



SYLLABUS: COMM 3331 COMMUNICATION AND DECISION-MAKING SUMMER 2020 ONLINE

Course overview

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. **Prereq:** Not open to students with credit for 631.

Instructor

Instructor: Xiaodan Hu

Email: hu.1399@osu.edu

Online office hours:
Friday 10am – 12pm & by appointment

TA: Molly Mao

Email: mao.252@buckeyemail.osu.edu

Online Office hours:
M/W 3PM – 4PM & by appointment.

TA: Kyla Brathwaite

Email: Brathwaite.13@osu.edu

Online Office hours:
T/Th from 11 am - 12 pm & by appointment

Course 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 student's own personal and professional lives.
3. The ability to critically analyze and evaluate decisions before, during, and after making them.

Course materials

Required Readings. There is no textbook for this course. Instead, PDFs of selected chapters and articles will be posted on Carmen for each class – refer to the course schedule (or Carmen – Modules) for each week's assigned readings. Students are expected to complete all readings prior to doing other required tasks of the week so that



they will be prepared to understand the course videos better. If any student is interested in additional readings on the assigned or related topics, please feel free to contact me and I can suggest additional resources.

Course technology

For help with your password, university email, Carmen, or any other technology issues, questions, or requests, contact the OSUIT 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.**

Office hours through Carmen Connect:

- Carmen Connect, Ohio State's webinar tool, will be used to host synchronous office hours. 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>

Baseline technical skills necessary for online courses:

- Basic computer and web-browsing skills
- Navigating Carmen

Technology skills necessary for this specific course:

- Carmen Connect text, audio, and video chat

Necessary equipment:

- Computer: current Mac(OSX) or PC(Windows7+) with high-speed internet connection.



Grading and faculty response

Grades

<u>Assignment or category</u>	<u>Points and Percent</u>
<u>Quizzes (x12)</u>	<u>60/12%</u>
<u>Writing Assignments (x4)</u>	<u>200/40%</u>
<u>Discussion Participation (x7)</u>	<u>84/16.8%</u>
<u>Choice Analysis (x1)</u>	<u>150/30%</u>
<u>Surveys (x2)</u>	<u>6/1.2%</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>500 Points and 100%</u>

See course schedule, below, for due date.

Assignment guide

Discussions

Each week (except for weeks with writing assignments due), students will be asked to respond to a question about either lecture or media assigned. The initial post will be due by 11:59pm(EST) on **Wednesday** of each week. A post responding to the initial post of another student will be due by **Sunday** of each week.

Quizzes

Each week, students will be asked to respond to several quiz questions about either lecture or media assigned. Weekly quiz will be due by 11:59pm(EST) on **Wednesday** of each week. You will have two attempts for each quiz and the highest score will be recorded.

Surveys

At the middle and the end of the semester, you will be asked to fill out a survey about your experience with this course.

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 10-point penalty for each 24-hours they are late. Assignments 5 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 lecture 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 no-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>
1	05/13	Intro to Comm and	Week 1 Syllabus and Carmen Quiz (Quiz 1),



		Decision-Making Kahneman (2011) Chapter 1 Newell, et al. (2007) Chapter 1	Due (05/17) Student intro discussion (Discussion 1), Due (05/17)
Emotions, Risk as Feelings, Affect Heuristics			
2	05/20	Slovic et al., (2004) Lerner et al., (2014)	Week 2 Discussion 2: initial discussion post, Due (05/20) Discussion response, Due (05/24) Quiz 2, Due (05/20)
3	05/27	Loewenstein et al., (2001) Slovic et al., (2007)	Week 3 Quiz 3, Due (05/27) <u>Decision Journal</u> , Due (05/31)
Heuristics and biases			
4	06/03	Schuldt (2013) Sundar et al., (2007)	Week 4 Discussion 3: initial discussion post, Due (06/03) Discussion response, Due (06/07) Quiz 4, Due (06/03)
5	06/10	Jussim (1986) Knobloch-Westerwick et al., (2013)	Week 5 Quiz 5, Due (06/10) <u>Reflection Paper 1 (Other People's Choices)</u> , Due (06/14)
The self and social environment			
6	06/17	Cialdini (2003) Kyrllisias (2018)	Week 6 Discussion 4: initial discussion post, Due (06/17) Discussion response, Due (06/21) Quiz 6, Due (06/17) Mid-semester survey, Due (06/17)
Social Media			
7	06/24	Hogan (2010) Toma & Hancock (2010)	Week 7 Quiz 7, Due (06/24) <u>Reflection Paper 2</u> , Due (06/28)
8	07/01	Kramer et al., (2014) TBD	Week 8 Discussion 5: initial discussion post, Due (07/01) Discussion response, Due (07/05) Quiz 8, Due (07/01)
Mass Media			
9	07/08	Agilitata & Tantleff-Dunn (2004) TBD	Week 9 Discussion 6: initial discussion post, Due (07/08) Discussion response, Due (07/12) Quiz 9, Due (07/08)



10	07/15	Winterbottom et al., (2008) TBD	Week 10 Quiz 10, Due (07/15) <u>Reflection Paper 3</u> , Due (07/19)
Group Decision Making			
11	07/22	Engleberg & Wynn (2013) – Chapters TBD	Week 11 Discussion 7: initial discussion post, Due (07/22) Discussion response, Due (07/26) Quiz 11, Due (07/22)
12	07/29	Adams & Galanes (2015) – Chapters TBD	Week 12 Quiz 12, Due (07/31) <u>Choice Analysis</u> Due (07/31)
Finals	08/3-5		End of semester survey, Due (08/01)