

CLPS0220 Making Decisions, Spring 2024

This course is an introduction to the field of judgment and decision-making, an interdisciplinary area that has emerged from the natural confluence of academic and applied interests across several disciplines including cognitive science, economics, social psychology, computer science, statistics, medicine, law, management and philosophy. The field deals with questions of how people judge likelihood, value, and risk and how those judgments influence their decisions and actions.

Instructor:

Molly Moore (molly_moore1@brown.edu)

Office hours: Tuesdays 10-11am in Metcalf Research Building 313

Graduate Teaching Assistants: Victoria Halewicz, Almos Molnar, and Alysandra Zhang.

Email addresses, office hours, and locations will be found on Canvas.

Undergraduate Teaching Assistants: Mason O'Boyle, Rachel Brooks, Isabel Hahn, and Harper Robbins. Email addresses, office hours, and locations will be found on Canvas.

Sections: There will be sections many weeks run by the TAs to review material, answer questions, and offer learning activities. These sections are optional, but it is highly recommended that you go to one each week that they are offered. Times and physical or zoom locations for sections can be found on Canvas.

Textbook(s) are available at the Brown Bookstore: *Rational Choice in an Uncertain World* by Reid Hastie and Robyn Dawes. You may buy the book at a discounted rate from SAGE publications [here](#).

Supporting Readings are available on the Canvas website.

Course Requirements:

- i. You are expected to keep up with the readings and to participate in class. Participation grades will be awarded for participating in class, in office hours, and any TA interactions.
- ii. You are expected to attend class. There will be three random quizzes at the beginning of class, one of which will be dropped.
- iii. Assignments, including problem sets, short response papers, and other activities.
- iv. A midterm test on 3/12. If you will not be available at that time, then you should not take the course.
- v. A short (4 page) paper (due 4/4) discussing a decision of your own, how you are in fact making it and the best way to make it.
- vi. A group project paper.
- vii. A final exam on May 10th.

All work will be expected on time. All grades are final. Grade complaints will either be ignored or lead to re-grading of the entire assignment. The final will be during exam period. If you will not be available at that time, then you should not take the course.

Grading: Assignments: 20%, Midterm: 15%, Short paper: 15%, Group project: 15%, Final exam: 25%, Quizzes: 5%, Participation: 5%

Late policy: All assignments will receive a 50% deduction for being late. If it is turned in after the solutions have been posted, you will receive no credit.

Experiment Participation: You can participate in CLPS department experiments that give credit on Sona. You will receive 1% extra credit for each hour of up to 2 hours of experiments. You can find more information about how to do this in the Resources folder on Canvas.

Learning Goals: Master basics of the psychology of judgment and decision making, probability theory, and utility theory; master distinction between descriptive and normative theory; learn how to make better decisions; learn how to apply behavioral science to improve social policy.

Very Approximate Time Requirements:

- Time in class (3 hours/week); reading (about 3 hours/week); reviewing notes (1 hour/week); assignments (average approx. 3 hours/week); writing short paper (20 hours); studying for final (40 hours for final)
- Total is about 192 hours.

Brown University Required Syllabus Information

Books, Supplies, and Materials If your Brown undergraduate financial aid package includes the Book/Course Material Support Pilot Program (BCMS), concerns or questions about the cost of books and course materials for this or any other Brown course can be addressed to bcms@brown.edu. For all other concerns related to non-tuition course-related expenses, whether or not your Brown undergraduate financial aid package includes BCMS, please visit the Academic Emergency Fund in E-GAP (within the umbrella of "E-Gap Funds" in [UFunds](#)) to determine options for financing these costs, while ensuring your privacy.

Accessibility and Accommodations Statement Brown University is committed to full inclusion of all students. Please inform me early in the term if you may require accommodations or modification of any of course procedures. You may speak with me after class, during office hours, or by appointment. If you need accommodations around online learning or in classroom accommodations, please be sure to reach out to [Student Accessibility Services \(SAS\)](#) for their assistance (seas@brown.edu, 401-863-9588). Students in need of short-term academic advice or support can [contact one of the academic deans in the College](#).

CLPS0220 Making Decisions Syllabus Spring, 2024

HD: Rational Choice in an Uncertain World by Reid Hastie and Robyn Dawes, version 2

Date	Title	Readings (those in grey are optional)
1/25/2024	Introduction: Deciding to Decide	HD 1,2
1/30/2024	Probability 1	HD 8
2/1/2024	Probability 2	
2/6/2024	How to study JDM - Methods	Shadish2002 Henrich2010
2/8/2024	Heuristics & biases	HD 4,5; Giffin2012 Tversky1974; Shah2008
2/13/2024	SNOW DAY	
2/15/2024	Heuristics & biases 2	
2/20/2024	OFF – UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY	
2/22/2024	Expected utility+	HD 11
2/27/2024	Prospect Theory and Framing	HD 12; Kahneman1984
2/29/2024	Intertemporal Choice	Ariely2002
3/5/2024	Affect & Emotion	HD 13.2; Lerner2004
3/7/2024	Multi-attribute Decision Making	HD 10
3/12/2024	MIDTERM	
3/14/2024	Game Theory Intro	
3/19/2024	Game Theory: cooperation and prosocial behavior	Camerer1997
3/21/2024	Moral Decision Making	Greene2009
3/25/2024	SPRING BREAK	

3/27/2024	SPRING BREAK	
4/2/2024	Happiness	HD 9, 13
4/4/2024	Overconfidence	Pronin2006
4/9/2024	Social Influence (<i>Guest lecture: Victoria</i>)	Cialdini1998
4/11/2024	Gender, Identity & Stereotypes	Brescoll2008
4/16/2024	Collective Knowledge (<i>Guest lecture: Almos</i>)	Rabb2019
4/18/2024	Conflict & Political Polarization	Finkel2020
4/23/2024	Algorithms & Technology	HD 3; Dawes1989
4/25/2024	Policy Applications, de-biasing & bias blind spot	Benartzi2017; Gigerenzer2015
Reading Period	Catch up & final review	