



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Research seminar on the sociology of decision making - 53804

Last update 25-01-2024

HU Credits: 4

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: Sociology and Anthropology

Academic year: 0

Semester: Yearly

Teaching Languages: English

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Adam Hayes

Coordinator Email: adam.hayes@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: TBD

Teaching Staff:

Dr. adam sadler hayes

Course/Module description:

People make terrible mistakes all the time. We marry the wrong person, governments take misguided military action, corporations spend vast resources on inferior or unwanted products, we go too deep into debt to consume goods and services, we mis-judge risks, we mis-calculate probabilities—and we often pay for it dearly. Human welfare has greatly suffered through poor decisions; and differences in general aptitude for judgment and decision-making can stratify societies and lead to economic and social inequalities.

Judgment is defined as the ability to make evaluations, determine relationships, and draw conclusions about the world. Throughout life, humans need to be able to make decisions with sound judgment about a range of topics in order to operate as a social being. Decision making is the process by which someone will choose between multiple alternatives. These two things tie in together: often, bad judgment can lead to bad decisions, which can lead to poor outcomes.

Being able to make good judgments and decisions has been an increasing focus in the fields of psychology and economics. Over the past decades, scholars in the field of judgment and decision making (JDM) have amassed a trove of findings, theories, and prescriptions regarding the processes ordinary people enact when making choices.

This body of knowledge, however, has had little influence on sociology—and sociology has had little impact on JDM scholarship as well. Sociological research on choice emphasizes how features of the social environment shape individual outcomes, but typically not people's underlying choices or decision processes that may lead to those outcomes.

Course/Module aims:

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Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

To be able to understand how society influences individual decisions and behavior.

To find links between psychology and sociology.

Attendance requirements(%):

10

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: In-person

Course/Module Content:

Week 1: Introduction

Week 2: What is JDM? And its Psychological Roots

Week 3: The Subconscious

Week 4: Dual-Process Models

Week 5: Economic Rationality and the Behavioralist Turn

Week 6: Bridging Psychology & Sociology

Week 7: The Sociology of the Mind & Perception

Week 8: The Social Gates of Consciousness & Meaning

Week 9: Categories and Schemas

Week 10: Culture & Cognition

Week 11: Dispositions, Field + Habitus

Week 12: Consumer Choice

Week 13: Relational Considerations

Week 14: The Technological Mediation of Choice

Required Reading:

Weekly readings will be made available online as .pdf files on the course website (see Moodle).

Additional Reading Material:

Additional reading materials will be made available online as .pdf files on the course website (see Moodle).

Grading Scheme:

*Written / Oral / Practical Exam 10 %
Essay / Project / Final Assignment / Home Exam / Referat 40 %
Presentation / Poster Presentation / Lecture/ Seminar / Pro-seminar / Research proposal 50 %*

Additional information: