

**Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs  
Spring 2009**

**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 – 11.50, Robertson 010, 011, 020, 023**

**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**

Many topics will be addressed over the course of the semester. The 80 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. Five times during the semester there is an “application” assignment due, and the sections will chiefly be occupied by discussing the application topic. During weeks that do not have an application assignment, discussion sections will focus on discussion questions from the previous week’s lecture.

## Schedule of lectures, discussion sections, and assignment deadlines

### Week 1a)

Tuesday, February 3 Lecture: Introduction to Psychology for Policy Analysis

### Week 1b)

Thursday, February 5 Lecture: Social Judgment and the Power of the Situation

Monday, February 9 *Individual Exercise Due: Eyewitness Testimony*

Tuesday, February 10 Discussion

### Week 2)

Thursday, February 12 Lecture: Perverse Incentives & Performance Measurement

Monday, February 16 *Group Exercise Due: No Child Left Behind Act*

Tuesday, February 17 Discussion

### Week 3)

Thursday, February 19 Lecture: Behavior Change

Tuesday, February 24 Discussion

### Week 4)

Thursday, February 26 Lecture: Attitude Change & Group Think

Monday, March 2 *Group Exercise Due: Legislation*

Tuesday, March 3 Discussion

### Week 5)

Thursday, March 5 Lecture: Justice & Fairness

Monday, March 9 *Individual Exercise Due: Compensation for Harm*

Tuesday, March 10 Discussion

### Week 6)

Thursday, March 12 Lecture: Intergroup Relations

Tuesday, March 17 \*Spring recess, no class\*

### Week7)

Thursday, March 19 \*Spring recess, no class\*

Tuesday, March 24 Guest lecture by Elizabeth Paluck: Field research in Rwanda

### Week 8)

Thursday, March 26 Lecture: Mental Accounting and Intertemporal Choice

Monday, March 30 *Individual Exercise Due: Microfinance in Developing Economies*

Tuesday, March 31 Discussion

### Week 9)

Thursday, April 2 Lecture: Prospect Theory

Tuesday, April 7 Discussion

### Week 10)

Thursday, April 9 Lecture: Heuristics & Biases

Monday, April 13 *Op-Ed Exercise Due*

Tuesday, April 14 Discussion

### Week 11)

Thursday, April 16 Lecture: Risk Perception & Communication

Monday, April 20 *Group Exercise Due: Reduction of Carbon Emissions*

Tuesday, April 21 Discussion

### Week 12)

Thursday, April 23 Lecture: Intuitions and Statistics

Tuesday, April 28 NO Discussion: Students do negotiation

### Week 13)

Thursday, April 30 Lecture: Negotiation

Monday, May 4 *Behavior Change Exercise Due (READING PERIOD BEGINS)*

Tuesday, May 5 Group Poster Presentations

## TOPICS AND READINGS

### **1a) Introduction to Psychology for Policy Analysis:**

Tuesday, February 3: Introductory 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.

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

### **1b) Social Judgment and the Power of the Situation:**

Thursday, February 5: Lecture

*Monday, February 9: Individual Exercise Due: Eyewitness Testimony*

Tuesday, February 10: 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.

Pronin, E. (2008). How we see ourselves and how we see others. *Science*, 320, 1177–1180.

### **2) Perverse Incentives & Performance Measurement:**

Thursday, February 12: Lecture

*Monday, February 16: Group Exercise Due: No Child Left Behind Act*

Tuesday, February 17: Discussion

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) Behavior Change:**

Thursday, February 19: Lecture

Tuesday, February 24: Discussion

Cialdini, R. B. (2009). *Influence: Science and practice* (5th edition), Chapter 3, & Chapters 5-8. Boston: Allyn & Bacon. [Textbook]

Cialdini, R. B. (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.

#### **4) Attitude Change & Group Think:**

Thursday, February 26: Lecture  
*Monday, March 2: Exercise Due: Legislation*  
Tuesday, March 3: 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.

#### **5) Justice & Fairness:**

Thursday, March 5: Lecture  
*Monday, March 9: Individual Exercise Due: Compensation for Harm*  
Tuesday, March 10: Discussion

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.

#### **6) Intergroup Relations:**

Thursday, March 12: Lecture  
Tuesday, March 17: \*Spring recess, no class\*

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.

#### **7) Field Research (in Rwanda):**

Thursday, March 19: \*Spring recess, no class\*  
Tuesday, March 24: Guest lecturer: Elizabeth Paluck

Paluck, E. L. (in press). Deference, Dissent, and Dispute Resolution: A Field Experiment in Rwanda. [Paper will be e-mailed separately].

## **8) Mental Accounting and Intertemporal Choice:**

Thursday, March 26: Lecture  
*Monday, March 30: Individual Exercise Due: Microfinance in Developing Economies*  
Tuesday, March 31: 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.

Barr, M. S., Mullainathan, S., & Shafir, E. (2008). *Behaviorally informed financial services regulation*. New America Foundation White Paper.

## **9) Prospect Theory:**

Thursday, April 2: Lecture  
Tuesday, April 7: Discussion

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

Kahneman, D. (2003). A perspective on judgment and choice: Mapping bounded rationality. *American Psychologist*, 58, 697-706. [Note. This is only the first part of the article.]

Camerer, C. F. (2000). *Prospect theory in the wild: Evidence from the field*. In D. Kahneman & A. Tversky (Eds), *Choices, Values, and Frames* (pp. 288-300).

## **10) Heuristics & Biases:**

Thursday, April 9: Lecture  
*Monday, April 13: Op-Ed Exercise Due*  
Tuesday, April 14: Discussion

Kahneman, D. (2003). A perspective on judgment and choice: Mapping bounded rationality. *American Psychologist*, 58, 706-720. [Note: See Week 9 for this reading. This is the second part of the article.]

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.

## **11) Risk Perception & Communication:**

Thursday, April 16: Lecture  
*Monday, April 20: Group Exercise Due: Reduction of Carbon Emissions*  
Tuesday, April 21: Discussion

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.

## **12) Intuitions and Statistics:**

Thursday, April 23: Lecture

Tuesday, April 28: NO Discussion: Students do negotiation exercise

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.

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

## **13) Negotiation:**

Thursday, April 30: Lecture

*Monday, May 4: Behavior Change Exercise Due (READING PERIOD BEGINS)*

Tuesday, May 5: Group Poster Presentations

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.

## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

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

All assignments are due at 12pm on Mondays. This is to ensure we have enough time to review your pieces before the Tuesday discussion. All assignments 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 assignment time, you must email Hulda or Joanne 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.

All assignments will be graded out of 10 points.

Applied Assignments (5x 8%):	40%
Legislation:	20%
Op-Ed :	10%
Behavior Change:	20%
Course participation :	10%
Total	100%

### Applied Assignments:

Students are required to prepare five assignments applying psychology to public policy. Each assignment will be based on a set of case readings identifying a topic within public policy which can be informed by psychological insights. Two of those are group projects (you will be assigned to a group of four) but the other three are individual assignments.

Instructions for each assignment and associated reading will be posted on the 502 Blackboard site on the Tuesday afternoon prior to the Monday deadline. Assignments 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.

The readings you will be given for the assignments, in conjunction with lecture material, provide the necessary background. There is no need to do any additional research beyond this.

<u>Due date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Prepared by</u>
February 9	Eyewitness testimony	Individual
February 16	No Child Left Behind Act	Group
March 9	Compensation for harm	Individual
March 30	Micro-finance	Individual
April 20	Carbon emissions	Group

**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: Monday, March 2

**Op-Ed – Behavioral Economics:**

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*). Use psychological insights to address a policy debate by drawing from lectures and readings from lectures on behavioral economics (weeks 8, 9, and 10). **Be sure that your essay draws directly on relevant course material to make your arguments (involving mental accounting, intertemporal choice, prospect theory, and/or heuristics and biases).** Length: 800 words.

Due: Monday, April 13

**Behavior Change:**

Working in groups of 3 people, write a paper 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). The day after this paper 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. At least one member of your group is expected to be present at your poster to discuss the project throughout the session.

Paper Due: Monday, May 4

Poster Session/Luncheon: Tuesday, 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 applied assignments, 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 12 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!).

## LAPTOP COMPUTERS

During both lecture and precept, use of laptops is permitted but should be limited to course-related work only (e.g., note-taking, group presentations).

## OFFICE HOURS

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

Professor Pronin: Tuesdays at 1:30-2:30pm in 2-S-6 Green Hall  
[epronin@princeton.edu](mailto:epronin@princeton.edu); 8-8008

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

Joanne Kane (Post-Doctoral Research Associate):  
Tuesdays at 9:15-10:15 am in 2-S-7 Green Hall  
[jekane@princeton.edu](mailto:jekane@princeton.edu); 8-6935

Hulda Thorisdottir (Post-Doctoral Research Associate):  
Thursdays at 9:15-10:15 am in 2-S-7 Green Hall  
[hthorisd@princeton.edu](mailto:hthorisd@princeton.edu); 8-6935

## COURSE READINGS

The required book is available for purchase at Labyrinth:

Cialdini, R. B. (2009). Influence: Science and Practice (5<sup>th</sup> 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. We will alert you to those during the semester.