

Psychology 2553r Decision Making and Negotiation: Research Seminar

Psychology 2553r is a laboratory course providing the opportunity to work on projects investigating behavioral aspects of decision making and negotiation. Students participate in all aspects of the research process, from the design and execution of experiments to the analysis of data. Each student works closely with a graduate student mentor who supervises the student's daily activities. There are no regular classroom meetings, and collective lab meetings are arranged on an ad hoc basis.

Becoming Involved With Our Laboratory

- Students are admitted to Psychology 2553r by permission of Professor Bazerman. Students who wish to gain permission to enroll should send an email to Professor Bazerman (mbazerman@hbs.edu) and Ranjan Ahuja (rahuja@hbs.edu).
- Students may enroll in 2553r more than once.

Practical Aspects of the Course

Students are expected to spend an average of 10 hours per week on the course. This includes time spent doing research in the laboratory or the field, doing readings, and helping to develop research projects and programs. Students are expected to keep in close contact with their graduate mentors who are responsible for supervising the student's work and evaluating the student's progress. Graduate mentors will arrange for a regular meeting with each student to discuss research progress and relevant readings, and will provide timely feedback to students about their performance.

Students who work in this lab must also take the Harvard/NIH on-line course on the protection of human research participants. The course is brief; less than 60 minutes of time is required. It can be found on line at <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/%7Eresearch/hstrain.html>

Graduate students currently working with Professor Bazerman

Below is a list of the graduate students currently working with Professor Bazerman and a description of their research interests.

Modupe Akinola



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My research focuses on the effects of stress on emotional and cognitive functioning in managerial and organizational life, biases in decision making, and stigma and its psychological and physiological consequences. Specifically in the domain of judgment and decision making, I explore decision making processes under managerially-relevant contexts characterized by stress, deadlines, and multi-tasking. In addition, I study how decision making processes and practices affect diversity in hiring. I primarily use lab experiments and surveys to study these areas.

For more information on my research please visit my website:
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John Beshears



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My current research focuses on how people make decisions across time. For example, I am collaborating with Katy Milkman and Professor Bazerman on a project that examines the extent to which stock analysts update their stock evaluations as additional information becomes available. As a research assistant, you will be involved in study design, the statistical analysis of large datasets, and occasionally the construction of online surveys.

Eugene Caruso



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I am broadly interested in how people form judgments and make decisions under uncertainty. Several of the projects I am currently working on explore how people try to understand other people, and the consequences of taking another's perspective in social interaction. For instance, one project explores the tendency for people to claim more credit for group tasks than they should, and shows how one popular method (perspective taking) for fixing this problem can have unfortunate consequences on behavior. A related project explores the type of information people rely on when making judgments about the self compared to judgments about others, and the biases that result from reliance on such heuristics. I am also looking at the role of mood – particularly an awareness of one's mood – on the choices and decisions that people make for entertainment and consumer products. Finally, I am looking into factors in our environment that we might be unaware of can actually affect the way we behave. For instance, I am looking into the effects of advertising (such as online banner ads) on purchase intent and purchase behavior, as well as the effects of gender stereotypes on behavior.

Heather Caruso



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I am interested in understanding the ways in which diverse people negotiate, change, and utilize their identities in social interactions with one another. I focus in particular on identity expression, perception, and negotiation and the critical roles they play in the experience and success of collaborative learning, creativity, and decision making. My current projects include: studies on identity-based territoriality in collaboration, on how people get to know “who's who” in diverse team interaction, on the consequences of individuals' affirmative action beliefs for their teams, and on the underpinnings of endorsement for statistical discrimination.

Luke Coffman



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I am beginning research on the adverse effects of incentives, control and contracting. I am interested in what drives these phenomena, whether it is the dynamic of the principal-agent relationship or perhaps something inherent in incentives or contracting themselves. I am also running a field experiment with an online school to explore the hidden dangers of introducing financial incentives into education.

I am also working on “The Transparency of Corporate Unethical Behavior” that you can find on Max's website.

Fiona Greig



PhD student in Public Policy, Kennedy School of Government, CID
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My research explores behavioral aspects of trust and negotiation. I am particularly interested in gender differences in behavior. Currently I am conducting research on the causes and consequences of gender differences in propensity to negotiate both in the laboratory and in the field.

Karim Kassam



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My research examines the role of emotions and uncertainty in judgment and buy/sell decisions. Which emotions play a role in purchase decisions, and how do they affect buyers and sellers differently? How do we decide what to pay for an item whose value is uncertain? As a research assistant, you will be involved in designing experiments and collecting, analyzing and interpreting data.

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Jolie Martin



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I'm interested in the way that presentation and type of available information (particularly online) influence individual decision making. Specifically, my research examines the influence of ratings and recommendations on consumption choices. In many settings, decision makers must consider the full distribution of opinions (in addition to the average opinion) in order to assess their options. Both real world evidence and laboratory studies suggest that individuals prefer options that have received higher variance ratings – controlling for average rating – in some product domains but not others. In additional projects, I explore the way that formatting of information about choice options affects the weight that is placed on different attributes, and attempt to computationally model the heuristic biases used by consumers in search and decision making.

Mary Carol Mazza



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On a basic level, I am interested in cognitive biases that occur in judgment and decision making and the role affect plays in moderating human behavior. My purposes are twofold: to understand the underlying mechanisms driving behavior and to translate these findings to public policy, negotiations, and marketing in an effort to impact our world through scientific research. Recent questions of interest include: Is 2nd best always 2nd best? Does legal training affect voting behavior in the U.S. Congress? How does one's current affective state influence how much one value items in one's possession? Do people overpay for services they dislike doing themselves due to an attribution error? I am fortunate to be able to explore questions like these in the psychology department and at Harvard Business School with Max Bazerman, Dan Gilbert, Mike Norton, and Sendhil Mullainathan.

Katy Milkman



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Todd Rogers and I are currently working on a number of projects exploring the dynamics of consumer preferences, such as how they change over time and how they are affected by events (e.g., the receipt of a coupon, the performance of a local sports team, etc.). We are using data from an online DVD rental company and an online grocery company to test hypotheses that have been posed in the psychology and behavioral economics literatures. John Beshears and I are also working on a project in the realm of behavioral finance. We are exploring whether sell side stock analysts suffer from common decision biases. As a research assistant, you will help me and my collaborators assemble datasets, conduct surveys, perform data analysis, and review the relevant academic literature.

Neeru Paharia



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I am interested in finding ways to encourage ecologically and socially sustainable consumption habits given the necessary psychological processes that happen via consumption. How can things like signaling one's social status or group identity happen without consuming goods that serve this purpose? Given that we know the identity, and emotional motivations behind consumption, how can we encourage people to engage in less ecologically and socially damaging practices?

**Todd
Rogers**



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I research the psychology of policy decision-making and behavior. This translates into two broad themes: political communications, and behavioral policy. To study these areas I try to use a broad range of methods including field experiments, lab experiments, surveys, and archival research.

For more information on my research please visit my website:

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**Ben
Shenoy**



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I currently have two streams of research:

- People who own something (e.g., a coffee mug) value it more than others who don't: this is called the endowment effect. We've conducted a series of studies investigating whether the nature of an object influences the size of the endowment effect. Our data to date suggest that "should" objects (e.g., a bowl of fruit salad) have a larger endowment effect than "want" objects (e.g., a slice of chocolate cake).
- How do people make judgments and choices in highly complex, uncertain environments? There a number of planning tools that have been recommended for coping with such environments, such as real options, scenario planning, and analogies. This line of work is investigating the (unintended) psychological consequences of using such planning tools.

For more details, please go to my website:

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Carmit Tadmor



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My research focuses mainly on acculturation and the effects of second-culture exposure on cognition. In particular, I am interested in how the different ways people can choose to adapt to a new culture can affect the way they process information and how that, in turn, relates to outcomes in various fields including intercultural negotiations, cross-cultural teams, and creativity.