

SYLLABUS

1. Program details

1.1 Higher education institution	West University of Timișoara
1.2 Faculty / Department	Psychology and Educational Sciences
1.3 Department	Psychology
1.4 Field of study	Psychology
1.5 Cycle of studies	Bachelor
1.6 Study program / Qualification	Psychology-Cognitive Science

2. Discipline details

2.1 Discipline name	Decision Making and Behavioral Economics						
2.2 Tenured teacher - course activities	Lecturer Alin SEMENESCU, Ph.D.						
2.3 Tenured teacher – seminar / laboratory activities	Semenescu Alin, PhD						
2.4 Study year	II	2.5 Semester	I	2.6 Type of assessment	E	2.7 Discipline regime	DOP
2.5 Google Classroom code	2qflm56u						

3. Estimated total time (hours per semester) of teaching activities

3.1 Number of hours per semester	3	Of which: 3.2 course	2	3.3 seminar/laboratory	1
3.4 Total hours from the curriculum	42	Of which: 3.5 course	28	3.6 seminar/laboratory	14
Time fund distribution:					Hours
Study based on the textbook, course material, bibliography, and notes					20
Additional documentation in the library, on specialist electronic platforms / in the field					3
Preparing seminars/labs, homework, papers, portfolios, and essays					8
Tutoring					-
Examinations					2
Other activities					-
3.7 Total hours of individual study	33				
3.8 Total hours per semester	75				
3.9 Number of credits (ECTS)	3				

4. Prerequisites (where necessary)

4.1 for curriculum	• not necessary
4.2 for competencies	• not necessary

5. Conditions (where necessary)

5.1 For conducting the course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance of a minimum of 50% of the total number of courses. Technical means necessary: laptop, projector, whiteboard and internet connection All online communication will take place on Google Classroom <p>Note: for special situations (medical problems, employee status, etc.), according to the regulations and based on a specific approval, a decrease in attendance will be accepted, within the limits provided by the regulations in force in the WUT. Exempted students will need to complete extra assignments to reach the minimum attendance.</p>
5.2 For conducting the seminar/laboratory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance of a minimum of 70% of the total number of seminars. Technical means necessary: laptop, SPSS, JASP, projector, whiteboard and internet connection All online communication will take place on Google Classroom <p>Note: for special situations (medical problems, employee status, etc.), according to the regulations and based on a specific approval, a decrease in attendance will be accepted,</p>

	within the limits provided by the regulations in force in the WUT. Exempted students will need to complete extra assignments to reach the minimum attendance.
5.3. Conduct for the use of generative Artificial Intelligence (genAI) tools	<p>Within this course, the use of genAI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, Copilot, etc.) is permitted only under the conditions set by the course/seminar instructor and in compliance with academic integrity standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permitted uses: idea brainstorming, support for writing and structuring, translations, linguistic revisions, generation of images, graphs, diagrams, illustrations, video or audio materials, avatars, and other digital objects, exclusively for educational purposes. • Prohibited uses: fully generating assignments (essays, reports, projects) or presenting genAI-created content as exclusively personal work. <p>For any assignment (essay, portfolio, project, etc.), the student is required to complete a transparency declaration form (available on the course platform). This document must specify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the tool used and its version, • the type of support provided by genAI, • how the content was verified and integrated. <p>Failure to declare the use of genAI is considered a violation of academic integrity standards and will be treated according to UVT regulations.</p> <p>Consequences of improper use of AI: If, after verification, it is found that the activity was mostly (>60%) completed with the help of AI tools or by copying, the student(s) will be required to attend a one-on-one evaluation meeting with the instructor and defend their work to demonstrate personal contribution and understanding of the material. If the student(s) does not attend or is/are unable to answer questions regarding the paper, the work will be canceled, and the student(s) will be allowed to participate in the evaluation again only in the next exam session.</p>

6. Objectives of the course - expected learning outcomes to which the discipline's study and completion contributes

Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works with theoretical constructs, clearly distinguished from common-sense knowledge, which are applied in psychological measures with robust psychometric properties (validity, reliability, sensitivity, face validity, etc.). • Reports on the main theories regarding social relationships/interactions, necessary for client interaction. • Uses appropriately the language and terminology specific to the field in interactions with the beneficiaries of psychological services, ensuring that the conveyed message is understood.
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents information coherently, using clear language and appropriate written materials, making reasonable adjustments to optimize understanding before an audience, under supervision. • Demonstrates the assimilation of group interaction techniques, empathetic interpersonal communication skills, and the ability to assume specific roles within teamwork. • Interacts effectively with others within teams focused on accomplishing common tasks.

Responsibility and autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquires strategies for rigorous, efficient, and responsible work, punctuality, and personal accountability for results, based on the principles, norms, and values of the professional code of ethics, which are to be applied in the relationship with the beneficiaries of psychological services. Responsibly integrates technology into the process of learning and professional development. Expresses in professional practice curiosity and respect toward diverse social/cultural identities.
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7. Contents

7.1 Course	Teaching methods	Observations
Lecture 1 - Introduction and history of Behavioral Economics	Interactive lecture, conversation, demonstration	Cartwright, E. (2018). <i>Behavioral Economics</i> - Chapter 1, pp 3-27
Lecture 2 - Theoretical aspects: Expected value, subjective expected utility, prospect theory	Interactive lecture, conversation, demonstration	Ranyard, R. (Ed.). (2017). <i>Economic psychology</i> - Chapter 2, pp 19-31
Lecture 3 – Heuristics in Behavioral Economics	Interactive lecture, conversation, demonstration	Cartwright, E. (2018). <i>Behavioral Economics</i> - Chapter 2, pp 31-95
Lecture 4 – Choice with risk	Interactive lecture, conversation, demonstration	Cartwright, E. (2018). <i>Behavioral Economics</i> - Chapter 3, pp 97-108, pp 115-130
Lecture 5 - Intertemporal choices	Interactive lecture, conversation, demonstration	Cartwright, E. (2018). <i>Behavioral Economics</i> - Chapter 4, pp 162-172, pp 191-203 Ranyard, R. (Ed.). (2017). <i>Economic psychology</i> - Chapter 3, pp 35-45
Lecture 6 – Social preferences	Interactive lecture, conversation, demonstration	Cartwright, E. (2018). <i>Behavioral Economics</i> - Chapter 7, pp 321-338, pp 354-365
Lecture 7 – Tax behavior	Interactive lecture, conversation, demonstration	Ranyard, R. (Ed.). (2017). <i>Economic psychology</i> - Chapter 16, pp 255-268 Cartwright, E. (2018). <i>Behavioral Economics</i> - Chapter 3, pp 146-154
Lecture 8 – Behavior in financial markets	Interactive lecture, conversation, demonstration	Ranyard, R. (Ed.). (2017). <i>Economic psychology</i> - Chapter 15, pp 239-250 Cartwright, E. (2018). <i>Behavioral Economics</i> - Chapter 3, pp 136-146 Cartwright, E. (2018). <i>Behavioral Economics</i> - Chapter 5, pp 236-245
Lecture 9 – Origins of behavior - Evolution and culture	Interactive lecture, conversation, demonstration	Cartwright, E. (2018). <i>Behavioral Economics</i> - Chapter 8, pp 373-413
Lecture 10 – Origins of behavior - Neuroeconomics	Interactive lecture, conversation, demonstration	Cartwright, E. (2018). <i>Behavioral Economics</i> - Chapter 9, pp 415-460
Lecture 11 – Policy and behavior	Interactive lecture, conversation, demonstration	Cartwright, E. (2018). <i>Behavioral Economics</i> - Chapter 11, pp 504-528
Lecture 12 – NUDGE	Interactive lecture, conversation, demonstration	Sunstein, C. R. (2014). Nudging: a very short guide. <i>Journal of Consumer Policy</i> , 37, 583-588.

Lecture 13 – Happiness and utility	Interactive lecture, conversation, demonstration	Cartwright, E. (2018). <i>Behavioral Economics</i> - Chapter 10, pp 465-501
Lecture 14 - Closing remarks/Exam preparation/Q&A	Interactive lecture, conversation, demonstration	
<p>Mandatory course material: can be found on Google Classroom Cartwright, E. (2018). <i>Behavioral Economics</i> (3rd ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315105079 Ranyard, R. (Ed.). (2017). <i>Economic psychology</i>. John Wiley & Sons. Sunstein, C. R. (2014). Nudging: a very short guide. <i>Journal of Consumer Policy</i>, 37, 583-588.</p> <p>Other references: Ariely, D., & Jones, S. (2008). <i>Predictably irrational</i>. New York: HarperCollins. Ariely, D., & Jones, S. (2012). <i>The honest truth about dishonesty</i> (Vol. 255). New York: HarperCollins. David, S.A., Boniwell, I., Conley Ayers, A., (2013). <i>The Oxford Handbook of Happiness</i>, Oxford University Press Daniel, K. (2017). <i>Thinking, fast and slow</i>. Kirchler, E. Hoelz, E. (2017) <i>Economic Psychology</i>. The Cambridge University Press Lewis, A. (2018). <i>The Cambridge Handbook of Psychology and Economic Behaviour</i>. Second Edition. The Cambridge University Press Mols, F., Jetten, J. (2017). <i>The Wealth Paradox. Economic Prosperity and the Hardening of Attitudes</i>. Cambridge University Press O'Doherty K. C., Hodgetts, D., (2019) <i>The Sage Handbook of Applied Social Psychology</i>. Sage Publications Steg, L. & al. (2017). <i>Applied Social Psychology. Understanding and Managing Social Problems</i>. Second Edition. Cambridge University Press Thaler, R. H., & Sunstein, C. R. (2021). <i>Nudge: The final edition</i>. Yale University Press. Webley, P., Burgoyne, C.B. Lea, S.E.G., Zoung, B.M. (2008). <i>The Economic Psychology of Everyday Life</i>. Psychology Press</p>		
7.2 Seminar / laboratory	Teaching methods	Observations
Seminar 1 – Homo economicus vs. Homo sapiens	Structured exercise; problematization; demonstration; conversation	Ranyard, R. (Ed.). (2017). <i>Economic psychology</i> - Chapter 2, pp 19-31
Seminar 2 - Bounded rationality	Structured exercise; problematization; demonstration; conversation	Cartwright, E. (2018). <i>Behavioral Economics</i> - Chapter 2, pp 31-95
Seminar 3 – Intertemporal choices – AI Exercise	Structured exercise; problematization; demonstration; conversation	Cartwright, E. (2018). <i>Behavioral Economics</i> - Chapter 4, pp 162-172, pp 191-203 Ranyard, R. (Ed.). (2017). <i>Economic psychology</i> - Chapter 3, pp 35-45
Seminar 4 - Strategies to increase tax compliance	Structured exercise; problematization; demonstration; conversation	Behavioral Insights Toolkit – IRS - https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-soi/17rpirtsbehavioralinsights.pdf
Seminar 5 – Origins of behavior	Structured exercise; problematization; demonstration; conversation	Cartwright, E. (2018). <i>Behavioral Economics</i> - Chapter 8, pp 373-413
Seminar 6 - NUDGE - applications	Structured exercise; problematization; demonstration; conversation	Sunstein, C. R. (2014). Nudging: a very short guide. <i>Journal of Consumer Policy</i> , 37, 583-588. Thaler, R. H., & Benartzi, S. (2004). Save more tomorrow™: Using behavioral economics to increase employee saving. <i>Journal of political Economy</i> , 112(S1), S164-S187.
Seminar 7 - Poster presentations	Presentation; discussion	

8. Correlation of discipline contents with the expectations of the representatives of the epistemic community, professional associations and representative employers in the field related to the program

The present course is designed in accordance with the expectations of the epistemic community, encapsulating contemporary topics, relevant theories and up-to-date research. The course is designed to meet the expectations of the Romanian College of Psychologists and the Commission for work psychology, transport psychology and applied in services and is compatible with courses in Behavioral Economics taught at other European universities.

9. Assessment

Activity type	9.1 Assessment criteria	9.2 Assessment methods	9.3 Weight of final mark
9.4 Course	Knowledge about the theories, concepts and research in the field of Behavioral Economics and ability to apply it in concrete scenarios	Multiple choice exam with 36 items. A grade between 1-10 will be awarded, the minimum standard being 5.	70%
9.5 Seminar / laboratory	Ability to work effectively as a team member and to create a high-quality output during a group project	Assignment: Students will work in groups and will devise a policy proposal to a given behavioral problem, which will need to include part of the knowledge and tools they developed during the semester. Their work will be presented in the form of a poster – mandatory assignment for entry in the first examination session. A grade between 1-10 will be awarded, the minimum standard being 5.	30%
Note: to enter the first examination session, students will need to achieve a minimum attendance rate of 50% for the course and 70% for the seminar. Active class participation is rewarded by extra bonus points			
9.6 Minimum performance standard			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The minimum standard is grade 5, on a scale from 1 to 10, for both the course and the seminar. The final grade will be the weighted average between the course (70%) and the seminar (30%). <p>Resits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who failed the first exam or want to increase their grade can resit the exam. The course material will be evaluated like in the first session, through a multiple choice exam. For those who resit the exam to increase their grade, the principle that will be applied is: the higher grade is the one that will be taken into consideration. Students can resit the exam (sessions B or C) without achieving the minimum attendance rates. Students who did not complete or failed the seminar will need to pass a multiple choice test with questions from the topics discussed during the seminars, in the resits session. Students who have not met the minimum standards outlined in the course syllabus will have to re-enroll in the course and complete the associated activities in the following academic year. 			

Date of completion,
15.09.2025

Tenure teacher,
Alin Semenescu, Ph.D.
Lecturer

Date of approval

Head of Department
Delia Virgă, Ph.D.
Professor