

Judgment and Decision Making (PSYC10) Syllabus

Fall 2020

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Professor

Dr. Yoel Inbar

Office Hours:

<https://utoronto.zoom.us/my/yoelinbar>, times TBA

TAs

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Introduction

This course has two objectives. The first is to improve the quality of students' decisions. Students will learn to be aware of and to avoid common inferential errors and systematic biases in their own decision making. The second objective is to improve students' ability to predict and influence the behavior of others. By understanding how other people decide and behave, students will be better able to motivate desired behavior in others.

This course accomplishes this by expanding the toolbox provided by standard economics (incentives and education) to include tools of influence prescribed by a realistic understanding of human behavior. We will cover classic and contemporary theories and empirical findings in judgment and decision-making, including perspectives from social and cognitive psychology, behavioral economics, decision analysis, and other fields.

Readings

There is no textbook for this course. Instead, there is a list of required readings, which are posted on Quercus. Whenever possible, I have chosen readings that are well-written, accessible, and apply the core concepts of this course to real-world issues.

Grading Criteria

Short Paper 1: 25%

Short Paper 2: 25%

Short Paper 3: 25%

Lecture "Quizzes": 10%

Data Surveys and Data Collection Assignment: 15%

Lecture "Quizzes"

Each lecture will be accompanied by a "Quiz" available on Quercus. "Quiz" is in quotes because these are not graded for correct/incorrect answers. Instead, they will ask you to respond to questions in the lecture. For example, I might ask you to make predictions, come up with an explanation for a phenomenon, suggest an experiment, etc. Each quiz will be graded Credit/No Credit (this grade is for the entire quiz), and as long as your responses show that you are paying attention and thinking about the content, you'll get credit.

Online Surveys and Data Collection

During the semester, I will ask you to do online surveys and discuss the results in class. The link to each survey will be posted to Quercus at least a week in advance of the due date.

You will also do a data collection assignment, in which you will design a study and collect and analyze data. I will give more details on this in lecture.

Short Papers

You will be asked to write three short papers applying the course material. Together, these three papers are worth 75% of your total grade. Each paper should be no more than 3 single-spaced pages (in Times New Roman 12-point font). This is a hard limit and any text exceeding it will not be graded. (But don't feel obliged to use the whole three pages. Brevity is a virtue!) You do not need to include citations or references in any of your papers. For each paper, I will post a detailed guideline and rubric.

You will find the topic and rubric for each paper under "Assignments," along with a link to submit your work. Due dates are in the "Due dates for assignments" table below.

Quercus

The course Quercus website will be your one-stop resource for all course documents, lectures, announcements, and supplementary information. The PowerPoint slides for each lecture will be available on Quercus as soon as the lecture is posted. You should also check course announcements regularly so that you don't miss anything important.

Office Hours

Office hours are a great way to get answers to specific questions you may have. I will hold office hours each week except for the Fall Reading Week, beginning the week of September 6. (I may have to cancel certain office hours due to travel, but if this is the case there will be an announcement posted.)

List of Lectures and Readings

Lecture #	Topic	Reading
1	Introduction & Experimental methods	<i>Thinking About Thinking</i> (Watts)
2	Statistical reasoning	<i>Fairness and Justice</i> (Watts) <i>The Odds of That</i> (Belkin)
3	Statistical reasoning II; Heuristics and biases	<i>Going Viral</i> (Lewis) <i>Connecting the Dots</i> (Gladwell)
4	Overconfidence & Motivated reasoning	<i>Dr. Drug Rep</i> (Calat) <i>Are You Smarter than a Television Pundit?</i> (Silver) <i>Why Good Accountants Do Bad Audits</i> (Bazerman)
5	Intuitive vs. Statistical decision-making	<i>Big and Bad</i> (Gladwell) <i>Who's on First?</i> (Thaler) <i>The No-Stats All Star</i> (Lewis)

6	Aggregating Opinions	<i>The Wisdom of Crowds</i> (Surowiecki)
7	Value construction I	<i>Reversals</i> (Kahneman) <i>Bernoulli's Errors</i> (Kahneman)
8	Value construction II	<i>Prospect Theory</i> (Kahneman) <i>Risk Policies</i> (Kahneman)
9	Nudges	<i>Nudge, pp. 1-14</i> (Thaler) <i>You Need Hands</i> (Underhill) <i>When Doctors Make Mistakes</i> (Gawande)
10	Fairness	<i>What Seems Fair</i> (Thaler) <i>Fairness Games</i> (Thaler)

Due Dates for Assignments

Date	Assignment Due
<i>Friday, September 11</i>	Complete Survey 1
<i>Friday, September 25</i>	Complete Survey 2
<i>Friday, October 2</i>	Data Collection Assignment
<i>Friday, October 9</i>	Short Paper 1
<i>Friday, October 16</i>	Complete Survey 3
<i>Friday, November 13</i>	Short Paper 2
<i>Friday, December 4</i>	Short Paper 3

Time Zone conflicts

If you are physically in a different time zone and a quiz or midterm is scheduled outside of 7:00am to midnight in your local time, you may use the following form to request special arrangements. Note that the form is only for term work. [Final exam conflicts](#) are handled by the Registrar's Office.

The form must be submitted **at least ten (10) business days before the activity**.

Form: <https://uoft.me/PSY-TimeZone>

Submit via email to: Keely Hicks, Departmental Assistant, keely.hicks@utoronto.ca

Missed Term Work due to Medical Illness or Other Emergency

All students citing a documented reason for missed term work must submit their request for accommodations **within three (3) business days** of the deadline for the missed work.

Submit via email to: Keely Hicks, Departmental Assistant, keely.hicks@utoronto.ca

Students must submit **BOTH** of the following:

1. A completed **Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form** (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW>), and
2. **Appropriate documentation** to verify your illness or emergency, as described below.

Appropriate documentation:

For missed **ASSIGNMENTS or TERM TESTS** due to **FLU-LIKE SYMPTOMS or SELF-ISOLATION REQUIREMENTS:**

- Email the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form (uoft.me/PSY-MTW) to Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca), and
- **Declare** your absence on **ACORN** (Profile & Settings > Absence Declaration)

For missed **ASSIGNMENTS** due to **OTHER ILLNESS:**

- Email the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form (uoft.me/PSY-MTW) to Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca), along with the Self-Declaration of Student Illness Form (uoft.me/PSY-self-declare-form).

For missed **TERM TESTS** due to **OTHER ILLNESS:**

- Email the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form (uoft.me/PSY-MTW) to Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca), along with a scan/photo of the **original** copy of the official UTSC Verification of Illness Form (uoft.me/UTSC-Verification-Of-Illness-Form) or an **original** copy of the record of visitation to a hospital ER.
- Forms are to be completed in full, clearly indicating the start date, anticipated end date, and severity of illness. The physician's registration # and business stamp are required.

- *Note: If an end date of “ongoing” is specified, the medical note will be assumed to cover a period of **two weeks**. If no end date / an “unknown” end date is specified, the note will be assumed to cover a period of **three business days** (starting from illness start date.)*

For missed **TERM TESTS** due to **ACCESSABILITY REASONS**:

- Meet with your **AccessAbility consultant** and have them email Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) detailing accommodations required.

For missed **ASSIGNMENTS** due to **ACCESSABILITY REASONS**:

- If your desired accommodation is **within the scope** of your Accommodation Letter (ex. your letter includes “extensions of up to 7 days” and you need 1-7 more days), email the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form (uoft.me/PSY-MTW) to Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca), and attach a **copy of your letter**. Specify how many days extension you are requesting in your email.
- If your desired accommodation is **outside the scope** of your Accommodation Letter (ex. your letter includes “extensions of up to 7 days” but you need more time than that) you will need to meet with your **AccessAbility consultant** and have them email Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) detailing the accommodations required.

For missed **ASSIGNMENTS or TERM TESTS** in **OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES**:

Email the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW>) form to Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca), along with:

- For the **death of a family member/friend**, provide a copy of the death certificate.
- For U of T varsity-level or professional **athletic commitments**, an email from your coach or varsity administrator should be sent directly to Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) **well in advance** of the missed work, detailing the dates and nature of the commitment.
- For **religious accommodations**, please email Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) **well in advance** of the missed work.
- For circumstances **outside of these guidelines**, please email Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) **on or before the date of the test / assignment deadline** to describe your circumstances and determine appropriate documentation.

Documents covering the following situations are NOT acceptable: medical prescriptions, personal travel, weddings, personal/work commitments.

As stated above, your documents must be submitted **within three (3) business days** of the deadline for the missed work.

After submitting your documentation:

Within approximately one to five business days, you will receive a response from your instructor detailing the accommodations to be made (if any).

You are responsible for checking your official U of T email and Quercus course announcements daily, as accommodations may be time-critical.

You should continue to work on your assignments to the best of your ability, as extension accommodations may be as short as one business day, depending on the nature of the illness/emergency.

If an accommodation has been granted but you are unable to meet the conditions of the accommodation (ex. you need a longer extension, or you missed a make-up test), you will need to repeat the missed term work procedure and submit additional forms to request further accommodation. Note that in the case of a missed make-up test, an opportunity to write a second make-up test may not be provided.

Completion of this form does NOT guarantee that accommodations will be made. The course instructor reserves the right to decide what accommodations (if any) will be made. Failure to adhere to any aspect of this policy may result in a denial of your request for accommodation.

Missed Accommodations

If an accommodation is granted but a continued illness/emergency prevents you from meeting the requirements of your accommodation, you must repeat the missed term work procedure to request additional accommodations.

(E.g.) If you miss a make-up midterm, you would need to submit another Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form. If your original medical note / documentation included the date of the make-up midterm, then only the Request form is required. If the date of the make-up midterm fell outside of the dates indicated on your original medical note/other documentation, then a new medical note/other appropriate documentation must also be submitted.

Importance of Three Business Day window:

If you are unable to submit your documents within the three business day window, **you must email Keely** (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) **within the three business day window** to explain the nature of the delay, and when you will be able to provide your documents. Exceptions to the documentation deadline will only be made under exceptional circumstances.

NOTE: Assignments due at end of term

Instructors cannot accept term work any later than five business days after the last day of class. Beyond this date, you would need to file a petition with the Registrar's Office (<https://www.utoronto.ca/registrar/term-work>).

NOTE: Final Exams

This policy applies only to missed assignments and term tests. Missed final exams are handled by the Registrar's Office (<http://www.utoronto.ca/registrar/missing-examination>).

AccessAbility:

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the AccessAbility Services as soon as possible.

AccessAbility Services staff (located in Rm SW302, Science Wing) are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations [416-287-7560](tel:416-287-7560) or email ability@utsc.utoronto.ca. The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppjun011995.pdf>) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement;
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor;
- Making up sources or facts;
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment.

On tests and exams:

- Using or possessing unauthorized aids;
- Looking at someone else's answers during an exam or test;
- Misrepresenting your identity; and
- When you knew or ought to have known you were doing it.

In academic work:

- Falsifying institutional documents or grades;
- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor's notes; and
- When you knew or ought to have known you were doing so.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If students have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, they are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from their instructors or from other institutional resources.

Note:

You may see advertisements for services offering grammar help, essay editing and proof-reading. Be very careful. If these services take a draft of your work and significantly change the content and/or language, you may be committing an academic offence (unauthorized assistance) under the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*.

It is much better and safer to take your draft to the Writing Centre as early as you can. They will give you guidance you can trust. Students for whom English is not their first language should go to the English Language Development Centre.

If you decide to use these services in spite of this caution, you must keep a draft of your work and any notes you made before you got help and be prepared to give it to your instructor on request.

TurnItIn

Normally, students are required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.