Behavioral Decision Sciences

Leading to a Bachelor of Arts, the study of decision making at Brown covers descriptive questions like how people, institutions, and nations make judgments and decisions; normative questions about rationality, such as what constitutes the best judgments and decisions; and prescriptive questions, such as how the process of decision making can be improved to make actual decisions closer to optimal ones. By virtue of its broad interdisciplinary nature, the study of decision making covers work found in a variety of more traditional disciplines including psychology, cognitive science, economics, philosophy, computer science, and neuroscience. Professor Steven Sloman (steven_sloman@brown.edu?subject=Behavioral%20Decision%20Sciences) is the concentration advisor. Upon declaring, concentrators are also encouraged to speak with the appropriate area specialist from among those listed here (https://www.brown.edu/academics/cognitive-linguistic-psychological-sciences/behavioral-decision-sciences/).

Standard Program for the AB Degree

CLPS Classes:

CLPS 0220 Making Decisions 1
Choose one of the following: 1
   CLPS 0400 Cognitive Neuroscience
   CLPS 0200 Human Cognition
   CLPS 0700 Social Psychology
Choose two of the following: 2
   CLPS 1470 Mechanisms of Motivated Decision Making
   CLPS 1495 Affective Neuroscience
   CLPS 1730 Psychology in Business and Economics
   CLPS 1760 The Moral Brain
   CLPS 0710 The Psychology and Philosophy of Happiness

Distribution Requirements:

Select one Introductory Course from the following: 1
   ECON 0110 Principles of Economics
   CSCI 0040 Introduction to Scientific Computing and Problem Solving
   or CSCI 0111 Computing Foundations: Data
   or CSCI 0150 Introduction to Object-Oriented Programming and Computer Science
   or CSCI 0170 Computer Science: An Integrated Introduction
   or CSCI 0180 Computer Science: An Integrated Introduction
   or CSCI 0190 Accelerated Introduction to Computer Science

Select Two Advanced Courses From: 2
   CSCI 1410 Artificial Intelligence
   CSCI 1420 Machine Learning
   ECON 1110 Intermediate Microeconomics
   or ECON 1130 Intermediate Microeconomics (Mathematical)
   ECON 1660 Big Data
   ECON 1820 Theory of Behavioral Economics
   ECON 1870 Game Theory and Applications to Economics
   PHIL 1610 Decision Theory: Foundations and Applications

Methods Classes:

Choose One From the Following: 1
   APMA 0650 Essential Statistics
   APMA 1650 Statistical Inference I

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CLPS 0900 Statistical Methods
CSCI 0100 Data Fluency for All
CSCI 1450 Advanced Introduction to Probability for Computing and Data Science
ECON 1620 Introduction to Econometrics

Plus One of the Following: 1
   CLPS 1791 Laboratory in Social Cognition
   CSCI 0150 Introduction to Object-Oriented Programming and Computer Science
   CSCI 0170 Computer Science: An Integrated Introduction
   ECON 1629 Applied Research Methods for Economists
   ECON 1630 Mathematical Econometrics I
   ECON 1805 Economics in the Laboratory
   PHIL 0640 Logic

Electives: 3

Students will choose three additional courses in consultation with a concentration advisor that will constitute an integrated specialization in some area of decision science. Any advanced course taught at Brown is eligible. Such courses might include, but are not limited to:

Psychology and Cognitive Science
   CLPS 0950 Introduction to programming
   CLPS 1292 Introduction to Programming for the Mind, Brain and Behavior
   CLPS 1370 Pragmatics
   CLPS 1970 Directed Reading in Cognitive, Linguistic and Psychological Sciences

Economics:
   ECON 1820 Theory of Behavioral Economics
   ECON 1870 Game Theory and Applications to Economics

Applied Mathematics:
   APMA 0200 Introduction to Modelling
   APMA 1690 Computational Probability and Statistics
   APMA 2640 Theory of Probability II
   APMA 2821V Neural Dynamics: Theory and Modeling

Philosophy:
   PHIL 0410 Moral Philosophy
   PHIL 1430 Moral Theories
   PHIL 1705 Epistemology

Computer Science:
   CSCI 1430 Computer Vision
   CSCI 1460 Computational Linguistics
   CSCI 1951A Data Science

Political Science:
   POLS 1090 Polarized Politics
   POLS 1150 Prosperity: The Ethics and Economics of Wealth Creation
   POLS 1470 International Negotiation and Conflict Resolution

Public Health:
   PHP 1740 Principles of Health Behavior and Health Promotion Interventions

Capstone: 1
Fall seminar in which students write an integrative paper or do a project covering their areas of study in their senior year.

Total Credits 13

1 Students may not use the same course to satisfy both the Introductory and Methods course requirements.
Students will be expected to take no more than 6 courses below the 1000-level within the concentration. Students with multiple concentrations may not apply more than 2 courses from a second concentration to the AB in Behavioral Decision Sciences. No more than 2 courses can be transferred from another institution to count toward concentration credit. Students are responsible for satisfying all prerequisites for courses they plan to take.

Honors

The Honors Program in BDS gives undergraduates a special opportunity to carry out a research project under the direction of a faculty member that they have developed a relationship with. The program also provides the opportunity for senior concentrators to receive their undergraduate degree with Honors. Participation in the program allows students to develop an understanding of research and acquire research skills and background. Candidates for Honors in BDS must meet all of the requirements of the BDS concentration as described above. Candidates submit their application for the program at the beginning of semester 7. We encourage students to seek out a faculty mentor prior to semester 7 and to complete their methods courses and two of their three electives before semester 7. Please refer to the CLPS Honors Program page for detailed information about the specific requirements for the Honors Program in BDS.