

Bar-Ilan University.
Graduate School of Business Administration
70-790-01 "The Decision-Making Process".
MBA Program.
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Introduction

Managers devote substantial efforts to making appropriate organizational decisions. Many important theorists and practitioners consider decision-making to be the most critical, core managerial function. Today's manager therefore needs to recognize his obligation to study and significantly enhance his knowledge of the decision-making process, including related theory and approaches, methods and techniques, and also develop advanced personal decision skills.

Our course orientation to decision-making is anchored in a behavioral approach. This behavioral viewpoint may be compared to other mainstream approaches to decision-making: mathematics, statistics and economics, as well as different approaches to decision-making from normative, rationalist, prospective and descriptive perspectives.

This orientation strives expressly to integrate diverse levels of decision-making processes: the individual level, the group-level process, and the organizational-level of decision-making. Our course will incorporate a balanced focus on multiple behavioral paradigms of decision-making: the psychological aspects (cognitive, social and personality), sociological aspects (group and societal), as well as the political and organizational contexts of decision-making.

Course Goals

1. To impart advanced knowledge of relevant theoretical and practical aspects of the decision-making process, based upon cutting-edge theoretical and conceptual approaches, and current empirical research and practice.
2. To enhance personal awareness and insight into one's decision-making process.
3. To acquire diagnostic skills in analyzing decision-making processes and decision problem analysis.
4. To acquire methods and tools for facilitating and intervening to improve the making of decisions at the individual and group level.

Course Structure

The course will incorporate a variety of lectures, class simulations, personal exercises, and case analyses. The course aims at achieving the following objectives:

1. Awareness and knowledge of diverse theoretical approaches to analyze decision-making.
2. Acquiring knowledge and understanding of important and relevant empirical studies of decision-making at the various levels (individual, group, organization).
3. Acquiring a working knowledge of appropriate methods and tools for in-depth analysis and evaluation of decision cases.
4. Enhancing practical skills in dealing with unique, non-programmed decision problems via creative and innovative thinking approaches.

5. Acquiring methods and techniques for diagnosing and expediting group-level decision processes.

The course is supported by an E-Learn Website. Many core and supplementary resource materials are available on this course website, including slides, articles and exercises as well as a variety of links. All registered students have automatic access to our E-Learn site.

Our instructional goal is to enhance your relating to the materials as stimulating, challenging, and relevant to your career plans - current and future. You are encouraged to personalize the information by introducing and sharing useful articles from any interesting source you locate (newspapers, journals, magazines, Internet). You may present and share your findings with the class via our Website forum.

Course Requirements:

- ◆ Participation in all lectures and classroom discussions.
- ◆ Preparation for class and reading of all assigned reading materials and chapters.
- ◆ Submission of a write-up of a personal decision case with an accompanying analysis (25%), or alternately, a class presentation of your case and analysis.
- ◆ Submitting all assigned exercises and case studies (25%). Some assignments will be completed individually, others will involve teamwork. While the review and discussion questions are typically application-oriented, the cases will require the application of your learning to complex business problems.
- ◆ A final integrative exam on all materials (50%).

Bibliography

Textbook:

Harrison, E. F. (1999). *The Managerial Decision-Making Process, 5th Ed.* Houghton-Mifflin.

Readings

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- Case studies – the course E-Learn WEBSITE.

Links to other related websites:

- BIU University Library – electronic journals and databases.
- Wall Street Journal.
- Fortune.
- Globes Israel Business Arena - <http://www.globes.co.il/>
- Business Week.

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