

Information about Psychology 458/558: Decision Making

Instructor: Paul Slovic
Time: Monday evenings 6:30 PM - 9:20 PM
Place: 142 Straub
Final Exam: Monday, June 3, 8-10 PM
Instructor's Office Hours: Mondays 2:00 - 3:00
312 Straub or by appointment
(Phone 485-2400)

This course is about Behavioral Decision Theory, a term coined in 1961 to describe research and theory pertaining to processes involved in judgment and decision making. Although most of the work in this area has been done during the past 30 years, the field has its origins in developments in economics, statistics, and probability theory that go back hundreds of years. In this course, descriptive findings about the ways people actually do make judgments and decisions will be contrasted with normative and prescriptive theories about how "rational" or "wise" decision makers should behave.

There is a text, Decision Research: A Field Guide by John Carroll and Eric Johnson. In addition, readings will be assigned from a photocopied packet of journal articles and book chapters that will be available for purchase from the EMU Campus Copy Center.

There will be one midterm exam. There will also be several small projects and an essay or two to write.

This is not a course in mathematics or statistics. However, quantitative and statistical thinking is required to understand the material. Some of the course will deal with intuitive statistics and intuitive probability theory. Students who are not facile in statistics, experimental design, and quantitative thinking will probably find the course to be difficult.