Current Topics in Behavioral Science III Winter 2018

Course time: Mondays, 1:30pm - 4:30pm
Course location: Harper Center (Booth School of Business), Room 3SW
Course website: http://canvas.uchicago.edu

INSTRUCTORS
Emma Levine (Emma.Levine@chicagobooth.edu)
Ed O’Brien (eob@chicagobooth.edu)

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This is a graduate seminar for Ph.D. students interested in behavioral science. The course will be divided into two parts according to different content areas. Throughout, our goal is to stimulate future research, by you, on the course topics, and to help you understand how papers on these topics come to fruition. This is an action-oriented class geared towards familiarizing you with how to craft good ideas and write effective papers in the field. Each week, we also plan to discuss a paper of our own. We will share insights on how the paper came to be and discuss the review process.

The first part (taught by Emma) will consist of readings and discussions about the psychology of altruism, ethical decision-making, and trust. We will examine these topics from a range of perspectives (i.e., how economists, moral psychologists, and JDM researchers think about these topics) and we will discuss how common methodological tools have shaped the types of questions that scholars have investigated.

The second part (taught by Ed) will cover hot topics in social psychology. This includes the dark side of positivity, hedonic adaptation, work and play, and mind perception. Each week will include ideas for experiments within these topics that Ed is excited about and exciting ideas of your own.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class Participation: ~50% All students are expected to:
- Each and every week: Complete all of the assigned readings before class and be ready to discuss
- Each and every week: Submit a short (~one paragraph) thought paper about the readings
- Two weeks: Lead class discussion by synthesizing thought papers and generating discussion questions (each student will lead twice throughout the quarter: one Emma week and one Ed week).
  • The discussion leader should be prepared to briefly (~5 min) summarize the key findings in the article, describe the methodological approach, and pose (~4-6) discussion questions, based on their own and others’ thoughts.
You do not need to prepare visual materials (e.g., powerpoint slides). If you choose to, please use them only to showcase key results or to visually clarify your summary or discussion point. Don’t come with slides full of bullet-points.

**Research Proposal: ~50%** All students are expected to:
- Think of one original research ideas that is (at least somewhat) related to a topic covered in class. It can relate to either the topics covered by Emma in Weeks 1-4 or the topics covered by Ed in Weeks 5-8. This must include the design of an experiment that you’d actually want to run.
- Prepare a short presentation to get feedback from the class in Week 9.
- Write one short research paper, in the style of a Psychological Science Short Report, on your idea. The paper should describe the topic and the design of at least one experiment to test the hypotheses empirically. The paper will be due during week 9.

**COURSE POLICIES**
This Ph.D. seminar is intended to help you advance your own research interests. We will work together to further our understanding of how to conduct good research in psychology, how to raise interesting questions about what we read, how to present and explain that information to others, and how to develop an original research idea that adds to our knowledge of psychology.

Specifically, you are expected to:
1. **Attend class.** It’s hard to contribute and learn from others if you’re not in class.
2. **Do the reading.** This is not a lecture course. Discussion with your classmates is crucial for learning, so you will need to come to class prepared to discuss something with the rest of us. You will not be asked to memorize any terms, concepts, or formulas; rather, you should spend your time thinking of interesting questions or implications of the papers you read.
3. **Respect others’ time.** This includes getting to class on time and handing in your thought papers on time so that the discussion leaders can prepare for the in-class discussion each week.

All readings are available on Canvas. **Note that some of the readings will be working papers, some of which our colleagues have asked us not to distribute beyond the class. Please do not cite any working paper outside of class without checking with us first.**

**COURSE DEADLINES**

*Each and every Saturday by 5:00pm:* By 5:00 each Saturday, you should email your thought paper to Emma, Ed, and that week’s discussion leaders.

*Monday, March 12th, 11:59pm:* By the end of the day, you must email your final Research Proposal to Emma and Ed.
WEEK 1 (1/8/2018): ALTRUISM (Emma)

Required Readings:

Optional Readings:

WEEK 2 (1/15/2018): MLK DAY, NO CLASSES HELD

WEEK 3 (1/22/2018): TRUST (Emma)

Required Readings:
Optional Readings:


Required Readings:

Optional Readings:

**WEEK 5 (2/5/2018): COOPERATION AND FAIRNESS (Emma)**

Required Readings:


Optional Readings:

**WEEK 6 (2/12/2018): HEDONIC ADAPTATION (Ed)**

Required Readings:

Optional Readings:

**WEEK 7 (2/19/2018): DARK SIDE OF POSITIVITY (Ed)**

Required Readings:

Optional Readings:


Required Readings:

Optional Readings:

**WEEK 9 (3/5/2018): MIND PERCEPTION (Ed)**

Required Readings:

Optional Readings:

**WEEK 10 (3/12/2018): STUDENT PRESENTATIONS + PAPER DUE!**