

**Syllabus**  
**Communication 3628**  
**Contemporary Persuasion Theory**  
**Autumn 2021**  
**Online DL Course**

<b>Professor</b>
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### **Course description**

Persuasion theories and issues in mass audience settings; persuasion in interpersonal contexts, including organizations, communities, family, and personal relationships.

**This course will be delivered 100% online using an asynchronous distance learning mode.** 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.

Course Objectives:

1. You will learn to demonstrate an understanding of the theories of persuasion.
2. You will learn about and apply ethical principles of persuasive messages.
3. You will demonstrate an understanding of persuasive messages and be able to explain why they work or fail using persuasion research and theory.

## Mode of delivery

This course will be presented fully online. Course content will take the form of required readings, asynchronous lectures and videos, weekly asynchronous small group interactions with other students and online assignments.

## How this course works

Each week, students can go to the modules tab on the Carmen course website to begin. Each week will have its own module wherein all required content and assignments for that week can be found. The “start here” section of the weekly module will begin with an introduction video from the professor explaining what the topic of the week is and what to expect. From there, students will find a roadmap explaining all the requirements of the week and can click through to complete everything needed for that week in one place.

## Required Readings

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

# Grading & Course Requirements

## Course Requirements

### Readings

Please read the assigned material for each week before going through the online module (i.e., lectures, quizzes, assignments). This will allow you to see connections and better understand the related material presented in lectures.

### **Weekly Reflection Assignment**

Each week you will be asked to respond to a prompt that will allow you to reflect on some aspect(s) of that week's content. This will be a brief written assignment that will require you to spend some time thinking about the content from that week before writing a brief response. Some of these reflections are designed to help you identify questions you may have or areas where the week's content is a little unclear. When these are identified, you are encouraged to raise them on the "ask the professor" online discussion board for clarification.

### **Weekly Group Interaction Assignment**

In this course, you have been randomly assigned to a smaller learning group (roughly 10 people) with whom you will have an opportunity to interact each week via the course online discussion board set up for your group. Each week you will have specific instructions within the module for how you should discuss that week's content with your group members. For example, these assignments may include a series of prompts to respond to, or an opportunity to share an example of a case study or sample real-world persuasion example you have found that relates to course concepts. You will follow the instructions provided in each weekly module in order to complete the weekly interaction assignment.

### **Weekly Content Quiz**

Each week you will be given an assignment to complete that will enhance your understanding of the topic(s) covered that week. You will be asked to complete a brief quiz to help you assess what you've learned from the weekly lecture videos and readings and assist you in preparing for exams. These assignments are due each week. (Specific due dates are posted on the syllabus and Carmen).

### **Exams**

There will be two exams based on material covered in class and in the assigned readings. The exams are not cumulative. Both lecture material and reading assignments will be tested. Exams will be composed of multiple-choice questions.

## **Grading**

Following are the percentages for each assignment category There will NOT be opportunities for any student to re-take exams, re-complete assignments, or complete additional work in order to raise their 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 to every student.** 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.

Assignments	Percentage
Reflection assignments	20%
Group interaction assignments	20%
Weekly Content quiz	20%
Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%

## Grading scale

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

**Please note:** Carmen Canvas, OSU’s grading and class management software, does not round fractions up. Please take that into account in computing grades. I do not manually round up grades.

## Grading and feedback

For weekly assignments, you can generally expect feedback within **7-10 days**.

**Assignments & Deadlines:** Each assignment is due on the designated date. Late assignments are marked down 10% per day including weekends. In an online course, it is your responsibility to have consistent access to a reliable Internet connection and all required software noted above. You should build in extra time to resolve technical problems so that you are able to do that while still meeting deadlines. For assistance with tech issues, please contact OCIO (details provided below in section on technology). Deadlines will **not** be extended for technological problems. If, however, you have an emergency or illness that precludes you from meeting a deadline, please let us know that right away. Provided that the emergency is brought to my attention within 24 hours of the deadline and can be documented, late penalties may be waived.

**Technology issues:** Technical failure does not constitute an excuse for submitting work late. This rule is critical in online courses. You are, per course requirements, expected to have regular access to a working computer/laptop and high-speed internet access. It is your responsibility to make sure your devices are in working order, which includes hardware and software. Technical problems which are documented by the University's Office of the Chief Information Officer ([https://osuitsm.service-now.com/selfservice/system\\_status](https://osuitsm.service-now.com/selfservice/system_status)) will be permitted as these are outside of your control. If you experience a problem with an OSU system (email, Carmen) which OCIO have not reported, it will be your responsibility to raise a ticket with them. Only after they confirm your situation was out of your control will an accommodation be made. Note that a situation like this is extremely rare. If you find yourself experiencing a technical issue that impacts your ability to take part in essential class activities, your first response should be to make alternate arrangements.

**Exams:** All exams are to be taken online, using Proctorio, on the designated exam dates. You are required to take the exam alone on the scheduled day. The exam will be open for a 24-hour period on the date listed on the schedule below starting at 12 a.m. and closing at 11:59 p.m. The exam may be taken at an alternative time when approved by the instructor for one of the following reasons: (a) the absence is a university excused activity, necessary documentation is provided, and arrangements for make-up are made in advance; or (b) the absence is due to a medical or family emergency, necessary documentation is provided, and arrangements for makeup are made within 24 hours of the missed exam. If the requirements for (a) or (b) are not fully met, you will receive 0 points for the exam. Please note that make-up exams may be of a different format or cover course content in a slightly different ratio than the original.

## Attendance, participation, and discussions

### Credit hour and work expectation

This is a 3-credit-hour course. According to Ohio State policy, students should expect around 3 hours per week of time spent on direct instruction (instructor content and Carmen activities, for example) in addition to 6 hours of homework (reading and assignment preparation, for example) to receive a grade of (C) average. [ASC Honors](#) provides an excellent guide to scheduling and study expectations.

### Student participation requirements

Because this is a 100% distance-education course, your attendance is based on your online activity and participation. We do not have any in-person lectures or exams as the course can be done completely online. Recorded lectures will be uploaded to Carmen each week by Monday. The lectures should be viewed within the week that they are posted to be sure you are up to date with the course materials.

The following is a summary of everyone's expected participation:

**Viewing lectures and other posted videos:**

- These can be found on Carmen within the weekly modules. In some cases, you will find a link within the Carmen module that will take you to another site to view the video (i.e., Kanopy). More than one lecture may appear in the upload. The videos are short to provide the most optimal viewing experience and to increase attention and engagement.
- The lectures will be my voice over a PowerPoint presentation, to make it easier to access, but please make certain you have a strong internet connection for watching the lectures and audio equipment (headphones are helpful).
- Per the Code of Conduct, you may not share recorded lectures. This is a copyright violation

**Weekly assignments**

As noted above, assignments will include weekly content quizzes, reflections, and group interaction. The details, expectations, and due dates for each assignment will be found within the weekly module on Carmen.

**Readings**

Required readings are listed on the syllabus as well as within each weekly module on Carmen. These readings include chapters from your textbook as well as additional articles posted online.

## How to Communicate with the Professor

**“Ask the Professor” online discussion board:** If your question is something that you believe may be of interest to others in the class, please use the “Ask the Professor” online discussion board on Carmen. Unless your question is something of a private nature or something very particular to your situation, ask me by posting to the “Ask the Professor” online discussion board. I will check these questions daily and you can expect a reply within 24 hours on weekdays (longer on weekends).

**Email:** For private questions, or those that are highly specific to your individual situation, you can email the course TA (contact info above) and me. One of us will respond to email within 24 hours on weekdays (longer on weekends). Please do not email with questions that can be answered by reviewing the syllabus or other official course documents.

\*It is not feasible for me to help you with technical problems. **University Tech support can help you (614-688-HELP).**

**Office Hours:** For more in-depth questions, please use office hours. This is the appropriate way to review exams, ask conceptual questions about assignments, grading, or course content you may not understand. Office hours are virtual via Carmen Zoom at the times indicated on page 1 of this syllabus (or by appointment).

**Use of Email and Carmen:** You are responsible for all information sent to you via your OSU email account and/or posted on the Carmen Website. Therefore, it is important for you to check your OSU email account daily and be sure to purge your account of unneeded email so that new messages can get through. Similarly, check the Carmen website regularly for any updates or announcements.

## Discussion and communication guidelines

The following are my expectations for how we should communicate as a class. Above all, please remember to be respectful and thoughtful.

- **Tone and civility:** Let's maintain a supportive learning community where people can disagree amicably. Remember that sarcasm does not always come across online. The instructor and TA both work very hard to provide a positive learning experience. Please keep this in mind and remain civilized and respectful in your email and online discussion board communications.
- **Citing your sources:** When we have academic discussions, please cite your sources to back up what you say. (For the textbook or other course materials, please use APA style. For online sources, be sure to include a link.)

## Encouraging an optimal learning experience

Previous distance learning courses have provided insights from students on how to improve the learning experience and optimize outcomes. Here are a few tips from previous students to encourage your success in this online course:

- Students kept up with the Schedule and assignment due dates.
- Students made sure they had access to a reliable internet connection.
- Students had access to at least one reliable device and a backup plan in case of a technological issue.
- Students have made plans to back up work. OSU provides free access to data storage through [BuckeyeBox](#) and [Microsoft One Drive](#).
- Students reported that completing assigned readings before viewing lectures helped them to be prepared to follow along with lectures and participate in discussions.
- Students scheduled time to complete activities at a steady pace during the week. Keeping a schedule prevented a last-minute rush and kept the workload manageable.

- Students approached the material by thinking about the connections between readings, lectures, and assignments.

## Course technology

For help with your password, university e-mail, Carmen, or any other technology issues, questions, or requests, contact the OSU IT Service Desk. Standard support hours are available at <https://ocio.osu.edu/help/hours>, and support for urgent issues is available 24x7.

- **Self-Service and Chat support:** <http://ocio.osu.edu/selfservice>
- **Phone:** 614-688-HELP (4357)
- **Email:** [8help@osu.edu](mailto:8help@osu.edu)
- **TDD:** 614-688-8743

### Carmen:

- Carmen, Ohio State's Learning Management System, will be used to host materials and activities throughout this course. To access Carmen, visit [Carmen.osu.edu](https://carmen.osu.edu). Log in to Carmen using your name.# and password. If you have not setup a name.# and password, visit [my.osu.edu](https://my.osu.edu).
- Help guides on the use of Carmen can be found at <https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/carmen>
- **This online course requires use of Carmen (Ohio State's learning management system) and other online communication and multimedia tools. If you need additional services to use these technologies, please request accommodations with your instructor.**
  - [Carmen accessibility](#)

### Carmen Zoom:

- Office hours will be held through Ohio State's conferencing platform, Carmen Zoom. A separate guide to accessing Carmen Zoom and our office hours is posted on the course Carmen page under Files.
- Students may use the audio and video functions if a webcam and microphone are available. If not, there is still a chat function within Carmen Zoom for the student to live chat with the professor or TA in the virtual office hours room.
- [Carmen Zoom](#) help guide

### Proctorio:



- Proctorio, an online proctoring tool, will be used during this course. Proctorio offers you flexibility to take your exams at the time and in the location of your choosing. Students are required to have a webcam (USB or internal) with a microphone and a strong and stable internet connection. During an exam, Proctorio will record the testing environment, therefore students should select private spaces for the exam session where disruptions are unlikely and where recording devices can be enabled.
- Instructions for setting up and using Proctorio can be found at: <https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/carmencanvas/getting-started-proctorio-students>
- To use Proctorio you must be **over 18 years of age**.
- Additionally, the tool has **limitations in its accessibility** for students reliant upon screen readers and keyboard navigation. If you have concerns about using an online proctoring tool for the reasons listed above or in general, please contact your instructor to find an equivalent alternative.
- Proctorio offers free [24/7 student support](#) through web chat or email.

### **Baseline technical skills necessary for online courses**

- Basic computer and web-browsing skills
- Navigating Carmen

### **Necessary equipment**

- Computer: current Mac (OS X) or PC (Windows 10) with high-speed internet connection
- Web cam and microphone

### **Necessary software**

- Word processor with the ability to save files under .doc, .docx, .rtf, or .pdf. Most popular word processing software programs, including Microsoft Word and Mac Pages, have these abilities.
- OSU students have access to Microsoft Office products free of charge. To install, please visit [https://osuitsm.service-now.com/selfservice/kb\\_view.do?sysparm\\_article=kb04733](https://osuitsm.service-now.com/selfservice/kb_view.do?sysparm_article=kb04733)

## **Other course policies**

### **Student Academic Services**

Arts and Sciences Advising and Academic Services' website provides support for student academic success. Information on advising issues such as tutoring, transfer credits, academic

standing, and contact information for Arts and Sciences advisors can be obtained through this website. The site is: <http://advising.osu.edu/welcome.shtml>

## Student Services

The Student Service Center assists with financial aid matters, tuition, and fee payments. Please see their site at: <http://ssc.osu.edu>

## Copyright Disclaimer

The materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection and are only for the use of students officially enrolled in the course for the educational purposes associated with the course. Copyright law must be considered before copying, retaining, or disseminating materials outside of the course.

## Diversity

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.

## Title IX

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Interim Ohio State Title IX Coordinator, Molly Peirano, at [titleix@osu.edu](mailto:titleix@osu.edu)

## Mental Health

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing.

If you are or someone you know is suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting [ccs.osu.edu](http://ccs.osu.edu) or calling 614--292--5766. CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766.

If you are thinking of harming yourself or need a safe, non-judgmental place to talk, or if you are worried about someone else and need advice about what to do, 24-hour emergency help is also available through the Suicide Prevention Hotline (Columbus: 614-221-5445)

## COVID-19 and Illness Policies

### University COVID policies

#### Student illness or absence

If *you* are too ill to participate in this course due to COVID-19 or another illness, please contact the instructor as soon as you are able. All materials are available on Carmen, including lecture recordings and slides. But extensions may be arranged.

#### Instructor illness or absence

If the *instructor* is too ill to teach the course for a period of time, the designated backup instructor for this course will step in. You will be notified via email from the School of Communication.

## Academic integrity policy

### Policies for this online course

- **Written assignments:** Your written assignments, including online discussion board posts, should be your own original work. In formal assignments, you should follow **APA** style to cite the ideas and words of your research sources. You are encouraged to ask a trusted person to proofread your assignments before you turn them in--but no one else should revise or rewrite your work.
- **Reusing past work:** In general, you are prohibited in university courses from turning in work from a past class to your current class, even if you modify it. If you want to build on past research or revisit a topic you have explored in previous courses, please discuss the situation with me.

### Academic Misconduct

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever

committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>

## **Accessibility accommodations for students with disabilities**

### Requesting accommodations

**Students with disabilities (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions) that have been certified by the Office of Student Life Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office of Student Life Disability Services is located in 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue; telephone 614- 292-3307, [slds@osu.edu](mailto:slds@osu.edu); [slds.osu.edu](http://slds.osu.edu).**

## Course Schedule

For each week, you should review the weekly “module” on Carmen. Within that module, you will find all the videos, articles, and assignment details needed to complete that week’s assignments. Weekly modules are released by 9:00am each Monday.

Week 1	Topic	Readings	What’s Due? *All due dates are by 11:59pm unless otherwise noted here
8/24-8/27	Introduction: Course Overview & Introduction	The Syllabus; “Why Study Persuasion?”	Interactive assignment (initial post Wednesday; Responses Friday)  Reflection (Sunday)  Content quiz (Sunday)
Week 2			
8/30-9/3	Persuasion Overview: What is persuasion? The role of theory in persuasion  Early rhetorical theory: Ethos, logos, pathos	<b><u>Frymier &amp; Nadler:</u></b> Chapter 1: <i>The Concept of Persuasion</i>  Chapter 7: <i>The Role of Theory in Persuasion</i>	Interactive assignment (initial post Wednesday; Responses Friday)  Reflection (Sunday)  Content quiz (Sunday)
Week 3			
9/7-9/10	Persuasion and the audience: Understanding	<b><u>Frymier &amp; Nadler:</u></b>	Interactive assignment (initial

*University closed 9/6	Attitudes & Behavior (TRA, TPB)	Chapter 2: <i>Attitudes: Definition, Formation, and Measurement</i>  Chapter 10: <i>A Reasoned Action Approach</i>	post Wednesday; Responses Friday)  Reflection (Sunday)  Content quiz (Sunday)
<b>Week 4</b>			
9/13-9/17	Attitude Consistency & Reactance; Motivational appeals	<b><u>Frymier &amp; Nadler</u></b> Chapter 9: <i>Consistency and Cognitive Dissonance Theory</i>  Gass, R. H., & Seiter, J. S. (2016). <i>Motivational Appeals</i> . In, <i>Persuasion: Social influence and compliance gaining</i> . New York, NY: Routledge.	Interactive assignment (initial post Wednesday; Responses Friday)  Reflection (Sunday)  Content quiz (Sunday)
<b>Week 5</b>			
9/20-9/24	Source & Message Factors (EPPM; Inoculation; Persuasion & Language)	<b><u>Frymier &amp; Nadler</u></b> Chapter 4: <i>Source Factors</i> Chapter 5: <i>Message Factors</i>  Borchers, T. A. (2013). <i>Persuasion and Language</i> . In, <i>Persuasion in the Media Age</i> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> Edition, Waveland Press, Inc.: Long Grove, IL.	Interactive assignment (initial post Wednesday; Responses Friday)  Reflection (Sunday)  Content quiz (Sunday)
<b>Week 6</b>			
9/27-10/1	Receiver & Context Factors; Social judgment theory	<b><u>Frymier &amp; Nadler</u></b> Chapter 6: <i>Receiver and Channel Factors</i>  Chapter 8: <i>Social Judgment Theory</i>	Interactive assignment (initial post Wednesday; Responses Friday)  Reflection (Sunday)

			Content quiz (Sunday)
<b>Week 7</b>			
10/4-10/7	Review & Exam 1	Study notes, videos, and readings to prepare for exam	<b>You must take the exam between 12:00am and 11:59pm on 10/7</b>
<b>Week 8</b>			
10/11-10/13  *Autumn Break 10/14-10/15	Visual Persuasion/How images persuade	Borchers, T. A. (2013). <i>Persuasion and Visual Images</i> . In, <i>Persuasion in the Media Age</i> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> Edition, Waveland Press, Inc.: Long Grove, IL.	Interactive assignment (initial post Wednesday; Responses Friday)  Reflection (Sunday)  Content quiz (Sunday)
<b>Week 9</b>			
10/18-10/21	Dual Processing Theories	<b>Frymier &amp; Nadler:</b> Chapter 11: Elaboration Likelihood Model  Bhutada, N. S., Rollins, B. L., & Perri, M. (2017). Impact of animated spokes-characters in print direct-to-consumer prescription drug advertising: An elaboration likelihood model approach. <i>Health Communication</i> , 32, 391-400.	Interactive assignment (initial post Wednesday; Responses Friday)  Reflection (Sunday)  Content quiz (Sunday)
<b>Week 10</b>			
10/25-10/29	Narratives & Narrative resistance; "esoteric" forms of persuasion	Gass, R. H., & Seiter, J. S. (2016). <i>Esoteric forms of persuasion</i> . In, <i>Persuasion: Social influence and compliance gaining</i> . New York, NY: Routledge.	Interactive assignment (initial post Wednesday; Responses Friday)  Reflection (Sunday)

		Moyer-Guse, E., & Dale, K. (2017). Narrative persuasion theories. <i>The International Encyclopedia of Media Effects</i> . Wiley.	Content quiz (Sunday)
<b>Week 11</b>			
11/1-11/5	Introduction to Weapons of Influence; Reciprocity and Commitment & Consistency	<b>Cialdini</b> Chapter 1: <i>Weapons of Influence</i> Chapter 2: <i>Reciprocation: The Old Give and Take...and Take</i> Chapter 3: <i>Commitment and Consistency: Hobgoblins of the Mind</i>	Interactive assignment (initial post Wednesday; Responses Friday)  Reflection (Sunday)  Content quiz (Sunday)
<b>Week 12</b>			
11/8-11/12  *University holiday 11/11	Social Proof, Liking, Authority & Scarcity	<b>Cialdini</b> Chapter 4: <i>Social Proof: Truths are Us</i> Chapter 5: <i>Liking: The Friendly Thief</i> Chapter 6: <i>Authority: Directed Deference</i> Chapter 7: <i>Scarcity: The Rule of the Few</i>	Interactive assignment (initial post Wednesday; Responses Friday)  Reflection (Sunday)  Content quiz (Sunday)
<b>Week 13</b>			
11/15-11/19	Persuasion Ethics	<b>Frymier &amp; Nadler:</b> Chapter 15: <i>Ethics in Persuasion</i>	Interactive assignment (initial post Wednesday; Responses Friday)  Reflection (Sunday)  Content quiz (Sunday)



<b>Week 14</b>			
11/22-11/26  *Thanksgiving week. No classes Wed-Fri	Final Interactive Assignment Presentations	---	Post final project video and written rationale (Wednesday)
<b>Week 15</b>			
11/29-12/3	Review & Exam 2	Study notes, videos, and readings to prepare for exam	Comment on 3 of your group members' videos according to the posted assignment (Wednesday)  <b>You must take the exam between 12:00am and 11:59pm on 12/3</b>

\* Note: Course schedule is subject to change. In such a case, announcements will be made via email and Carmen announcements.