



SYLLABUS: COMM 3331 COMMUNICATION AND DECISION MAKING SUMMER 2019 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: Katy Coduto

TA: Sean Burridge

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Online Office hours: By appointment

Office hours: W 9am – 11am

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 and cognitive factors that influence decision-making.
3. An increased ability to analyze communication in making decisions in real world group and organizational contexts
4. An increased ability to think critically to derive recommendations for how to solve decision-making problems and provide leadership

Course materials

Required

- Plous, S. (1993). *The Psychology of Judgment and Decision Making*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill, Inc.
- Additional readings to be provided as digital copies on Carmen. Reading quizzes are possible if it is apparent readings are not complete.

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 synchronous class meetings. Log in to Carmen Connect 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 Connect can be found at <https://odee.osu.edu/resourcecenter/carmenconnect>
- **Mediasite:**

- Mediasite is Ohio State's Lecture Capture System. Lectures will be recorded through Mediasite and posted to the course Carmen page.
- Help guides on the use of Mediasite can be found at <https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/mediasite>
- **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

Grading and faculty response

Grades

<u>Assignment or category</u>	<u>Points and Percent</u>
<u>Syllabus and Carmen Quiz</u>	<u>25/ 5%</u>
<u>Writing Assignments</u>	<u>150/ 25%</u>
<u>Discussion Participation</u>	<u>175/ 30%</u>
<u>Choice Analysis</u>	<u>150/ 25%</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>500 Points and 100%</u>

See course schedule, below, for due dates

Assignment guide

Discussions

Each week, 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 **Wednesday** of each week. A post responding to the initial post of another student will be due by **Friday** of each week.

Writing Assignments

- **Decision Journal** – In the first week of class you will document three choices that you personally make in the course of your week. You will write about a decision to ACT (a decision about behavior) a decision to REACT (a decision made about how to respond or react to some information or stimulus), and a decision to INTERACT (a decision about how to engage with others). 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 your own judgment and decision-making processes.
- **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.
- **Choice Analysis** – Your final assignment for the term will be to pick a topic to which your knowledge of communication and decision-making can be applied. You will do external research to find a real-world example of communication and decision-making. Then you will fully describe and evaluate that choice using your knowledge of communication and decision-making gained over the course of the term. How does communication influence the decision-making process? What communication strategies might result in a better decision? What cognitive, affective, contextual, and social factors might be influencing such a choice, and how? Several weeks prior to the due date, you will email me your topic of interest (or, if you are unsure of your final choice of topic, a list of several options). This will allow me to provide you with some feedback and direction, as necessary. 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 for each day they are late. Assignments 3 or more days late will not be accepted.

Grading scale

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

Faculty 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-HELP** at any time if you have a technical problem.)

Grading and feedback

For large weekly assignments, you can generally expect feedback within **7 days**.

E-mail

I will reply to e-mails within **24 hours on school days**.

Discussion board

I will check and reply to messages in the discussion boards every **24 hours on school days**.

Student participation

Because this is a distance-education course, there are not set meeting times for our lectures and discussions. To achieve learning success, please follow this guideline for how often you should plan to log in and engage with the course and materials posted.

Logging in: 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 in discussion forums: 2 TIMES PER WEEK

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.

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. Informality (including an occasional emoticon) 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.

Other course 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>Dates</u>	<u>Topics, Readings</u>	<u>Assignments</u>
<u>1</u>	<u>5/8</u>	<u>Introduction to Communication and Decision Making</u>	<u>Due (5/14):</u> <u>Syllabus and Carmen Quiz</u> <u>Student introduction discussion</u>
<u>2</u>	<u>5/15</u>	<u>Choice Architecture: Constructed Preferences</u> <u>Read: Newall, Lagnado & Shanks ch. 1</u>	<u>Due:</u> <u>Discussion Post</u> <u>First post due Wednesday, response due Friday</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>5/22</u>	<u>How Problems Shape Decisions/ Bias</u>	<u>Due:</u>

		<u>Read: Plous Chapters 5 (51-63), 6 (64-76), 3 (31-37)</u>	<u>Discussion Post (W then F)</u> <u>Decision Journal (5/24)</u>
<u>4</u>	<u>5/29</u>	<u>Availability</u> <u>Read: Plous Chapters 11(121-130), 2 (15-21), 10(109-120)</u>	<u>Due:</u> <u>Discussion Post</u> <u>Reflection Paper 1 (6/2)</u>
<u>5</u>	<u>6/5</u>	<u>Self-fulfilling Prophecies,</u> <u>Expected Utility Theory</u> <u>Read: Plous Chapters 20 (231-240), 7(79-83)</u>	<u>Due:</u> <u>Discussion Post</u>
		<u>The role of messages in reasoning about decision preferences</u>	
<u>6</u>	<u>6/12</u>	<u>Descriptive Models of</u> <u>Decision Making/ Risk</u> <u>Assessment</u> <u>Read: Plous Chapters 8(84-93), 9(94-106), 12(131-144)</u>	<u>Due:</u> <u>Discussion Post</u>
<u>7</u>	<u>6/19</u>	<u>Cognition: Attitudes, Beliefs,</u> <u>and Values</u> <u>Read: Plous Chapters 13(145-153), 14(153-161), 16 (64-76)</u>	<u>Due:</u> <u>Discussion Post</u> <u>Reflection Paper 2 (6/28)</u>
		<u>How do motivation and emotion affect communication and the decision-maker?</u>	
<u>8</u>	<u>6/26</u>	<u>Motivation and Context</u> <u>Read: Ekman, ch. 2 (on</u> <u>Carmen), Plous Chapter 4(38-48)</u>	<u>Due:</u> <u>Discussion Post</u>
<u>9</u>	<u>7/3</u>	<u>Emotions/ Risk as Feelings</u> <u>Read: Slovic et al (2004),</u>	<u>Due:</u> <u>Discussion Post</u>
		<u>Making Decisions Together</u> <u>Improving Communication</u>	

<u>10</u>	<u>7/10</u>		<u>Due:</u> <u>Discussion Post</u>
<u>11</u>	<u>7/17</u>	<u>Social Influences/ Group</u> <u>Decision Making</u> <u>Read: Plous Chapters 17-18</u> <u>(189-214)</u>	<u>Due:</u> <u>Discussion Post</u> <u>Reflection Paper 3 (7/19)</u>
<u>12</u>	<u>7/24</u>	<u>Behavioral Traps/</u> <u>Overconfidence</u> <u>Read: Plous Chapters 21(241-</u> <u>252), 19(217-230)</u>	<u>Due:</u> <u>Discussion Post</u>
<u>Finals</u>		<u>Choice Analysis</u>	<u>Choice Analysis Due July 31 11:59pm</u>

Additional Readings

- Ekman, P. (2003). When do we become emotional? In *Emotions Revealed* (pp. 17-37). New York: Times Books.
- Engleberg, I.N., & Wynn, D.R. (2013). *Working in groups*, 6th ed. Upper Saddle River NJ: Pearson. Chapters 9 and 10.
- Forsyth, D.R. (2014). *Group dynamics*. 6th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. Chapter 11, Decision-making.
- Hirokawa, R.Y., & Scheerhorn, D.R. (1986). Communication in faulty group decision-making. In R.Y. Hirokawa & M.S. Poole (Eds.), *Communication and group decision-making* (pp. 63-80). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
- Newell, B. R. Lagnado, D. A., & Shanks, D. R. (2007). Falling off the straight and narrow. In *Straight choices: The psychology of decision Making* (1-13). New York: Psychology Press.
- Slovic, P., Finucane, M. L., Peters, E., & MacGregor, D. G. (2004). Risk as analysis and risk as feelings: Some thoughts about affect, reason, risk, and rationality. *Risk Analysis*, 24(2), 311-322. DOI: 10.1111/j.0272-4332.2004.00433.x