Social Influence & Persuasion
Persuasion Course

Social influence and persuasion manifest across the communication discipline. This class will investigate social influence in perhaps unexpected corners of communication studies. In addition to the broad topics, we will also pay close attention to how social influence is studied with emphases on methods. Throughout the semester, we will engage four central questions: (1) What is persuasion and social influence? (2) Where can we find social influence and persuasion? (3) What are critical approaches to social influence? (4) What, if any, are the limits of social influence and persuasion? The class will be organized into different sections of Social Influence/Persuasion as________ or Social Influence/Persuasion in______.

Objectives

Upon successfully finishing the course, students should demonstrate the following capacities:

- Referential knowledge of critical, rhetorical, qualitative, and quantitative approaches to social influence and persuasion.
- Reading, processing, and evaluating different research practices and traditions.
- Increased understanding of different types of research manuscripts
- Understanding of different persuasion and social influence practices in academic publishing

Assignments

Work Sheet Assignments (50*2= 100 points)

One objective of the class is that students learn how to approach and frame challenging conceptual material. Throughout the semester and in pairs, students will write/design a worksheet for the class to complete during discussion period. By design, these worksheets should ask questions and engage classmates in activities about course themes, the ways that readings speak to those themes, and the ways the readings comment on each other. These should be submitted to Nicole no later than Sunday by Midnight of the week when they are due. They will then be distributed to the class via canvas to be completed during your readings and/or during our Wednesday evening meeting time.

Daily Participation & Activities (100 points)¹

We are going to be going fast in these three weeks, and I know that not everyone is going to be interested in 100% of the material. My expectation is that you read well enough that you can competently participate in class discussions. I view discussions in graduate classes as preparation for formal defenses. These are opportunities to find and perfect your academic voice so that

¹ Language and policies drawn from Samantha Senda-Cook’s Environmental Communication: Health, Social Justice and Rhetorical Field Methods taught in Summer of 2014 at the University of Nebraska Lincoln.
when you need to defend your prospectus, exams, and thesis or dissertation, you’re ready. Even for those of you entering the private industry, conducting localized research in organizations as well as translating research for your target organization are necessary skills for helping to improve communication. Also, as each of you will facilitate one day of class, you need to be a good citizen and help your peers succeed.

**Submission Letter (50 points)**
Part of conducting and reviewing research is being able to locate a particular project within a conceptual and methodological tradition. In this letter, you will target a specific journal publication. Submission letters provide a brief description of the article, identify the journal editor, give a brief history of the manuscript, and finally make an argument for why this manuscript would benefit the readers of this specific journal. You may have to conduct some research about the journal to make this form of persuasive appeal.

**Journal-Style Paper (final draft 100 points, revision 100 points)**
For the final paper, I want to emulate the process of submitting a manuscript for consideration in a journal. You will choose a communication-topic journal and comply with their submission requirements. To understand how to read research, it will be helpful to mimic the process of producing it. Therefore, you will write a 7,000-9,000, depending on the target publication using their citation-style and requirements. Different journals will accept different types of manuscripts. For example, some journals only accept post-positivist empirical research while others will accept theory articles that do not have any type of newly collected data. Journals can also be specific about the research tradition (rhetoric, critical cultural, interpersonal, family, quantitative, qualitative etc.). On Week Ten, seminarians will submit a journal article that models the type, method, and structure of manuscript that they intend to write. A theory article? A review article? Original research? Awesome. Submit an example article by Week Ten. In whatever way you choose, papers should connect in some way to course concepts. What you submit to me and your classmate first is not a first draft. It is a polished, ready-for-consideration-for-publication draft. Just like when you submit a manuscript to a journal, you know that you are probably going to have to revise the essay before it will be accepted for publication (if you’re lucky, and it’s not rejected).

**Grading Scale**
A = 93-100%
A- = 90-92%
B+ = 87-89%
B = 83-86%
B- = 80-82%
C+ = 77-79%
C = 73-76%
C- = 70-72%

**General Grading Standards**
A = Excellent. To receive an “A,” your assignment must not only meet all of the requirements, but should also exceed the expectations and standards.
B = Good. A “B” is a good grade. It means that you met all of the requirements of the assignment and have done a good job in meeting those requirements.

C = Unsatisfactory work. A “C” means that you produced something that did not meet the expectations and standards.

Course Policies and Statements

Student Accommodations
USU welcomes students with disabilities. If you have, or suspect you may have, a physical, mental health, or learning disability that may require accommodations in this course, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) as early in the semester as possible (University Inn # 101, 435-797-2444, drc@usu.edu). All disability related accommodations must be approved by the DRC. Once approved, the DRC will coordinate with faculty to provide accommodations.

COVID-19 Classroom Safety Protocols
While not mandated, USU encourages and welcomes the wearing of masks in all university building, especially within 6 feet of others. Furthermore, it is strongly encouraged to take measures to mitigate risk as recommended by federal and state public health officials. These measures include getting fully vaccinated, staying home if you are sick (even with mild symptoms), and maintaining good hygiene including frequent hand washing. Testing will be provided, without charge, throughout the semester and the USU COVID Webpage will provide up-to-date information. Please remember; COVID can have significant impact on the health and safety of those around you so remain vigilant and respectful.

Late Work
All unexcused late work must be turned within one week of it being due. I will not accept work later than a week. The assignment will be deducted 12% of the assignment total for each day that it is late. Unless otherwise discussed, all work stemming from an excused absence will be expected within a week of the absence. For excused absences, when possible, exams should be scheduled prior to the missed class.

Technology
School-related use of technology is at the discretion of students. I have seen students help and hurt themselves with the use of laptops in the classroom. By and large, I will optimistically assume all tech use is class related, however, if it becomes apparent a student is inappropriately using technology in the classroom, I reserve the right to reduce participation points.

Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism
All work for the class should be original and submitted just for this course. This means presenting others work (even small excerpts) as your own OR attempting to use a paper you did for another class will result in a 0 for the assignment on the first offense and expulsion from the class on the second offense. If you have interest in a particular topic that you explored in another class, please let me know so we can find a way to balance plagiarism and your continued interest in a specific topic.
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| Week One: 08/30-09/03 | **Social Influence as…..Something?**  
Pearce & Foss, “The Historical Context of Communication as a Science” |  |
| Week Two: 09/06-09/10 | **Social Influence as Methodology**  
Firestone, “Meaning in Method: The Rhetoric of Quantitative and Qualitative Research”  
Braithwaite et al., “I need numbers before I will buy it”: Reading and writing qualitative scholarship on close relationships”  
Hunt, “An essay on publishing standards for rhetorical Criticism”  
Brockiede, “Rhetorical Criticism as Argument” | *Bring a research article that you think bridges persuasion/social influence and your topic area of interest.  
Work Sheet: Nicole* |
| Week Three: 09/13-09/17 | **Social Influence as (Mythic) Narrative**  
Esch, “Legitimizing the ‘War on Terror’: Political Myth in Official-Level Rhetoric”  
| Week Four: 09/20-09/24 | **Social Influence and Social Media**  
Lewallen & Behm-Morawitz(2016) , “Pinterest or Thinterest?: Social Comparison and Body Image on Social Media.”  
Jaramillo-Dent & Pérez-Rodrígues (2021), “#migrantcaravan: The border wall and the establishment of otherness on Instagram.” |  |
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| Five: 09/27-10/01 | Social Influence as Social Change                        | **Happe,** “Health Communication Methodology and Race” (Chapter)  
**Dutta (2014),** “A Culture-Centered Approach to Listening: Voices of Social Change”  
**Dutta et al. (2019),** “A Culture-Centered Community-Grounded Approach to Disseminating Health Information Among African Americans” |
| Six: 10/04-10/08 | Social Influence as (Neo)Colonialism  
**Buescher & Ono,** “Civilized Colonialism Pocahontas as Neocolonial Rhetoric”  
**Hanchey** (2018), “All of Us Phantasmic Saviors”  
**Morin** (2016), “Framing Terror: The Strategies newspapers Use to Frame an Act as Terror or Crime”  
**Rankine & McCleanor (2004) “Colonial Coverage: Media Reporting of a Bicultural Health Research Partnership” | **Activity:** Climbing Citation Trees |
| Seven: 10/11-10/15 | Social Influence as Classroom Management  
**Golish (1999)** “Students’ Use of Compliance Gaining Strategies with Graduate Teaching Assistants: Examining the Other End of the Power Spectrum”  
**Elias & Loomis (2004),** “The Effect of Instructor Gender and Race/Ethnicity on Gaining Compliance in the Classroom”  
**Kannen (2012) ‘My body speaks to them’: instructor reflections on the complexities of power and social embodiments.”  
**LeFebvre et al. (2020),** “Its Only One Negative Comment….” | |
| Eight: 10/18-10/22 | Social Influence and Compliance Gaining  
**Segal (1994),** “Patient Compliance, the Rhetoric of Rhetoric, and the Rhetoric of Persuasion”  
**Klinge (2004),** “Compliance Gaining in Medical Contexts,” (pp. 289-315 in Perspectives on Persuasion, Social Influence, and Compliance Gaining)  
**Schneider & Beaubien (1996) “A Naturalistic Investigation of Compliance-Gaining Strategies Employed by Doctors in Medical Interviews,” | |
| Week Nine: 10/25 - 10/29 | Social Influence as Intercultural Communication  
Martin (2015), “Reconsidering intercultural (communication) competence in the workplace: a dialectical approach”  
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week Ten: 11/01 - 11/05 | Mid-Semester Writing & Checking In  
Example Article Presentation and Check-in Due  
Nicole Leads |
| Week Eleven: 11/08 - 11/12 | Social Influence as Ableism  
Jack & Appelbaum, “This is Your Brain on Rhetoric: Research Directions for Neurorhetorics” |
| Week Twelve: 11/15-11/19 | Social Influence as Space & Time  
McKerrow, “Space and Time in the Postmodern Polity”  
Ballard & Seibold (2006), “The Experience of Time at Work: Relationship to Communication Load, Job Satisfaction, and Interdepartmental Communication” |
| Week Thirteen: 11/22 - 11/26 | XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  
Thanksgiving: 24th-26th |
| Week Fourteen: 11/29 - 12/03 | Social Influence as Organizational Control  
Mumby, “Introduction: Narrative and Social Control”  
Willmott(2002), “Identity Regulation as Organizational Control: Producing the Appropriate Individual” |
| Week Fifteen: 12/06-12/10 | Week: Paper proposal, presentation, weekly writes  
No test week |
| Week Sixteen: 12/13 - 12/17 | Final Paper Due  
Final Paper Due |