibility to check both Carmen and your OSU emails regularly to make sure you receive messages from me and your TA.

I will reply to your emails within **48 hours**. I will let you know ahead of time if there is a short period in which I will be less accessible via emails. Email is the best method to reach me – You can either email me directly or using Carmen messaging system. You can also come my online office hours on Carmen Connect, or email me to set up individual appointments.

I expect professionalism from your emails: You need to politely address me, include a subject line, use respectful languages, and sign your name at the end. **I will respond once to emails that do not meet this standard and let you know what needs to be improved. Subsequent unprofessional emails will not receive a response.**

Similarly, emails asking questions that can be answered by reading the syllabus will receive one response, and subsequent emails will be not answered.

Expectation for Students

Because this is a distance-education course, there are not set meeting times for our lectures and discussions. However, **the expectation for students is the same as an in-person class:** I expect you to do your weekly readings, listen or view the lectures, participate by posting on our weekly discussion boards, finish your assignments on time, and overall, put time and effort into this course just as you would do for an in-person course. For a 12-week 3-credit class such as ours, you should be planning on spending **at least 12 hours/week** working on class materials and assignments.

Being away from campus will NOT hinder your success in this class, but not planning to put in the required amount of time or effort for this class will. The content and assignment will be delivered completely online, but other than that, you must treat this class like any other class. Because there are no set meeting times, you will have to rely more on yourself to make sure your assignments are completed and turned in in time. You will also need to have reliable Internet access – **If you know ahead of time there is a short period in which you will need extra accommodations, please email me and let me know as soon as possible.**

To achieve learning success, please follow the following guideline for how often you should plan to log in and engage with the course and materials posted.

Logging in & Checking your emails: AT LEAST THREE TIMES PER WEEK

Be sure you are logging in to the course in Carmen each week, including weeks with holidays or weeks with minimal online course activity. (During most weeks you will

probably log in many times.) If you have a situation that might cause you to miss an entire week of class, discuss it with me *as soon as possible*.

Participating on the discussion board: 2 TIMES PER WEEK WHEN THERE ARE DISCUSSIONS

As participation, each week you can expect to post at least once and respond at least once as part of our substantive class discussion on the week's topics.

Readings & Lectures: AT LEAST ONCE PER WEEK

Readings and lectures for each week will be posted on Carmen every Wednesday between 12 and 5pm. You must log in to Carmen to download and view these materials. I highly recommend you do your readings and view the lectures before posting on the discussion board to get satisfactory grades.

Discussion and communication guidelines

The following are my expectations for how we should communicate as a class. Above all, please remember to be respectful and thoughtful.

- **Writing style:** While there is no need to participate in class discussions as if you were writing a research paper, you should remember to write using good grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Do not use slangs or emojis in your discussion posts.
- **Tone and civility:** Treatment of all students with respect regardless of race, gender or gender identification, sexual orientation, or other characteristics is a priority in this class. If issues arise with other students, or if you have concerns about the ways in which I may have expressed myself in these regards, please let me know. Let's maintain a supportive learning community where everyone feels safe and where people can disagree amicably. Under no circumstances should you name-call or attack another student's character. Remember that sarcasm does not always come across online.
- **Citing your sources:** When we have academic discussions, please cite your sources to back up what you say. (For the textbook or other course materials, list at least the title and page numbers. For online sources, include a link.)
- **Backing up your work:** Consider composing your academic posts in a word processor, where you can save your work, and then copying into the Carmen discussion.

Other Policies

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>

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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.

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

Academic integrity policy

Policies for this online course

- **Written assignments:** Your written assignments, including discussion posts, should be your own original work. In formal assignments, you should follow **APA** style to cite the ideas and words of your research sources. You are encouraged to ask a trusted person to proofread your assignments before you turn them in--but no one else should revise or rewrite your work.
- **Reusing past work:** In general, **you are prohibited in university courses from turning in work from a past class to your current class, even if you modify it.** If you want to build on past research or revisit a topic you've explored in previous courses, please discuss the situation with me.

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/>

Accessibility accommodations for students with disabilities

Requesting accommodations

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 (tentative)

<u>Week</u>	<u>Week of</u>	<u>Topics, Readings</u>	<u>Assignments</u>
<u>1</u>	<u>5/9</u>	<u>Introduction to Communication and Decision Making</u>	<u>Due:</u> <u>Syllabus and Carmen Quiz (5/12)</u> <u>Student introduction discussion 1 (5/10)</u>
<u>2</u>	<u>5/14</u>	<u>Expected Value, Expected Utility & Choice Architecture</u> <u>Read: Plous chapter 7, Johnson et al., 2012</u>	<u>Due:</u> <u>Discussion Post 2 (5/17)</u>
		The Lone Decision-Maker <u>The role of language and message features in shaping decision preferences, problems, and heuristics</u>	

<u>3</u>	<u>5/21</u>	<u>Framing</u> <u>Read: Winterbottom, 2008;</u> <u>Plous chapter 6</u>	<u>Due:</u> <u>Discussion Post 3 (5/24)</u> <u>Decision Journal (5/21)</u>
<u>4</u>	<u>5/28</u>	<u>Availability &</u> <u>Representativeness</u> <u>Heuristic</u> <u>Read: Plous chapter 10 & 11</u>	<u>Due:</u> <u>Discussion Post 4 (5/31)</u>
<u>5</u>	<u>6/4</u>	<u>Probability & Risk</u> <u>Perception</u> <u>Read: Fargelin et al 2011,</u> <u>Slovic 1987</u>	<u>Due:</u> <u>Discussion Post 5 (6/7)</u>
<u>6</u>	<u>6/11</u>	<u>Confirmation Bias & Self-</u> <u>fulfilling prophecy</u> <u>Read: Klaymen 1995 parts 1,</u> <u>2, & 5, Jussim 1986</u>	<u>Due:</u> <u>Reflection Paper 1 (6/11)</u> <u>Discussion Post 6 (6/14)</u>
<u>7</u>	<u>6/19</u>	<u>Anchoring & Attribution</u> <u>Read: Plous chapter 13,</u> <u>Riggio & Garcia 2009</u>	<u>Due:</u> <u>Discussion Post 7 (6/21)</u>
		<u>How do motivation and emotion affect communication and the decision-maker?</u>	
<u>8</u>	<u>6/25</u>	<u>Motivation & Cognitive</u> <u>Dissonance</u> <u>Read: Santinioso & Kunda</u> <u>1991, Brehm 1957</u>	<u>Due:</u> <u>Reflection Paper 2 (6/25)</u> <u>Discussion Post 8 (6/28)</u>
<u>9</u>	<u>7/2</u> <u>(No class</u> <u>on 7/4)</u>	<u>Emotions, Risk as Feelings, &</u> <u>Affect Heuristic</u> <u>Read: Ekman chapter 2,</u> <u>Slovic et al (2004)</u>	<u>Due:</u> <u>Discussion Post 9 (7/6)</u>
		<u>Making Decisions Together &</u> <u>Improving Communication</u>	

<u>10</u>	<u>7/9</u>	<u>Social Influences & Group Decision Making</u> Read: <u>Plous chapter 17, Lunnenburg 2011</u>	<u>Due:</u> <u>Discussion Post 10 (7/12)</u>
<u>11</u>	<u>7/16</u>	<u>Overconfidence & Debiasing</u> Read: <u>Moore 2008, Larrick 2004 chapter 16</u>	<u>Due:</u> <u>Reflection Paper 3 (7/16)</u>
<u>12</u>	<u>7/23</u>	<u>Communication & Decision Making</u> Read: <u>Keller et al 2006, Baltes et al 2002</u>	<u>Work on Final Paper</u>
<u>13</u>	<u>FINALS</u>	<u>Final Paper</u>	<u>Final Paper due July 30 at 11:59 PM</u>