

SYLLABUS

COMM 3331

Communication & Decision Making

Summer 2025 (8 weeks) Online

3 credit hours

COURSE OVERVIEW

Instructor: Yifei Lu

Email address: lu.2941@osu.edu

Office hours: By appointment

TA: Leah Lindemeyer

Email address: lindemeyer.3@osu.edu

Office hours: Wednesday 9–10am (Meeting ID: 976 0337 8826; Password: 55555)

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.

Course learning outcomes: By the end of this course, students should successfully be able to:

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

HOW THIS ONLINE COURSE WORKS

Mode of delivery: This course is 100% online. There are no required sessions when you must be logged in to Carmen at a scheduled time.

Pace of online activities: This course is divided into **weekly modules** that will be released each Sunday with assignments due the following Sunday. Students are expected to keep pace with weekly deadlines but may schedule their efforts freely within that time frame.

Credit hours and work expectations: This is a **3-credit-hour** course. According to Ohio State policy (go.osu.edu/credithours), students should expect around 3 hours per week of time spent on direct instruction (instructor content and Carmen activities, for example) in addition to 6 hours of homework (reading and assignment preparation, for example) to receive a grade of (C) average.

Attendance and participation requirements: Because this is an online course, your attendance is based on your online activity and participation. The following is a summary of students' expected participation:

- **Participating in online activities for attendance: AT LEAST ONCE PER WEEK**
You are expected to log in to the course in Carmen every week. (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.
- **Office hours and live sessions: OPTIONAL** All live, scheduled events for the course, including my office hours, are optional.
- **Participating in discussion forums: 2 TIMES PER WEEK** As part of your participation, each week you will be expected to post one original response and one reply to a peer each week in a discussion board, unless otherwise noted.

COURSE MATERIALS AND TECHNOLOGIES

Materials

- **Textbook:** Rational Choice in an Uncertain World: The Psychology of Judgment and Decision Making (2nd edition). ISBN 10: 1412959039. I will provide the first week of reading as a courtesy to those who haven't

received their book yet. Starting on week 2, I will no longer provide scans of the textbook.

- **Additional readings:** I will provide PDFs of additional readings in the files section of Carmen.

Course technology

Technology support: For help with your password, university email, Carmen, or any other technology issues, questions, or requests, contact the Ohio State IT Service Desk. Standard support hours are available at ocio.osu.edu/help/hours, and support for urgent issues is available 24/7.

- Self-Service and Chat support: ocio.osu.edu/help
- Phone: 614-688-4357(HELP)
- Email: servicedesk@osu.edu
- TDD: 614-688-8743

Technology skills needed for this course

- Basic computer and web-browsing skills
- Navigating Carmen (go.osu.edu/canvasstudent)
- CarmenZoom virtual meetings (go.osu.edu/zoom-meetings)

Required equipment

- Computer: current Mac (MacOs) or PC (Windows 10) with high-speed internet connection
- Webcam: built-in or external webcam, fully installed and tested
- Microphone: built-in laptop or tablet mic or external microphone
- Other: a mobile device (smartphone or tablet) to use for BuckeyePass authentication
- Required software
- Microsoft Office 365: All Ohio State students are now eligible for free
- Microsoft Office 365. Full instructions for downloading and installation can be found at go.osu.edu/office365help

Carmen access: You will need to use BuckeyePass (buckeyepass.osu.edu) multi-factor authentication to access your courses in Carmen. To ensure that you are able to connect to Carmen at all times, it is recommended that you take the following steps:

- Register multiple devices in case something happens to your primary device. Visit the BuckeyePass – Adding a Device help article for step-by-step instructions (go.osu.edu/adddevice).
- Request passcodes to keep as a backup authentication option. When you see the Duo login screen on your computer, click Enter a Passcode and then click the Text me new codes button that appears. This will text you ten passcodes good for 365 days that can each be used once.
- Download the Duo Mobile application (go.osu.edu/install-duo) to all of your registered devices for the ability to generate one-time codes in the event that you lose cell, data, or Wi-Fi service.

If none of these options will meet the needs of your situation, you can contact the IT Service Desk at 614-688-4357(HELP) and IT support staff will work out a solution with you.

GRADING

How your grade is calculated

Assignment category	Points
Syllabus Quiz	5
Weekly Reading Quizzes (6)	20
Weekly Discussion Posts (4)	10
Essays (2)	25
Exams (2)	40
Total	100

Descriptions of major course assignments

Syllabus Quiz: You will be asked to answer questions on course policies and assignments. You can retake this quiz as many times as needed to receive a 100%.

Weekly Reading Quizzes: Each week you will be asked to answer questions about the readings and lectures from that week. Reading quizzes may not be retaken.

You may not collaborate with others on your reading quizzes, though you are allowed to reference your readings and notes.

Weekly Discussion Posts: Weekly discussion posts will ask you to elaborate on and apply concepts covered in the reading or lecture that week. Each week you will also be asked to pick at least one topic that week that was unclear to you and explain why. You will then be asked to respond to one peer's post, preferably helping to clarify their muddiest concept.

Essays: Essays are formatted like extended discussion posts. You may be asked about any of the topics covered in that section of the course, rather than just topics covered that week (Essay 1 will cover the first half of the course, while Essay 2 will cover the second half of the course). You must write essays in the textbox submission of Carmen, so that they can be run through TurnItIn. Failure to turn essays in in the right format will result in a grade deduction.

Exams: Each exam will cover one section of the course (Exam 1 covers the first half of the course while Exam 2 covers the second half of the course). Exams cannot be retaken. You may not collaborate with others on exams. You may use readings and notes on the exams.

Late assignments: Late submissions will be accepted with an automatic deduction of 2% for each hour late. Exam 2 may not be turned in late.

Grading scale

100 - 93: A

92.9 - 90: A-

89.9 - 87: B+

86.9 - 83: B

82.9 - 80: B-

79.9 - 77: C+

76.9 - 73: C

72.9 - 70: C-

69.9 - 67: D+

66.9 - 60: D

59.9 - 0: E

Instructor feedback and response time: I am providing the following list to give you an idea of my intended availability throughout the course. (Remember that you can call 614-688-4357(HELP) at any time if you have a technical problem.

- **Grading and feedback:** For weekly discussion posts, you can generally expect feedback within 7 days. For reading quizzes and exams, feedback will be posted automatically. For essays, you can generally expect feedback within 1 – 2 weeks.
- **Email:** I will reply to emails within 24 hours on days when class is in session at the university.
- **Discussion board:** I will check and reply to messages in the discussion boards every 24 hours on school days.

OTHER COURSE POLICIES

Discussion and communication guidelines: Communicating with the Instructor and TA:

- **Communication Method:** Please communicate with us through email. Do not use Carmen messages, as messages are often deleted and therefore cannot be used as proof of a communication attempt.
- **Email Subject:** Please include “COMM 3331” in the subject of your email.

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. A more conversational tone is fine for non-academic topics.
- **Tone and civility:** Let's maintain a supportive learning community where everyone feels safe and where people can disagree amicably. Remember that sarcasm doesn't 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.

Professionalism: You must ensure that the work you submit is correct and accessible. Submitting the wrong link, submitting to the wrong location, 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 the integrity of your work immediately following submission. If we cannot access your submission, you forfeit all points for your submission.

Grade Appeals: You may send your TA an email to instigate a grade appeal within 1 week after the grade has been posted. We will respond to appeal requests within 3 business days. An appeal is a formal process with explicit rules. Appeals can result in an unchanged grade, a higher grade, or a lower grade. If you wish to appeal a grade, email your TA that you wish to appeal and then await further instructions.

Missing Work & Making Up Assignments: If you become seriously ill or something happens to you that prevents you from participating in the course (e.g., mental illness or a friend's mental illness, taking care of an immediate family member, childbirth, etc.), please let me know as soon as possible, preferably before the assignment deadline so that we can negotiate a timeline to turn in your work.

Academic integrity policy

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.

Falsifying research or results: All research you will conduct in this course is intended to be a learning experience; you should never feel tempted to make your results or your library research look more successful than it was.

Using AI or other resources: In general, using software, artificial intelligence, websites, or other tools to automatically generate answers to questions, ideas, sentences, or other portions of class assignments, quizzes, exams, or other submitted work will not be permitted in this course.

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/>

If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by university rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that you have violated the university's *Code of Student Conduct* (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the university.

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

Other sources of information on academic misconduct (integrity) to which you can refer include:

- Committee on Academic Misconduct web page (go.osu.edu/coam)
- Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity (go.osu.edu/ten-suggestions)

Student Services and Advising

University Student Services can be accessed through BuckeyeLink. More information is available here: <https://contactbuckeyelink.osu.edu/>

Advising resources for students are available here: <http://advising.osu.edu>

Copyright for instructional materials

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.

Statement on 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 at titleix@osu.edu

Commitment to a diverse and inclusive learning environment

The Ohio State University affirms the importance and value of diversity in the student body. Our programs and curricula reflect our multicultural society and global economy and seek to provide opportunities for students to learn more about persons who are different from them. We are committed to maintaining a community that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among each member of our community; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. Discrimination against any individual based upon protected status, which is defined as age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status, is prohibited.

Land Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge the land that The Ohio State University occupies is the ancestral and contemporary territory of the Shawnee, Potawatomi, Delaware, Miami, Peoria, Seneca, Wyandotte, Ojibwe and Cherokee peoples. Specifically, the university resides on land ceded in the 1795 Treaty of Greenville and the forced removal of tribes through the Indian Removal Act of 1830. I/We want to honor the resiliency of these tribal nations and recognize the historical contexts that has and continues to affect the Indigenous peoples of this land. More information on

OSU's land acknowledgement can be found here:

<https://mcc.osu.edu/about-us/land-acknowledgement>

Your mental health

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learn, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. No matter where you are engaged in distance learning, The Ohio State University's Student Life Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) is here to support you. If you find yourself feeling isolated, anxious or overwhelmed, on-demand resources are available at go.osu.edu/ccsondemand. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766, and 24-hour emergency help is also available through the 24/7 National Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org. The Ohio State Wellness app is also a great resource available at go.osu.edu/wellnessapp.

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 immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. 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; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

Accessibility of course technology

This online course requires use of CarmenCanvas (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.

- Canvas accessibility (go.osu.edu/canvas-accessibility)

- Streaming audio and video
- CarmenZoom accessibility (go.osu.edu/zoom-accessibility)
- Collaborative course tools

COURSE SCHEDULE

Course schedule is subject to change. Refer to the Carmen course for up-to-date assignment due dates.

Week 1 (05/06 – 05/11) *Thinking and Deciding & What is Decision Making?*

Lectures: Course Introduction and 1.1 and 1.2

Readings: Hastie & Dawes Chapter 1 and Chapter 2

Assignments: Syllabus Quiz, Week 1 Reading Quiz, and Week 1 Discussion Post (Due 05/11 at 11:59 pm)

Week 2 (05/12 – 05/18) *Fast and Slow Thinking & Heuristics*

Lectures: 2.1 and 2.2

Readings: Petty & Cacioppo (1996) and Hastie & Dawes Chapter 5

Assignments: Week 2 Reading Quiz and Week 2 Discussion Post (Due 05/18 at 11:59 pm)

Week 3 (05/19 – 05/25) *Explanation Based Judgments & Entertainment and Elaboration*

Lectures: 3.1 and 3.2

Readings: Hastie & Dawes Chapter 6 and Moyer-Gusé (2008)

Assignments: Week 3 Reading Quiz and Essay 1 (Due 05/25 at 11:59 pm)

Week 4 (05/26 – 06/01) *Chances and Causes & Overconfidence*

Lectures: 4.1 and 4.2

Readings: Hastie & Dawes Chapter 6 and Plous (1993)

Assignments: Exam 1 (Due 06/01 at 11:59 pm)

Week 5 (06/02 – 06/08) *Context Effects & Limited Capacity*

Lectures: 5.1 and 5.2

Readings: Plous (1993) – Context effect and Fisher et al. (2018)

Assignments: Week 5 Reading Quiz and Week 5 Discussion Post (Due 06/08 at 11:59 pm)

Week 6 (06/09 – 06/15) *Anchor and Adjust & Evaluating Consequences*

Lectures: 6.1 and 6.2

Readings: Hastie & Dawes Chapter 4 and Chapter 9

Assignments: Week 6 Reading Quiz and Week 6 Discussion Post (Due 06/14 at 11:59 pm)

Week 7 (06/16 – 06/22) *Social Influence in Decision-making and Course Wrap-up*

Lectures: 7.1 and 7.2

Readings: Plous (1993) – Social Influence

Assignments: Week 7 Reading Quiz and Essay 2 (Due 06/22 at 11:59 pm)

Week 8 (06/23 – 06/27)

Lectures: No additional lectures

Readings: No additional readings

Assignments: Exam 2 (Due 06/27 at 11:59 pm – CANNOT BE TURNED IN LATE)