

Course Information

HONS 3199.HN8 : CV Readings – Risk, Probability, and Statistics
Fall 2021, Tuesday 10-10:50 am
CB 1.106

Professor Contact Information

Instructor: Tom Brunell
Phone: 972-883-4963
Email: tbrunell@utdallas.edu
Office: GR 2.246
Office Hours: Tuesday 11-12, or by appointment

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

(including required prior knowledge or skills)

None. Requires permission of instructor to enroll.

Course Description

Risk and probability played a central role in the advancement of mathematical knowledge. They continue to play an important role in every day life – luck, chance, bad timing, etc. are all related to risk and probability.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Explain the advantages and drawbacks of statistics-based decision making.
2. Describe the application of statistical methods to some phenomenon.
3. Assess the role of randomness and methods of dealing with randomness in the world.

Required books:

1. The Drunkard's Walk by Leonard Mlodinow
2. Skin in the Game by Nassim Nicholas Taleb
3. The Signal and the Noise, by Nate Silver
4. The Undoing Project by Michael Lewis

Grading, Class Citizenship, & Attendance Policies

Class will begin promptly at 10:00am, and roll will be taken each day. Attendance is required for this class. If a student signs roll and then leaves, they will be marked absent for the day. Students who are consistently late for class will have their grades adjusted accordingly.

Students are allowed ONE unexcused absence during the semester and are expected to make up material missed in the course. Documentation for excused absences will be required.

Students are expected to come to class prepared – you have READ the assigned material for each day of class. You should have notes prepared and ready to discuss the material. Students are expected to lead TWO classroom discussions each during the semester and participate in all discussions actively. I will call on you to contribute as a leader, so you should always have several questions prepared and have organized points to contribute regarding the readings due for that week.

Students are required to write TWO 5 page double spaced (New Times Roman 12-point font, 1 inch margins) book review essays critically examining issues raised in the books read during the course. See calendar for dates and assigned texts.

High scores will be given for papers that offer critical discussion, well written and organized, without typos or grammar issues, and which explore the complex issues presented in detail. Late papers will not be accepted for any reason and papers will be due on the date assigned at the beginning of class. Students will turn in a hard copy of their submission to the instructor.

Focus on critically assessing the main themes from the assigned book and offer critical discussion of the pros and cons of the book. Provide give insights into what the reader can expect without giving a play by play of the table of contents. Proof your work carefully and make sure you write without errors—these will absolutely impact your grade on your paper! You should write your review in a style consistent with a professional book review.

Grades will be weighted the following way:

20% participation/attendance
40% first paper
40% second paper

Calendar

8/23 Introduction to class

8/30 Mlodinow Ch. 1-3

9/6 Mlodinow Ch. 4-7

9/13 Mlodinow Ch. 8-epilogue

9/20 Lewis Ch. 1-4

9/27 Lewis Ch. 5-9

10/4 Lewis Ch 10-14

10/11 Silver Ch 1-3 **FIRST WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE**

10/18 Silver Ch 4-9

10/25 Silver Ch 10-13

11/1 Silver Ch. 14-epilogue

11/8 Taleb Ch. 1-6

11/15 Taleb Ch. 7-12

11/22 - No Class, Thanksgiving break

11/29 Taleb Ch. 13-18

12/6 Taleb Ch. 19-25

12/13 - **SECOND WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE**