Course Description

This workshop in political decision making has a theoretical component and a practical one. The theoretical part of the course focuses on models of decision making (rational actor, prospect theory, poliheuristic theory, bureaucratic politics, organizational politics, the cybernetic theory of decision, groupthink, and polythink), biases in decision making, the decision environment, and domestic, international and psychological influences on political decision making.

The practical component of the workshop shows how to utilize the Decision Board platform (decisionboard.org) for process tracing of political and economic decisions, trends and events, voting decisions, and as a Decision Support System.

Course Goals

To familiarize the student with essentials of decision making and with computerized process tracing

A. Essentials of Decision Making

Who makes political decisions?
Types of decisions
Information processing characteristics
Applied Decision Analysis (ADA)
Groupthink, Polythink, and Con-Div
Decision rules
Comparing and contrasting models of decision making
   Rational actor/Expected Utility model
   Prospect Theory
   Cybernetic Theory
   Poliheuristic Theory
   Bureaucratic Politics
   Organizational Politics
Biases and heuristics in decision making
Foreign policy decisions
Influences on national security and foreign policy decision making

B. The use of Decision Board (DB) for research, training, and teaching

Computerized process tracing
Applied Decision Analysis
DB as a Decision Support System

C. Guidance in writing your final paper
Grading
Active participation: 10%
Computer exercise: 20% due after recitations. Exact dates will be sent via Moodle.

Lecturer Office Hours
Schedule in advance through Ms. Shira Akiva
Shira.Akiva@idc.ac.il

Teaching Assistant
Eli Mograbi
elimograb influence@gmail.com - schedule via e-mail

Reading List
Allison, Graham. The Cuban Missile Crisis at 50. Foreign Affairs, Aug. 2012
Kertzer, Joshua D. and Dustin Tingley. Political Psychology in International Relations: Beyond the Paradigms (2018)

Recommended Reading: