

## COURSE SYLLABUS

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### Course Information

Course Title: Managerial Decision Making  
Course Number: OB 6333-001  
Class Location: SOM 2.717  
Class Time: 4:00 – 6:45 PM, Fridays

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### Instructor Contact Information

Name: Zhiang “John” LIN  
Office Location: SOM 4.405  
Office Hours: Before and after class, or by appointment  
Phone: 972-883-2753  
Fax: 972-883-6029  
E-mail: [zlin@utdallas.edu](mailto:zlin@utdallas.edu)  
Homepage: <http://www.utdallas.edu/~zlin> (with lecture outlines and updates)

### Teaching Assistant Contact Information

Name: David H. Weng  
Office Location: SOM 4.102  
Office Phone: 972-883-6112  
Fax: 972-883-6029  
E-mail: [dweng@utdallas.edu](mailto:dweng@utdallas.edu)

The teaching assistant will mainly be responsible for: 1) copying reading articles, 2) helping proctor and grade the quiz, 3) tabulating and updating student records, and 4) distributing teaching evaluation forms.

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### Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

Pre-requisites: OB 6301 or permission of instructor

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### Course Description

This is a master level course intended to enrich students' knowledge of managerial decision making in organizations, which has been regarded as the core of an organization's operation and the foundation for any top-level executive.

Throughout this course, we will introduce different perspectives in the study of individual, group, and organizational decision making and investigate the pros and cons of various theories and approaches under these perspectives. We will consider the role of rationality/non-rationality in managerial decision making and examine how uncertainty and ambiguity may impact managerial perceptions of choices and risks.

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**Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes**

1. Introduce the concept and importance of managerial decision making
2. Discuss various decision making perspectives and techniques
3. Train analytical skills (verbal and written) for decision making under difficult situations

By the end of the course, students should have a solid understanding of the main development in the field of organizational decision making and be able to form an integrated and yet creative line of thinking in dealing with various managerial choices, some of which may be under crisis situations.

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**Required Textbooks and Materials**Required Textbooks:**Book 1.**

Title: The Managerial Decision-Making Process (5<sup>th</sup> Ed.).  
Author: E. Frank Harrison.  
Publisher: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999.  
ISBN: 0-395-90821-3.

**Book 2.**

Title: Harvard Business Review on Decision Making.  
Authors: Various.  
Publisher: Harvard Business School Press, 2001.  
ISBN: 1-57851-557-2.

Note: Although the first textbook may appear to have an older publishing date, it is nonetheless the most comprehensive and authoritative one available to us, with many insights still relevant to today's corporate world.

Additional Materials:**ADM.**

The instructor will also make available some additional articles from various other sources for discussion assignments.

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**Grading Policies**

This course requires thoughtful readings, active discussions, and intelligent research work. The instructor's main role will be to facilitate the implementations of these activities and provide constant guidance along each step of the way. The final letter grade (A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, and F) will be based on the following three components, each of which will be in the form of an expanded letter grade like that of the undergraduate system (A+/10, A/9, A-/8, B+/7, B/6, B-/5,...).

1. Class Participation (15%)

All students are expected to come to class being prepared for and actively involved in discussing the assigned readings listed in the schedule part of the syllabus. The class participation credit will be awarded

based on a student's participation and attendance throughout the whole semester, including the first class.

## 2. Discussion Leading (30%)

Each student will be required to lead **two** class discussions in front of the whole class (15% each). For each such assignment, the discussion leader will submit to the instructor a two-page review (double spaced) of the assigned reading at the time of the discussion. The designation of discussion leaders will be conducted during the first class, with the students' input.

Generally, the two-page review should focus on a) how the assigned reading relates to the decision making theories and concepts; b) how the decision making theories and concepts can be applied with real world examples or personal experiences; and c) how the assigned reading may be critiqued or extended.

The discussion leader should also prepare a few slides to assist the discussions. The quality of the discussion leading will be evaluated based on a) whether the student has demonstrated a sound understanding of the essence of the assigned reading; b) whether the student has actively engaged the class for discussions; c) whether the student has formulated appropriate critiques of the readings and defended his/her position in discussion with other class members; and d) whether the student has managed the allocated time effectively (usually about 30 minutes).

## 3. Individual Case Analysis (25%)

In the course of the semester, each student will conduct one in-depth case analysis while *applying managerial decision making concepts and theories* learned from the course. Students can choose a raw case of own choice. There is no fixed format for the case analysis but it generally should contain the following components:

- Introduction to the analysis;
- Choices faced by the organization;
- Decisions made by the organization, with corresponding theoretical interpretations;
- Consequences resulted from the decisions;
- Alternative decision suggested by this analysis, with corresponding theoretical backings; and
- Conclusion.

The deadline for submission is 4:00 PM on **4/23/2009**, at the instructor's office. The length should be about 5 double-spaced pages. At the time of submission, students should also attach the raw case, or the background information of a raw case if no available published source is used, that is being relied on for the case analysis. No late or electronic submissions please.

## 3. Quiz (30%)

At the end of the semester, there will be a quiz to test the students' understanding and application of main theories and concepts learned from Book 1 (Chapters 1 to 11). The quiz will contain 45 multiple choice questions and take 90 minutes. Students will be allowed to bring notes on two regular size pages, with double sides permitted. Due to fairness and confidentiality issues, no make up quiz will be offered.

The final grade will be based on the weighted combination of the above three requirements.

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## Course & Instructor Policies

### 1. Final Grade Checking

After the quiz, there will be a designated office hour for final grade checking in the instructor's office (see the schedule part for time and location). If a student cannot make this office hour, he/she can bring a self addressed and stamped envelope to class on the date of the quiz, or simply wait for the university to mail the final grade. No additional office hours will be held.

*In compliance with the university's policy on confidentiality, no grade information will be transmitted via phone or e-mail.*

### 2. Class Policies

Throughout the semester, each student is expected to follow the university's guideline on student conduct with regard to cheating and other dishonorable behaviors. Severe consequences can occur if such rules are not followed.

A student is responsible for reading the syllabus and following its requirements, as well as potential consequences that may result from missed classes, either portions or whole.

There will be *no make-up quiz* or lectures.

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## Assignments & Academic Calendar

#	Date	Main Topics	Assigned Readings	Discussion Leaders
1	1/15	Course Description	- Syllabus - Designation of Discussion Leaders	- S0
2	1/22	Overview of Decision Making	- Book 1: Chapter 1 - ADM: Introduction to Managerial Decision Making (Bazerman)	- S0 - S
3	1/29	Process of Decision Making	- Book1: Chapter 2 - Book 2: The Effective Decision	- S0 - S
4	2/5	Rational Decision Making	- Book 1: Chapter 3 - Book 2: Humble Decision Making - ADM: Biological Factors Influencing Decisions (Williams)	- S0 - S - S

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5	2/12	- Values for Decision Making	- Book 1: Chapter 4 - Book 2: Interpersonal Barriers to Decision Making - ADM: Fairness in decision Making (Bazerman)	- S0 - S - S
6	2/19	- Eclectic Approaches to Decision Making	- Book 1: Chapter 5 - Book 2: Even Swaps: A Rational Method for Making Trade-Offs - ADM: Descriptive Models in Decision Making (Plous)	- S0 - S - S
7	2/26	- The Psychology of Decision Making	- Book 1: Chapter 6 - Book 2: The Hidden Traps in Decision Making - ADM: Judgment Biases Influencing Decisions (Williams)	- S0 - S - S
8	3/5	- The Sociology of Decision Making	- Book 1: Chapter 7 - ADM: Social Influences (Plous) - Book 1: Chapter 15 -- The Walt Disney Company	- S0 - S - S
9	3/12	- The Social Psychology of Decision Making	- Book 1: Chapter 8 - Book 2: When to Trust Your Gut - ADM: The Nature of Sensemaking (Weick)	- S0 - S - S
3/19 - Spring Break; No Class				
10	3/26	- Political Aspects of Decision Making	- Book 1: Chapter 9 - ADM: Interpersonal, Organizational, and Group Decisions (Beach & Connolly) - Book 1: Chapter 13 -- The Chrysler Bailout Decision	- S0 - S - S
11	4/2	- Strategic Decision Perspectives	- Book 1: Chapter 10 - Book 2: Can You Analyze This Problem - Book 2: How to Analyze That Problem	- S0 - S - S
12	4/9	- Strategic Decision Success	- Book 1: Chapter 11 - ADM: Thinking Critically: How We Know What We Know (Williams) - Book 1: Chapter 12 -- The Cuban Missile Crisis	- S0 - S - S

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13	4/16	- Semester End Review	- Course Review	- S0
			- Sample Quiz	- S0

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14	4/23	- Self Study; No Formal Class	- <b>Individual Case Analysis Due</b> by 4 PM at the Instructor's Office	
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15	4/30	- <b>Quiz</b> (90 Minutes)		
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	5/3	- Final Grade Checking	- From noon to 2 PM at the instructor's office	
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## VARIOUS UNIVERSITY POLICIES

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### Field Trip Policies, Off-campus Instruction and Course Activities

*Off-campus, out-of-state, and foreign instruction and activities are subject to state law and University policies and procedures regarding travel and risk-related activities. Information regarding these rules and regulations may be found at the website address [http://www.utdallas.edu/BusinessAffairs/Travel\\_Risk\\_Activities.htm](http://www.utdallas.edu/BusinessAffairs/Travel_Risk_Activities.htm). Additional information is available from the office of the school dean. Below is a description of any travel and/or risk-related activity associated with this course.*

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### Student Conduct & Discipline

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD publication, *A to Z Guide*, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the *Rules and Regulations, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System, Part 1, Chapter VI, Section 3*, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391).

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

### Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work or material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

### Email Use

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the

identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

### **Withdrawal from Class**

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

### **Student Grievance Procedures**

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

### **Incomplete Grade Policy**

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of **F**.

### **Disability Services**

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:  
The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22  
PO Box 830688  
Richardson, Texas 75083-0688  
(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)

Essentially, the law requires that colleges and universities make those reasonable adjustments necessary to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability. For example, it may be necessary to remove classroom prohibitions against tape recorders or animals (in the case of dog guides) for students who are blind. Occasionally an assignment

requirement may be substituted (for example, a research paper versus an oral presentation for a student who is hearing impaired). Classes enrolled students with mobility impairments may have to be rescheduled in accessible facilities. The college or university may need to provide special services such as registration, note-taking, or mobility assistance.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

### **Religious Holy Days**

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

***These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.***

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**DESIGNATION OF DISCUSSION LEADERS**  
(Finalized after the first class)

<u>Slot</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Note</u>
S0	John Lin	
S1		
S2		
S3		
S4		
S5		
S6		
S7		
S8		
S9		
S10		
S11		
S12		
S13		
S14		
S15		

