

Psychology 343 Judgement and Decision-Making, Fall 2025

Instructor: David Hauser (he/him)

Office: see onQ

Office hours: see onQ

What are office hours?: <https://vimeo.com/270014784>

Lecture times and locations: see onQ

Teaching assistants: see onQ

Required Course Textbooks:

- *Predictably Irrational* by Dan Ariely (Revised and Expanded Edition, First Harper Perennial Edition published 2010)
 - For purchase: <https://www.campusbookstore.com/textbooks/search-engine/results?Course=PSYC27647>
 - Cost: \$24.99
 - Available in Library: no
- *Thinking, Fast and Slow* by Daniel Kahneman (Anchor Canada Edition, published 2013)
 - For purchase: <https://www.campusbookstore.com/textbooks/search-engine/results?Course=PSYC27647>
 - Cost: \$23.00
 - Available in Library: online
- I do not know whether old versions of the textbooks 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.

Content is presented in the form of readings from the class textbook, lectures, and in demos.

Course Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, a student will 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 exam & final exam)
2. Evaluate how these constructs intersect (midterm exam & final exam)
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:

- Paper 1 – 10%
- Paper 2 – 10%
- Midterm exam – 30% or 50%, weighted according to performance
- Final exam – 30% or 50%, weighted according to performance
 - See syllabus section on Exams for how weights for the exams will be determined

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

Grade Rounding Policy:

Please note that there will be no “rounding up” of final grades (as in, a final percentage of 79.8 will receive a B+ and not an A-). The reason why is because the Queen’s Psychology department has guidelines regarding the final grade distribution of courses (i.e., how many As, Bs, Cs, etc, are given out). After an exam in my course, I assess how well the class did, and if scores are lower than I expected, then I bump up everyone’s scores by the same amount (e.g., everyone gets X points added to their score). My goal is that, at the end of the semester, my grade distribution is the highest it can be without raising any red flags. However, this means that I cannot round up final grades because doing so would put my grade distribution over the upper limit.

Assessment details:***Papers – 20% of course grade***

There will be two paper assignments for this course, each worth 10% 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.

Completion of both papers is an essential requirement for the course. Failure to complete a paper will result in a zero being assigned for the paper mark.

Late assignment submission policy and grace periods

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 up to 3 days (submitted through the Faculty of Arts and Science portal without documentation) are not needed for paper assignments and long term requests for academic consideration (for 4 days or more extension) submitted through the portal will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

For more information on how to request a paper deadline extension because of a QSAS-accommodated disability or because of a request for consideration due to extenuating circumstances (Considerations request), please see the Assessment Extension and Deferral Guide on the course onQ website.

All students automatically receive a 72 hour grace period for papers, such that extensions for extending the due date for papers for up to 72 hours are permitted. **If you wish to take the 72 hour grace period, just take it; there is no need to inform me.** All papers received prior to the 72 hour grace period will receive no late penalties.

One point out of 10 (i.e., 10%) shall be deducted from an assignment for each day/week, or portion thereof, if it is late (including weekends) after the grace period. The absolute last day to submit a late assignment in this course is the last day of the course. Anything that arrives after this will not be accepted.

Students with letters of accommodation should, if possible, confirm the implementation of their accommodations prior to the listed due date. Please see the “Accommodations for Disabilities” section of this syllabus for more information.

Exams – 80% of course mark

There will be two exams: the Midterm exam and the Final exam. These exams will include multiple choice questions. The midterm will include only material covered in the first half of the term (in blue on the schedule) while the final will cover only material from the second half of the term (in red on the schedule). The emphasis will be on material covered in lecture but some questions will be drawn exclusively from the readings or in-class videos.

The exam’s contribution to your course mark will be weighted such that your best exam mark will count for 50% of the total course mark and your lowest exam mark will count for 30% of the total course mark.

It is expected that students write both exams. Both exams are essential requirements for the course. Failure to complete an exam will result in a zero being assigned for the exam mark.

Deferred exam policy

Students receiving permission to write a deferred midterm or final exam will be expected to write their exam during the Faculty of Arts and Science or Psychology Department’s deferred exam period. **Requests for individualized deferred exam dates will not be accommodated.**

The deferred exam is considered an official exam to which all the exam regulations apply. Note that deferred exams may contain different questions than the originally administered exam and therefore may differ in difficulty.

For more information on how to request an exam deferral because of a QSAS-accommodated disability or because of a request for consideration due to extenuating circumstances (Considerations request), please see the Assessment Extension and Deferral Guide on the course onQ website.

Regrading policy for papers and exams

Sometimes, the TAs and I, but usually me, make mistakes in grading. If we made a clerical error in grading your assignment (e.g., we added up your paper score incorrectly or we deducted points for the wrong font being used when the right font was used), please reach out to me and I'll be happy to correct it.

Aside from those circumstances, all grades assigned by TAs and myself are final. As discussed previously in the syllabus (see "Grade Rounding Policy"), throughout the semester I take opportunities to bump up everyone's grade as high as I can. Regrades raise the class grade distribution over the upper limit; thus, **papers will not be regraded**

The TAs and I are happy to discuss graded assignments and provide additional feedback to students in office hours as long as those meetings take the form of discussions about how to improve on future assignments. Debates about why more points should have been awarded on a particular assignment will not be entertained.

If you wish to get more feedback on your assessment, please contact the TA who graded it to set up a meeting. I (Dave Hauser) am often unable to provide useful feedback about the particular nuances of your paper because I am not the one who graded it. TAs are able to provide far better feedback in these circumstances.

Timing of Exams

Once the exam schedule has been finalized, the exam date will be posted on your SOLUS account. 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 on SOLUS immediately prior to Thanksgiving and on the Friday before Reading Week for the Winter Term. 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. For information regarding what is considered extenuating circumstances and qualifications for Academic Consideration, please visit the [Faculty of Arts and Science's Academic Consideration webpage](#).

If you are unable to attend an exam and receive approval for a deferred proctored exam, a further deferral of that exam will not be accommodated.

Where to go with Questions:

If you have a question about a paper extension or an exam deferral, see the Assessment Extension and Deferral Guide on the course onQ page. It provides exact details on how to handle those situations.

If you have a question about the course, please take the following actions:

1. Check the syllabus (yes, this one). It's most likely answered here.
2. Check the course onQ announcements to see if it's answered there.
3. Check the course onQ Questions Discussion Forum to see if it's already been asked and answered there.
 - a. If it has not been, please post your question there and I will respond as soon as I can.
 - b. If your question is personal and you'd rather not post it on the discussion board, please see me after class or in office hours and I would be happy to answer it then.

Lastly, email me your question only if the above actions do not work for you. However, note that email is an asynchronous medium. My inbox is often flooded. I will try my best to respond to you as soon as possible, but please do not be offended if my response is delayed or your email falls through the cracks.

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 working with students with disabilities to remove barriers to their academic goals. Queen's Student Accessibility Services (QSAS), students with disabilities, instructors, and faculty staff work together to provide and implement academic accommodations designed to allow students with disabilities equitable access to all course material (including in-class as well as exams). If you are a student currently experiencing barriers to your academics due to disability related reasons, and you would like to understand whether academic accommodations could support the removal of those barriers, please visit the [QSAS website](#) to learn more about academic accommodations or start the registration process with QSAS by clicking *Access Ventus* button at [Ventus | Accessibility Services | Queen's \(queensu.ca\)](#)

VENTUS is an online portal that connects students, instructors, Queen's Student Accessibility Services, the Exam's Office and other support services in the process to request, assess, and implement academic accommodations.

To learn more go to: <https://www.queensu.ca/ventus-support/students/visual-guide-ventus-students>

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 any extenuating circumstance (illness, bereavement, traumatic event, injury, family emergency, etc.) which is short-lived, begins within the term, and will not last longer than 12 weeks - see [Academic Consideration](#) webpage for details (<https://www.queensu.ca/artsci/undergraduate/student-services/academic-consideration>).

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. For more information, undergraduate students in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences should consult the Faculty's webpage on [Academic Consideration in Extenuating Circumstances](#) and submit a request via the [Academic Consideration Request Portal](#). Students in other Faculties and Schools who are enrolled in this course should refer to the protocol for their home Faculty.

Students are encouraged to submit requests as soon as the need becomes apparent and to contact their instructor and/or course coordinator as soon as possible once academic consideration has been granted. Any delay in contact may limit the options available for academic consideration. While we encourage instructors to accommodate, each instructor has discretion in deciding whether or how to apply the Academic Consideration. 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 the Faculty of Arts and Science's [Academic Consideration website](#). ASO courses include links to information on **Academic Consideration** on your **Course Homepage** in onQ. For more information, please see the [Senate Policy on Academic Consideration for Students in Extenuating Circumstances](#).

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

Psychology Accommodations Coordinator Name: Tara Karasewich
Coordinator email address: psyc.accom@queensu.ca

Students are encouraged to submit requests as soon as the need becomes apparent and to contact the psyc.accom@queensu.ca as soon as possible once a consideration request has been made. Any delay in contact may limit the Consideration options available.

Please follow up with psyc.accom@queensu.ca via email within 1 day of making your Consideration request.

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](#).

For more information on how to make an Academic Consideration request, please see the Assessment Extension and Deferral Guide on the course onQ website.

Queen’s Policy Statement on Academic Integrity:

Queen’s University is dedicated to creating a scholarly community free to explore a range of ideas, to build and advance knowledge and to share the ideas and knowledge that emerge from a range of intellectual pursuits. Each core value of academic integrity, as defined in the [Senate Academic Integrity Policy](#), gives rise to and supports the next.

Honesty appears in presenting one’s own academic work, whether in the context of an examination, written assignment, laboratory or seminar presentation. It is in researching one’s own work for course assignments, acknowledging dependence on the ideas or words of another and in distinguishing one’s own ideas and thoughts from other sources. It is also present in faithfully reporting laboratory results even when they do not conform to an original hypothesis. Further, honesty is present in truthfully communicating in written and/or oral exchanges with instructors, peers and other individuals (e.g. teaching assistants, proctors, university staff and/or university administrators).

Trust exists in an environment in which one’s own ideas can be expressed without fear of ridicule or fear that someone else will take credit for them.

Fairness appears in the proper and full acknowledgement of the contributions of collaborators in group projects and in the full participation of partners in collaborative projects.

Respect, in a general sense, is part of an intellectual community that recognizes the participatory nature of the learning process and honours and respects a wide range of opinions and ideas. However, “respect” appears in a very particular sense when students attend class, pay attention, contribute to discussion and submit papers on time; instructors “show respect by taking students’ ideas seriously, by recognizing them as individuals, helping them develop their ideas, providing full and honest feedback on their work, and valuing their perspectives and their goals” (“[The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity](#)”, 3rd Edition, p. 8).

Ultimately, responsibility is both personal and collective and engages students, administrators, faculty and staff in creating and maintaining a learning environment supported by and supporting academic integrity.

Courage differs from the preceding values by being more a quality or capacity of character – “the capacity to act in accordance with one’s values despite fear” (“The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity”, 3rd edition, p. 10). Courage is displayed by students who make choices and integrous decisions that are followed by action, even in the face of peer pressure to cheat, copy another’s material, provide their own work to others to facilitate cheating, or otherwise represent themselves dishonestly. Students also display courage by acknowledging prior wrongdoing and taking proactive measures to rectify any associated negative impact.

All of these values are not merely abstract but are expressed in and reinforced by the University’s policies and practices.

Generative Artificial Intelligence Tools (e.g., ChatGPT):

Students must submit their own work and cite the work that is not theirs. Students are permitted to utilize generative AI writing tools such as ChatGPT in their paper assignments as long as students cite the material that they generate. Note that students are also responsible for the accuracy (or inaccuracy) of the material that ChatGPT generates. Any other use constitutes a Departure from Academic Integrity.

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 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 plagiarized text in this course. Data from submissions is also collected and analyzed by Turnitin for detecting Artificial Intelligence ([AI](#))-generated text. These results are not reported to your instructor at this time but could be in the future.

Turnitin is a suite of tools that provide instructors with information about the authenticity of submitted work and facilitates the process of grading. The similarity report generated after an assignment file is submitted produces a similarity score for each assignment. A similarity score is the percentage of writing that is similar to content found on the internet or the Turnitin extensive database of content. 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 Policy](#), [Acceptable Use Policy](#) and [End-User License Agreement](#), which govern 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:

Course materials created by the course instructor, including all slides, presentations, handouts, tests, exams, and other similar course materials, are the intellectual property of the instructor. It is a departure from academic integrity to distribute, publicly post, sell or otherwise disseminate an instructor's course materials or to provide an instructor's course materials to anyone else for distribution, posting, sale or other means of dissemination, without the instructor's express consent. A student who engages in such conduct may be subject to penalty for a departure from academic integrity and may also face adverse legal consequences for infringement of intellectual property rights.

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:

Lecture dates	Topics	Assigned readings	Assessments
Sept 3	Introduction to JDM	A** intro K** intro, K1	
Sept 8	Introduction to JDM		
Sept 10	System 1 and System 2	K1 – K5***	
Sept 15	System 1 and System 2		
Sept 17	Norms, confirmation bias, and quick judgments	K6 – K8	
Sept 22	Norms, confirmation bias, and quick judgments		
Sept 24	Heuristics	K9 – K11, A2	
Sept 29	No class (Truth and Reconciliation)		
Oct 1	Heuristics	K12 – K17	Oct 1 – Paper 1 due
Oct 6	Heuristics		
Oct 8	Illusions of validity	K19 – K24	
Oct 13	No class (Thanksgiving Break)		
Oct 15	No class (Reading Week)		
Oct 20	Review session for Midterm		
Oct 22	MIDTERM EXAM		MIDTERM EXAM
Oct 27	Illusions of validity		
Oct 29	Prospect theory and its implications	K25, K26	
Nov 3	Prospect theory and its implications		
Nov 5	Prospect theory and its implications	K27 – K29 A8	
Nov 10	Prospect theory and its implications		
Nov 12	Misperceptions of importance	K30 – K34 A1, A3	
Nov 17	Misperceptions of importance		
Nov 19	Experiencing happiness vs remembering happiness: do we know what makes us happy?	K35 – K38	Nov 19 – Paper 2 due
Nov 24	Experiencing happiness vs remembering happiness: do we know what makes us happy?		
Nov 26	Needing to be in the moment: Affective forecasting errors and hot vs cold decision-making	K38 A6, A7, A10	
Dec 1	Needing to be in the moment: Affective forecasting errors and hot vs cold decision-making		

* If you bought an older edition of Ariely's Predictably Irrational, be warned that some older versions jumble the chapter order. Check your book to ensure that your chapter names are in the same order as mine. I include the chapter names that correspond with the chapter numbers on the next page.

** 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.

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