Welcome to Carleton! It is great to have you here, joining our community!

This course is an Argument and Inquiry (A & I) seminar, occupying a special place in the Carleton College curriculum. The on-line college catalog states that A& I seminars:

“...share a set of common goals and all are designed as small, discussion-based seminars. All introduce students to the ways in which scholars ask questions and construct arguments, and they teach students how to effectively and ethically find, use, and evaluate information. In these courses, students work to strengthen habits of critical thinking and cooperation with their peers while they engage in opportunities for critical reading, discussion, and college-level writing on a variety of topics. “ (Source: http://apps.carleton.edu/curricular/aiseminars/elements/ accessed July 25, 2011).

What does this mean for you? There are no exams! Your grade will be based on papers, attendance, and participation. That puts a premium on being in class having done the assigned reading carefully and thoughtfully and being ready to discuss it. You will do a lot of writing and a fair amount of reading in this course.

Our focus will be on decision making—how it works, when it works, what makes it better, etc. We’ll consider various styles of decision making, and you’ll get the chance to reflect on your own decision making. We’ll begin by considering the broader idea of thinking and what makes it good and not-so-good. We’ll also consider broader "styles" of thinking that might be guiding your assumptions about your learning and your capabilities. I hope you will find that the study of this topic helps you develop your own critical thinking skills, which are fundamental to a liberal arts education.

There are four books that will comprise the bulk of your reading for the course. Copies have been ordered for you to purchase at the bookstore.


There will also be some chapters or articles assigned that I’ve placed on e(lectronic) reserve at the library. These are indicated below with the symbol “(ER).” To access these, click on Gould Library from the main page of the Carleton web site, find the link for electronic reserves, find the link for this course, type in the password (CGSC), and download the article.

There will be four short papers due on dates indicated on the calendar. All together, these will account for 60% of your grade—although the exact weight of each paper will vary a little bit (earlier papers will count less). There will be a final essay, worth 20% and due during final period (no final exam—yay!). In addition, small teams of 2-3 students will be responsible for leading one class session toward the end of the term. This will be graded and will count 10% of the final grade. And, (consciously awake) attendance and (thoughtful, relevant) participation will also be counted 10%. In short: show up, be on time, be prepared by doing the readings, stay awake, and participate —don’t free associate or ‘wing it’—(it’s usually painfully obvious when you are doing this)!

We will have a writing assistant for our course, Emily Bauer, a senior Cognitive Science major. We’ll talk much more in class about what her is, and how she will be available to assist you in this course.

I assume each of you will have read and become familiar with the Carleton website “Academic Honesty”. A handbook is available at this url: http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/doc/honesty/complete/. We’ll talk about this topic in class as well—it’s really important that you understand that plagiarism goes beyond “copying.”

The Academic Standing Committee has recommended that the following statement be included in course syllabi:

“All assignments, quizzes, and exams must be done on your own. Note that academic dishonesty includes not only cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism, but also includes helping other students commit acts of academic dishonesty by allowing them to obtain copies of your work. You are allowed to use the Web for reference purposes, but you may not copy material from any website or any other source without proper citations. In short, all submitted work must be your own.”
Cases of academic dishonesty will be dealt with strictly. Each such case will be referred to the Academic Standing Committee via the Associate Dean of Students or the Associate Dean of the College. A formal finding of responsibility can result in disciplinary sanctions ranging from a censure and a warning to permanent dismissal in the case of repeated and serious offenses.

The academic penalty for a finding of responsibility can range from a grade of zero in the specific assignment to a F in this course.”

Please don't force me to bring an academic dishonesty case!

I'm excited about the seminar, and hope you will be, too. Office hours will be announced shortly, and I invite you to make use of them to discuss course material, or other topics of mutual interest.
Calendar

Note: We will almost certainly adjust this calendar as the course progresses—stay tuned!

**Week 1:**
Mon Sept 16   Introductions/Class Overview
              Due next class: 2-page description of how you chose Carleton

Wed Sept 18  Anatomy of a Decision (Yours)
              What is Good Thinking, and How Can We Tell?
              Read: Halpern, ch. 1 [ER]
              **DUE: Short narrative paper (1-3 pages)**

Fri Sept 20:  Reasoning and Critical Thinking
              Discussion: Halpern’s “Framework for Thinking”—What are its strengths and weaknesses

**Week 2:**
Mon Sept 23:  The Elements of Reasoning
              Read: Halpern, chs. 4 and 5 [ER]
              Lecture: Deductive and Inductive Reasoning

Wed Sept 25:  Other Models of Decision-Making: Blink
              Read: Gladwell, Introduction and chs. 1-2

Fri Sept 27:  Blink discussion, continued
              Read Gladwell, chs. 3-5

**Week 3:**
Mon Sept 30:  Blink discussion and models of mind
              Read: Gladwell, chs. 6, 7, and Afterward

Wed Oct 2     Prepare for Friday’s convo
              Read: Nussbaum  p. 1-77
              Group Paper assigned

Fri Oct 4     Planning for group papers—meeting time during class
              Read: Nussbaum, p. 79-143.
              [Kathie out of town]
              **Convo talk: Required attendance!**
**Week 4:**

**Mon Oct 7**  
Citations in College Papers (brief discussion)  
Read: *Academic Integrity in the Writing of Essays and Other Papers*  
available at: http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/doc/integrity/  
Writing day: Groups convene—bring working drafts to class

**Wed Oct 9**  
Studying Real-Life Decision Making (Lecture)  
Read: Galotti (2002, chs. 1-5; ER) Galotti (2007, ER)  
**DUE: Evaluation of convo paper**  
(approx 5 pages; GROUP paper)

**Fri Oct 11**  
Rationality and Intuition in Decision Making  
Read: Dawes [ER], Arkes [ER]

**Week 5:**

**Mon Oct 14**  
Individual Differences in Goal Setting: Mindsets  
Read: Dweck, chs. 1-4

**Wed Oct 16**  
Mindsets in Different Realms  
Read: Dweck, chs. 5-8  
**DUE: Revision of College Decision-Making Paper**  
(5 pages)

**Fri Oct 18**  
Catch up day  
Read: Catch up if you need to

**Week 6:**

**Mon Oct 21**  
MIDTERM BREAK  
Go ahead, take the day off!

**Wed Oct 23**  
Writing planning day: Meet to work on Group Papers

**Fri Oct 25**  
Another writing day/meetings with Kathie
**Week 7:**

Mon Oct 28  
Student-Led Discussion 1:  
*Thinking Fast and Slow: Two Systems*  
Read: Kahneman, Introduction and Chapters 1-3

Wed Oct 30  
Student-Led Discussion 2:  
*Thinking Fast and Slow: Two Systems*  
Read: Kahneman, Introduction and Chapters 4-9

Fri Nov 1  
Campus Resources: The Libe and the Write Place  
GROUP PAPER DUE: How Well do Gladwell and Dweck’s Ideas Cohere? (5 pages)

**Week 8:**

Mon Nov 4  
Student-Led Discussion 3:  
*Thinking Fast and Slow: Heuristics and Biases*  
Read: Kahneman, chs. 10-14

Wed Nov 6  
Student-Led Discussion 4:  
*Thinking Fast and Slow: Heuristics and Biases*  
Read: Kahneman, chs. 15-18

Fri Nov 8  
Student-Led Discussion 5:  
*Thinking Fast and Slow: Overconfidence*  
Read: Kahneman, chs. 19-24

**Week 9:**

Mon Nov 11  
Student-Led Discussion 6:  
*Thinking Fast and Slow: Choices*  
Read: Kahneman, chs. 25-34

Wed Nov 13  
Student-Led Discussion 7:  
*Thinking Fast and Slow: Two Selves*  
Read: Kahneman, chs. 35-38 and Conclusions

Fri Nov 15  
Dual Processing Theory: Exposition of the Theory  
Read: Evans & Stanovich [ER]
**Week 10:**

Mon Nov 18  Final Paper Assignment: Discussion and Clarifications

Wed Nov 20  Wrapping Up: Assessing What You've Learned

**Final papers due by the end of finals period, Monday Nov. 25**

**Course Bibliography (\* = primary text for course)**


