

**COMMUNICATION 3628  
CONTEMPORARY PERSUASION THEORY**

**Spring 2023**

Dr. Susan L. Kline  
Associate Professor  
Office: 3106 Derby Hall  
Phone: 292-0464  
Email: [Kline.48@osu.edu](mailto:Kline.48@osu.edu)  
Office Hours: Th., 11:30-12:30 or by appt.  
Zoom or in-person  
[Kline.48@osu.edu](mailto:Kline.48@osu.edu)

Meeting place & time:  
T Th 9:35-10:55; 371 Journalism

This course is a survey of contemporary theory and research in persuasive communication. Its primary purpose is to enable students to become more advanced analysts and producers of persuasive and deliberative messages. The subject of persuasion has included theories about commercial promotion as well as theories of rhetoric and dialogue. While some see persuasion as propaganda techniques, others see persuasion as the artful creation of desirable identities and situations. While some see persuasion as power and authority, others see persuasion as argument and pathos. Finally, while some see persuasion the result of cognitive processes, others see persuasion the result of linguistic and cultural practices. This term we will discuss a broad range of theories and research. We will first review contemporary theories of attitude formation and change. Then we will review the persuasive and deliberative message strategies that are often found to be effective and ethical in shaping contemporary rhetorical choices, in consumer culture as well as in our interpersonal and civic lives.

**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 learn to demonstrate an understanding of persuasive messages and arguments.
4. You will continue to develop your skills in producing effective written persuasive messages and arguments.
5. You will continue to advance your skills in creating and delivering effective oral persuasive messages.

**Course Type:**

While we have two class periods for us to meet, there will some sessions that will be online, with recorded lectures. These will be noted on Carmen and in class.

## Required Readings

Frymier, A. B., & Nadler, M. K. (2017). *Persuasion: Integrating theory, research, and practice*. 4th Edition. Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt. Selected chapters.

Cialdini, R. B. (2009). *Influence: Science and practice* (5th Edition). Boston, MA: Pearson/Allyn & Bacon.

Additional readings will be available through the Carmen course website.

To help you master the reading and lecture material:

1. Every reading will have a set of study guide questions available on the course website.
2. For some topics handouts summarizing or amplifying the reading material will be available, either in class or on the course website.

## Assignments

### Examinations (2 at 100 points each = 200)

There will be two examinations in this course that will cover concepts, findings and strategies from the course readings, materials and lectures. The examinations will consist of multiple choice and/or short answer-essay questions.

To help you prepare for these exams, I will provide study guide questions ahead of each exam and also hold a review session with a powerpoint prior to each exam.

### Group Practice Activities 50 points

We will have several opportunities (6-8) in class to obtain expertise in analyzing persuasive discourse (e.g. media interviews, advertisements, speeches, reports).

### Individual Expertise Activities 70 points

We will also have opportunities (2-3) in class or on discussion posts to develop individual skills and expertise in persuasion, such as engaging in self-presentation. Certain activities are designed for individual and not group work.

### Analyzing Persuasive Discourse with Attitude Change Theories 100 points

One important skill is to be able to analyze persuasive discourse using different theoretical frameworks. A first assignment is to analyze one website for a company, politician or nonprofit by applying two different attitude change theories we will discuss in the first three weeks of the course. Students are asked to take each theory and (a) explain, (b) apply and (c) evaluate an aspect of the website with each theory. The paper should be 4-6 pages double spaced, with one-inch margins, APA format, that includes a title and reference page.

### **Portfolio Case Project: Persuasive Speech Writing 150 points**

This is your opportunity to apply what you're learning by preparing a speech designed to persuade a target audience that there is an important social problem that needs to be solved. The essay/speech should be 4-6 pages double spaced, with one-inch margins, APA format, plus a title and reference page. The assignment will be distributed the second week of the course.

### **Portfolio Case Project: Policy presentation for promoting change 150 points**

The last part of the course is focused on discussing how to promote change regarding an issue of interest. Students will learn how to form a policy brief to promote change on a topic with a target audience. We'll want to conduct brief library or interview research to include on the issue. The paper can analyze the arguments of affected audiences, develop best recommendations, and use appropriate persuasive message strategies. The paper format should be no more than 4 pages single-spaced with one-inch margins, APA format, plus a title and reference page. Aspects of the recommendations and arguments can be provided in Tables. Each student will present their policy presentation orally to the class. (Speech = 75; Essay = 75)

We will devote time in class to work on these projects, and I'll set aside time for office hours for conferences.

### **Participation 100 points**

Besides the lecture-discussions, our sessions will involve class discussions of case studies, and applying course concepts in group activities and tasks that are due at the end of the same day class session, or by the end of the next day.

### **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%

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

### **COURSE POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS**

**Attendance:** Attendance is expected at all class sessions and will be taken; beyond four absences is the point that a student's grade may be affected. Please let me know if you need to miss class.

**Late Assignments:** Unless otherwise noted, assignments must be submitted as indicated below (see Written Assignments) *no later than 11:59 p.m.* on the assigned due date.

**Written Assignments:** In-class assignments may be handwritten, but all other work must be typed and must conform to APA formatting, citing, and referencing guidelines (see <http://www.apastyle.org/> and <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>). Unless otherwise noted, assignments should be uploaded to Carmen *no later than 11:59 p.m.* on the assigned due date. Assignments that are overdue will be reduced grade-wise by 10% (1 day late), 20% (2 days late), or receive no credit (3 or more days late).

**Communication:** I will post class updates, extra credit opportunities, and/or additional materials as announcements on Carmen. Please check Carmen and read your email regularly (at least 2-3 times per week) because you are responsible for this information, just as you are responsible for information in class.

### **Course Topics Taken from:**

- I. Theories of Attitude Formation and Change
  - A. Exposure, Associative Learning, Conditioning, Role-Models, Social Learning Theory, Trait transference
  - B. Functional Approaches to Attitude Change
  - C. Consistency Theories; Dissonance, Consistency
  - D. Summative Model/Information Integration
  - E. Theory of Reasoned Action/Theory of Planned Behavior
  - F. Elaboration Likelihood Model
- II. Influence Tasks and Message Practices
  - A. Theories of Credibility, Trust, and Liking: Creating connections through Ethos, Trust, and Liking
  - B. Creating consensus by Discovering and Discussing Exigencies, Needs And Desires
  - C. Deliberating about and Advocating change; Creating Identities
  - D. Creating believable messages: Theories of Argument, Narrative
  - E. Theories of Language and Performance: Creating Impressiveness through Clarity and Style
  - F. Facilitating Behavioral Commitment: Heuristics vs. Theories of Collaboration and Dialogue.
- III. Linguistic, Social, and Cultural Resources that Shape Influence Possibilities and Rhetorical Choices
  - A. Systems of meaning and relevance: Using signs and Ideology in persuasive argument
    1. Constituting Identities, Gender and Relationships
    2. Constituting History, Place, Environment
  - B. Using narrative, symbol, poetics, image, and metaphor to create impressive messages that align with your audience
  - C. Collaboration Practices: Staging and facilitating deliberation and dialogue
  - D. Tailoring, customization, and person-centeredness
  - E. Interactivity online and persuasive effectiveness

- IV. Influence contexts for discussion and study
  - A. E-commerce
  - B. Leadership & Management
  - C. Advertising, Sales, Marketing, Service
  - D. Policy discourse, public address, campaign rhetoric
  - E. Interpersonal influence amongst friends, family, community

### **Influence Tasks and Message Strategies Model**

Influence Task #1: Creating connections through Ethos, Trust, and Liking  
 Influence Task #2: Creating consensus by discussing Exigencies, Needs, Desires  
 Influence Task #3: Creating believable messages with Argument and narrative  
 Influence Task #4: Creating impressiveness through clarity, memorability and style  
 Influence Task #5: Deliberating and advocating change; creating identities  
 Influence Task #6: Facilitating behavioral commitment

### **Additional Readings**

Clark, R. A. (1984). *Persuasive messages*. Harper & Row. Selected chapters on Carmen.

O'Keefe, D.J. (2002). *Persuasion theory & research, 2nd Ed.* Sage Publications. Chapter 3. Belief-Based models of attitude.

Warnick, B., & Inch, E.S. (1994). *Critical thinking and communication: The use of reason in argument*, 2nd Ed. Macmillan. Chapters 4-5.

O'Hair, Stewart, R., & Rubenstein, H. (2004). *A speaker's guidebook: Text and reference*. Chapter 2, 24.

Hollihan, T.A., & Baaske, K.T. (2005). *Arguments and arguing: The products and process of human decision making, 2nd Ed.* New York: Waveland Press. Chapter 9. Refutation.

# 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.

## 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 everyone feels safe and where people can disagree amicably. Remember that sarcasm doesn't always come across online. Please keep this in mind and remain civilized and respectful in your email and 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.

## 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.

- 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
- Common Academic and Commercial Streaming Services
- There are many commercial sources for streaming video in today's world, including Netflix, Amazon Prime Video channels. The assigned films will be available through streaming services at university libraries, such as Kanopy and Films on Demand. There may become available new films that I can recommend that can be streamed free or from other sources such as PBS or rented for a low price on commercial services.
- Turnitin:
  - Students at The Ohio State University are accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Therefore, you should be familiar with the guidelines provided by the [Committee on Academic Misconduct \(COAM\)](#) and [Section A of OSU's Code of Student Conduct](#) in order to meet the academic expectations concerning appropriate documentation of sources. In addition, OSU has made Turnitin, a learning tool and plagiarism prevention system, available to instructors. For this class, you will submit your papers to Turnitin from Carmen. When grading your work, I will interpret the originality report, following [Section A of OSU's Code of Student Conduct](#) as appropriate. For more information about Turnitin, please see [the vendor's guide for students](#). Note that submitted final papers become part of the OSU database.
- 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

### 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 7+) 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)

### New York Times Digital Subscription

This is made available to ALL students, staff and faculty at the university courtesy of the Undergraduate Student Government. The goal is to improve access to news and current events among students and to facilitate incorporation of news into traditional coursework. This is an important resource for students that can help improve news literacy and knowledge of contemporary public affairs for all students. [Activate your subscription with the instructions on USG's website.](#)

## 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 Ohio State Title IX Coordinator 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

The university strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. In light of the current pandemic, students seeking to request COVID-related accommodations may do so through the university's request process, managed by Student Life Disability Services. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic, or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: [slds@osu.edu](mailto:slds@osu.edu); 614-292-3307; [slds.osu.edu](http://slds.osu.edu); 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

### 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 will be made available on Carmen, including lecture recordings for sessions that will be conducted online, as well as slides. Alternate assignments or extensions may be arranged.

## Academic integrity policy

### 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/>

While many people associate academic misconduct with "cheating," the term encompasses a wider scope of student behaviors which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Violation of course rules;
- Violation of program regulations;
- Knowingly providing or receiving information during a course exam or program assignment;
- Possession and/or use of unauthorized materials during a course exam or program assignment;
- Knowingly providing or using assistance in the laboratory, on field work, or on a course assignment, unless such assistance has been authorized specifically by the course instructor or, where appropriate, a project/research supervisor;
- Submission of work not performed in a course: This includes (but is not limited to) instances where a student fabricates and/or falsifies information for an academic assignment. It also includes instances where a student submits data or information (such as a term paper) from one course to satisfy the requirements of another course, unless submission of such work is permitted by the instructor;
- Submitting plagiarized work for a course/program assignment;
- Serving as or asking another student to serve as a substitute while taking an exam.

Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University's Code of Student Conduct and this syllabus may constitute "Academic Misconduct." Ignorance of the University's Code of Student Conduct is never considered an excuse for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review the Code of Student Conduct and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that you have violated the University's Code of Student Conduct (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University. If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

## 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).

### RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS

Our inclusive environment allows for religious expression. Students requesting accommodations based on faith, religious or a spiritual belief system in regard to examinations, other academic requirements or absences, are required to provide the instructor with written notice of specific dates for which the student requests alternative accommodations at the earliest possible date. For more information about religious accommodations at Ohio State, visit <http://odi.osu.edu/religious-accommodations>

### Tentative Course Schedule

Week & Date	Topics Overview	Reading
1 T 1.10  Th 1.12	<p>Introductions: Course Overview</p> <p>Concepts of Persuasion; Classical rhetoric <i>Definitions; multiple goals in persuasion; symbols &amp; identification, the deliberative process, strategy and message design</i></p> <p><i>Class activity: Discovering strategies in the 2021 United Way Annual report for Columbus</i></p>	FN Ch. 1; Clark, Ch. 1
	<b>I. Theories of Attitude Change</b>	
2 T 1.17  Th 1.19	<p>Classical rhetoric concepts, Conditioning models</p> <p><i>Rhetorical canon, occasions for rhetoric; mere exposure theory, associative learning, operant conditioning, role models</i></p> <p>Conditioning model application, Functional theory of attitude change, <i>Attitude functions, matching</i></p> <p><i>Class activity: Applying conditional models to print advertising</i></p>	<p>FN Ch. 2; Classical rhetoric reading</p> <p>FN Ch. 2</p>
3 T 1.24  Th 1.26	<p>Social Judgment Theory; Reasoned Action Theory, Part 1</p> <p>Cognitive Dissonance Theory/Elaboration Likelihood Model</p>	<p>FN Ch. 8, 10</p> <p>FN Ch. 9, Ch. 11</p> <p>Website Analysis (1-30)</p>
4 T 1.31  Th 4.2	<p>Elaboration Likelihood Model/Review</p> <p><b>Examination #1</b></p>	<p>FN Ch. 9, Ch. 11</p> <p><b>Exam #1</b></p>
	<b>II. Six Influence Tasks</b>	
5 T 2.7  Th 2.9	<p>Influence Task #1: <i>Securing credibility, trust, liking; analyzing audiences; identification, exemplification, acclaiming, altercasting</i></p> <p>Influence Task #2: <i>Gaining consensus on exigencies with deliberation; message strategies</i></p>	<p>FN Ch. 4</p> <p>FN Ch. 5; Clark, Ch. 6</p> <p>Communicate character Essay</p>

		2.11
6 T 2.14 Th 2.16	Influence Task #3: <i>Gaining believability with argument, narrative</i>  Influence Task #4: <i>Engaging style, message impressiveness</i>	FN Ch. 5; Evid. Clark, Ch. 4 Borchers, language FN Ch. 8
7 T 2.21 Th 2.23	Looking ahead--Influence Task #5: <i>Advocacy, nudging</i> <b>Work on paper/speech/open office hours</b>	Clark, Ch. 7 Speech essay due (2.25)
8 T 2.28 Th 3.2	Persuasive speeches: Gaining consensus on a problem	Speeches
9 T 3.7 Th 3.9	Persuasive speeches: Gaining consensus on a problem	Speeches
	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	
10 T 3.21	Reasoned Action Model/Influence Task #6: Mobilizing commitment <i>The policy argument essay/presentation assignment</i>	FN Ch. 10, 13
	<b>III. Influence Tactics</b>	
Th. 3.23	Influence tactics	Cialdini, Ch. 1-2
11 T 3.28 Th 3.30	Influence tactics: <i>Reciprocity, Commitment, Social Proof</i> Influence tactics: <i>Like, Authority, Scarcity</i>	Cialdini, Ch. 3-4 Cialdini, Ch. 5-8
12 T 4.4 Th 4.6	Policy persuasion: <i>lines of arguments, value arguments, identities</i> ; Review for exam <b>Examination #2</b>	FN Ch. 5 <b>Exam #2</b>
13 T 4.11 Th 4.13	Policy presentations	
14 T 4.18 Th 4.20	Policy presentations	
M 4.24	Policy persuasion essay due	