

Course Design

This course has a “hybrid” format: most of the explicit instruction occurs outside the classroom in the form of short videos and reading. Class time will center on discussion and application of what you learned from the previous week’s course materials.

Assessments and Grading

Students will complete an assigned activity (usually a quiz or short writing assignment) every week. The nine quizzes are worth 30 points each and the four short writing assignments are worth 20 points each. The week’s activity opens Thursday morning at 7 AM and is due Friday evening by 7 PM. There are no make-up quizzes or late work accepted (except for lateness due to religious observances or disability). Be sure to take the quizzes from a stable and reliable internet connection. Momentary disconnections will bounce you from the quiz and submit incomplete work. You can take the quiz anytime between Thursday morning and Friday evening, but it has to be completed in one sitting and you only have 45 minutes to complete the quiz once you start it. The questions will be presented one at a time, with no backtracking.

The final paper, the length of which will be somewhere between our short writing assignments and a full-blown research paper, is due Wednesday November 28 at 7 PM. A significant component of the course grade (30%) will be based on attendance and participation. Students must be present, physically and mentally, to earn attendance and participation points. At no point will you be graded on how well you play bridge.

Assessment

Final Paper	350
Weekly Assignments	350
Attendance and Participation	300

Overall Grading Scale

A	>950	C+	775 - 799
A-	900 - 949	C	750 - 774
B+	875 - 899	C-	700 - 749
B	850 - 874	D	600 - 699
B-	800 - 849	F	<600

Other Important Course Details

Patience

A lot of course focuses on—what many regard as—the world’s most complicated card game. People learn at different speeds. Be patient with me if my explanations strike you as too simplistic or too confusing (if the latter, ask for clarification). Be patient with your bridge partner. Be patient with yourself.

Communication

I will communicate with you through email or Blackboard announcements. Check your email at least once every 24 hours. I will make my best effort to respond to all email within the day but sometimes it may take me longer. If I do not respond to your email within 48 hours, e-mail me again.

Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct of any type will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action. According to the university: “Academic misconduct by a student shall include, but not be limited to, disruption of classes; threatening an instructor or fellow student in an academic setting; giving or receiving of unauthorized aid on examinations or in the preparation of notebooks, themes, reports or other assignments; knowingly misrepresenting the source of any academic work; unauthorized changing of grades; unauthorized use of University approvals or forging of signatures [...]” (U.S.R.R., Section 6, 2.6.1, University Senate Rules and Regulations). If you engage in academic misconduct that results in a penalty, I must file a formal report with the Provost’s Office. Depending on the extent of your plagiarism, at the very least, the student will receive zero for the assignment. They may also receive an F in the course and/or be dismissed from the University. At the very least, the student will receive zero for the assignment. I take zero tolerance policy in cheating and plagiarism, so if you are ever not sure about an assignment, ask first.

Student Support

If you are struggling in this course, please contact me. Also consider these resources: Undergraduate Advising Center (<http://www.advising.ku.edu/>) Academic Achievement services (<https://www.achievement.ku.edu>). Please feel free to reach out to me if you are struggling with adjusting to college or are encountering interpersonal or family problems. Also, do not hesitate to use our campus mental health resources: <https://caps.ku.edu/> or the [Sexual Assault Prevention and Education Center](#)

Accessibility & Disability Services

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, KU invites students with disabilities to request reasonable accommodations. Additional information regarding KU’s academic accommodations may be found by visiting the Student Access Services - Academic Achievement & Access Center. The staff of Student Access Services (SAS), 135 Strong, 785-864-2620, coordinates accommodations and services for KU courses – contact them before you contact me. If you have a disability for which you may request accommodation in KU classes and have not contacted them, please do as soon as possible. Please get in touch with me, as well, in regards to accommodation for this course.

Religious Observances

If you are observing a religious holiday on the day something is due, you can receive an extension or an accommodation. To receive the accommodation, you must contact me at least one week prior to your religious absence.

Weekly Schedule

<p>Week 1</p> <p>Aug. 20</p>	<p>Bridge – An Overview</p> <p>Read: <i>Bidding in the 21st Century</i> chapter 1 “Getting Started” pgs. 2-28.</p> <p>Watch: Bill Gates on the Importance of Bridge (00:30) Bill Gates and Warren Buffett on Bridge (6:15) Interview with Bahar Gidwani (1:37) Learn to Play Bridge in 5 Minutes (5:58) ABF Lesson 1: Introduction to Bridge (6:56)</p> <p>Do: Quiz 1 – Scoring and the Bidding Ladder (open Aug. 23rd at 7 AM, due by Aug. 24 7 PM)</p>
<p>Week 2</p> <p>Aug. 27</p>	<p>Hand Valuation and Bidding Basics</p> <p>Read: “Bidding Basics”; <i>Bidding in the 21st Century</i> chapter 2 “Objectives” pgs. 30-63.</p> <p>Watch: ABF Lesson 2: Bidding (6:55) Tips on Bidding (2:02)</p> <p>Do: Quiz 2 – Hand Valuation and Opening Bids (open Aug. 30th at 7 AM, due by Aug. 31st 7 PM)</p>
<p>Week 3</p> <p>Sept. 3</p>	<p>NO CLASS – Happy Labor Day</p> <p>Do: Play two hands of bridge, record the hands, bidding, and results (due by Sept. 7th at 7 PM)</p>
<p>Week 4</p> <p>Sept. 10</p>	<p>Responding to Your Partner’s Opening Bid</p> <p>Read: “Bidding is a Conversation”; <i>Bidding in the 21st Century</i> chapter 4 “Responses to Opening Bids of One in a Suit” pgs. 94-129.</p> <p>Watch: ABF Lesson 4: Responding to Suit Bids (10:12) To Raise or Not to Raise by Patty Tucker (2:46)</p> <p>Do: Quiz 3 – Responding to Partner’s Opening Bid (open Sept. 13th at 7 AM, due by Sept. 14th 7 PM)</p>

<p>Week 5</p> <p>Sept. 17</p>	<p>Notrump Bidding</p> <p>Read: Stayman – The Bidding Toolkit; Jacoby Transfers – The Bidding Toolkit; Notrump Auctions – Responses Recommended: Stayman – <i>25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know</i> chapter 1; Jacoby Transfers – <i>25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know</i> chapter 8; “The Stayman Convention” – <i>Bidding in the 21st Century</i> chapter 9.</p> <p>Watch: How to Play Stayman by Peter Hollands (first 13 minutes of 29:01) Jacoby Transfers by Learn Bridge NYC (18:35)</p> <p>Do: Quiz 4 – Responding to Partner’s 1N Opening (open Sept. 20th at 7 AM, due by Sept. 21st 7 PM)</p>
<p>Week 6</p> <p>Sept. 24</p>	<p>Principles of Declarer Play</p> <p>Guest Appearance: Dave Chipman, Gold Life Master</p> <p>Read: “Count Your Winners” and “Count Your Losers” in <i>Bridge Maxims</i> by Audrey Grant and Eric Rodwell, chapter 1 and 2, pgs. 1-41.</p> <p>Watch: ABF Mastering the Finesse (3:36) Suit Establishment by Dominic Rayner (25:40)</p> <p>Do: Quiz 5 – Continuations by 1N Opener (open Sept. 27th at 7 AM, due by Sept. 28th 7 PM)</p>
<p>Week 7</p> <p>Oct. 1</p>	<p>Principles of Defense</p> <p>Read: “The Opening Lead” in <i>Introduction to Defender’s Play</i> by Edwin Kantar, pgs. 5-17.</p> <p>Watch: Opening Leads Against Notrump Contracts (5:43) Opening Leads Against Suit Contracts by Patty Tucker (3:11)</p> <p>Do: Turn in a brief description of your paper idea (20 points possible) (Due Oct. 5 by 7 PM)</p>
<p>Week 8</p> <p>Oct. 8</p>	<p>Contract Bridge and Social Capital</p> <p>David Owen, “Turning Tricks: The Rise and Fall of Contract Bridge”; Robert Putnam, <i>Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community</i>, pgs. 1-28 and 102-108.</p> <p>Do: short writing assignment about bridge and social capital (20 points possible) (Due Oct. 12 by 7 PM)</p>

<p>Week 9</p> <p>Oct. 15</p>	<p>Bridge, Cultural Capital, and Social Inequality</p> <p>Read: Gary Pomerantz, <i>The Devil's Tickets: A Night of Bridge, A Fatal Hand, and a New American Age</i>, chapters 1, 3 and 7, pgs. 1-23, 41-50, 82-93; Local Bridge Player, 80, Among World's Best</p> <p>Watch: Audrey Grant interviews Jenny Ryman Wolpert (9:16)</p> <p>Do: short writing assignment about bridge and social stratification (20 points possible) (Due Oct. 19 by 7 PM)</p>
<p>Week 10</p> <p>Oct. 22</p>	<p>Bridge and Ethics</p> <p>Read: David Owen, "Dirty Hands: The Cheating Problem in Professional Bridge." <i>New Yorker</i></p> <p>Watch: The Fisher/Schwartz Cheating Scandal (8:08) Aces and Knives documentary trailer (2:06) Fast and Loud Penalty Double (0:28) Proper Tempo Penalty Double (0:28) Fast Pass to Convey a Minimum (0:31) Proper Tempo by Opener (0:34)</p> <p>Do: short writing assignment about bridge and ethics (20 points possible) (Due Oct. 26 by 7 PM)</p>
<p>Week 11</p> <p>Oct. 29</p>	<p>Bridge and Mathematics Overcalls</p> <p>Guest Appearance: Dr. Jeremy Martin (Professor of Mathematics)</p> <p>Read: Overcalls part 1 – The Bidding Toolkit; Overcalls part 2 – The Bidding Toolkit; <i>Bidding in the 21st Century</i> chapter 8 “Overcalls and Bids by the Advancer,” pgs. 230-251 (pages 252-269 are optional).</p> <p>Watch: The Basics of Overcalls – Bridge Chats with Patty (6:05) Competitive Bidding and Overcalls by BridgeHands (18:04)</p> <p>Do: Quiz 6 (open Nov. 1st at 7 AM, due by Nov. 2nd at 7 PM)</p>

Week 12 Nov. 5	<p>Advanced Bidding Concepts: Weak Two Bids</p> <p>Guest Appearance: Dr. Joane Nagel (Distinguished Professor of Sociology and Chair of the Department of Anthropology)</p> <p>Read: The Strength of Weak Hands; Weak Two-Bids – <i>25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know</i> chapter 3; Preempts and Jump Overcalls by Lynn Berg Optional: Weak Two Bids parts 1 and 2 – The Bidding Toolkit</p> <p>Listen: Larry Cohen discusses the Weak Two Bid (8:24)</p> <p>Do: Quiz 7 (open Nov. 9th at 7 AM, due by Nov. 10th at 7 PM)</p>
Week 13 Nov. 12	<p>Advanced Bidding Concepts: Takeout Doubles</p> <p>Read: Takeout Double – <i>25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know</i> chapter 2; <i>Bidding in the 21st Century</i> chapter 8 “Takeout Doubles and Responses,” pgs. 272-288 (especially pages 287-288, pages 289-307 are optional); Takeout Double in Bridge Bum</p> <p>Watch: The Takeout Double – Bridge Chats with Patty (4:34)</p> <p>Do: Quiz 8 (open Nov. 16th at 7 AM, due by Nov. 17th at 7 PM)</p>
Week 14 Nov. 19	<p>Advanced Bidding Concepts: Bidding Big Hands</p> <p>Read: Bidding Big Hands; Blackwood – <i>25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know</i> chapter 6; Blackwood – The Bidding Toolkit; Strong Two Clubs – <i>25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know</i> chapter 4</p> <p>Watch: Blackwood Slam Bidding by BridgeHands (13:40, especially the first 6 minutes); A Delicate Slam Hand Using Blackwood (3:32)</p> <p>Do: Quiz 9 (open Nov. 21st at 7 AM, due by Nov. 25st at 7 PM – note extended time)</p>
Week 15 Nov. 26	<p>In-Class Tournament (** final papers due Wednesday November 28 **)</p>
Week 16 Dec. 3	<p>In-Class Tournament</p>

Week 17	In-Class Tournament
Dec. 10	

Short Writing Assignment Prompts

Paper Idea Write a paragraph (100-200 words) about the topic of your final paper assignment. The goal of this assignment is to prompt you to start thinking about your final paper and the evidence you will use to build it. This isn't a contract; you can change your mind later. Be thoughtful. Be creative. The writing style for this assignment can be informal.

Bridge and Social Capital In a well-organized essay (400-500 words), discuss the connection between bridge and social capital. Your essay should consider some or all of the following questions: What is social capital? Why is it important? Historically, how has the game of bridge fostered social capital? What are the current barriers or obstacles to the development of social capital through contract bridge? How can these barriers be overcome? High-scoring essays will show evidence of having read and absorbed the readings by Putnam and Owen.

Bridge and Social Inequality In a well-organized essay (400-500 words), discuss the connection between bridge and social inequality using the Week 9 course materials. Your essay might focus on social class, gender, or both. (You could also discuss race, but the course material doesn't really cover race in an explicit way). There are a number of questions to consider, but trying to address them all might spread your essay too thin. Why was bridge a popular activity among different social classes in the early twentieth century? How did bridge develop as an activity favored by the upper class? How did bridge develop as a gendered activity (an activity that has implications for the social organization of gender)? Why are men over-represented in the upper echelons of competitive bridge? Historically, why did this occur? What are the barriers to women (and/or members of the lower class) in gaining an equal footing with men in the competitive bridge scene? How can these barriers be overcome? High-scoring essays will use specific examples from the Pomerantz reading and/or the other week's material.

Bridge and Ethics In a well-organized essay (400-500 words), discuss the ongoing problem of cheating and unethical practices in competitive bridge. Your essay might address some of the following questions: What are the ethical issues at stake in the world of competitive bridge? What are the boundaries between ethical and unethical behavior in bridge? What was new about the Fisher/Schwartz cheating scandal? In what ways was the Fisher/Schwartz scandal consistent with past forms of cheating? What do you think can be done to lessen or eliminate unethical practices in the world of competitive bridge? What's the ACBL's concept of "active ethics?" How can that concept be fruitfully applied to areas outside the bridge world?