**JOMC 890.004 Persuasion and Social Influence Spring 2014**

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| Time & location: Thursday, 9 – 11:45am, Carroll 338  Instructor: Dr. Maria Leonora (Nori) Comello  [comello@email.unc.edu](mailto:comello@email.unc.edu) (Best way to reach me)  (919) 928-2440 cell  Skype: nori.comello  Office hours: Th, 1-3:30 p.m., and by appointment; Carroll 226 |

**Course objectives**

This graduate-level seminar will examine the major social-scientific theories and concepts related to persuasion and social influence in a communication context. Topics include attitudes, beliefs, and other antecedents to behavior; reasoning and automatic processing; source, message, context, and receiver characteristics; and special topics in health, political, and advocacy campaigns.

Readings include chapters/articles describing major theories and theory-driven research from a variety of methodological approaches. It is expected that readings will be done before class to enable informed and lively class discussions.

**Required readings**

O’Keefe, D. J. (2002). Persuasion: Theory and research (2nd ed). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Additional course readings on Sakai.

**Course requirements**

* Exam: There will be a midterm take-home exam in essay format.
* Study proposal or professional project: You will be asked to develop a paper (8-10 pages, single-spaced including references) and present it to the class. More details will be provided on Sakai under Assignments, but please note the following important guidelines.
  + *If you are a student in the Interdisciplinary Health Communication program,* your paper must be on a topic related to health communication.
  + *If you are on the research track (master’s or doctoral):* you should propose a study that investigates some aspect of a theory of persuasion or area of persuasion research. It should include a brief overview of past research in the same or a similar area, a rationale for your study, the hypotheses or research questions you will investigate, and a description of the methods you will use to collect data (study design; proposed participants; and operationalizations of dependent and independent variables*).*
  + *If you are on the professional track (master’s):* you should write a paper that applies some aspect of a theory of persuasion to a professional/organizational problem (e.g., a critical analysis of a health organization’s communication materials). It should be a piece that will be useful to you as pursue professional opportunities.

You will work on the paper by stages throughout the semester so that you can receive feedback from me about content and direction. The paper will be broken down into the following graded assignments:

* Synopsis – Brief description of the topic you want to study and why it’s important to you and your field
* First draft – Intro and review of literature, plus outline of remaining sections you plan to include
* Presentation – Toward the end of the semester, each student will deliver a 10-minute presentation to the class with slides/visuals. The purpose is to receive feedback and ideas prior to final paper turn in at the end of the semester.
* Final paper
* Discussion leader: You will select one of the class days and lead a discussion on the topic. You are responsible for summarizing the readings and facilitating discussion about the topic. In addition to covering the assigned readings, you will be expected to bring in at least one additional peer-reviewed article that complements the assigned readings. Also, you should try to find real-world examples of persuasive messages/campaigns (video clips, ads, etc.) to illustrate points as appropriate. Further guidelines will be posted on Sakai.

Grading

The above requirements will be weighted in the following manner in assigning final grades in the course:

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| Midterm | 30 |
| Synopsis | 5 |
| First draft | 10 |
| Presentation | 5 |
| Final paper | 35 |
| Discussion leader | 15 |
|  | 100 |

The graduate scale (H, P, L, F) is in effect for all assignments for this seminar. Here are the basic grading criteria I will follow:

* H = Your very best work. These students read and critically engage with all materials. Their class participation and written assignments demonstrate the ability to apply the materials, extrapolate ideas, expand the material into new areas of thought, and contribute to the body of scholarship in the area. Reserved for truly extraordinary work – I will actually say “wow!”
* P = Your very best work. These students read and critically engage with all materials. They are able to apply the material and to extrapolate ideas in many instances.
* L = Students read most of the material but do not often critically engage with it. They are able to apply the material and extrapolate ideas in some instances.
* F = Students miss one or more classes, do not always read the material, and fail to critically engage it.

Course Outline – Tentative Schedule – Subject to change

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|  | **Topic** |
| Week 1  Jan 9 | Day one. Meet and greet, discuss course goals, go over syllabus, discuss research interests. |
| Week 2  Jan 16 | **Basic concepts in persuasion (attitudes and persuasion research design)**  O’Keefe, Chapters 1 & 7  Cameron, K. A. (2009). A practitioner’s guide to persuasion: An overview of 15 selected persuasion theories, models and frameworks. *Patient Education and Counseling*, *74*(3), 309-317. |
| Week 3  Jan 23 | **Belief-based models of attitude. SYNPOSIS DUE.**  O’Keefe, Chapter 3  Pechmann, C. (2001). A comparison of health communication models: Risk learning versus stereotype priming. *Media Psychology*, *3*(2), 189-210.  Nelson, T. E., Clawson, R. A., & Oxley, Z. M. (1997). Media framing of a civil liberties conflict and its effect on tolerance. *American Political Science Review*, 567-583. |
| Week 4  Jan 30 | **Cognitive dissonance & selective exposure**  O’Keefe, Chapter 4  Dickerson, C. A., Thibodeau, R., Aronson, E., & Miller, D. (1992). Using Cognitive Dissonance to Encourage Water Conservation. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, *22*(11), 841-854.    Garrett, R. K. (2009). Politically motivated reinforcement seeking: Reframing the selective exposure debate. *Journal of Communication*, 59(4), 676-699. |
| Week 5  Feb 6 | **Theories of behavioral intention (TRA/TPB/Integrated)**  O’Keefe, Chapter 5  Fishbein, M., & Cappella, J. N. (2006). The role of theory in developing effective health communications. *Journal of Communication*, *56*(s1), S1-S17.  Stead, M., Tagg, S., MacKintosh, A. M., & Eadie, D. (2005). Development and evaluation of a mass media Theory of Planned Behaviour intervention to reduce speeding. *Health Education Research*, 20(1), 36-50. |
| Week 6  Feb 13 | **Elaboration Likelihood Model / dual-process models**  O’Keefe, Chapter 6  Gerrard, M., Gibbons, F. X., Houlihan, A. E., Stock, M. L., & Pomery, E. A. (2008). A dual-process approach to health risk decision making: The prototype willingness model. *Developmental Review*, 28(1), 29-61.  Slater, M. D., & Rouner, D. (2002). Entertainment-education and elaboration likelihood: Understanding the processing of narrative persuasion. *Communication Theory*, 12(2), 173-191. |
| Week 7  Feb 20 | **Message factors – structure**  O’Keefe, Chapter 9 (pgs. 215-218, 230-235)  Rothman, A. J., & Salovey, P. (1997). Shaping perceptions to motivate healthy behavior: the role of message framing. *Psychological Bulletin*, 121(1), 3-19.  Shafer, A., Cates, J. R., Diehl, S. J., & Hartmann, M. (2011). Asking mom: Formative research for an HPV vaccine campaign targeting mothers of adolescent girls. *Journal of Health Communication*, 16(9), 988-1005. |
| Week 8  Feb 27 | **Message factors – content & emotion. FIRST DRAFT DUE.**  O’Keefe, Chapter 9 (pgs. 219-229)  O'Neill, S., & Nicholson-Cole, S. (2009). “Fear Won't Do It”: Promoting Positive Engagement With Climate Change Through Visual and Iconic Representations. *Science Communication*, 30(3), 355-379.  Pechmann, C., Zhao, G., Goldberg, M. E., & Reibling, E. T. (2003). What to convey in antismoking advertisements for adolescents: The use of protection motivation theory to identify effective message themes. *Journal of Marketing*, 1-18. |
| Week 9  Mar 6 | **Source & receiver factors**  O’Keefe, Chapters 8 & 10  Cram, P., Fendrick, A. M., Inadomi, J., Cowen, M. E., Carpenter, D., & Vijan, S. (2003). The impact of a celebrity promotional campaign on the use of colon cancer screening: The Katie Couric effect. *Archives of Internal Medicine*, 163(13), 1601-1605.  Green, M. C., & Dill, K. E. (2013). Engaging with stories and characters: Learning, persuasion, and transportation into narrative worlds. *The Oxford Handbook of Media Psychology*, 449-461. |
| Week 10  Mar 13 | **NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK!** |
| Week 11  Mar 20 | **Role of identity/self-concept**  Chung, A. H., & Slater, M. D. (2013). Reducing Stigma and Out‐Group Distinctions Through Perspective‐Taking in Narratives. *Journal of Communication*, 63(5), 894-911.  Comello, M. L. G. (2013). Conceptualizing the intervening roles of identity in communication effects: The prism model. In D. Lasorsa & A. Rodriguez (Eds.), *Identity and communication: New agendas in communication* (pp. 168-188). New York: Routledge.  Lisjak, M., Lee, A. Y., & Gardner, W. L. (2012). When a Threat to the Brand Is a Threat to the Self The Importance of Brand Identification and Implicit Self-Esteem in Predicting Defensiveness. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 38(9), 1120-1132. |
| Week 12  Mar 27 | **Interpersonal and community influences (Take-home midterm assigned; due next week)**  Eveland, W. P., & Hively, M. H. (2009). Political discussion frequency, network size, and “heterogeneity” of discussion as predictors of political knowledge and participation. *Journal of Communication*, 59(2), 205-224.  Goldstein, N. J., Cialdini, R. B., & Griskevicius, V. (2008). A room with a viewpoint: Using social norms to motivate environmental conservation in hotels. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 35(3), 472-482.  Southwell, B. G., & Yzer, M. C. (2007). The roles of interpersonal communication in mass media campaigns. *Communication Yearbook*, 31, 420-461. |
| Week 13  Apr 3 | **TAKE-HOME MIDTERM DUE BY 5PM** |
| Week 14  Apr 10 | **Sustainable social change / Multi-component campaigns**  Edwards, R. W., Jumper-Thurman, P., Plested, B. A., Oetting, E. R., & Swanson, L. (2000). Community readiness: Research to practice. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 28, 291-307.  Slater, M. D. (1999). Integrating application of media effects, persuasion, and behavior change theories to communication campaigns: A stages-of-change framework. *Health Communication*, 11(4), 335-354.  Rozin, P. (1999). The process of moralization. *Psychological Science*, 10(3), 218-221. |
| Week 15  Apr 17 | **Presentations of research/professional projects** |
| Week 16  Apr 24 | **Wrap up / Popular press discussion pieces**  Freedman, David H. (June 2012). The Perfected Self. The Atlantic Monthly.  Other articles TBA – suggestions welcome |
|  | **FINAL PAPERS DUE MAY 2** |