

Communication 3628

Contemporary Persuasion Theory

Autumn 2019: Monday/Wednesday 3:00-4:50 (360 Journalism Building)

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Course Description

This class is designed to introduce students to the central conceptual, theoretical, and applied issues in the study of persuasion. In particular, students will gain familiarity with 1) major classic and contemporary theories of persuasion; 2) key terms used by social influence researchers and practitioners, 3) common heuristics, or simple decision rules, that guide the decision making process, and 4) ethical implications associated with persuasive attempts. Students should complete the class not only with a strong understanding of persuasion theory but also with the ability to recognize persuasive appeals, to understand the underlying mechanisms through which they operate, and to construct effective persuasive messages for both interpersonal and mass media contexts.

Required Readings

1. Grymier, A. B., & Nadler, M. K. (2017). *Persuasion: Integrating theory, research, and practice*. 4th Edition. Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt.
2. Cialdini, R. B. (2009). *Influence: Science and Practice* (5th Edition). Boston, MA: Pearson/Allyn & Bacon.

Course Requirements

Readings: Reading prior to class is a requirement. The required readings are designed to be a starting point for our class discussions and activities. If you do not read before class, I will have less to talk about that will interest you and you will have fewer questions for me. In addition, you will be unable to participate in many of the in-class assignments without having read the assigned reading before class.

Lecture and Discussion: Questions and discussion are encouraged. The class discussions are designed to highlight, explain, update, and enhance material in the text as well as cover issues that the text does not. You should be prepared to ask and answer questions, provide thoughtful commentary, and engage in meaningful discussions of the assigned readings by the due dates listed in the syllabus. This will require that you do more than “skim” the reading material. A consistent pattern of a lack of preparation to discuss assigned reading will result in reduction in your in-class assignments grade.

Exams: There will be two exams based on the material covered in class and in the assigned readings. The exams are not cumulative, though later information presented in the course builds on earlier information. Exams will be composed of multiple choice questions.

In-Class Participation Assignments: You will regularly be asked to complete in-class assignments to illustrate course concepts. Some assignments will be carried out individually while others will be completed in a group. Most of these assignments will be finished entirely in class. Because many of these assignments necessitate participation in the group discussion and activity, **they cannot be made up** if you need to miss class for any reason. However, I will drop your lowest in-class assignment score, providing you with a cushion should you need to miss a class. If you need to miss more than one class period due to an illness or other emergency, please be in touch with me immediately so that we can work together to find a solution. This opportunity to make up assignments will only be considered if the illness or emergency situation A) can be documented and B) is brought to my attention within 24 hours of the missed class.

Online assignments: This class uses a hybrid format, meaning that some of the course material will be conducted online. The online content is designed to give you a chance to get additional information as well as apply the persuasion theories and concepts we cover in our in-person class meetings in a real world context. Detailed information about each assignment is provided on the course website.

Final Project: Together with a group (typically 5 people) you will choose a theory to use in order to create a persuasive video (i.e., a public service announcement) about a social issue of your choice. Each group will have an opportunity to present their video and the theoretical rationale for the video during our last week of class. Detailed information about this assignment is provided on the course website.

Finding Everyday Examples—Extra Credit: You can earn extra credit by observing something you see out in the world (newspaper article, ad, picture you took, study you read about etc.) that you think is related to the content of the class and worth sharing with your classmates. The critical part of this assignment is to link your observed example of persuasion to a specific theory on concept from class. You should email me your example and if I think it is appropriate for sharing, you can earn extra points (up to 5 points) by giving a short presentation (max. 5 minutes) as well as submitting a short write -up (max. 250 words) about the example and specifically how it exemplifies **ONE** theory or concept from class. Your proposal must first be sent to me and determined to be an accurate example with a specific theory articulated. Only if I approve this proposal can you be eligible to present it to the class and earn the extra credit. Each student can submit a maximum of three proposals, but only one will be accepted. That is, you can have up to three attempts to earn the extra credit once. Due to time constraints during the lecture, and depending on the number of submissions, I may have to make alterations regarding the format of your contribution (i.e., written only, no presentation). Regardless of the format, you will have to provide the example (e.g., by adding an article link or image). It cannot be just something you've heard with no visual artifact. Then in your presentation and write-up you should explain why it is an example of a concept discussed in class. To be considered for extra credit, you must submit your write-up to me as well

as a PowerPoint slide you plan to use in class to present the example. You can submit proposals no later than 5:00pm, 11/25.

Grading Scale

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percent</i>
A	93%-100%	C	73%-76%
A-	90%-92%	C-	70%-72%
B+	87%-89%	D+	67%-69%
B	83%-86%	D	63%-66%
B-	80%-82%	D-	60-62%
C+	77%-79%	E	<60%

Your grade in this course will be calculated according to the following work. There will NOT be opportunities for any student to re-take exams, re-complete assignments, or complete additional work in order to raise his/her grade outside what is laid out in this syllabus. Providing extra assignments for one student or “bumping up” a grade for one student invalidates the standards applied to the class and is unfair. For this reason, please do not ask me to reconsider your grade when the semester is over unless there has been an error in how it was calculated.

Exam 1	22.5%
Exam 2	22.5%
In-class participation assignments	15%
Online Assignments	20%
<u>Final Project</u>	<u>20%</u>
Total	100%

Course Policies

Exams: All exams are to be taken in class on the designated exam dates. No early or late exams will be given except in the case of an illness or other emergency. In the rare event that an illness or emergency arises, it is your responsibility to: 1) inform the professor prior to the scheduled exam time, and 2) provide the professor with written documentation of the emergency. Such documentation must be presented before the missed exam whenever possible (and by the next class period when this is not possible). Please note that make-up exams may be of a different format or cover course content in a different ratio than the original. Also note that if you arrive after the first person has completed/left the exam, you will not be allowed to take the exam (i.e., you will receive a zero on the exam).

Assignments & Deadlines: Each assignment is due on the designated date. Late assignments are marked down 10% per day including weekends. If you are unable to complete an assignment on time due to an

illness or other emergency, please be in touch with me immediately so that we can work together to find a solution. I will only consider an extension to a due date if the illness or emergency situation A) can be documented and B) is brought to my attention within 24 hours of the missed assignment.

Use of Email and Office Hours: You are responsible for all information sent to you via your OSU email account and/or posted on the Course Website. Therefore, it is important for you to check your OSU email account regularly and be sure to purge your account of unneeded email so that new messages can get through. Check your SPAM settings to be certain that class wide emails are getting through to your inbox. Similarly, check the Course website regularly for any updates or announcements.

Email is sometimes a useful way to obtain answers to brief questions of clarification. Email questions should be limited to those things that A) cannot wait until before/after class to ask me and B) cannot be answered by looking at the syllabus or other materials posted on Carmen. If you have more involved questions, these should be reserved for a one-on-one session during office hours. You can generally expect a response to email questions within 24 hours.

Respect for Fellow Students and Professor:

Disruptions: Please silence your phone during class. If you choose to come to class, you should give your full attention to any person who is speaking (e.g., the professor or another student). Please turn off phones or other devices that make noise during class. During class, avoid reading newspapers, sending text messages/email, sleeping, browsing the Internet, working on other class projects, talking while others are talking, etc. ***Students engaging in these or other disruptive behaviors during class will be asked to leave and will lose any in-class points associated with that class meeting.*** Texting and email checking on your phone are disruptive to the professor and to those around you. Please excuse yourself from class if you must engage in this activity during class time.

Technology Policy: Students are NOT allowed to take photographs, record video, or record audio during class. I do not permit the use of phones in class as they introduce a variety of potential disruptions. Please excuse yourself from class if you need to attend to your phone for any reason. If a student disrupts the class and/or violates the technology policy, I will ask the student to stop whatever action they are engaging in or to leave the classroom.

Academic Integrity

All students at the Ohio State University are bound by the code of student conduct (see http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp). Any evidence of academic misconduct will be reported to the Committee on Academic Misconduct in accordance with the Ohio State University Code of Student Conduct and the rules of faculty governance. Academic misconduct is any activity that compromises the academic integrity of the institution or subverts the educational process. Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:

1. Violation of course rules as contained in the course syllabus or other information provided to the student; violation of program regulations as established by departmental committees and made available to students;
2. Knowingly providing or receiving information during examinations such as course examinations and candidacy examinations; or the possession and/or use of unauthorized materials during those examinations;
3. Knowingly providing or using assistance in the laboratory, on field work, in scholarship or on a course assignment;
4. Submitting plagiarized work for an academic requirement. Plagiarism is the representation of another's work or ideas as one's own; it includes the unacknowledged word-for-word use and/or paraphrasing of another person's work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas;
5. Submitting substantially the same work to satisfy requirements for one course or academic requirement that has been submitted in satisfaction of requirements for another course or academic requirement, without permission of the instructor of the course for which the work is being submitted or supervising authority for the academic requirement;
6. Falsification, fabrication, or dishonesty in creating or reporting laboratory results, research results, and/or any other assignments;
7. Serving as, or enlisting the assistance of a substitute for a student in the taking of examinations;
8. Alteration of grades or marks by the student in an effort to change the earned grade or credit;
9. Alteration of academically-related university forms or records, or unauthorized use of those forms or records; and
10. Engaging in activities that unfairly place other students at a disadvantage, such as taking, hiding or altering resource material, or manipulating a grading system.

School of Communication Diversity Statement: The School of Communication at The Ohio State University embraces and maintains an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, experiences, and people. Our commitment to diversity moves beyond mere tolerance to recognizing, understanding, and welcoming the contributions of diverse groups and the value group members possess as individuals. In our School, the faculty, students, and staff are dedicated to building a tradition of diversity with principles of equal opportunity, personal respect, and the intellectual interests of those who comprise diverse cultures.

Accommodations

Any student who may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, you should contact me to arrange an appointment as soon as possible. At the appointment we can discuss the course format and explore possible accommodations. I rely on the Office for Disability Services for assistance in verifying the need for the accommodation and developing accommodation strategies. The office can be contacted at 614-292-3307 and is located in room 150 Pomerene Hall.

Classroom Schedule & Readings

Week	Date	Lecture Topic	Readings
	M 10/14	Course Overview & Introduction	---
	W 10/16	Persuasion Overview: What is persuasion? Why study persuasion?	Frymier & Nadler: Chapter 1 & Chapter 7
	M 10/21	Group Project Work Day	--
	W 10/23	Understanding Attitudes & Behavior (TRA, TPB)	Frymier & Nadler: Chapter 2 & Chapter 10
	M 10/28	Attitude—Consistency & Reactance	Frymier & Nadler: Chapter 9
	W 10/30	Source & Message Factors (EPPM; Inoculation)	Frymier & Nadler: Chapter 4 & Chapter 5
	M 11/4	Receiver & Context Factors (social judgment theory)	Frymier & Nadler: Chapter 6 & Chapter 8
	W 11/6	Exam 1	--
	M 11/11	Veterans Day—No Classes Today	
	W 11/13	Dual Processing Theories	Frymier & Nadler: Chapter 11
	M 11/18	Weapons of Influence & Reciprocity	Cialdini, 1 & 2
	W 11/20	Group Project Work Day	
	M 11/25	Commitment & Consistency Social Proof	Cialdini, 3 & 4
	W 11/27	Thanksgiving Break—No Classes Today	
	M 12/2	Liking, Authority, & Scarcity	Cialdini, 5, 6, & 7
	W 12/4	Student Presentations	---

F 12/6

Exam 2: 12:00-1:45pm**Online Assignments**

Assignment	Topic	Due Date
Online #1	Three Means of Persuasion	10/22
Online #2	Attitudes	10/27
Online #3	Receiver traits	11/3
Online #4	Persuasion Ethics	11/12
Online #5	ELM	11/21
Online #6	Weapons of influence	12/1