

Day & time	Synchronous Zoom sessions Tuesdays, 9:30 – 10:45 AM Asynchronous discussions on Sakai Discussion Forum Individual check-ins on Zoom with instructor twice during semester
Instructor	Dr. Maria Leonora (Nori) Comello comello@email.unc.edu (Best way to reach me) (919) 928-2440 cell
Office hours	Tuesdays, 11 AM – 12:15 PM and by arrangement. Location: Zoom!
Location	Zoom link for synchronous sessions and office hours posted on Sakai

Course description

This graduate-level seminar will examine 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; interpersonal influences; and community-based/multi-component campaigns. Articles will be drawn from a range of persuasion areas including health, legal, environmental, and consumer behavior. PhD students and MA students in the research track will be expected to produce a study proposal that utilizes a persuasion theory applied to their area of interest. MA students in the professional track will write a paper that applies some aspect of a persuasion theory to a professional/organizational problem. Whatever you produce should be useful to your scholarly or professional goals. I expect everyone to come prepared for lively discussion!

Required readings and other content

- O’Keefe, D. J. Persuasion: Theory and research. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications. 3rd ed. (2016). Several chapters will be assigned over the semester. It is available at UNC bookstore. There is also a reserve copy at Park Library. Amazon and other online sources offer new and used copies, as well as rental options, but they may be expensive. You may find ebooks for as low as \$15.
- Other required course readings will have full-text links on Sakai under Resources.

ACEJMC competencies

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) requires that, irrespective of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies. This course is particularly relevant to the following competencies:

- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- Think critically, creatively and independently;
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- Contribute to knowledge appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.

The full list of competencies is available here:

<http://www2.ku.edu/~acejmc/PROGRAM/PRINCIPLES.SHTML#vals&comps>

Diversity and inclusion

The School of Media and Journalism adopted [diversity and inclusion mission and vision statements](#) in spring 2016 with accompanying goals. It complements the University policy on [Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination](#). In summary, UNC is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and does not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities on the basis of age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. The Dean of Students (Suite 1106, Student Academic Services Building, CB# 5100, 450 Ridge Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-5100 or [919] 966-4042) has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the University's nondiscrimination policies.

Special accommodations

If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in this course, please let me know as soon as possible. If you need information about disabilities visit the [Accessibility Resources & Service Office website](#), call 919/962-8300, or use NC Relay 711.

UNC honor code

It shall be the responsibility of every student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to obey and to support the enforcement of the Honor Code (<http://instrument.unc.edu>), which prohibits lying, cheating, or stealing when these actions involve academic processes or University, student, or academic personnel acting in an official capacity.

Other resources

- [The Graduate School COVID-19 resource hub](#)
- [CV19 Student Care Hub](#)
- [Carolina Cupboard food pantry](#)
- [UNC Department of Psychology and Neuroscience Community Clinic](#)

Course requirements (THIS IS A PREVIEW ONLY – FULL INSTRUCTIONS WILL BE POSTED ON SAKAI)

- **Reflection and participation:** Before the start of each class, please go to our class discussion forum on Sakai; respond to a reflection prompt and comment on at least one classmate's reflection by the time class begins. The prompt will generally ask you to comment on something of value you took from the readings, a question or point of confusion about any of the readings, and/or how any of the readings relate to your life, your topic, current events, or past readings. The forum for a class session will be open no later than Thursday of the previous week. Beyond these online discussions, I expect everyone to engage in lively and respectful discussion during our synchronous sessions.
- **Discussion leading:** Each student will be expected to take a turn at leading discussion during one week in the semester. Please choose a topic that aligns well with your research/professional goals; a sign-up sheet will be posted on Sakai. When you are discussion leader, it does NOT mean that you will be

responsible for all class activities that week; I will continue to give an overview and context for assigned readings during our online sessions. However, as discussion leader, you will be expected to contribute to our greater understanding by providing additional perspective and opportunity for discussion. Given our asynchronous and synchronous format, discussion leading will have the following components:

- Asynchronous: Pose a prompt on the discussion forum no later than Thursday of the previous week. (I may contribute a prompt as well.)
- Synchronous: During our Zoom session (typically after I present an overview), you will present a summary of a scholarly article that aligns with the theme for the week. The article must be theory-based and must present a study (i.e., with data, using qualitative or quantitative methods). But beyond that, I would love for you to be excited about the article! 😊 Your job is to summarize it, show how it provides a valuable angle or counterpoint to the week's readings, and pose discussion questions. In addition to presenting, please submit a brief written summary/critique of the article (due on the day you present) that includes the questions you posed to the class.

Detailed instructions for all of these components will be posted on Sakai under Assignments.

- Study proposal or professional project: You will be asked to develop a paper and present it to the class. More details will be provided on Sakai under Assignments, but please note the following.
 - *If you are a PhD student or research-track MA student*: you should propose a study that investigates some area of persuasion or social influence 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). Although a proposal is the basic requirement, students are encouraged to carry out as much of the study as possible during the semester.
 - *If you are a professional-track MA student*: you should write a paper that applies some aspect of a theory of persuasion to a professional/organizational problem (e.g., development of a campaign plan, a critical analysis of a health organization's communication materials, etc.). It should be a piece that will be useful as you 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 – Provide a brief description of the topic you want to study and why it's important to you and your field. The assignment instructions on Sakai will provide specific prompts you should address.
- First draft – Provide an intro and review of literature, including RQs/hypotheses. Outline methods and other sections you plan to include.
- Presentation – Toward the end of the semester, each student will deliver a presentation to the class with slides/visuals. The purpose is to receive feedback prior to final paper turn-in at the end of the semester. The time allotment and format will depend on the number of students.
- Final paper – Address feedback from first draft/presentation and flesh out remaining sections.

Absences

If you need to be absent from a synchronous class session, please let me know in advance, and be sure to chime in on the forum before start of class so we can include your thoughts in class discussion.

Grading

Grades for overall course performance and most individual assignments will be based on the graduate scale (H, P, L, F). *As applied to final course grades*, interpretations are as follows:

- H = Your very best work. These students read and critically engage with all materials. They are able to apply concepts to practical and/or research-based contexts, suggest new directions, and significantly contribute to the body of scholarship in the area. Assignments are submitted on time and are well written and engaging. *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 concepts and suggest new directions in many instances. Assignments are submitted on time and are well written and engaging.
- L = Students read most of the material but do not often critically engage with it. They are able to apply concepts and suggest new directions in some instances.
- F = Students miss one or more classes without prior arrangement. They do not always read the material, and they fail to critically engage it.

Most individual assignments are also evaluated according to the H/P/L/F scale. *As applied to individual assignments*, a P signifies work that meets content and formatting requirements as explained in instructions, is well written, and is submitted on time. An H signifies work that meets the above and is also exceptional in terms of depth of analysis or significance of contribution – again a “wow!” assessment.

Although no formal points corresponding to the grades are issued, the WEIGHTS of each assignment in determining the final course grade are as follows:

Synopsis	10
First draft	15
Presentation	10
Final paper	40
Article critique	15
Reflection and participation	10
TOTAL	100

For individual assignments, I will also provide written feedback, typically in the form of comments (sometimes extensive) added directly to your paper using the comment feature in Word.

Spring 2021 Persuasion Course Outline – tentative schedule – subject to change

This schedule represents a good faith effort to outline our work over the course of the semester. However, because of unpredictable factors, the timeline and assignments are subject to change. I will alert you of any changes in readings, assignments, due dates, etc., over the course of the semester. Thank you for your flexibility!

	Topic
Week 1 Jan 19	Day one. Meet and greet, discuss course goals, go over syllabus, discuss research interests.
Week 2 Jan 26	<p>Theory assessment and persuasion research methods</p> <p>O’Keefe, Chapters 1 & 9</p> <p><i>Choose one</i> of the following methods pieces: Karmarkar, U. R., & Plassmann, H. (2019). Consumer neuroscience: Past, present, and future. <i>Organizational Research Methods</i>, 22(1), 174-195. Belk, R. W. (2017). Qualitative research in advertising. <i>Journal of Advertising</i>, 46(1), 36-47.</p>
Week 3 Feb 2	<p>Belief-based models of attitude change. Synopsis due</p> <p>O’Keefe, Chapter 4</p> <p>Gilbert, D. T. (1991). How mental systems believe. <i>American Psychologist</i>, 46(2), 107-119.</p> <p>Lewandowsky, S., Ecker, U. K., Seifert, C. M., Schwarz, N., & Cook, J. (2012). Misinformation and its correction: Continued influence and successful debiasing. <i>Psychological Science in the Public Interest</i>, 13(3), 106-131.</p>
Week 4 Feb 9	<p>Cognitive dissonance and misinformation</p> <p>O’Keefe, Chapter 5</p> <p>Dickerson, C. A., Thibodeau, R., Aronson, E., & Miller, D. (1992). Using Cognitive Dissonance to Encourage Water Conservation. <i>Journal of Applied Social Psychology</i>, 22(11), 841-854.</p> <p>Hornik, R., Kikut, A., Jesch, E., Woko, C., Siegel, L., & Kim, K. (2021). Association of COVID-19 misinformation with face mask wearing and social distancing in a nationally representative US sample. <i>Health communication</i>, 36(1), 6-14.</p> <p>Recommended further reading: Journal of Communication special issue on misinformation, Vol 65, Issue 4. Read overview by special-issue editors Southwell and Thorson: https://onlinelibrary-wiley-com.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/doi/epdf/10.1111/jcom.12168</p>

<p>Week 5 Feb 16</p>	<p>Wellness day</p>
<p>Week 6 Feb 23</p>	<p>Theories of behavioral intention (TRA/TPB and intention-behavior gap)</p> <p>O’Keefe, Chapter 6</p> <p>Carrington, M. J., Neville, B. A., & Whitwell, G. J. (2014). Lost in translation: Exploring the ethical consumer intention–behavior gap. <i>Journal of Business Research</i>, 67(1), 2759-2767.</p> <p>Fogg, B. J., & Euchner, J. (2019). Designing for Behavior Change—New Models and Moral Issues: An Interview with BJ Fogg. <i>Research-Technology Management</i>, 62(5), 14-19.</p> <p>Recommended:</p> <p>Dervin, B., & Foreman-Wernet, L. (2012). Sense-making methodology as an approach to understanding and designing for campaign audiences. <i>Public communication campaigns</i>, 147-162.</p>
<p>Week 7 Mar 2</p>	<p>Elaboration Likelihood Model / information processing, bias, and reflection</p> <p>O’Keefe, Chapter 8</p> <p>Kang, J., Bennett, M. W., Carbado, D. W., Casey, P., Dasgupta, N., Faigman, D. L., ... & Mnookin, J. (2012). Implicit bias in the courtroom. <i>UCLA Law Review</i>, 59(5). READ SECTIONS ON INTRO AND INTERVENTIONS. SKIM SECTIONS ON CRIMINAL AND CIVIL PATHS.</p> <p>Resnicow, K., & McMaster, F. (2012). Motivational Interviewing: moving from why to how with autonomy support. <i>International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity</i>, 9(19), 1-9.</p> <p>Recommended: 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. <i>Developmental Review</i>, 28(1), 29-61.</p>
<p>Week 8 Mar 9</p>	<p>Message factors, emotions, and narratives</p> <p>O’Keefe, Chapter 11</p> <p>Myrick, J. G., & Oliver, M. B. (2014). Laughing and Crying: Mixed Emotions, Compassion, and the Effectiveness of a YouTube PSA About Skin Cancer. <i>Health Communication</i>, (ahead-of-print), 1-10.</p> <p>Bilandzic, H., & Busselle, R. (2012). Narrative: Conceptualizations and Foundational Literatures. In <i>The SAGE Handbook of Persuasion: Developments in Theory and Practice</i>. Ed. Dillard, J.</p>

<p>Week 9 Mar 16</p>	<p>Communicator & receiver factors / Workshop day</p> <p>Skim O’Keefe, Chapter 10 & 12</p> <p>BY END OF WEEK: FIRST DRAFT DUE. I will also send out a mid-semester evaluation to get your feedback on the course thus far.</p>
<p>Week 10 Mar 23</p>	<p>Reward and punishment / Gamification</p> <p>Guest speaker: TBD</p> <p>Hanus, M. D., & Fox, J. (2015). Assessing the effects of gamification in the classroom: A longitudinal study on intrinsic motivation, social comparison, satisfaction, effort, and academic performance. <i>Computers & Education, 80</i>, 152-161.</p> <p>Basol, M., Roozenbeek, J., & van der Linden, S. (2020). Good news about bad news: gamified inoculation boosts confidence and cognitive immunity against fake news. <i>Journal of cognition, 3</i>(1).</p>
<p>Week 11 Mar 30</p>	<p>Identity and values-framing</p> <p>Brewer, M., & Gardner, W. (1996). Who Is This “We”? Levels of Collective Identity and Self Representations. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 71</i>(1), 83-93.</p> <p>Comello, M. L. G., & Farman, L. (2016). Identity as a Moderator and Mediator of Communication Effects: Evidence and Implications for Message Design. <i>The Journal of Psychology, 150</i>(7), 822-836.</p> <p>Ramasubramanian, S. (2010). Television viewing, racial attitudes, and policy preferences: Exploring the role of social identity and intergroup emotions in influencing support for affirmative action. <i>Communication Monographs, 77</i>(1), 102-120.</p> <p>Recommended readings:</p> <p>(Influential piece from consumer behavior perspective) Belk, R. W. (1988). Possessions and the extended self. <i>Journal of Consumer Research, 15</i>(2), 139-168.</p> <p>(Synthesis of psych literature on the self) Baumeister, R. F. (2010). The self. <i>Advanced social psychology: The state of the science</i>, 139-175.</p>
<p>Week 12 Apr 6</p>	<p>Interpersonal, cultural, and community influences</p> <p>Guest speaker: TBD</p>

	<p>Jain, P., Roy, E., Garud, N., & Mazid, I. (2019). Sexuality and substance abuse portrayals in item songs in Bollywood movies. <i>South Asian Popular Culture</i>, 17(1), 15-29.</p> <p>Schau, H. J., Muñiz Jr, A. M., & Arnould, E. J. (2009). How brand community practices create value. <i>Journal of Marketing</i>, 73(5), 30-51.</p> <p>Recommended:</p> <p>Dutta, M. J. (2015). Decolonizing communication for social change: A Culture-Centered approach. <i>Communication Theory</i>, 25(2), 123-143.</p>
Week 13 Apr 13	Students' choice, based on mid-semester evaluation: If there are persuasion topics you would like to discuss that are not covered on the syllabus, please suggest during mid-semester evaluation. We will discuss during this session. Readings TBA.
Week 14 Apr 20	INDIVIDUAL CHECK-INS
Week 15 Apr 27	Course recap / Workshop day
Week 16 May 4	<p>Presentations of projects</p> <p>FINAL PAPERS DUE MAY 11 BY NOON</p>

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!