

Psychology 4325

Decision Making

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University of Lethbridge

Section A Spring 2013
(Mon. 6:00 - 8:50 pm, W866)

Objective

The objective of this course is to give you a chance to explore several areas of research in decision making, to develop your ability to present research findings and to interpret their meaning, and to hone your critical thinking and scholarly writing skills.

Textbooks

There is one required text that we will use to structure the first half of the course and the search for additional materials. Additional readings will be assigned by the instructor and the students in the class will be responsible for finding additional readings from the research literature. The textbook is:

Hastie, R. & Dawes, R. M. (2010), *Rational choice in an uncertain world: The psychology of judgment and decision making*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Structure of the course

There will be three main responsibilities of the students in this course. In no particular order they are:

Research paper presentations. Present (twice) to the rest of the class a research paper relevant to a particular chapter or topic in one of the textbooks. You will choose/be assigned a particular topic area associated with the textbook or other assigned reading and be responsible for finding a paper from the original research literature (i.e., not another textbook) that contributes to the specified topic area. You or you and your partner(s) will be responsible for two such presentations, one in the first half of the semester and one in the second half.

Written assignments. There will be (nearly) weekly writing assignments. You will be asked to write on a topic related to the weeks presentations. Each written assignment is expected to be in proper APA format and a *maximum* of 3 pages in length. Submitted assignments will be read by all class members and bonus marks will be assigned by the class.

Supporting your colleagues. You are to support your colleagues in their presentations by having read *and thought about* the relevant article and chapter(s)/section(s) of the textbook and being prepared to discuss them. The importance of this responsibility should not be underestimated. It is only when the students in the class are prepared and willing to participate that we can have useful discussions. Note that I do not expect you to necessarily come to class fully understanding everything you've read (particularly the research articles) but to have made a reasonable effort and to have some notion of what you understand and don't understand and what questions or comments you wish to discuss with the class. The grade for this section will be partly based on attendance (you cannot participate if you are not in class) and partly on your level (quantity and quality) of participation when you are present.

Evaluation

Your grade in this course will consist of:

40% for your presentations (20% each)

40% for your written assignments (approximately 4% each), and

20% for your participation in class discussions.

Details will be discussed in the first class.

No excuses for missed assignments will be accepted other than documented, prolonged illness. Make-up opportunities will not normally be provided.

You should be aware of the student discipline policy - academic offenses starting on p.80 of the current calendar.

Your final letter grade will be calculated as follows (of course, if you're precisely on the border you will receive the higher grade):

%	Grade	%	Grade	%	Grade	%	Grade
90 - 100	A+	77 - 80	B+	67 - 70	C+	55 - 60	D+
85 - 90	A	73 - 77	B	63 - 67	C	50 - 55	D
80 - 85	A-	70 - 73	B-	60 - 63	C-	0 - 50	F

Contacting me

The most effective way of reaching me outside of class is by email at

allens@uleth.ca. There is also a [class, email discussion list](#) that you may use to raise questions and discussion with me and your fellow students; I encourage you to use it.

Welcome to the course. I hope you will have a fruitful and enjoyable semester -S.A.