CJT 682: Communication and Persuasion
Fall 2016
M 5:00PM – 7:45PM
Grehan 223

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Office: 242 Grehan  Phone: 859.218.3349
Office Hours: Mondays 4-5PM and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course is designed to provide students with an overview of persuasion theory and research. The course will introduce students to the central conceptual, theoretical, and applied issues in the study of persuasion/social influence. As this is an introductory graduate course in an area in which the literature is quite extensive, our readings and discussion must, by necessity, be broad yet abbreviated. However, by course design, you will be expected to delve more deeply and gain mastery over the sub-field(s) that most interest you.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
After completing this course, students should be able to:
- Define persuasion and understand its relationship to social influence;
- Understand and explain different theories of persuasion;
- Describe the dominant methodological approaches underlying persuasion research;
- Summarize, critically analyze, and synthesize empirical research on persuasion;

COURSE FORMAT
This course will be conducted in seminar format. The goal of each class discussion is to highlight the important aspects of the theories under discussion, discuss the key conceptual debates and criticisms of the theories, analyze one or more research articles based on the theories, and/or consider their ramifications for us as communication scholars. It is essential that you complete assigned readings prior to each class for our conversation to be as productive as possible given our limited time together. To encourage productive discussion, you will be asked to turn in questions on the readings each week (see below).

COURSE READINGS AND WEBSITE
There is no required textbook for this course. Instead, all readings (see schedule below) will be posted in PDF format on Canvas. Readings should be completed prior to class on the week during which they are assigned. I have made reading selections to highlight certain aspects of each literature or area of persuasion research, sometimes assigning the “classic” pieces by the original theorists and sometimes assigning current studies or overviews.

Although not required, I highly recommend and have placed the following text on 2-hour reserve at the library as an additional resource for you:

COMMUNICATION AND PERSUASION
ASSIGNMENTS
(All assignments/activities will be graded on a 0-100 scales and will be appropriately weighted to determine your final course grade)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (10%)
Each week you will be required to post 1-2 discussion questions to the class discussion forum on Canvas. Questions should be focused on one or more of the week’s assigned readings. They may be about theory, methods, or anything else in the readings, and may be used to probe links between the readings and other ideas you’ve encountered earlier in this class or other classes. Each question should be preceded by a brief (1-3 sentence) rationale that provides background information and context. Although you are free to pose any (reading-relevant) questions you want, all questions should clearly demonstrate that you have engaged in advanced, critical thought about the readings.

Questions should be posted every week starting Week 3, except the two weeks that you are leading discussion (see below) and one other week of your choice (i.e., you get one week off) – in other words, you will post discussion questions for 10 out of the 15 weeks of this course. Post your questions by creating a new thread to the appropriate week’s discussion. Questions should be posted online by noon on Sunday, the day prior to the class meeting.

DISCUSSION LEADER (2@10% = 20%)
Starting Week 4, you will be assigned to two weeks that you will work with 1-2 other students to lead the seminar discussion. Your group will be in charge of guiding the class discussion for your assigned day. The discussion should touch upon all of the week’s assigned readings. For this to be successful, you should prepare in advance several discussion questions about each of the week’s readings. Keep in mind that your classmates will also have questions of their own that they will want to bring into the discussion – I suggest you look over those on Canvas before the class meeting and plan accordingly. Discussions should emphasize the strengths and weaknesses of the theoretical model(s) in question, methodological trends, and links to other theories discussed in this course or other courses, among other things. Your primary goal is to stimulate and facilitate class discussion, not monopolize it – in other words, let your classmates do most of the talking. I will provide a schedule, model, and details about how to go about this during the first three weeks of the semester.

PARTICIPATION (20%)
An important part of your graduate education is the development of your ability to explore ideas with others. It is therefore crucial that you contribute to the discussion during every class period. Quality of participation is more important than quantity. New and insightful observations about theory and research are more valuable than long summaries of the readings – but don’t hesitate to voice your beliefs or ask questions about the readings. No observation or question is too trivial. Don’t contribute only when you have a fully worked-out answer in polished form (which is rare for most of us in any case); the classroom is a space where you can try out off-the-wall ideas, ask what you think are stupid questions (but probably aren’t), and otherwise take intellectual risks.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL (50%)
For your final paper, you are expected to propose an original study (or set of studies) that applies existing persuasion theory (ideally one that we’ve covered in this class) to a new topic or
question. Your paper should not be a simple literature review, but instead should reach beyond what has been covered by others (new variables, contexts, etc.) and should be clear in justifying how you are contributing to and advancing scholarly knowledge.

Persuasion/social influence is a fundamental process of communication that can be applied to virtually any topic and context. Thus, it is my hope that you will take this opportunity to propose a persuasion-oriented study in the specific area of research that you are interested in (e.g., interpersonal, organizational, media, instructional, etc.) and eventually carry out the study and submit it to a conference and/or for publication.

Your paper should be 12-16 double-spaced pages (excluding title page, abstract, references, tables, and any other supporting materials). It should be journal-submission quality and should include a rationale, justification, and basic research design for your proposed study. Clear hypotheses (or research questions) – that logically follow from the preceding theoretically-rooted rationale – should be advanced. All constructs of interest should be clearly operationalized. The method section should include information about your target sample, stimuli, measures, and procedures. The paper should adhere to 6th edition APA format.

A hard copy of your paper is due in my mailbox in Grehan by noon on Monday, December 12th.
## COMMUNICATION AND PERSUASION
### GRADE BREAKDOWN

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points earned (out of 100)</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Weighted points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Leader #1</td>
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<td>Participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
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<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
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All assignments and activities will be graded on a 0-100 scale (A+ = 100, A = 95, A- = 90, and so on). Participation grades will be assigned after each class period (note that being absent = 0 points for that day) and these will be averaged at the end of the semester to determine your overall participation grade. Grades will also be assigned to each of the 10 discussion board posts and these will be averaged at the end of the semester to determine your overall grade for discussion questions.

To calculate your final course grade, multiply the points earned on each assignment/activity by the appropriate weight and add them all together to get your total weighted points earned. Divide this number by 100 to get a percentage.

Final grades will be assigned using the following scale:

- **A** = 90 – 100%
- **B** = 80 – 89.9%
- **C** = 70 – 79.9%
- **E** = 69.9% and below
ATTENDANCE
Because this is a seminar, we will get the most out of it if everyone shows up regularly and does all of the readings on time. Failing to attend class is not an option and will ultimately hurt your grade – if you don’t show up to class, you can’t participate in class. If you have an emergency and cannot make it to class, please try to let me know in advance. In such cases, I may request that you provide me with appropriate verification as specified by University Senate Rule 5.2.4.2 (https://www.uky.edu/Faculty/Senate/files/Excused%20Absences%209-2-09.pdf).

ANALYTICAL SKILLS
I expect that you have a strong background in empirical research methods that will allow you to analyze the literature you will be reading. If your background is minimal, please come see me for some suggested readings.

WRITING SKILLS
I expect that you have strong writing skills and will produce logical, high-quality scientific writing. All written assignments (e.g., research proposal) should be journal-submission quality and adhere to APA (6th ed.) format.

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION
All written assignments must be typed in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, use 1-inch margins on all sides, and adhere to the style guidelines set forth in the American Psychological Association (APA) 6th edition style manual. A hard copy (sometimes accompanied by an electronic copy) of all assignments must be submitted, unless otherwise specified. Electronic-only submissions will not be accepted unless otherwise indicated by me.

LATE WORK
All assignments must be turned in on time. Late work will not be accepted and will receive a zero. The only exception to this policy is if the absence is officially excused (see Student Rights & Responsibilities Code: http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code) and cleared with me in advance.

GRADE APPEALS
To appeal a grade on an assignment or activity, please email me a written explanation of your argument as to why you feel the grade is in error. This must be done within 72 hours of receiving the grade. Keep in mind that you must provide a well thought-out appeal. Grades may go up or down due to an appeal decision.

OFFICE HOURS
Office hours are an optional resource for you. Please come by to discuss content from the course, ask questions about the field, or just say hello. If you cannot make the scheduled office hours but would like to talk with me individually, please email me and we can set up another time to meet. Although I plan to be in my office during posted office hours, I occasionally step out to speak with colleagues, hold group conversations in larger spaces, or to work in nearby computing.
locations. Therefore, it is important that you always email me when requesting an appointment or inform me that you will be coming to office hours. This is particularly helpful during busy times in the semester when many students plan to visit office hours and is a policy meant to benefit students and myself by making the most efficient use of our time.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR, DECORUM, AND CIVILITY
The University of Kentucky is committed to the respect and dignity of all and values differences among members of our academic community. In line with this commitment, it is important to build a classroom climate that is comfortable for all. Diversity of opinions and free expression are encouraged while at the same time courtesy and respect for difference are essential aspects of the classroom climate. It is essential that everyone displays respect for all members of the classroom, including the instructor and fellow classmates; avoids unnecessary disruptions during class time (e.g., tardiness, distracting interpersonal conversations, cell phone use, web surfing, checking social media); and avoids racist, sexist, homophobic or other negative language that may unnecessarily exclude members of our campus and classroom. This is not an exhaustive list. Rather, it represents the minimal standards that help make the classroom a productive place for all. Failure to abide by these policies will result at minimum in a deduction from your participation grade for each infraction and you may be asked to leave the classroom and return on another day.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
Per university policy, students shall not plagiarize, cheat, or falsify or misuse academic records. Students are expected to adhere to University policy on cheating and plagiarism in all courses. The minimum penalty for a first offense is a zero on the assignment on which the offense occurred. If the offense is considered severe or the student has other academic offenses on their record, more serious penalties, up to suspension from the university may be imposed.

Plagiarism and cheating are serious breaches of academic conduct. Each student is advised to become familiar with the various forms of academic dishonesty as explained in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Complete information can be found at the following website: http://www.uky.edu/Ombud. A plea of ignorance is not acceptable as a defense against the charge of academic dishonesty. It is important that you review this information as all ideas borrowed from others need to be properly credited.

Part II of Student Rights and Responsibilities (available online http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code/part2.html) states that all academic work, written or otherwise, submitted by students to their instructors or other academic supervisors, is expected to be the result of their own thought, research, or self-expression. In cases where students feel unsure about the question of plagiarism involving their own work, they are obliged to consult their instructors on the matter before submission.

When students submit work purporting to be their own, but which in any way borrows ideas, organization, wording or anything else from another source without appropriate acknowledgement of the fact, the students are guilty of plagiarism. Plagiarism includes reproducing someone else’s work, whether it be a published article, chapter of a book, a paper from a friend or some file, or something similar to this. Plagiarism also includes the practice of
employing or allowing another person to alter or revise the work which a student submits as his/her own, whoever that other person may be.

Students may discuss assignments among themselves or with an instructor or tutor, but when the actual work is done, it must be done by the student, and the student alone. When a student’s assignment involves research in outside sources of information, the student must carefully acknowledge exactly what, where and how he/she employed them. If the words of someone else are used, the student must put quotation marks around the passage in question and add an appropriate indication of its origin. Making simple changes while leaving the organization, content and phraseology intact is plagiaristic. However, nothing in these Rules shall apply to those ideas which are so generally and freely circulated as to be a part of the public domain (Section 6.3.1).

Please note: Any assignment you turn in may be submitted to an electronic database to check for plagiarism.

WITHDRAWALS AND INCOMPLETES

In situations where a student’s total EXCUSED absences exceed 1/5 (or 20%) of the class periods scheduled for the semester, students are strongly encouraged to withdraw (take a “W”) from the class as per university policy. Specifically, if a student has excused absences in excess of 20% or one-fifth of the class contact hours for that course, a student shall have the right to petition for a “W,” and the Instructor may strongly encourage the student to petition for a “W” or take an “I” in the course rather than fail the course outright [US: 2/9/87; RC: 11/20/87].

Specifically, if a student has excused absences in excess of 20% or one-fifth of the class contact hours for that course, a student shall have the right to petition for a “W,” and the Instructor may strongly encourage the student to petition for a “W.” In the case where a significant number of excused absences (>20%) affect the course grade, the student may petition for an “I” (or Incomplete) in the course. To do so, the student will be required to make arrangements with the instructor to complete incomplete work, which accrued due to the number of excused absences. An “I” grade shall not be conferred when the student’s reason for incompleteness is due to unexcused absences or found to be unsatisfactory to the Instructor of Record. For each “I” grade request, the student and Instructor of Record shall complete an appropriate file record on a standard form provided by the Registrar, which shall include the following: (a) the name of the student; (b) the course number and hours of credit; (c) semester and year of enrollment; (d) signature of the Instructor of Record; (e) a brief statement of the reason(s) for recording the incomplete; (f) specific instructions on how alternate grades on the work to be completed will affect the final grade; (g) the specific time requirement (not to exceed 12 months) set by the Instructor of Record for removal of the “I” grade and consequences of not removing the “I” grade; and (h) signature of the student, if feasible. Failure to comply will result in the Instructor's assignment of a letter grade the course.

In practical terms, this means that for classes that meet once a week students can only have 3 excused absences or students will be encouraged withdraw from the class as per University policy [US: 2/9/87; RC: 11/20/87].
RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS
Students anticipating an absence for a major religious holiday are responsible for notifying the Instructor in writing of anticipated absences due to their observance of such holidays no later than the last day of add/drop. Information regarding dates of major religious holidays may be obtained through the religious liaison, Dr. David Beach (859-257-2754).

ACCOMMODATIONS DUE TO DISABILITY
If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please come see me as soon as possible. In order to receive accommodations in this course, you must provide me with a Letter of Accommodation from the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC coordinates campus disability services available to students with disabilities. The DRC office is located at 725 Rose Street, Multidisciplinary Science Building, Suite 407 (phone: 859-257-2754; email: susan.fogg@uky.edu). You can also visit the DRC website for more information at http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/DisabilityResourceCenter/.
COMMUNICATION AND PERSUASION
TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

**Week 1 (8/29): Defining Persuasion and Social Influence**


**Week 2 (9/5): Information Processing Theory (Labor Day - NO CLASS)**


**Week 3 (9/12): Attitude Structure and Functions; Social Judgment Theory**


**Week 4 (9/19): Cognitive Dissonance, Forced Compliance, Hypocrisy**


**Week 5 (9/26): Theory of Reasoned Action, Theory of Planned Behavior**


**Week 6 (10/3): Social Norms Approach**


Week 7 (10/10): Social Cognitive Theory


Week 8 (10/17): Elaboration Likelihood Model, Heuristic Systematic Model, Unimodel


Week 9 (10/24): Emotion

Optional

Week 10 (10/31): Source Factors


Week 11 (11/7): Framing and Language


Week 12 (11/14): Narrative and Metaphor


**Week 13 (11/21): Sequential Requests; Transtheoretical Model**


**Week 14 (11/28): Reactance**


Week 15 (12/5): Inoculation