Course Outline

TU108 Self Development and Management

Semester 2/2025 (January 5 - May 2, 2026)

Lecture Time: Monday; 13.00-16.00 hrs.

Lecture Venue:

Teaching Materials Platform: [Google Classroom / MS Team / Facebook Group / etc. Please specify with an actual URL or access code.]

Instructor:

Name: Dr. Min Ye Paing Hein

Office Hours:

Email:

Phone:

Number of Credit: 3 Credits (3-0-6)

Prerequisite: -

Course Description:

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This course applies economic and behavioral insights to personal growth, decision-making, and well-being. Using tools from microeconomics, behavioral economics, and strategic interaction, students learn how individuals allocate scarce resources such as time, energy, and attention. The course examines decision-making under risk and uncertainty, habit formation, incentives, and cooperation, integrating ethical reflection to support productivity, resilience, and purposeful living.

3. Course Objectives

This course explores how economic reasoning and behavioral insights can guide personal and professional growth. It integrates microeconomic logic, behavioral science, and strategic thinking to help students make wiser decisions, manage time and energy effectively, and live with purpose and integrity.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Apply microeconomic, behavioral, and strategic reasoning to personal and professional decisions
- Understand trade-offs in time, energy, and attention allocation
- Analyze risk, uncertainty, and interdependence in everyday choices
- Design systems and incentives that enhance productivity and long-term well-being
- Strengthen skills in reflection, self-command, and ethical awareness
- Foster civic responsibility and Thammasat's ethos of moral and public leadership

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4. Expected Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

- **PLO1:** Analytical and critical thinking skills linking economic, social, and cultural contexts
- **PLO2:** Ability to use information and technology for personal and professional development
- **PLO3:** Academic ethics, professional conduct, and respect for human dignity
- **PLO4:** Evidence-based reasoning and reflective inquiry
- **PLO5:** Capacity to work effectively at local, national, and international levels
- **PLO6:** Understanding and engagement with diverse individuals and environments
- **PLO7:** Collaboration skills demonstrating civic responsibility and commitment to the public good

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5. Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

- **CLO1:** Apply economic and behavioral insights to improve decision-making and self-management (PLO1, PLO4)
- **CLO2:** Develop effective systems for time, energy, and habit management (PLO2, PLO6)
- **CLO3:** Analyze decisions under risk and uncertainty using microeconomic and behavioral frameworks (PLO1, PLO5)
- **CLO4:** Evaluate strategic interaction, trust, and cooperation through cooperative and non-cooperative game reasoning (PLO1, PLO5, PLO6)
- **CLO5:** Explore identity, motivation, and purpose to align personal and professional goals (PLO7)
- **CLO6:** Demonstrate ethical awareness, resilience, and civic responsibility consistent with Thammasat's ethos (PLO3, PLO7)

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6. Course Rules and Grading Criteria

Active participation is essential. Sessions combine lecture, discussion, experiential exercises, and reflection-based activities. Students are expected to complete readings before class and engage thoughtfully with materials and peers.

Grade Composition

- Attendance & Participation: **30%**
- Quizzes / Short Reflections: **20%**
- Experiential Exercises: **15%**
- Capstone Project (Presentation + Paper): **30%**
- Final Reflection / Assessment: **5%**

Course Modules

- **Module I:** Economics and Psychology of Choice
- **Module II:** Strategy, Uncertainty, and Cooperation
- **Module III:** Identity, Purpose, and Well-Being

Weekly Schedule

Module I – Economics and Psychology of Choice

Week 1: Introduction – Why Economics of Personal Growth?
Scarcity of time, energy, and attention; rational vs. behavioral models of the self; economics as a lens for self-understanding and improvement.

Week 2: Preferences, Trade-Offs, and Opportunity Cost
Life as allocation; marginal thinking in everyday choices; recognizing comparative advantage in personal strengths and values.

Week 3: Intertemporal Choice and Present Bias
Time discounting; procrastination and temptation; commitment devices and Schelling's concept of self-command.

Week 4: Behavioral Biases in Personal Decisions
Loss aversion, framing, and mental accounting; limited willpower and bounded rationality in everyday judgment.

Week 5: Cognitive Bandwidth and Decision Fatigue
Attention as a scarce resource; the economics of focus and stress; managing cognitive load for better performance.

Module II – Strategy, Uncertainty, and Cooperation

Week 6: Habits as Capital – Systems vs. Goals
Compounding effects; habit formation as investment; behavioral nudges, feedback loops, and dynamic consistency.

Week 7: Time and Energy Management
Optimal scheduling, rest, and recovery; the marginal productivity of attention; designing routines for sustained performance.

Week 8: Decisions Under Risk and Uncertainty – How to Choose When You Don't Know
Expected utility and its limits; Knightian uncertainty; ambiguity aversion; heuristics for reasoning under unknowns.
Applications: career choices, relationships, and moral dilemmas under uncertainty.

Week 9: Strategic Interaction, Trust, and Cooperation
Schelling's focal points; repeated games and reciprocity; cooperative vs. non-cooperative games as models of social interaction; the economics of trust, fairness, and social capital.

Week 10: Emotions, Strategy, and Self-Control
Emotional intelligence as a strategic asset; credibility, commitment, and the role of emotion in maintaining trust and long-term goals.

Module III – Identity, Purpose, and Well-Being

Week 11: Motivation and Incentives
Intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivation; designing self-aligned incentive systems; the limits of monetary and external rewards.

Week 12: Identity Economics – Who You Are Shapes What You Do
Akerlof & Kranton's framework of identity in the utility function; authenticity, role choice, and the economics of belonging.

Week 13: Thammasat Ethos and Puey Ungphakorn
Moral leadership, public service, and integrating success with responsibility; reflections on honesty, moderation, and self-discipline.

Week 14: Well-Being and Life Satisfaction
Hedonic vs. eudaimonic well-being; adaptation and aspiration; meaning, purpose, and time affluence in modern life.

Week 15: Capstone – Designing Your Personal Growth Strategy
Students present a one-year personal growth plan applying economic, behavioral, and strategic principles; synthesis of decision-making, cooperation, identity, and ethical reflection.

Readings

1. **Thaler, R. & Sunstein, C. (2008).** *Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness*
   → Behavioral economics and choice architecture

2. **Kahneman, D. (2011).** *Thinking, Fast and Slow*
   → System 1 and System 2 thinking, biases, bounded rationality
3. **Schelling, T. (1960).** *The Strategy of Conflict*
   → Coordination, commitment, and self-command
   Suggested chapters: 2 and 8 (simplified discussion)
4. **Thaler, R. (2015).** *Misbehaving: The Making of Behavioral Economics*
   → Fairness, reciprocity, and human decision-making
5. **Puey Ungphakorn (1981).** *Siamese of All Seasons*
   → Honesty, moderation, and moral discipline
6. **Marcus Aurelius (c. 180 AD).** *Meditations*
   → Stoic reflections on self-command, virtue, and perspective