Columbia University
Business B9702 and PSYC G9180 or 4285
Spring 2006

MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES TO HUMAN DECISION MAKING

Thursdays 5:15-6:30
311 Warren Hall (115th & Amsterdam)

Instructors:
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Office Hours:  contact Ryan by e-mail for an appointment or general questions

Session topics, speakers, and weekly course readings can be found at:

http://www.cebiz.org/cds/

General Course Description:
This ongoing weekly seminar serves as a focal point for bringing together the decision science community at Columbia. The seminar can be taken for credit as a graduate or advanced undergraduate course but is open to all scholars interested in decision making. Our meetings take several forms, including introductions to topic areas by Columbia faculty, guest speakers (often leading researchers in their fields), and discussions. We occasionally schedule all three types of meetings for a given topic to create a module including an introduction, a guest speaker, and a wrap-up discussion.

More Details:
Human judgments and decisions are studied by many disciplines, including psychology, sociology, anthropology, as well as in applied fields such as business, law, and public policy. These “behavioral” fields take the approach of studying behavior human empirically rather than modeling it based on assumptions of rationality. The seminar is designed to draw together students and faculty from disciplines that are part of the decision sciences to exchange ideas and to work towards a broader and deeper understanding of human decision processes. Its specific aims are: (a) to provide students and researchers from different disciplines with general background knowledge about the scope, aims, and methods of research in the decision sciences; (b) to examine decision making from different disciplinary perspectives; and (c) to feature several distinguished speakers each semester, who will present current basic and applied research in a range of sub-disciplines.

Detailed course content will vary from semester to semester. The focus of most talks and lectures will be actual (usually human) behavior, but connections are typically made to normative and prescriptive analyses of the judgment or choice tasks under study. This semester the course will focus on judgment and decision making broadly within the context of negotiation.
Course Requirements:
Graduate students and advanced undergraduates can register for 1.5 points, for repeated credit in different semesters, with the permission of the instructor. MBA students can register for 1.5 credits. All students are expected to participate in the general discussion during and following each topic presentation. A paper on each week’s topic is posted on the CDS website provided above. Students should read the paper ahead of time and come prepared with questions.

Students are also required to turn in a final research paper at the end of the semester. The topic of the paper will be determined by each student and should be discussed with an instructor before the middle of the semester. These papers should range between 5-8 pages; more details regarding the paper will be provided a few weeks into the semester. The following sections suggest some background reading as well as references to a subset of specific topics. These are reference materials, not required readings.

Background Reading: Negotiation and decision making

Getting Past No: Negotiating Your Way from Confrontation to Cooperation by William Ury
Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In by Roger Fisher, William Ury and Bruce Patton
The Mind and Heart of the Negotiator by Leigh L. Thompson
Negotiating Rationally by Max Baxerman
Negotiation Analysis: The Science and Art of Collaborative Decision Making by Howard Raiffa, John Richardson and David Metcalfe

General judgment and decision making

The Adaptive Decision Maker by John Payne, James Bettman and Eric Johnson
Adaptive Thinking: Rationality in the Real World by Gerd Gigerenzer
Bounded Rationality: The Adaptive Toolbox by Gerd Gigerenzer and Reinhard Selten
Heuristics and Biases: The Psychology of Intuitive Judgment by Thomas Gilovich, Dale Griffin and Daniel Kahneman
Choices, Values, and Frames edited by Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky
How We Know What Isn't So by Thomas Gilovich
Judgment and Decision Making edited by Kenneth R. Hammond and Hal R. Arkes
Judgment and Decision Making: An Interdisciplinary Reader edited by Terry Connolly, Hal R. Arkes, Kenneth R. Hammond
Judgment in Managerial Decision Making by Max H. Bazerman
Judgment under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases edited by Daniel Kahneman, Paul Slovic, Amos Tversky
Rational Choice in an Uncertain World: The Psychology of Judgment and Decision Making by Reid Hastie and Robyn M. Dawes
Rationality in Action: Contemporary Approaches by Paul K. Moser
The Psychology of Judgment and Decision Making by Scott Plous
Thinking and Deciding by Jon Baron
Wise Choices: Decisions, Games, and Negotiations by Richard J. Zeckhauser, Ralph L. Keeney and James K. Sebenius