

**PSY 5991 (1418)**

**Judgment and Decision Making**

**Fall 2004**

**Instructor:** Claudia Stanny      **Bldg 41 / Room 214 474-3163**      **cstanny@uwf.edu**

**Class Meets: 9:00 - 11:55 AM**      **Monday**      **Room 115 / Bldg 41**

Office Hours:      Monday & Wednesday      1:30 PM - 3:30 PM  
Tuesday & Thursday      9:30 - 11:30 AM

**Texts:**

Plous, S. (1993). *The psychology of judgment and decision making*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Garb, H. N. (1998). *Studying the clinician: Judgment research and psychological assessment*. Washington, DC: APA.

**Readings**

Ericsson, K. A., & Lehmann, A. C. (1996). Expert and exceptional performance: Evidence of maximal adaptation to task constraints. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 47, 273-305.

Lipshitz, R., Klein, G., Orasanu, J., & Salas, E. (2001). Taking stock of naturalistic decision making. *Journal of Behavioral Decision Making*, 14, 331-352.

Rikers, R. M. J. P., Schmidt, H. G., & Boshuizen, H. P. A. (2000). Knowledge encapsulation and the intermediate effect. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25, 150-166.

Weiss, D. J., & Shanteau, J. (2003). Empirical assessment of expertise. *Human Factors*, 45, 104-114.

Additional readings in the primary literature related to expertise and JDM in counseling and clinical psychology will be assigned at a later date.

**Course Description**

This course will survey current theories of human judgment and decision making. Students will be introduced to both normative models of decision making (based in statistics, philosophy, psychology, and economics) and descriptive models of decision making (based on research in cognitive psychology and social psychology). The role of expertise in judgment and decision making will also be discussed. The course will include discussion of judgment and decision making under a variety of conditions of uncertainty, including aviation, diagnosis and treatment decisions in clinical psychology and medicine, forecasting, risk assessment, and evaluation of eyewitnesses and jury decisions.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

Describe and understand the theoretical and empirical background on judgment and decision making.

Describe normative and probabilistic models for decision making.

Identify heuristics and biases in decision making.

Describe naturalistic decision making and differentiate this from normative models of decision making.

Describe the differences between expert and novice decision makers in terms of knowledge and information processing strategies.

Understand the development of expertise in decision making.

Develop a detailed knowledge and understanding of theory and empirical data concerning decision making within a specific domain of knowledge.

**Evaluation**

The course will be organized as a seminar and divided into two sections. The first section will consist of a survey of the theories and literature on judgment and decision making in general. The second section will consist of an in-depth study of research questions, methodology, and empirical findings on a specialized topic in judgment and decision making (clinical and counseling psychology).

Class participation will be essential for a successful course. Students will be expected to come to class prepared to discuss the scheduled topic. Each student will be expected to volunteer to discuss a total of three papers (published in primary sources) that are related to material in Plous but are not discussed or cited by Plous. Each paper read will be discussed briefly when the relevant material in Plous is discussed in class. Distribute your participation across the term. Prepare yourself for these presentations by (1) identifying the main points presented in the reading or preparing a concept map for the reading and (2) developing specific questions about things that were not clearly explained in the reading, raising questions about the generality of the findings reported, or discuss some related finding you have read about in your independent reading. When preparing material that was cited by Plous, you should compare Plous' interpretation of the research cited to the interpretation given by the authors of the original article. The goal is that each student will become actively involved with the readings and to demonstrate understanding and critical thought on the topics discussed.

**Exam**

A take-home essay exam will be given at the end of discussion of the material in Plous.

**Paper and Presentation**

The paper will be based on a topic related to the general area of judgment and decision making. You might focus on one theoretical issue in judgment and decision making and present a critical

review and analysis of recent studies on this topic. Alternatively, you might select a specific application of judgment and decision making and discuss how theoretical material discussed in class is applied to a practical problem (e.g., how theories of judgment and decision making can be used to understand and improve decision making about dangerousness). You might propose an experimental study that would test and/or extend findings in an area of judgment and decision making.

The last class meeting of the term will be devoted to student presentations based on individual papers. Student paper must be completed before these presentations begin. Provide an **electronic copy** of your paper for circulation among students in the class no later than the second-to-last class. Student presentations will include both an overview of your paper (a 5-10 minute summary) and a seminar discussion. All students are expected to read all of the student papers and be prepared to discuss these papers before the day of the presentation. Individual students will be assigned as primary readers for two student papers. Primary readers will be required to have questions prepared for the discussion part of the paper presentation. These questions should be e-mailed to the instructors no later than Dec 3. In addition, student presenters should come prepared to ask students questions about their paper. Finally, primary reviewers will be asked to submit a formal peer review evaluation for the papers reviewed.

### Grading

Grades will be based on class participation, the paper, and the class presentation. These will be weighted as follows:

Class Participation (includes written preparatory work)	20%
Exam	30%
Paper	30%
Presentation and Leading of Seminar Discussion	10%
Peer review of papers (2)	10%

Letter grades will be assigned as follows:

93% or better	A	77% to 79%	C+
90% to 92%	A-	73% to 76%	C
87% to 89%	B+	70% to 72%	C-
83% to 86%	B	60% to 69%	D
80% to 82%	B-	50% or less	F

### UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACADEMIC CONDUCT

Honesty in our academic work is vital, and we will not knowingly act in ways which erode that integrity. Accordingly, we pledge not to cheat, nor to tolerate

cheating, nor to plagiarize the work of others. (UWF Student Handbook, page 46)

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense and will be taken seriously. Please refer to the UWF Student Handbook (page 48) for information about procedures that will be followed with cases of academic dishonesty.

### ASSISTANCE FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Students with special needs who require specific accommodations for examinations or other course activities should contact Barbara Fitzpatrick, Director of Disabled Student Services (DSS) (e-mail: [dss@uwf.edu](mailto:dss@uwf.edu), telephone: 474-2387). DSS will provide the student with a letter for the instructor that will specify recommended accommodations.

### Schedule of Activities

<b>Week(s)</b>	<b>Topic(s)</b>
August 23	Overview and theoretical background for JDM in sensory processing and cognition (Ch 1, 2, 3, & 4) Discussion of student paper topics and methods for locating relevant literature
August 30	Contextual and Social influences on JDM (Ch 5, 6, 17, & 18)
Sept 6	Labor Day Holiday - no class meeting
Sept 13	Normative models of decision making (Ch 7, 8, & 9) <b>Due: Statement of topic for student paper</b>
Sept 20	Heuristics, biases, and other “decision traps” (Ch 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21)
Sept 27	Naturalistic decision making (Lipshitz et al, 2001)
Oct 4	Expertise in decision making (Ericsson & Lehmann, 1996; Rikers et al., 2000; & Weiss & Shanteau, 2003)
Oct 10	finish general discussion of decision making - distribute take-home exam
<b>Oct 18</b>	<b>Take-Home Exam Due</b> Overview of JDM in clinical and counseling psychology
Oct 25	Methodological issues in the study of JDM in counseling and clinical psychology
Nov 1	Evaluating the quality of decisions
Nov 8	Expertise in JDM in clinical and counseling psychology
Nov 15	Training and development of JDM in clinical and counseling psychology
Nov 22	Future directions for research <b>Student papers due - e-mail copy of your paper to me and to all students in the class</b>
Nov 29	Student Presentations <b>Peer reviews by primary readers due</b>