Human Judgment and Decision Making 47-754

Professor:  
Dr. Carey K. Morewedge  
Tepper School of Business  
237 Posner Hall  
morewedge@cmu.edu  
412.268.6079 (office)

Time:  
Mondays and Wednesdays, 3:30pm - 5:20pm

Location:  
Scaife Hall 222

Office Hours:  
Email for an appointment.

Overview

Whether choosing what to have for breakfast, whom to marry, or what career to pursue, our choices are based on judgments and decisions. In this course we examine the affective, cognitive, and motivational processes involved in human judgment and decision making, and the accuracy of human judgment and decision making.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the psychological processes involved in judgment and decision making, and when those processes lead to accurate and inaccurate judgments and optimal and suboptimal decisions.

2. Assess the quality of empirical research in the field of judgment and decision making.

3. Articulate a novel hypothesis related to the field of judgment and decision making, cite appropriate research supporting that hypothesis, and propose experiments to test it.

Course Materials

All readings are on BlackBoard.
**Grades/Attendance**

Grades are not curved.

**Attendance**

Attendance is mandatory. If you miss any class for a non-professional reason (i.e., job interview, conference) other than sickness, you will not pass the course. If you miss class for a professional reason, please notify the instructor as far in advance as possible to discuss how you will make up the work.

**Participation (26%)**

This is a small seminar, and your active involvement in each and every class is important. Not only does it demonstrate that you are prepared for class, it helps identify what from the readings and topic you understand, and on which topics you need more guided instruction. I expect you to ask questions and participate in the discussion in every class.

**Online Critiques (24%)**

Due by midnight before each class (i.e., Sunday and Tuesday evenings), you must post a critique of the readings assigned for that day on its Blackboard Discussion Board. Do NOT summarize the findings; we have all read the papers. Critique the authors’ theories, methods, analyses, and interpretation of the data. Come up with alternative theories, or if you believe the authors’ theory, explain why. Think of new research projects that are related to this work, build on it, or challenge it. Describe the studies that would be included. The goal is for you to synthesize and think about the research that you’re reading, and spark discussion in class. It is not to write a book report. Each critique is worth 2 points.

**Final Exam (25%) – In class on 10/14/2013**

To be sure that you have actually read the papers assigned for the semester, there will be a final exam on 10/14/2011. Think of it as practice for your generals.

**Research Paper (25%) – Due 11:59pm on 10/16/2013**

The primary goal of this class is to increase your proficiency in research. By 11:59pm on Wednesday October 16th, you will turn in a research paper (recommend length is ~4000 words, not including references) in which you have articulated a novel hypothesis directly relevant to human judgment and decision-making and have proposed rigorous experiments to test that hypothesis. The paper should be written in the style of the American Psychological Association and thus include a title page, abstract, introduction, methods and anticipated results section for each experiment, and a general discussion. If you are unfamiliar with APA style, please refer to the 5th edition of the APA publication manual for guidance. Be sure to carefully proofread and edit your paper before turning it in.

Your research paper is your most important assignment for this class. Please schedule a meeting with me to discuss the project you intend to propose at least three weeks before the paper is due. I will expect that you will be able to describe the work and at least 1-2 studies that you plan to run.
Late Assignment & Extension Policy
A late research paper will be penalized a full letter grade per day unless accompanied by a note from a doctor. I will not accept critiques that are turned in late.

Laptop Policy
Laptop use is strongly discouraged as it is most likely to distract you from participating in the discussion. You may bring a laptop to class if you agree to use it to only take notes and refer to the readings.

Academic Honesty
You must be the sole author of work you submit in this course. You may NOT collaborate with other students on your final exam and you may NOT submit a collaborative research project as your research paper. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade in the course and a referral to the Dean of Students’ Office for further action. Please note that you may not submit or present any assignment completed in this class for credit in another course, and you may not submit collaborative work (e.g., with another student or advisor). Doing so will result in a failing grade in this course.

If you are unfamiliar with the area, please read this in advance.


I will be excited to suggest other readings on topics related to the course, if you are interested. Please do not hesitate to ask.
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic and Required Readings</th>
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| 8/26 | **Day 1: Awareness of our judgment and decision making**  

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| 8/28 | **Day 2: Systems of Reasoning**  
**Further Recommendations:**  

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| 9/4  | **Day 3: Intuition**  
**Further Recommendations:**  


**Further Recommendations:**


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**Day 7: Anchoring Bias**


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**Day 8: Confirmatory Hypothesis Testing**


**Further Recommendations:**


### Day 9: Subjective Value


**Further Recommendations:**


### Day 10: Comparison in Judgment


**Further Recommendations:**


**Further recommendations:**

**Day 11: Time**


**Further recommendations:**


### Day 12: Estimating Probability


**Further Recommendations:**


### Day 13: Motivated Reasoning


**Further Recommendations:**

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