

**Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs
Spring 2005**

WWS 502: Psychology for Policy Analysis and Implementation

Professors John Darley, Emily Pronin , and Eldar Shafir

Lectures: Thursdays, 10:40 - 12:40, Robertson, Bowl 016

Discussions: Tuesdays, 10:40 – 11:30 or 11:40 – 12:30, Robertson 005, 011, 035

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course covers basic concepts and findings from behavioral research in social psychology and the study of human judgment and decision making. Of particular interest are the implications of current knowledge about human reasoning and motivation for formulating and implementing policy. Central themes include a detailed analysis of bounded rationality, the varieties of motives that affect people's choices, and the forces that facilitate or impede change in attitudes and behavior. These topics have implications for the design of policies that affect individual citizens. They also have implications for the functioning of organizations that determine policy. The material presented in lectures and readings is mostly drawn from basic research. Identifying the relevance of this material for policy and management will be carried out through weekly precepts and the submission of written weekly commentaries. In addition to these weekly assignments, three exercises will be assigned during the semester.

COURSE STRUCTURE

Twelve topics will be addressed over the course of the semester. Each topic will begin with a two-hour session on Thursday and will be followed by a one-hour discussion in sections on the next Tuesday. The entire class will meet as a group for the Thursday sessions, but will divide into small sections for the Tuesday discussions. The assigned readings for each topic should be read following the Thursday session but prior to the Tuesday discussion. Attendance is required; however, participation will not be separately graded.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Four elements of the course will contribute to the final course grade. Each of these elements is described in more detail below.

Commentaries	30%
Exercise 1	20%
Exercise 2	25%
Exercise 3	25%

TOPICS

Introductions

Tuesday, February 1: Discussion

1) Introduction to Psychology for Policy Analysis

Thursday, February 3: Lecture

Tuesday, February 8: Discussion

2) Judgment and Cognitive Illusions / Signal Detection

Thursday, February 10: Lecture

Tuesday, February 15: Discussion

3) Social Judgment / Situational Determinants

Thursday, February 17: Lecture

Tuesday, February 22: Discussion

4) Inducing Behavioral Change / Attitudes and Attitude Change

Thursday, February 24: Lecture

Tuesday, March 1: Discussion

5) Prospect Theory / Behavioral Economics

Thursday, March 3: Lecture

Tuesday, March 8: Discussion

Guest Speaker: Daniel Kahneman

6) Reason-based Choice / Group Decision Making

Thursday, March 10: Lecture

SPRING BREAK

Tuesday, March 22: Discussion

7) Justice / Punishment

Thursday, March 24: Lecture

Tuesday, March 29: Discussion

Guest Speaker: Tom Tyler

8) Problems with Individual Incentive Systems / Human Capabilities

Thursday, March 31: Lecture

Tuesday, April 5: Discussion

9) Public Opinion / The Marketplace of Ideas

Thursday, April 7: Lecture

Tuesday, April 12: Discussion

Guest Speaker: Daniel Oppenheimer

10) Race and Education / Intuition and Empiricism

Thursday, April 14: Lecture

Tuesday, April 19: Discussion

Guest Speaker: Geoffrey Cohen

11) Intergroup Relations & Processes / PD games

Thursday, April 21: Lecture

Tuesday, April 26: Discussion

12) Negotiation / Wrap-up

Thursday, April 28: Lecture

COURSE READINGS

The two required books are available for purchase at the Princeton University Store. These are:

Bazerman, M. (2002). Judgment in Managerial Decision Making (5th ed.). NY: John Wiley & Sons.

Cialdini, R. B. (2001). Influence: Science and Practice (4th ed.). Allyn and Bacon.

In addition, there will be a packet containing the other required course readings available at Pequod. Look for announcements on Blackboard regarding any additional readings not included in the course packet.

WEEKLY COMMENTARY

We have designed this course in a way we believe will maximize your learning. One way we have done this is to assign weekly commentaries which give you the opportunity to digest and process the information we provide, in a way you structure for yourselves. The commentaries also give you the added opportunity to receive feedback at regular intervals throughout the semester regarding your mastery of the material. These commentaries are in place of a final exam. Thus, the reading and thinking that go into this commentary should make up a significant part of the time that you spend working for this course.

In your commentary each week, you should address the topics and principles covered in each assigned reading and lecture. We have purposely kept the reading load relatively light with the expectation that you will read each paper carefully and thoughtfully.

We suggest that you take one or more of the following approaches:

- discuss implications for existing policy
- discuss implications for the formulation and implementation of a future policy
- consider how the ideas in the various papers and the lecture relate to one another
- discuss new or surprising ideas in the material
- critique the persuasiveness of the evidence

For the sake of discussion sections, at the end of your commentary, please list one (or more, if others occur to you) question or insight that you would like addressed in your discussion section. If you see a potential policy application for material from lecture or readings, it is particularly useful to bring that up for discussion. This will allow the professors to identify discussion topics in the few hours that they have to look over the commentaries before Tuesday's discussion sections.

Commentaries should be 3-5 pages in length (not including discussion topics or questions). Any text beyond the five page limit will not be read. Commentaries should be double-spaced with one-inch margins. A 12-point font such as Times or Arial should be used. Please include your discussion section time and professor's name at the top of the document.

There will be 11 weeks for which commentaries can be written. You are required to submit only eight of those 11 commentaries. You can choose those weeks that work best for you, or which you find the most engaging. You can also choose to avoid commentaries on those weeks when other assignments in the class are due. If you submit more than 8 commentaries, we will count your top 8. Each week's commentary (addressing the readings associated with the previous Thursday's lecture) is due by Monday at 12:00 noon. This deadline will enable us to review your comments in preparation for the Tuesday session. Commentaries will be returned to you in discussion section the following week (a week and a day after you hand your commentary in). Commentaries should be submitted via Blackboard. If for any reason you are unable to submit your commentary on time, you must email the TAs at least 24 hours in advance. Our expectation is that this will be a rare event. Late submissions that are unaccounted for will not be graded.

You will be given a weekly score based the thoughtfulness of your contribution and your ability to demonstrate you have read the weekly readings and have correctly applied the principles covered in the readings and lecture.

Some things to consider as you write your commentaries:

The best time to write your thoughts about a particular reading is immediately after it. If you have a further thought about a reading after reading a subsequent paper, write it there. You will receive credit for including as much of the readings and lectures as possible in your analysis.

We recognize that you will need to balance commenting on each of the readings and lectures (breadth) with how thoroughly you apply the readings and lectures (depth). Therefore, it is acceptable to forgo commenting on every reading and lecture in favor of an extensive and thoughtful analysis of a subset of the materials.

Do not be as concerned about style, coherence or redundancy as you would for a more formal paper. Feel free to take risks by writing ideas you are not sure of. However, make sure that your understanding of the principles is correct.

The scoring for weekly commentaries will be on a five-point scale:

- 5 = Outstanding
- 4 = Well-done
- 3 = Satisfactory
- 2 = Needs improvement
- 1 = Subpar and/or incomplete.

Adequate comments on the readings would merit a 3. Thoughtful, cogent, and/or integrative commentaries receive 4s; 5s are reserved for unusually outstanding commentaries. Incomplete work will, of course, receive lower scores.

EXERCISES

1. Write an op-ed essay of the sort that appears on the op-ed page of the *New York Times* and other major newspapers (or sometimes as a brief essay in the *Sunday New York Times Magazine*) using psychological insights from the lectures and/or readings to address a policy debate. Length: 3-4 pages.

Due: Friday, March 11

2. Working in pairs, identify and analyze the behavioral assumptions on which a particular piece of legislation is based. (Length 5-6 pages)

Due: Friday, April 8

3. Working in groups of 3 people, write a memorandum (Length 15 pages; 20 pages max) outlining your ideas for a government or private non-profit strategy designed to bring about a change in social behavior -- presumably the reduction of harmful behavior and/or the promotion of more constructive or beneficial behavior.

Paper Due: Monday, May 2

Additional details will be provided at the time each exercise is assigned.

FINAL EVENT

A day after Exercise 3 is due, there will be an informal poster session in which all groups will present their final projects. Lunch will be provided.

Poster Session/Luncheon: Tuesday, May 3

OFFICE HOURS

Professor Darley: Wednesdays 10:30-11:45 am in 2-S-11 Green Hall
jdarley@princeton.edu; 8-4433

Professor Shafir: Thursdays at 3 pm-4 pm in 3-S-14 Green Hall
shafir@princeton.edu; 8-5624

Professor Pronin: Tuesdays at 1 pm-2 pm in 2-S-6 Green Hall
epronin@princeton.edu; 8-8008

Janet Schwartz (Post-Doctoral Research Associate):
Thursdays at 9:15-10:15 am in 3-S-3 Green Hall
jaschwar@princeton.edu; 8-9056

Joe Simmons (Post-Doctoral Research Associate):
Tuesdays at 9:15-10:15 am in 3-S-3 Green Hall
jpsimmon@princeton.edu; 8-9057

READING LIST

1) Introduction to Psychology for Policy Analysis

Ross, L., & Nisbett, R. (1991). The Person and the Situation, Chapters 1 (pp. 1-26) & Chapter 8 (pp. 204-247). McGraw Hill.

Thaler, R., & Sunstein, C. (2003). Who's on First: Review of Moneyball. The New Republic. September 1.

Bazerman, M. H. (2002). Judgment in managerial decision making (5th Edition), Chapter 1. Wiley Text Books.

2) Judgment and Cognitive Illusions / Signal Detection

Bazerman, M. H. (2002). Judgment in managerial decision making (5th Edition), Chapter 2. Wiley Text Books.

Gilovich, T. (1991). How we know what isn't so: The fallibility of human reason in everyday life, Chapters 2 & 3 (pp. 9-48): NY: The Free Press.

Sherman, S. J., Cialdini, R. B., Schwartzman, D. F., & Reynolds, K. D. (2002). Imagining can heighten or lower the perceived likelihood of contracting a disease : The mediating effect of ease of imagery. In T. Gilovich, D. Griffin & D. Kahneman (Eds.), Heuristics & biases: The psychology of intuitive judgment (pp. 98-102). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Hastie, R. & Dawes, R. M. (2001). Rational choice in an uncertain world : The psychology of judgment and decision making (pp. 54-72; 188-198). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

3) Social Judgment / Situational Determinants

Ross, L., & Nisbett, R. (1991). The person and the situation. McGraw Hill. Chapter 2 (pp. 27-58) & Chapter 3 (pp. 59-89).

Gilbert, D. T. (1995). Attribution and interpersonal perception. In A. Tesser (Ed.), Advanced social psychology (pp. 99-147). New York: McGraw Hill.

Gladwell, M. (2000). The tipping point. (Chapter 4: The power of context; pp. 133-168). Boston: Little Brown.

Cialdini, R. B. (2001). Influence: Science and practice (4th edition), Chapter 4. Pearson Allyn & Bacon.

4) Inducing Behavioral Change / Attitudes and Attitude Change

Cialdini, R. B. (2001). Influence: Science and practice (4th edition), Chapters 5 to 8. Pearson Allyn & Bacon.

Costanzo, M., Archer, D., Aronson, E., & Pettigrew, T. (1986). Energy conservation behavior: The different path from information to action. American Psychologist, 41, 521-528.

Aronson, E. (1999). The social animal (8th ed.). (Chapter 3: Mass communication, propaganda, and persuasion; pp. 57-113). New York: Worth Publishers.

5) Prospect Theory / Behavioral Economics

Bazerman, M. H. (2002). Judgment in managerial decision making (5th Edition), Chapter 3. Wiley Text Books.

Camerer, C. (2000). Prospect theory in the wild: Evidence from the field. In D. Kahneman & A. Tversky (Eds.), Choices, values, and frames, Chapter 16 (pp. 288-300).

Thaler, R. (1999). Mental accounting matters. Journal of Behavioral Decision Making, 12, 183-206.

Schelling, T. C. (1984). Self-command in practice, in policy and in a theory of rational choice. American Economic Review, 74, 1-11.

Bertrand, M., Mullainathan, S., & Shafir, E. (2004). A behavioral-economics view of poverty. American Economic Review, 94, 419-423.

6) Reason-Based Choice / Group Decision Making

Gregory, R., Lichtenstein, S., & MacGregor, D. (1993). The role of past states in determining reference points for policy decisions. Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 55, 195-206.

Shafir, E., Simonson, I., & Tversky, A. (1993). Reason-based choice. In D. Kahneman & A. Tversky (Eds.) Choices, values, and frames, Chapter 34 (pp. 596-619).

Kahneman, D., & Lovallo, D. (1993). Timid choices and bold forecasts: A cognitive perspective on risk taking. Management Science, 39, pp. 17-31.

Janis, I. (1982). Groupthink, Chapter 2: A Perfect Failure: Bay of Pigs, (pp.14-47). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

7) Justice / Punishment

Tyler, T. R. (2000). Social justice: Outcome and procedure. International Journal of Psychology, 35, 117-125.

Robinson, P. H., & Darley, J. M. (1997). The utility of desert. Northwestern University Law Review, 91, 453-471.

Cialdini, R. B. (2001). Influence: Science and practice (4th edition), Chapter 2. Pearson Allyn & Bacon.

8) Problems with Individual Incentive Systems / Human Capabilities

Dawes, R. M., van de Kragt, A., & Orbell, J. M. (1988). Not me or thee but we: The importance of group identity in eliciting cooperation in dilemma situations. Acta Psychologica, 68, 83-97.

Ferraro, F., Pfeffer, J., & Sutton, R.I. (2005). Economics language and assumptions: How theories can become self-fulfilling. Academy of Management Review, 30, 8-24.

Dalrymple, T. (6 November, 2004). Losing Patients. The Spectator.

Cialdini, R. B. (2001). Influence: Science and practice (4th edition), Chapter 3. Pearson Allyn & Bacon.

Dunning, D., Johnson, K., Ehrlinger, J., & Kruger, J. (2003). Why do people fail to recognize their own incompetence? Current Directions in Psychological Science, 12, 83-87.

Bazerman, M. H. (2002). Judgment in managerial decision making (5th Edition), Chapter 4. Wiley Text Books.

9) Public Opinion / The Marketplace of Ideas

Schwarz, N. (1999). Self-reports: How the questions shape the answers. American Psychologist, 54, 93-105.

Todorov, A., & Mandisodza, A. (2003). Public opinion on foreign policy: The multilateral public that perceives itself as unilateral. WWS Policy Brief.

10) Race and Education / Intuition and Empiricism

Cohen, G. L., & Steele, C. M. (2002). A barrier of mistrust: How negative stereotypes affect cross-race mentoring. In J. Aronson (Ed.), Improving academic achievement: Impact of psychological factors on education (pp. 303-327).

Redelmeier, D. A., Molin, J., & Tibshirani, R. J. (1995). A randomised trial of compassionate care for the homeless in an emergency department. The Lancet, 345, 1131-1134.

Baumeister, R. F., Smart, L., & Boden, J. M. (1996). Relation of threatened egotism to violence and aggression: The dark side of high self-esteem. Psychological Review, 103, 5-33.

11) Intergroup Relations & Processes/ PD games

Sherif, M. (1966). The experiments, Chapter 5 (pp. 71-93). In Common predicament: Social psychology of intergroup conflict and cooperation. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Tajfel, H. (1970). Experiments in intergroup discrimination. Scientific American, 223, 96-102.

Dixit, A. K., & Nalebuff, B. H. (1991). Resolving the prisoners' dilemma, Chapter 4 (pp. 89-118). In Thinking strategically: The competitive edge in business, politics, and everyday life. New York: W.W. Norton.

12) Negotiation/Wrap-up

Bazerman, M. H. (2002). Judgment in managerial decision making (5th Edition), Chapters 8 & 9. Wiley Text Books.

Ross, L., & Ward, A. (1995). Psychological barriers to dispute resolution. In M. P. Zanna (Ed.), Advances in Experimental Social Psychology: Vol. 27 (pp. 255-304). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.