

**Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs
Spring 2008**

WWS 502: Psychology for Policy Analysis and Implementation

Professors John Darley, Emily Pronin, and Alex Todorov

Lectures: Thursdays, 10:40 - 12:00, Robertson, Bowl 016

Discussions: Tuesdays, 10:40 – 12.00, Robertson 011, 012, 020, 029 (Subject to change)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course covers how basic concepts from behavioral research in social psychology and judgment and decision making can shape policy formulation and implementation. Central themes include a detailed analysis of boundedly rational judgment and decision making, how a variety of motives can affect people's choices, and the forces that cause changes in attitudes and behavior. Combined these topics have important implications for policy design that affects individuals as well as the functioning of the organizations that determine those policies. Lecture and reading material is primarily drawn from basic psychological research. Students work with faculty and each other to identify the relevance of this material for policy and management through weekly discussion and five written application assignments. Students will continue to explore these issues more in-depth in three larger assignments they will conduct either on their own or in small groups.

COURSE STRUCTURE

A good many topics will be addressed over the course of the semester. A one-hour twenty minute lecture session will generally introduce a single topic, or sometimes two related topics, and will be followed by discussion in sections on the next Tuesday. The entire class meets as a group for the Thursday lecture, 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 in lecture is expected and participation in Tuesday discussions is required.

Discussion sections are broken into four separate groups of students that will remain the same throughout the semester. Discussion sections will occur in two different ways:

Students will participate in weekly discussion sections throughout the semester. For pedagogical purposes, each student will be assigned to one of 8 discussion groups (1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, 4A, or 4B). Discussion sections will occur in two different ways:

1) Five times during the semester there is an “application” assignment due, and the sections will chiefly be occupied by discussing the application topic. These discussion sections will last from 10:40am to 12:00pm, and each student is required to attend for the full duration. For these meetings, the "A" and "B" discussion groups will meet collectively (i.e., 1A and 1B will meet

together, 2A and 2B will meet together, etc). There will be some time for more open-ended discussion at the end of these sessions.

2) During weeks that do not have an application assignment, discussion sections will meet for a shorter duration, and will focus on discussion questions from the previous week's lecture. For these meetings, the "A" and "B" discussion groups will meet separately. One group will meet from 10:40 to 11:15, and the other will meet from 11:20 to 11:55. This is done to increase the quality of the discussion section.

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.

Applications (x 5)	35%	(7 % each)
Exercise 1 – Op-Ed :	10%	
Exercise 2 – Legislation :	20%	
Exercise 3 – Behavior Change :	20%	
Course participation :	10%	

TOPICS AND READINGS

1a) Introduction to Psychology for Policy Analysis

Tuesday, February 5: Lecture

Ross, L., & Nisbett, R. (1991). The person and the situation, Chapter 1 (pp. 1-26). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Johnson, E. J., & Goldstein, D. (2003). Do defaults save lives? Science, 302, 1338-1339.

Pronin, E. (2007). Perception and misperception of bias in human judgment. Trends in Cognitive Sciences, 11, 37-43.

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

1b) Social Judgment and the Power of the Situation

Thursday, February 7: Lecture

Tuesday, February 12: Discussion

Ross, L., & Nisbett, R. (1991). The person and the situation. McGraw Hill. Chapter 2 (pp. 27-58), Chapter 3 (pp. 59-89), & Chapter 8 (pp. 204-247). New York: McGraw-Hill.

2) Perverse Incentives / Performance Measurement

Thursday, February 14: Lecture

Tuesday, February 19: Application 1: No Child Left Behind Act

Kerr, S. (1995). On the folly of rewarding A while hoping for B. Academy of Management Executive, 9, 7-14.

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.

Milgrom, P. & Roberts, J. (1992) Economics, Organization, and Management. Prentice Hall. (pp. 6 -18)

3) Behavioral Economics

Thursday, February 21: Lecture

Tuesday, February 26: Discussion

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). Memos to the council of behavioral-economics advisors: A behavioral economics view of poverty. AEA Proceedings and Papers, 94, 419-423.

Bazerman, M. H. (2001). Judgment in managerial decision making (5th Edition), Chapter 3. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

4) Behavior Change

Thursday, February 28: Lecture

Tuesday, March 4: Application 2: Microfinance in Developing Economies

Cialdini, R. B. (2001). Influence: Science and practice (4th edition), Chapter 3, & Chapters 5-8. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Cialdini, R. (2003). Crafting normative messages to protect the environment. Current Directions in Psychological Science, 12, 105-109.

Schultz, P. W., Nolan, J. M., Cialdini, R. B., Goldstein, N. J., & Griskevicius, V. (2007). The constructive, destructive, and reconstructive power of social norms. Psychological Science, 18, 429-434.

5) Attitude Change and Group Think

Thursday, March 6: Lecture

Tuesday, March 11: Discussion

Aiken, L. R. (2002). Attitudes and Related Psychosocial Constructs, Chapter 3 (pp. 53-77). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Eberhardt, J. L., Davies, P. G., Purdie-Vaughns, V. J., & Johnson, S. L. (2006). Looking deathworthy: Perceived stereotypicality of Black defendants predicts capital-sentencing outcomes. Psychological Science, 17, 383-386.

Helweg-Larsen, M., & Collins, B. E. (1997). A social psychological perspective on the role of knowledge about AIDS in AIDS prevention. Current Directions in Psychological Science, 6, 23-26.

Janis, I. L. (1971). Groupthink. Psychology Today, 5, 43-46, 74-76.

6) Justice and Fairness

Thursday, March 13: Lecture

Friday, March 14: *Due: Exercise 1 – Op-Ed*

SPRING BREAK

Tuesday, March 25: Application 3: Compensation for Harm

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

Robinson, P. H. & Darley, J. M. (2004). Does criminal law deter? A behavioural science investigation. Oxford Journal of Legal Studies, 24, 173-205.

7) Judgment and Cognitive Illusions

Thursday, March 27: Lecture
Tuesday, April 1: Discussion

Kahneman, D. (2003). A perspective on judgment and choice: Mapping bounded rationality. American Psychologist, 58, 697-720.

Todorov, A., Mandisodza, A. N., Goren, A., & Hall, C. C. (2005). Inferences of competence from faces predict election outcomes. Science, 308, 1623-1626.

Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. (1974). Judgment under uncertainty: Heuristics and biases. Science, 185, 1124-1131.

Groopman, J. (2007, January 29). What's the trouble? How doctors think. The New Yorker, pp. 36-41.

8) Intuitions and Statistics

Thursday, April 3: Lecture
Tuesday, April 8: Application 4: Eyewitness Testimony

Dawes, R. M., Faust, D., & Meehl, P. E. (1989). Clinical versus actuarial judgment. Science, 243, 1668-1674.

Hastie, R. & Dawes, R. (2001). Rational choice in an uncertain world. Chapter 3 (pp. 47-72). Thousand Oaks, Sage.

Wells, G. (2001). Police lineups: data, theory, and policy. Psychology, Public Policy and Law, 7, 791-801.

9) Guest Lecturer: Daniel Oppenheimer

Thursday, April 10: Lecture
Friday, April 11: Due: Exercise 2 – Legislation
Tuesday, April 15: Discussion

Berger, J. A., & Heath, C. (2005). Idea habitats: How the prevalence of environmental cues influences the success of ideas. Cognitive Science, 29, 195-221.

Additional readings TBA.

10) Risk Perception and Communication

Thursday, April 17: Lecture
Tuesday, April 22: Application 5: Reduction of Carbon Emissions

Finucane, M. L., Alhakami, A., Slovic, P., Johnson, S. M. (2000). The affect heuristic in judgments of risks and benefits. Journal of Behavioral Decision Making, 13, 1-17.

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

Sinaceur, M., & Heath, C. (2005). Emotional and deliberative reactions to a public crisis: Mad Cow Disease in France. Psychological Science, 16, 247-254.

11) Intergroup Relations

Thursday, April 24: Lecture
Tuesday, April 29: Discussion: Negotiation Exercise

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.

Malhotra, D., & Liyanage, S. (2005). Long-term effects of peace workshops in protracted conflicts. Journal of Conflict Resolution, 49, 908-924.

12) Negotiation / Wrap-up

Thursday, May 1: Lecture
Monday, May 5: Due: Exercise 3 – Behavior change
Monday, May 6: Poster presentation

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.

Bazerman, M. H. (2005). Judgment in managerial decision making (6th Edition), Chapter 12. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Kahneman, D., & Renshon, J. (2007, January/February). Why hawks win. Foreign Policy, 158, 34-38.

APPLICATIONS - MEMOS

Students are required to prepare five policy memos throughout the semester. Each memo will be based on a set of case readings identifying a topic within public policy which can be informed by psychological insights. The total grade for the policy memos is 35%, and each memo is worth equal value (i.e., 7%). Each memo will be graded out of 10 points. Memos will be due at 12pm on the Monday preceding the Tuesday discussion of each case. The 12:00pm Monday deadline is there to ensure that we have enough time to review your pieces before the Tuesday discussion. Memos are submitted via Blackboard and will be returned graded to your mailbox after discussion the following week (a week and a day after you handed them in). If for any reason you are unable to submit your commentary on time, you must email Geoff or Hulda at least 24 hours in advance. Our expectation is that this will be a rare event. Late submissions turned in by 5pm lose 2 points. Late submissions after 5pm will not be accepted or graded.

Instructions for each memo and associated reading will be posted on the 502 Blackboard site by 3:00pm on the Thursday afternoon prior to the Monday deadline. Memos should be between 1000-1500 words (3.5–5 pages) long. Nothing beyond 1500 words (5 pages) will be read. The *required* format for all assignments is double-spaced with one-inch margins and 12-point font such as New Times Roman. Please include your name, discussion section time, and discussion leader's name at the top of the document.

Schedule for application topics

<u>Memo due date</u>	<u>Discussion date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Prepared by</u>
February 18	February 19	No Child Left Behind Act	Group
March 3	March 4	Micro-finance	Individual
March 24	March 25	Compensation for harm	Individual
April 7	April 8	Eyewitness	Individual
April 21	April 22	Carbon emissions	Group

The case readings, in conjunction with lecture material, provide the necessary background for all memos. There is no need to do any additional research beyond this.

EXERCISES

Exercise 1 – Op-Ed: 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. **Be sure that your essay draws directly on relevant course material to make your arguments.** Length: 3-4 pages.

Due: Friday, March 14

Exercise 2 – Legislation: Working in pairs, identify and analyze the behavioral assumptions on which a particular piece of legislation is based. Those wishing to work alone on this project may do so. Length: 5-6 pages

Due: Friday, April 12

Exercise 3 – Behavior Change: Working in groups of 3 people, write a memorandum 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. Length: 15 - 20 pages max)

Paper Due: Monday, May 5

Note that you may not write about the exact same topic for all three assignments. Additional details will be provided at the time each exercise is assigned.

COURSE PARTICIPATION

Course participation will be assessed independently of the other course work and counts 10% towards the final course grade. This grade will be primarily based on active precept participation. During the weeks we do not discuss memos, discussion questions will be posted on Blackboard after Thursday's lecture. You are expected to come to precept thoroughly prepared to discuss those questions. In addition, at a few points during the semester regular Tuesday discussions will be replaced with other group activities designed to compliment the course material. For example, in Week 11 you will be paired up with a partner for a negotiation exercise. All negotiation will take place during your regularly scheduled precept time and the reading load will be light that week so that you can prepare for the negotiation. You should aim to offer thoughtful questions and comments on the reading and lecture material in the small group sessions. The quality of comments raised is the key factor in your participation, although quantity also matters (up to a point!).

FINAL EVENT

A day after Exercise 3 is due there will be a poster session and luncheon. This informal event gives all groups the opportunity to showcase their final project to the faculty and class members. It is expected that at least one member of your group will be present at your poster to discuss the project throughout the session.

Poster Session/Luncheon: Tuesday, May 6

OFFICE HOURS

Professor Darley: Wednesdays at 11:00am-12:00pm in 2-S-11 Green Hall
jdarley@princeton.edu; 8-4433

Professor Pronin: Tuesdays at 12:15-1:15pm in 2-S-6 Green Hall
epronin@princeton.edu; 8-8008

Professor Todorov: Tuesdays at 2:00-3:00pm in 2-N-7 Green Hall
atodorov@princeton.edu; 8-7463

Geoff Goodwin (Post-Doctoral Research Associate):
Tuesdays at 9:15-10:15 am in 3-C-4 Green Hall
ggoodwin@princeton.edu; 8-9498

Hulda Thorisdottir (Post-Doctoral Research Associate):
Thursdays at 9:15-10:15 am in 2-C-2 Green Hall
hthorisd@princeton.edu; 8-6935

COURSE READINGS

The required book is available for purchase at the U Store:

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

Readings will be available as a course package from the Business office. There will likely also be a few additional readings that will be placed on Blackboard and which we will alert you to during the semester.