

Psychology 343
Judgement and Decision-Making, Fall 2021
REMOTE ASYNCRONOUS VERSION

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Virtual office hours: Wed 10 AM to noon EST (other times available upon request)
Virtual office hours link: [here](#) (be aware that clicking this will basically drop you straight in the meeting)

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Required Texts:

- *Predictably Irrational* by Dan Ariely (Revised and Expanded Edition, First Harper Perennial Edition published 2010)
- *Thinking, Fast and Slow* by Daniel Kahneman (Anchor Canada Edition, published 2013)

(Sorry, I do not know whether old versions of the textbook are OK. I am using the versions described above. If you wish to use an older version of these books, you are responsible for any discrepancies in content).

Course Overview:

This course is focused upon classic and current issues judgment and decision-making (JDM). We will draw upon and compare perspectives from cognitive and social psychology as well as behavioral economics. Many of the topics should help students improve the quality of their own decisions. Assignments will apply topics in the course to students' everyday lives, helping students be aware of and avoid common inferential errors and systematic biases in their own decision making as well as improve their ability to predict and influence the behavior of others.

The course is structured like a pseudo- in-person course. Each week focuses upon one theme in JDM. Content is presented in the form of readings from the class textbook, lectures, and participation assignments. All content is available onQ in the content tab.

Intended Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, a successful student should be able to:

1. Understand and evaluate major constructs in judgment and decision making, such as System 1 and System 2, conceptual accessibility, fluency, rationality, utility theory, prospect theory, overconfidence, and the empathy gap (midterm & final)
2. Evaluate how these constructs intersect (midterm & final)
3. Apply these constructs to their daily lives to become more wise decision-makers (paper 2)
4. Interpret new research findings in this field (paper 1)

Grading Scheme & Grading Method:

- Participation assignments – 10%
- Paper 1 – 15%
- Paper 2 – 15%
- Midterm – 24% or 36%
- Final – 24% or 36%

All components of this course will receive numerical percentage marks. The final grade you receive for the course will be derived by converting your numerical course average to a letter grade according to Queen’s Official Grade Conversion Scale:

Queen’s Official Grade Conversion Scale

| Grade | Numerical Course Average (Range) |
|-------|----------------------------------|
| A+ | 90-100 |
| A | 85-89 |
| A- | 80-84 |
| B+ | 77-79 |
| B | 73-76 |
| B- | 70-72 |
| C+ | 67-69 |
| C | 63-66 |
| C- | 60-62 |
| D+ | 57-59 |
| D | 53-56 |
| D- | 50-52 |
| F | 49 and below |

Please note that there will be no “rounding up” of final grades (as in, a final percentage of 79.6 will receive a B+ and not an A-). The logic is as follows: to treat all students equally, whatever points I add to one student’s grade I must also add to all students’ grades. So, if I bump up a 79.6 to an A-, I effectively add .4 to that student’s grade, which I must then add to all students’ grades. After that, someone else will be on the cusp, and bumping them will put someone else on the cusp, etc, etc. Rinse and repeat and everyone has A+s. For these reasons, final grades receive no rounding up.

Assignment details:***Participation assignments – 10% of course grade***

Each week, there will be mini assignments on onQ to accompany the readings and lecture videos. These are usually just some sort of demonstration of something covered in lecture, such as making a decision and writing a paragraph about how you reached it or taking a cognitive aptitude test. These assignments have no right or wrong answers, they are purely scored by whether you did them or not.

Participation assignments for weeks 1 through 5 will be assessed on the day of the Midterm Exam, and participation assignments for weeks 7 through 12 will be assessed on the day of the Final Exam. For each participation assignments that you complete the day before the assessment date, you get one point. There are 17 participation assignments total, but I am only counting the 15 assignments with the highest point totals. Thus, you can skip 2 participation assignments and still reach 100% of the participation assignment contribution toward your course grade. Participation assignment score (out of 15) contributes 10% toward the course grade.

Papers – 30% of course grade

There will be two paper assignments for this course, each worth 15% of the course mark. Both assignments will stress application of principles covered in lecture and the readings to understanding modern research on the subject as well as the role of judgment and decision-making in student's everyday lives. Paper assignments will be posted in onQ at least 3 weeks prior to their due date and will be submitted via onQ.

Late submission grace period for papers

There may be a time when you are unable to complete a paper by the due date for personal reasons. This course has been designed with accommodations and considerations for extenuating circumstances in mind. This means that "Short term Requests for Academic Consideration" (submitted through the Faculty of Arts and Science portal without documentation) are not needed and long term requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis if needed.

Each paper will be due by the end of the day (11:59 pm EST) on a Friday. However, there is a 72 hour grace period for papers, such that late papers will be accepted up until Monday at 11:59 pm EST. **Let me know in advance of the paper deadline if you are taking the grace period.** Grace period requests made post hoc of the deadline will not be granted. Papers submitted after the due date (if the grace period is not requested) or after the grace period due date (if the grace period is requested) will receive a 0.

Exams – 60% of course grade

There will be two exams total: the Midterm and the Final. These exams will be open-book, open-notes written exams consisting of short answer and essay questions. The Midterm will include only material covered in the first half of the term. The Final will include only material covered in the second half.

Each exam is designed to be a 2-hour exam (as in, you can conceivably complete it in two hours). However, in order to make the exam accessible for all given a remote course that can be completed from everywhere on the globe, each exam will be open for a 24 hour window in onQ. On the day of the exam, it will posted in onQ at 1 minute after midnight, and submissions are allowed all the way up to 1 minute prior to midnight that same day. On exam day, do not share your responses with your classmates. Turnitin will be enabled.

Here's how exams will be weighted. The exam you do best on is worth 36% of your course grade. The exam you do worst on is worth 24% of your course grade. Students requesting permission to write a deferred exam will be expected to write a deferred exam as soon as they are able. Note that deferred exams may contain different questions than the originally administered exam.

Late exams will be penalized 10 percentage points (off the total exam grade) for each 1-60 minute time period they are submitted past the deadline. So, with a deadline of midnight, exams submitted at 12:05, 12:54, and 1:05 are penalized -10, -10, and -20 percentage points.

Regrading policy for papers and exams

Sometimes, the TAs and I, but usually me, make mistakes in grading. If either of us made a clerical error in grading your assignment (e.g., we added up your paper score incorrectly), please reach out to me and I'll be happy to correct it.

Students who believe that an assignment has not been appropriately graded (e.g., you believe you got a lower grade than you deserve) must contact me to resolve the issue within ten (10) working days of the date when the graded work is returned to the class. Grades not questioned within this period will not be recalculated at a later date. Students are required to submit a written formal request for re-grading. This request must clearly and concisely state why the work warrants a higher grade, must refer to the specific areas of the rubric where the points that were assigned were lower than warranted, and must provide compelling reasons why a higher rubric score is more appropriate than the assigned rubric score. I will respond within five (5) working days. A reassessment may result in the grade remaining the same, being raised, or being lowered. For reference, about 85% of regrade requests result in the same grade, about 10% result in a higher grade, and about 5% result in a lower grade. Students will receive feedback that addresses their rationale for requesting a re-grading of the work.

Timing of Exams

The exam dates for each Term are listed on the Faculty of Arts and Science webpage under [Important Dates](#). Student exam schedules for the Fall Term are posted via SOLUS immediately prior to the Thanksgiving holiday; they are posted on the Friday before Reading Week for the Winter Term and for the summer term, they are individually noted on the Arts and Science Online syllabi. **Students should delay finalizing any travel plans until after the examination schedule has been posted. Exams will not be moved or deferred to accommodate employment, travel/holiday plans or flight reservations.**

Diversity and Inclusion

In an ideal world, science would be objective. However, much of science is subjective and is historically built on a small subset of privileged voices. In this class, we will make an effort to read papers from a diverse group of scientists, but limits still exist on this diversity. I acknowledge that it is possible that there may be both overt and covert biases in the material due to the lens with which it was written, even though the material is primarily of a scientific nature. Integrating a diverse set of experiences is important for a more comprehensive understanding of science. I would like to discuss issues of diversity in JDM as part of the course from time to time. Please contact me (in person or electronically) or submit anonymous feedback if you have any suggestions to improve the quality of the course materials.

Furthermore, I would like to create a learning environment for my students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.) To help accomplish this:

- If you have a name and/or set of pronouns that you prefer, please let me know!

- If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please do not hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you. Remember that you can also submit anonymous feedback (which will lead to me making a general announcement to the class, if necessary, to address your concerns).

I (like many people) am still in the process of learning about diverse perspectives and identities. If something was said in class (by anyone) that made you feel uncomfortable, please talk to me about it. (Again, anonymous feedback is always an option.)

As a participant in course discussions, you should also strive to honour the diversity of your classmates.

Accommodations for Disabilities

Queen's University is committed to achieving full accessibility for people with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all their academic activities. The Senate Policy for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities was approved at Senate in November 2016. If you are a student with a disability and think you may need academic accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact the Queen's Student Accessibility Services (QSAS) and register as early as possible. For more information, including important deadlines, please visit the [QSAS website](#).

Academic Consideration for Students in Extenuating Circumstances

Academic consideration is a process for the university community to provide a compassionate response to assist students experiencing unforeseen, short-term extenuating circumstances that may impact or impede a student's ability to complete their academics. This may include but is not limited to:

- Short-term physical or mental health issues (e.g., stomach flu, pneumonia, COVID diagnosis, vaccination, etc.)
- Responses to traumatic events (e.g., Death of a loved one, divorce, sexual assault, social injustice, etc.)
- Requirements by law or public health authorities (e.g., court date, isolation due to COVID exposure, etc.)

Queen's University is committed to providing academic consideration to students experiencing extenuating circumstances. For more information, please see the [Senate Policy on Academic Consideration for Students in Extenuating Circumstances](#).

Each Faculty has developed a protocol to provide a consistent and equitable approach in dealing with requests for academic consideration for students facing extenuating circumstances. Arts and Science undergraduate students can find the Faculty of Arts and Science protocol and the [portal where a request can be submitted](#). Students in other Faculties and Schools who are enrolled in this course should refer to the protocol for their home Faculty.

If you need to request academic consideration for this course, you will be required to provide the name and email address of the instructor/coordinator. Please use the following contact information:

Instructor/Course Coordinator Name: David Hauser

Instructor/Course Coordinator email address: david.hauser@queensu.ca

Students are encouraged to submit requests as soon as the need becomes apparent and to contact their Professors/Course Coordinators as soon as possible once Consideration has been granted. Any delay in contact may limit the Consideration options available.

For more information on the Academic Consideration process, what is and is not an extenuating circumstance, and to submit an Academic Consideration request, [please see our website](#).

Academic Integrity:

Queen's students, faculty, administrators and staff all have responsibilities for upholding the fundamental values of academic integrity; honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility and courage (see www.academicintegrity.org). These values are central to the building, nurturing and sustaining of an academic community in which all members of the community will thrive. Adherence to the values expressed through academic integrity forms a foundation for the "freedom of inquiry and exchange of ideas" essential to the intellectual life of the University (see the Senate Report on Principles and Priorities <http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/policies/senate/report-principles-and-priorities>).

Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the regulations concerning academic integrity and for ensuring that their assignments and their behaviour conform to the principles of academic integrity. Information on academic integrity is available in the Arts and Science Calendar (see Academic Regulation 1 <http://www.queensu.ca/artsci/academic-calendars/regulations/academic-regulations/regulation-1>), on the Arts and Science website (see <https://www.queensu.ca/artsci/students-at-queens/academic-integrity>), and from the instructor of this course. Departures from academic integrity include plagiarism, use of unauthorized materials, facilitation, forgery and falsification, and are antithetical to the development of an academic community at Queen's. Given the seriousness of these matters, actions which contravene the regulation on academic integrity carry sanctions that can range from a warning or the loss of grades on an assignment to the failure of a course to a requirement to withdraw from the university.

Relevant to academic integrity is plagiarism, intended or not. Regardless of how and where you retrieve information, the principles of academic integrity apply with regard to plagiarism. Please visit these helpful websites to help you make sure that you are able to write things in your own words:

- <https://www.queensu.ca/academicintegrity/students/avoiding-plagiarismcheating>
- <https://integrity.mit.edu/handbook/academic-writing/avoiding-plagiarism-paraphrasing>
- http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_paraphrase.html

Turnitin:

This course makes use of Turnitin, a third-party application that helps maintain standards of excellence in academic integrity. Normally, students will be required to submit their course assignments to through onQ to Turnitin. In doing so, students' work will be included as source documents in the Turnitin reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism.

Turnitin is a suite of tools that provide instructors with information about the authenticity of submitted work and facilitates the process of grading. Turnitin compares submitted files against

its extensive database of content, and produces a similarity report and a similarity score for each assignment. A similarity score is the percentage of a document that is similar to content held within the database. Turnitin does not determine if an instance of plagiarism has occurred. Instead, it gives instructors the information they need to determine the authenticity of work as a part of a larger process.

Please read [Turnitin's Privacy Pledge, Privacy Policy, and Terms of Service](#), which governs users' relationship with Turnitin. Also, please note that Turnitin uses cookies and other tracking technologies; however, in its service contract with Queen's Turnitin has agreed that neither Turnitin nor its third-party partners will use data collected through cookies or other tracking technologies for marketing or advertising purposes. For further information about how you can exercise control over cookies, see [Turnitin's Privacy Policy](#).

Turnitin may provide other services that are not connected to the purpose for which Queen's University has engaged Turnitin. Your independent use of Turnitin's other services is subject solely to Turnitin's Terms of Service and Privacy Policy, and Queen's University has no liability for any independent interaction you choose to have with Turnitin.

Copyright of Course Materials:

The material presented in class is designed for use as part of the course on Judgment and Decision Making at Queen's University and is the property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third party copyrighted materials (such as the book chapters and articles found on onQ) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law. Copying this material for distribution (e.g., uploading material to a commercial third-party website) can lead to a violation of Copyright law. Find out more about copyright here: <http://library.queensu.ca/copyright>.

Changes to the syllabus:

In extreme circumstances, the syllabus and/or course schedule may be modified at my discretion. I will announce all changes via onQ.

Course Schedule:

| Week opens | Topics | Readings* | Participation assignments | Assessments due |
|------------|---|-------------------------------|--|--------------------|
| Sept 7 | Introduction to JDM | A** intro K** intro, K1 | Airplane decision | |
| Sept 13 | System 1 and system 2 | K1 – K5**** | Math test, product choice | |
| Sept 20 | Norms, confirmation bias, and quick judgments | K6 – K8 | Memory test, card test | |
| Sept 27 | Heuristics pt 1 | K9 – K11 A2 | Which test helps you more and why? | Paper 1 due Oct 1 |
| Oct 4 | Heuristics pt 2 | K12 – K17 | How to get a better grade; How to commit the conjunction fallacy | |
| Oct 11 | Fall break, no content, Happy Thanksgiving! | | | |
| Oct 18 | Midterm Exam – Oct 20 | | | Midterm Exam |
| Oct 25 | Illusions of validity | K19 – K24 | Draw a bike, pick a door | |
| Nov 1 | Prospect theory & its implications pt 1 | K25, K26 | Computing expected values | |
| Nov 8 | Prospect theory & its implications pt 2 | K27 – K29 A8 | Evaluate decision weights | |
| Nov 15 | Misperceptions of importance | K30 – K34 A1, A3 | Draw a marble, pick a dictionary | Paper 2 due Nov 19 |
| Nov 22 | Experiencing happiness vs remembering happiness: do we know what makes us happy? | K35 – K38 | Pick a gift basket, list what makes you happy | |
| Nov 29 | Needing to be in the moment: Affective forecasting errors and hot vs cold decision-making | K38 A6, A7, A10 | Write an example empathy gap | |

* just in case your book has different chapter numbers than mine, the chapter names that correspond with the chapter numbers are listed on the next page. Some older versions of Ariely's Predictably Irrational jumble the chapter order. Check your book to ensure that your chapter names are in the same order as mine.

** A = Ariely (Predictably Irrational) and K = Kahneman (Thinking Fast and Slow), numbers indicate chapter numbers

*** the – indicates “through”. So K1 – K5 means read chapters K1, K2, K3, K4, and K5****

**** footnotes can be fun

Readings chapter names:

Thinking, Fast and Slow by Daniel Kahneman

1. The characters of the story
2. Attention and effort
3. The lazy controller
4. The associative machine
5. Cognitive ease
6. Norms, surprises, and causes
7. A machine for jumping to conclusions
8. How judgments happen
9. Answering an easier question.
10. The law of small numbers
11. Anchors
12. The science of availability
13. Availability, emotion, and risk
14. Tom W's specialty
15. Linda : less is more
16. Causes trump statistics
17. Regression to the mean
18. Taming intuitive predictions.
19. The illusion of understanding
20. The illusion of validity
21. Intuitions vs. formulas
22. Expert intuition : when can we trust it?
23. The outside view
24. The engine of capitalism.
25. Bernoulli's errors
26. Prospect theory
27. The endowment effect
28. Bad events
29. The fourfold pattern
30. Rare events
31. Risk policies
32. Keeping score
33. Reversals
34. Frames and reality.
35. Two selves
36. Life as a story
37. Experienced well-being
38. Thinking about life.

Predictably Irrational by Dan Ariely

1. The truth about relativity
2. The fallacy of supply and demand
3. The cost of zero cost
4. The cost of social norms
5. The power of a free cookie
6. The influence of arousal

7. The problem of procrastination and self control
8. The high price of ownership
9. Keeping doors open
10. The effect of expectations
11. The power of price
12. The cycle of distrust
13. The context of our character pt 1
14. The context of our character pt 2
15. Beer and free lunches