MKTG 951: Judgment and Decision Making Perspectives on Consumer Behavior

Fall 2021

Instructor: Barbara Mellers mellers@wharton.upenn.edu

Office Hour: Thursdays, 3:00 – 4:00 pm.

When and Where: Fridays 8:45-11:45 am (JMHH 741; Marketing Conference Room)

Course website: Canvas

Course Overview:

This course will give you an overview of key judgment and decision-making topics in consumer research. Each week, we’ll cover combinations of classic papers that represent foundational ideas and newer papers about recent findings and controversies I’ll give a mini-lecture about the topic, and then we’ll discuss the articles for the week. Finally, each person will present a research idea. Write it up and bring copies to share. Your job is to read the assigned papers carefully, be prepared to discuss them and come up with lots of theoretical, experimental or applied ideas. On the last day of classes, students will present their final research proposals.

Assignments

Each week, read the assigned papers and while reading, write down questions about papers to ask and discuss in class! We’ll talk about theories, evidence, statistics, quality of the design and the implications. When reacting to papers, make connections, express doubts and build on ideas. Your goal is to design a polished research project by the end of the course. Each week, students will present idea papers and lead discussions about papers.

Turn in your idea paper each week (except the first and the last), on Canvas before 5 pm on Thursday. State a testable hypothesis. Define terms and state claims so that, if tested, they could be right or wrong. Then develop a study to test your hypothesis (hypotheses) and say how you would analyze the data. What should you find if your hypothesis is supported? What is a likely alternative result? What are the wider implications of your “data”?

On the last day of class, turn in a research paper that is a proposal for a study (maximum 8 pages). Students will present their work to the class. The proposal should builds on one or more of your weekly ideas or it could be completely new. It should contain a brief literature review on important and relevant research following by the reasoning behind your hypothesis (hypotheses). Write a brief method section that explains what you would do, and a results section about how you would analyze data, what results would be consistent with your hypothesis and some other possible results. Then describe the inferences you would make and answer the “who cares” question!
Your Grade

30% Weekly Ideas and Discussion
20% Brief Presentations of Articles and Class Participation
45% Research Proposal
5% Presentation

Course Schedule

1. Sept 3rd, Background, History and Distinctions


Recommended Reading


2. Sept 10th Loss Aversion, Framing and Mental Accounting


Recommended Readings:


3. Sept 17th Constructed Choices and Contextual Effects


Recommended Reading


4. Sept 24th Beliefs, Confidence and Optimism


Recommended Reading


5. Oct 1st Emotions and Decisions


Recommended Readings:


6. Oct 8th Improving Decisions


Recommended Reading:
