

BECOMING A BEHAVIORAL SCIENTIST

Grado en Comportamiento y Ciencias Sociales BBSS SEP-2023 BBS-N-BS.1.M.A

Area Human Resources and Organisational Behaviour

Number of sessions: 20

Academic year: 23-24

Degree course: FIRST

Number of credits: 3.0

Semester: 2º

Category: COMPULSORY

Language: English

Professor: **ALISTAIR FILDES**

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ALISTAIR FILDES

Dr. Alistair Fildes (pronounced 'Files') is the Vice Dean for Behavioral Science & Behavior Change in IE, as well as leading the Bachelor in Behavior and Social Sciences (BBSS). Trained as a sociologist and criminologist, Alistair spent the first half of his career seeking to understand human behavior in healthcare and law enforcement settings. He specialised in evaluating behavior and conflict resolution, including an award-winning experiment on improving public confidence in police.

The second half of his career has been shaping and changing behavior in risky environments across international private and public sector organizations. Before joining IE in 2021, Alistair was based in London working as a management consultant in behavior and organizational change. His work included setting up a Learning Design Faculty, building a Data Science capability, and developing an experiential learning methodology. He has academic qualifications from the University of Glasgow, University of Edinburgh, and Griffith University (Australia).

Office Hours

Office hours will be on request. Please contact at:

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Professor: **GARRET PAUL KILMER**

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Garret is a trained Industrial/Organizational Psychologist with a passion for bringing together the scientific rigor and practical use of human sciences to the world of business. As a millennial, he knows the challenges early professionals face in the workforce, and strives to teach a balance of business acumen, critical thinking, and evidence-based practices to help students position their career as a strategic lever for the business.

His work and interests are around how we translate people and their behaviors into data, mostly through the use of psychometrics and workplace assessments. In addition, organizational development, transformation, and culture change are of particular interest, especially modern approaches including self-management, borderless employees, and start-up culture.

Garret earned his master's degree in I/O Psychology from the Florida Institute of Technology, known for its strong program in cross-cultural psychology. There, he was able to work on research and practical projects with the U.S. military and private industries. Since then, he worked at the global headquarters of L'Oreal in Paris.

Office Hours

Office hours will be on request. Please contact at:

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SUBJECT DESCRIPTION

For a long time, we took for granted that humans acted rationally and made logical decisions with their best interests in mind. However, we also understand that this is not the case in the real world; in fact, we often act against our own interests. Behavioral Science helps us understand why we behave and make decisions the way that we do. Becoming a Behavioral Scientist is a compulsory course for all first year BBSS students. It is complementary to 'Fundamentals of Human Behavior' and serves as an introduction to the multidisciplinary field of Behavioral Science.

This course will provide an overview of the discipline of Behavioral Science and its various applications in the world. Nowadays, Behavioral Science is being applied to fields ranging from health and education to energy, the environment, financial decision making and ethics. During the semester, you will not only learn some of the fundamental concepts and practices of the discipline but also apply them through individual course work, in-class activities and a group project.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the course is to provide a foundational learning experience and a broad overview of the Behavioral Science field. Through regular attendance and active participation in the course, students will have a baseline understanding of the key principles of Behavioral Science. This will provide the building blocks for the other courses that BBSS students take in Years 2-4 of the Bachelor. Through class exercises and projects, students will also become familiar with the professional applications of this skillset.

NOTE ON USE OF AI: the use of AI tools is restricted to the following two cases:

- Idea generation and refinement: Utilize AI to brainstorm and fine-tune ideas, formulate research

questions, and even draft an outline to bring clarity to your thoughts.

- Simplified explanations: Generate simplified explanations of complex topics using AI, which can serve as valuable learning resources to support your comprehension of challenging concepts.

These explanations are not to be copied into any submitted coursework. Such cases will be treated as plagiarism.

TEACHING METHODOLOGY

IE University teaching method is defined by its collaborative, active, and applied nature. Students actively participate in the whole process to build their knowledge and sharpen their skills. Professor's main role is to lead and guide students to achieve the learning objectives of the course. This is done by engaging in a diverse range of teaching techniques and different types of learning activities such as the following:

Learning Activity	Weighting	Estimated time a student should dedicate to prepare for and participate in
Lectures	26.67 %	20.0 hours
Discussions	13.33 %	10.0 hours
Exercises in class, Asynchronous sessions, Field Work	13.33 %	10.0 hours
Group work	20.0 %	15.0 hours
Individual studying	26.67 %	20.0 hours
TOTAL	100.0 %	75.0 hours

PROGRAM

SESSION 1 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Course Introduction

Topic(s): Course Overview. Expectations. Evaluation Criteria.

Reading: None.

SESSION 2 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

What is a Behavioral Scientist?

Topic(s): What is Behavioral Science? Goal setting & barriers. Building better plans.

Readings:

Article: Young (2022) *It's time to define Behavioral Science.* (Medium.com, Mar 3, 2022)

Book Chapters: Ariely (2008) *Predictably Irrational* (chp. 6) (IE Library)

SESSION 3 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Planning for a Brighter Future?

Topic(s): Present Bias & Hyperbolic Discounting. Loss Aversion. Commitments.

Watching:

Multimedia Material: Shlomo Benartzi (2012) Saving for Tomorrow, Tomorrow (Youtube)

SESSION 4 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Behavioral Science Concepts - Part I

Topic(s): Habits. Biases. Heuristics.

Readings:

Book Chapters: Duhigg (2014) *The Power of Habit* (chp. 2) (IE Library)

Book Chapters: Kahneman (2011) *Thinking Fast and Slow* (chp. 10-12, 26) (IE Library)

SESSION 5 (ASYNCHRONOUS)

Behavioral Science Concepts - Part II

Topic(s): Humans vs. Econs. The Intention-Action Gap.

Reading:

Book Chapters: Thaler and Sunstein (2008) *Nudge: improving decisions about health, wealth, and happiness* (pp. 33-40) (ced)

Activities: Kahneman Quiz. Video lecture.

SESSION 6 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Behavioral Science Concepts - Part III

Topic(s): Choice Architecture. Nudge & Sludge. Defaults & Decoys.

Reading:

Book Chapters: Thaler and Sunstein (2008) *Nudge: Improving decisions about health, wealth, and happiness* (chp 4 and 5) (IE Library)

SESSION 7 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

(Dis)-Honesty, Behavioral Science & Ethics

Topic(s): (Dis)-Honesty. The Ethics of Nudging. EAST Framework.

Reading:

Book Chapters: Ariely (2008) *Predictably Irrational* (chp. 11) (IE Library)

Article: Uber Shows How Not to Apply Behavioral Economics (HBS H03M3I-PDF-ENG)

SESSION 8 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

What You Expect Is Not What It Is

Topic(s): Expectations. Priming & Framing. Stereotypes.

Reading:

Book Chapters: Ariely (2008) *Predictably Irrational* (chp 9) (IE Library)

Book Chapters: Dolan (2014) *Happiness By Design* (chp. 6) (IE Library)

SESSION 9 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Mid-term

Knowledge test. Summary of first-half of course. Opportunities to apply Behavioral Science.

SESSION 10 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Case Study Day 1

Topic(s): The What Works Centre Case Study - Introduction, Context, Challenge.

Reading:

Practical Case: The What Works Centre: Using Behavioral Science to Improve Social Worker Well-being (HBS 921020-PDF-ENG)

SESSION 11 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Case Study Day 2

Topic(s): The What Works Centre Case Study - Problem solving, Guided Discussion/Debate.

Reading:

Practical Case: The What Works Centre: Using Behavioral Science to Improve Social Worker Well-being (HBS 921020-PDF-ENG)

SESSION 12 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Case Study Day 3

Topic(s): The What Works Centre Case Study - Conclusions / Lessons Learned.

Reading:

Practical Case: The What Works Centre: Using Behavioral Science to Improve Social Worker Well-being (HBS 921020-PDF-ENG)

SESSION 13 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Positive Psychology

Topic(s): Positive Psychology. Negativity Bias. Strengths.

Watching: Positive Psychology Introduction - Research, Theory, & Criticisms

Multimedia Material: Positive Psychology Introduction - Research, Theory, & Criticisms (Youtube)

Multimedia Material: The happy secret to better work (Youtube)

SESSION 14 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Growth Mindset

Topic(s): Growth Mindset. Mind vs. Body

Watching:

Multimedia Material: What Having a "Growth Mindset" Actually Means (Youtube)

SESSION 15 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Motivation

Topic(s): Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic, Goal setting theory, Self-regulation

Reading:

Book Chapters: Gary P Latham: Work motivation: history, theory, research, and practice (Chapter 2) (IE Library)

SESSION 16 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Choices

Topic(s): Choice Overload, Attention Span

Watching:

Multimedia Material: My Brain on Information Overload (Youtube)

SESSION 17 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Group Project Coaching

5-10 minutes with each group

SESSION 18 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Careers in Behavioral Science, BBSS Brand, Guest Speaker

SESSION 19 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Group Presentations

Topic(s): Behavioral Change for Good – Group Presentations.

Reading: None.

Activities: Group Presentations.

SESSION 20 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Group Presentations

Topic(s): Behavioral Change for Good – Group Presentations.

Reading: None.

Activities: Group Presentations.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

criteria	percentage	Learning Objectives	Comments
Behavioral Change Plan	25 %		
Group Presentation	30 %		
Class Participation	25 %		
Behavior Diary	10 %		
Intermediate Tests	10 %		

RE-SIT / RE-TAKE POLICY

Behavior Diary Assignment (10%) – This assignment allows you to document what you do, rather than what you think you to. You will periodically document your activities over a 24 hour period. During the assignment, you should keep a diary of what you are doing every hour. You choose the level of data completeness you wish to generate but pick a "typical" day or to keep track of, not an unusual weekday schedule, for example.

During your chosen time, strive to make notes on what you are doing periodically, perhaps every 15 minutes or so. This will be more accurate than trying to go back at the end of the day and reconstruct what you did. You will submit the diary to me as well as 1-2 paragraphs describing what you learned about your behavior through the exercise and whether there are any behaviors you would like to change as a result.

Behavioral Change Plan (25%) – As part of the course you will be required to participate in a personal behavioral change project which will include your enrollment in a professional behavioral change program called Stickk. Over the course of three weeks, students will be expected to not only participate in the program but also submit a 3-page double-spaced report (not including the bibliography and cover page) that includes the following information:

- Identifies the design of the Stickk program and relates it to concepts discussed in class;
- Describes your individual experience with changing a behavior and the outcome of the assignment;
- Includes at least 3 references from the Behavioral Science literature

While we will spend some time in class developing your ideas for the plan, you will also be required to dedicate time outside of class to the project. The project guidelines, expectations and due date will be discussed in-class.

Mid-term Test (10%) - a short test of your Behavioral Science knowledge half-way through the course.

Group Project & Presentation (30%) – Students will get together in groups of 4-5 students to apply ideas from the course to solving a social problem using Behavioral Science. The problem can range from organizational to social across a range of industries. Some examples include: health, education or financial services and banking. Feel free to get creative with the context, it does not have to be based at IE or in Spain but can be a global issue. The objective is to prepare a memo (5-7 pages double spaced - not including the bibliography) that identifies the problem and proposes a solution inspired by behavioral science. You are required to use concepts and theories from the course. Be prepared to present the proposal to a panel of experts. You will be evaluated both on the presentation and the memo as well as an individual component of how your peers evaluate you as a member of the team. The presentations will take place on the last day of class.

Class Participation and Continuous Evaluation (25%): Class participation and engagement will be evaluated based on the quality (not quantity) of your participation in class discussion, online forums and other activities that take place during synchronous and asynchronous sessions. The most important component of your participation is the content of what you are saying. A high quality comment reveals depth of insight, rigorous use of case evidence, consistency of argument, and realism. People who speak often but whose comments lack substance will not be rewarded in the same way that people who speak less frequently but with rich content that furthers the class discussion. That said, your attempts at participation should not be such that the instructor has to “go looking for you”. You should be attempting to get into the debate on a regular basis. Listening is an equally important component of class participation. Please be mindful of how much you are speaking versus listening and ensure that this class is an environment in which all of us are encouraged to do both. Students who are disruptive or disrespectful will be asked to leave the classroom and will be counted as absent for that day. No exceptions.

Finally, you might want to avoid being classified as one of the following types of students:

- Repeaters: students who, consciously or unconsciously, make comments that are really just repeats/rephrasing of what has already been said (by other students, or yourself). This is a waste of time and does nothing to move the conversation along.
- Ramblers: students who take a lot of time to say simple things or may tell long personal/professional stories, or roam into irrelevant topics, or simply make low quality comments just to participate. They waste valuable time and prevent other students from being able to participate.
- Space Cadets: Students who have been distracted (by Facebook, etc.) or who have stopped

paying attention and then, later on, when they realized they have missed a term or concept, ask you about it even though it has already been discussed.

Listening is an equally important component of class participation. Please be mindful of how much you are speaking versus listening and ensure that this class is an environment in which all of us are encouraged to do both. Students who are disruptive or disrespectful will be asked to leave the classroom and will be counted as absent for that day. No exceptions.

RE-SIT / RE-TAKE POLICY

Each student has four (4) chances to pass any given course distributed over two (2) consecutive academic years. Each academic year consists of two calls: one (1) ordinary call (during the semester when the course is taking place); and one (1) extraordinary call (or “re-sit”) in June/July.

Students who do not comply with the 80% attendance requirement in each subject during the semester will automatically fail both calls (ordinary and extraordinary) for that Academic Year and have to re-take the course (i.e., re-enroll) during the next Academic Year.

The Extraordinary Call Evaluation criteria will be subject to the following rules:

Students failing the course in the ordinary call (during the semester) will have to re-sit evaluation for the course in June / July (except those students who do not comply with the attendance rule, and therefore will not have that opportunity, since they will fail both calls and must directly re-enroll in the course during the next Academic Year).

It is not permitted to change the format nor the date of the extraordinary call exams or deadlines under any circumstance. All extraordinary call evaluation dates will be announced in advance and must be taken into consideration before planning the summer (e. g. internships, trips, holidays, etc.)

The June/July re-sit will consist of a comprehensive evaluation of the course. Your final grade for the course will depend on the performance in this exam or evaluation only. I.e., continuous evaluation over the semester (e. g. participation, quizzes, projects and/or other grade components over the semester) will not be taken into consideration on the extraordinary call. Students will have to achieve the minimum passing grade of 5 and the maximum grade will be capped at 8.0 (out of 10.0) – i.e., “notable” in the extraordinary call.

Re-takers: Students who failed the subject on a previous Academic Year and are now re-enrolled as re-takers in a course will need to check the syllabus of the assigned professor, as well as contact the professor individually, regarding the specific evaluation criteria for them as re-takers in the course during that semester (ordinary call of that Academic Year). The maximum grade that may be obtained as a retaker during the ordinary call (i.e., the 3rd call) is 10.0 (out of 10.0).

After exams and other assessments are graded by the professor (on either the ordinary or extraordinary call), students will have a possibility to attend a review session (whether it be a final exam, a final project, or the final overall grade in a given course). Please be available to attend the session in order to clarify any concerns you might have regarding your grade. Your professor will inform you about the time and place of the review session.

Students failing more than 18 ECTS credits after the June/July re-sits will be asked to leave the Program. Please, make sure to prepare yourself well for the exams in order to pass your failed subjects.

In case you decide to skip the opportunity to re-sit for an exam or evaluation during the June/July extraordinary call, you will need to enroll in that course again for the next Academic Year as a re-taker, and pay the corresponding tuition fees. As you know, students

BEHAVIOR RULES

Please, check the University's Code of Conduct [here](#). The Program Director may

provide further indications.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Please, check the University's Attendance Policy [here](#). The Program Director may provide further indications.

ETHICAL POLICY

Please, check the University's Ethics Code [here](#). The Program Director may provide further indications.