Foster
School of Business

MGMT 579: Mindful Decision Making
Spring Quarter, 2020

Professor

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Class meets all Wednesday evenings in April, 6pm-7:40pm, at the following Zoom link:
https://washington.zoom.us/j/108005364

Course Overview

This course is designed to provide you with a better understanding about how you and other people think, feel, decide, and behave. One main objective is to increase awareness of the psychological processes that underlie the choices that people make, as well as systematic biases and heuristics that people have when making decisions. A second main objective is to give you a space to reflect on who you are and who you want and do not want to be, as well as provide tools for how to mindfully create a life that aligns with your goals. A third main objective is to better understand how to interact with oneself and other people in ways that are mindful and responsible. A last main objective is to appreciate the role of emotions and moods in how people decide and behave. All of these topics will be presented based on scientific research, including related interventions which can help people become more effective. In the process, we will discuss mindfulness from a variety of angles: as a psychological state and trait, as a long term training and "on-the-spot" intervention, as a philosophical and cultural concept that changed as it was brought to the West and secularized, and topic of scholarly and popular debate.

Course Objectives
- Identify decision-making biases and heuristics
- Ponder the role that identity and emotions play in decisions and behavior
- Consider the big picture goals we have including happiness and meaning
- Understand what mindfulness is and different ways it can be thought of and applied
- Deepen understanding of human psychology related to managerial decisions and stress

Course Schedule and Preparation

This schedule is tentative. Because the amount of time required to cover each topic tends to vary, topics may be changed or omitted depending on our progress throughout the quarter. For each topic, I will typically use multiple means to convey the material. Preparation for each class topic will usually involve reading an article or two written for practitioners but generally grounded in the research literature

I will reserve some time during each class to discuss the readings. I have erred on the side of popular press articles over scientific articles for the required readings. To find scientific articles on these topics, please see the bibliography at the end of this syllabus which contains optional readings, search scholar.google.com, or email me (ahaf@uw.edu).

Because this course will be **hybridized**, some of the class content that would normally happen with us all together in an in-person course, particularly me lecturing or showing videos, will be replaced by videos that you can watch at your convenience. **You can find those videos on the Syllabus part of the Canvas website**, and they are also required.

Date	Topic	Required Readings
1 April (Wed)	*Session 1* Course introduction: Syllabus Mindfulness and Stress	Pickert, K. (2014). The Mindful Revolution. *Time.* https://time.com/1556/the-mindful-revolution/ Purser, R., & Loy, D. (2013). Beyond McMindfulness. *The Huffington Post.* https://www.huffpost.com/entry/beyond-mcmindfulness_b_3519289 Hafenbrack, A. (2017). Mindfulness Meditation as an On-The-Spot Workplace Intervention. *INSEAD Knowledge.* https://knowledge.insead.edu/leadership-organisations/mindfulness-meditation-as-an-on-the-spot-workplace-intervention-5636
8 April (Wed)	*Session 2* Identity Motivational Biases and Heuristics	Wilson, T.D. (2011). Redirect, Ch. 1 (pp. 3-21) Stone, D., Heen, S., & Patton, B. (2010). Difficult conversations: How to discuss what matters most. Penguin. Ch. 6 (pp. 111-128) Van Zant, A. B., & Moore, D. A. (2013). Avoiding the Pitfalls of Overconfidence while Benefiting

Date	Topic	Required Readings
		from the Advantages of Confidence. *California Management Review, 55*(2), 5-23.
15 April (Wed) ASSIGN-MENT 1 DUE	*Session 3* Cognitive Biases and Heuristics Happiness and Meaning	Kahneman, D. (2011). Thinking, fast and slow. Macmillan. Part 2. Esfahani Smith, E. (2013). There is more to life than being happy. *The Atlantic.* https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2013/01/theres-more-to-life-than-being-happy/266805/
22 April (Wed) ASSIGN-MENT 2 DUE	*Session 4* Generosity and Trust Understanding and Using Emotion	Grant, A. (2013). Give and take: A revolutionary approach to success. Hachette UK. Chapters 1 & 7, pp. 1-26, 186-215. Lerner, J. S., Small, D. A., & Loewenstein, G. (2004). Heart strings and purse strings: Carryover effects of emotions on economic decisions. *Psychological Science, 15*(5), 337-341.
29 April (Wed)	*Session 5* Negative Feedback and Group Dynamics Self-Control and Decision Support Systems Course Summary	Heen, S., & Stone, D. (2014) How to find the coaching in criticism. *Harvard Business Review.* https://hbr.org/2014/01/find-the-coaching-in-criticism Friedman, T. (2013). How to get a job at Google. *New York Times.* https://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/23/opinion/sunday/friedman-how-to-get-a-job-at-google.html Eyal (2016, November). Have we been thinking about willpower the wrong way for 30 years? *Harvard Business Review.* https://hbr.org/2016/11/have-we-been-thinking-about-willpower-the-wrong-way-for-30-years Gawande, A. (1998, March 30). "No mistake: Should doctors start acting more like machines?" The New Yorker, 74-81.
ASSIGNMENT 3 will be due at 11:59pm on Sunday May 3rd.		

Date	Topic	Required Readings
There will be an open book take home individual 2-hour exam, probably administered between Sunday May 3rd 12pm and Wednesday May 6th 11:59pm.		

Expectations and Course Plan

I run a highly participative course, with many discussions and exercises. We each have jobs to do. It is my responsibility to choose topics that will hopefully be important for your life and to guide our journey together in ways that are interesting and effective. It is your responsibility to come to class prepared and motivated to learn. Since this is the first time most of us have conducted a full course online, we may need to give each other the benefit of the doubt at times. Please let me know if some way that I am conducting the course is not working for you and how it could be improved.

Grading

Here are the components that will comprise your grade for the course:

Final exam (25%): There will be a final examination covering all of the class topics. It will be open book and open notes, but you will be bound by the UW Foster Honor Code to work alone on it. You will only have two hours to complete the exam after you open it. It will be administered on Canvas in the "Quizzes" function.

Assignment 1 (20%): Write an individual profile of approximately 1500 words. Use realistic imagination and project yourself 10 years into the future three different ways. Describe what you are doing with your life and how you got there after graduation. In other words, your task is to write three significantly different possible futures for yourself (in separate sections). Submit this on Canvas on the day of <u>Class 3</u>. Confidential, mostly pass or fail grade (unless you did not take it seriously). This is an individual assignment.

Assignment 2 (20%): First, write a personal journal entry (private, not to turn in) on what you think your three biggest strengths are and three biggest weaknesses are. Second, ask five people who know you well and whose opinions you value to give you general feedback. Ask them for 2-3 things that they appreciate about you (or think are your biggest strengths) and 2-3 things that they think you could improve on. Write a 1-2 page description of this experience including who the five people were and at a big picture-level what you learned from the exercise, possibly including if anything surprised you, if you heard similar or different things from multiple people, or how much overlap there was between your own self-evaluation and others' feedback. Please, of course, omit any details that you do not feel comfortable sharing. Submit this on Canvas on the day of <u>Class 4</u>. Confidential, mostly pass or fail grade (unless it seems like you did not take it seriously). This is an individual assignment.

Assignment 3 (20%): Find a news article, short video clip (<5 minutes), advertisement, or other form of media that gives a real-life example of that a concept that we covered in class. But it should not be too obvious (for example, don't find an article that is explicitly on one of the course topics and submit it as the example of a course topic, don't google the course topic and then write about one of the examples that show up). The challenge here is primarily about internalizing the course topics and noticing them out in the world, finding the best/cleverest/most interesting example you can out of all possible options. Write a 1-2 page single spaced report in which you identify, explain, and define concept, then describe the example you chose, then explain specifically why the example is a good example of the concept. Among accurate examples, more points for concepts other people have not used, examples that are very different from those discussed in class, and well-written reports. Submit the report with a screenshot/PDF of or link to the media on Canvas within four days of the last class meeting (by 11:59pm on Sunday, May 3rd). This is an individual assignment.

Participation and attendance (15%): You will be responsible for reading the course content assigned before each class and actively participating in exercises and class discussions. The required readings will not be tested in class (i.e., no pop quizzes) but some will be discussed in class and most of them will be tested on the final exam. Attendance to all sessions is expected and each missed class session will translate to lost participation points unless you make it up (see below). One's grade is largely determined by the quantity and quality of contributions to class discussions. Making up a class: If you cannot make it to a class meeting, please watch the recording of the class meeting you missed, do the related exercises if there were any, write a paragraph or two on what you thought about the class and what you would have said in the class discussions, and email that to me (ahaf@uw.edu) within four days of the last class meeting (by 11:59pm on Sunday, May 3rd).

Student Professionalism in Class

Each student is expected to be on time to and prepared for each class meeting as well as fully engaged in class content throughout the class meeting. Please refrain from engaging in any activities that might distract you or your classmates (especially if your microphone is not muted).

The Honor Code

I employ the principles and procedures espoused by the Foster School of Business MBA Honor System to maintain academic integrity in the course. The Honor Code of the Foster School expressly prohibits cheating, attempted cheating, plagiarism, and lying to administration or faculty as it pertains to academic work. Suspected violations of the Honor Code will be handled by referral of the matter to the Foster MBA Honor Council.

I expect that you will complete all deliverables required in the course in accordance with the principles of the Honor Code and submit them by the due dates assigned. If you have any uncertainty about how the Honor Code applies to a specific deliverable in the course, please ask before taking action; when it is not possible to ask before acting, please err on the side of conservatism.

Access and Accommodations

Your experience in this class is important to me. If you have already established accommodations with Disability Resources for Students (DRS), please communicate your approved accommodations to me, preferably by email, at your earliest convenience so we can discuss your needs in this course.

If you have not yet established services through DRS, but have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations (conditions include but not limited to; mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts), you are welcome to contact DRS at 206-543-8924 or uwdrs@uw.edu or disability.uw.edu. DRS offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and/or temporary health conditions. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, your instructor(s) and DRS. It is the policy and practice of the University of Washington to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law.

Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW's policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at Religious Accommodations Policy. Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the Religious Accommodations Request form.

BIBLIOGRAPHY
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> Ibarra, H. (1999). Provisional selves. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 44*(4), 764-791.
> Pennebaker, J. W. (1997). Writing about emotional experiences as a therapeutic process. *Psychological Science, 8*(3), 162-166.
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This syllabus is subject to change.