

University of Georgia
Office hours:
Course home page:

Andy Whitford (<http://andrewwhitford.com>)
Zoom, by appointment
<https://uga.view.usg.edu>

aw@uga.edu
412 Baldwin

PADP 8850 – Quantitative Methods for Public Decision Making
Spring 2021

Learning Objectives I will help you better understand key concepts in decision making. You will learn how decision-making methods help us overcome cognitive biases. You will use math to make decisions.

This course contributes to our MPA program's Competency 3: To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions.

“Students in the Master of Public Administration program at The University of Georgia will utilize various methods and analytical tools to analyze and interpret data to provide effective reasoning for decision-making and policy creation. Students will learn to effectively and concisely inform the public and other stakeholders of decisions and initiatives through the presentation of data and research findings. Furthermore, they will produce policy papers involving the synthesis of information, evaluation, and analysis of critical questions or problems currently facing the field of public administration and policy.”

There is one primary learning objective for this course:

- “Students will use various methods and analytical tools to analyze and interpret data to provide effective reasoning for decision making and policy creation.”
- “Students will produce policy papers involving the synthesis of information, evaluation, and analysis of critical questions or problems currently facing the field of public administration and policy.”

Given that this is writing-intensive course, this course will not concentrate on the following learning objective that supports Competency 3 (although short homework assignments are required).

- “Students will concisely inform the public and other stakeholders of decisions and initiatives through the presentation of data and research findings.”

Teaching Approach I will help you identify the key concepts discussed in the material. Students often learn best in small study groups, so you will also work in groups.

This is a writing-intensive course, but I will also require problem sets. I will distribute details online.

- You will complete problem sets. You will also peer review other students' problem sets. See below for more information.
- You will complete an applications portfolio. Full details will be provided online
- You will attend a meeting of a county, city, town, state, nonprofit, or other policy-setting body. You will write a summary that includes details of the meeting along with your observations. Include a copy of the agenda. You may not attend a meeting held at UGA. Virtual attendance is acceptable.
- You will interview a public official about their work. You may not interview a UGA official.

Problem Sets (PS)

- The sets are due at the beginning of class; late problem sets are accepted only by prior arrangement.
- You are encouraged to work together on problem sets but you will turn in your own work.
- The sets will be graded on correct answers and methods, so hand in all your work with each set, including your calculations and explanations of your reasoning.
- Work out problems on lined paper in pencil. You must submit your answers to problem sets via ELC.
- Your homework must include an affidavit that another student in the class peer-edited it.
- Problem sets will be available electronically via ELC.

Text and Materials:

- Required:
 - Goodwin and Wright. 2014. Decision Analysis for Management Judgment. 5th Edition. Wiley. ISBN: 9781118740736. **(G)**
 - Medina. 2014. Brain Rules. Updated and Expanded Edition. Pear Press. ISBN: 9780983263371. **(M)**
- I will distribute other readings online at the course home page.

Evaluation

45% Problem Sets
 45% Applications Portfolio and Presentation
 10% Summaries of local policy meeting and email interview

An A will be given to anyone with 93 or more points, an A- to those with 90-92 points, a B+ to those with 87-89 points, a B to those with 83-86 points, a B- to those with 80-82 points, a C+ to those with 77-79 points, a C to those with 73-76 points, a C- to those with 70-72 points, a D to those with 60 to 69 points, and an F to anyone receiving fewer than 60 points in the course.

Instructor Availability If you would like to speak with me outside of class, feel free to email me to arrange a meeting. Occasionally I have meetings during the day and may be unavailable. To ensure that I am available on a given day, email me at least 24 hours in advance to set a specific time to meet.

Class Attendance/Participation Students are expected to participate through asking questions and answering inquiries raised in class. Keep in mind that it is difficult to participate without being physically present. This term I will teach this course assuming in-person attendance. I will not provide hybrid or remote instruction facilities or material.

To adequately prepare for class, all assigned readings should be completed by the dates indicated on the course schedule. Not all assigned readings may be discussed in class; nonetheless you are responsible for familiarizing yourself with them.

Prohibition on Recording Lectures In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Disability Resource Center, students may not make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course. Students who have a recording accommodation agree in writing that they:

- Will use the records only for personal academic use during the specific course. Understand that faculty members have copyright interest in their class lectures and that they agree not to infringe on this right in any way.
- Understand that the faculty member and students in the class have privacy rights and agree not to violate those rights by using recordings for any reason other than their own personal study.
- Will not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings. They also agree that they will not profit financially and will not allow others to benefit personally or financially from lecture recordings or other course materials.
- Will erase/delete all recordings at the end of the semester.
- Understand that violation of these terms may subject them to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject them to liability under copyright laws.

Special Needs and Academic Honesty Students with special needs that require accommodation should notify the Office for Disability Services and me as soon as possible so the appropriate arrangements can be made. All information as well as documentation is considered confidential. All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty.” Students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. The link to more detailed information about academic honesty can be found at: http://www.uga.edu/honesty/ahpd/culture_honesty.htm.

Religious Holidays Students who are absent from academic or social activities because of religious observances will not be penalized. If you desire to be excused from class to observe a religious holiday, notify me in advance. You are still responsible for any material covered during the excused absence but will be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up any work missed. If an event is scheduled during the class at which you are excused for a religious observance, you should make arrangements with me as soon as possible for an alternate time or be given a comparable assignment.

Miscellaneous No “extra credit” will be assigned in this course under any circumstances. Keep in mind that final grades may only be changed in the event of a clerical error (e.g., points summed incorrectly). Also, for privacy reasons, information pertaining to course grades cannot be discussed over the telephone or via email. A final grade of “Incomplete” will only be given in this course under extraordinary circumstances and is solely at the discretion of the instructor. The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary. Please silence devices while in class. Devices and laptops may only be used in-class with my permission. I accept late work after the due date only by prior arrangement. You must type any grade appeals and attach supplemental information as appropriate.

Mental Health and Wellness Resources:

- If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care

and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit <https://sco.uga.edu>. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.

- UGA has several resources for a student seeking mental health services (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) or crisis support (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>).
- If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) for a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center.
- Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.

Campus resources: There are many resources on campus that offer support during your time here at UGA. They are here for you, so please take advantage of them.

Academic support

- The Division of Academic Enhancement Academic Coaching:
 - <https://dae.uga.edu/services/academic-coaching/>
- The Presentation Collaboratory:
 - https://dae.uga.edu/services/presentation_collaboratory/
- Student Success Workshops:
 - <https://dae.uga.edu/services/student-success-workshops/>
- Tutoring through the Academic Resource Center:
 - <https://dae.uga.edu/services/tutoring/>
- Resources for academic success at UGA:
 - https://dae.uga.edu/resources/academic_success_resources/
- First Generation Student Resources:
 - https://dae.uga.edu/resources/first_generation_student_resources/
- International Student Resources:
 - <https://dae.uga.edu/resources/international-student-resources/>
- Intensive English Program
 - <https://dae.uga.edu/iep/intensive-english-program/>

Technology support

- If new to campus:
 - https://eits.uga.edu/support/new_to_campus/
- Mobile App Warehouse
 - <https://dae.uga.edu/resources/mobile-app-warehouse/>
- Enterprise Information Technology Services
 - <https://eits.uga.edu>
- EITS Support
 - <https://eits.uga.edu/support/>
- Site-licensed Software

- https://eits.uga.edu/hardware_and_software/
- Vlab
 - <https://eits.uga.edu/support/vlab/>
- Printing Kiosks
 - https://eits.uga.edu/support/printing_kiosks/
- Accessibility Group
 - http://www.amacusg.gatech.edu/wag/Main_Page

Personal support

- Graduate Student Financial Aid
 - <https://dae.uga.edu/iep/intensive-english-program/>
- Aid for Student Veterans and Military-Connected Students
 - https://osfa.uga.edu/types-of-aid/DoD_tuition_assistance/
- Student Veterans Resource Center
 - <https://svrc.uga.edu>
- Dean of Students
 - <https://dos.uga.edu>
- Counseling Center
 - <https://www.uhs.uga.edu/caps/welcome>
- Disability Resource Center
 - <https://drc.uga.edu/site>
- Financial Hardships Support Gateway
 - https://financialhardship.uga.edu/content_page/uga-resources-funding-and-employment
- Women's Resource Center
 - <https://women.uga.edu>
- LGBT Resource Center
 - <https://lgbtcenter.uga.edu>
- Student Care and Outreach
 - <https://sco.uga.edu>
- UGA Police
 - <https://www.police.uga.edu>
 - 911 or 706-542-2000

Coronavirus Information for Students

Face Coverings:

Effective July 15, 2020, the University of Georgia—along with all University System of Georgia (USG) institutions—requires all faculty, staff, students and visitors to wear an appropriate face covering while inside campus facilities/buildings where six feet social distancing may not always be possible. Face covering use is in addition to and is not a substitute for social distancing. Anyone not using a face covering when required will be asked to wear one or must leave the area. Reasonable

accommodations may be made for those who are unable to wear a face covering for documented health reasons. Students seeking an accommodation related to face coverings should contact Disability Services at <https://drc.uga.edu/>.

DawgCheck:

Please perform a quick symptom check each weekday on DawgCheck—on the UGA app or website—whether you feel sick or not. It will help health providers monitor the health situation on campus: <https://dawgcheck.uga.edu/>

What do I do if I have symptoms?

Students showing symptoms should self-isolate and schedule an appointment with the University Health Center by calling 706-542-1162 (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.). Please DO NOT walk-in. For emergencies and after-hours care, see <https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>.

What do I do if I am notified that I have been exposed?

Students who learn they have been directly exposed to COVID-19 but are not showing symptoms should self-quarantine for 14 days consistent with Department of Public Health (DPH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines. Please correspond with your instructor via email, with a cc: to Student Care & Outreach at sco@uga.edu, to coordinate continuing your coursework while self-quarantined. If you develop symptoms, you should contact the University Health Center to make an appointment to be tested. You should continue to monitor your symptoms daily on DawgCheck.

How do I get a test?

Students who are demonstrating symptoms of COVID-19 should call the University Health Center. UHC is offering testing by appointment for students; appointments may be booked by calling 706-542-1162.

UGA will also be recruiting asymptomatic students to participate in surveillance tests. Students living in residence halls, Greek housing and off-campus apartment complexes are encouraged to participate.

What do I do if I test positive?

Any student with a positive COVID-19 test is required to report the test in DawgCheck and should self-isolate immediately. Students should not attend classes in-person until the isolation period is completed. Once you report the positive test through DawgCheck, UGA Student Care and Outreach will follow up with you.

Schedule of Topics:

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>PS DUE</u>
1 (1.25)	Introduction and Course Overview			
2 (2.1)	Overview of Decision Theory	1	1	
3 (2.8)	Multiple Objectives	2-4	2	
4 (2.15)	Uncertainty	5-6	3	
5 (2.22)	Decision Trees	7	4	1
6 (3.1)	Simulation	8	5	
7 (3.8)	Updating	9	6	2
8 (3.15)	Biases	10	7	
9 (3.22)	Eliciting, Risk	11-12	8	3
10 (3.29)	Groups	13	9	
11 (4.5)	Negotiation	14	10	4
12 (4.12)	Framing, Planning	15-17	11	
13 (4.19)	Alternatives and Conclusions	18	12	5
14 (4.26)	Portfolio Workshop			
15 (5.3)	Presentations. All deliverables due.			6