

Decision Processes Colloquia

Monday, November 25, 2019

Where: 370 JMHH

When: 12:00 – 1:20 pm

Jennifer Dannals

Assistant Professor, Business Administration
Dartmouth College, Tuck School of Business

Perceiving Social Norms in Groups and Teams

ABSTRACT:

Social norms are a powerful psychological force across a variety of situations, and yet relatively little is known about how individuals arrive at their perceptions of descriptive and prescriptive social norms. In a series of projects, my coauthors and I examine how individuals summarize group behavior in order to learn the descriptive and prescriptive norms of the group. First, we consider how individuals summarize group behavior when the group contains an outlier, one member who behaves differently than others. We find that individuals tend to overweight the behavior of outliers but that this effect is curvilinear with more extreme outliers being discounted, particularly in inferences of the prescriptive norm. Second, we consider how individuals infer the descriptive norm as a function of the hierarchical rank of those they observe. We find that individuals tend to give greater weight to the behavior of lower ranking individuals in comparison to higher ranking individuals. Collectively, this work offers insights into social norm perception can guide future work on social norm interventions in organizations.

