Speech 764: Seminar in Persuasion and Influence  
Spring 2012 (Wed. 3:00-5:30 pm)

Professor: Dr. Min-Sun Kim  
Office: George Hall, Room 331  
Phone: 956-8317  
Email: kmin@hawaii.edu  
Office Hours: Wednesdays 2:10 – 3:00 pm, Fridays 1:00 – 2:00 pm, and by appointment

Course Description

The study of persuasion is one of the oldest subdisciplines within both social scientific and humanistic approaches to speech communication. The types of social influence situations that occur frequently in our day-to-day life are becoming increasingly intercultural. The variables of social influence may differ in quantity, quality, form, and process from culture to culture. We will focus on how different types of persuasion may be effective in different social/cultural settings, by providing explanations for how and why people process, evaluate, and resist or yield to persuasive appeals.

The course will be conducted in seminar fashion. Each week, seminar participants will be expected to discuss, analyze, and critique selected research articles or papers. Seminar participants are to integrate their own interests related to areas in which they will carry out their own thesis and dissertation research.

Textbooks


In addition, a reading packet will be available for purchase from the Copying Center on campus.

Course Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>50 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>50 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>80 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-Class Presentations</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total points</td>
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<td>200 pts</td>
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Individual Papers: Develop your own proposal for original research in this area, including research questions or hypotheses, and proposed methods. It is optional to
conducted a pretesting (involving about 30 participants) and report the results. Each student will be required to do an oral presentation based on the project. The goal of this project is to produce a paper which can be developed into a conference paper that can be presented at a national communication conference.

**Exams:** There will be take-home midterm and final exams. Exams will be distributed in class the week before they are due. You will be asked to answer about four questions, and write a two-page (typed, double-spaced, standard margins) answer to each question.

**In-Class Presentations:** Twice throughout the semester, each student will abstract two or three studies/chapters and present written and oral summaries of these abstracts to the class. Your job will be to summarize the key points of the assigned reading for the class, and to indicate what the strengths and weaknesses are of this reading, and how it contributes to the topic of the week. If the assigned reading is an empirical paper, your abstracts should summarize the rationale, research questions, methods, and results of each study, and should note convergent or divergent research findings across studies as well as implications of the studies for the theoretical approach discussed that day. Conceptual/methodological limitations of the research also should be discussed.

The following scale will serve as the basis for assigning grades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>%</th>
<th>Grade*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90 - 100</td>
<td>A-, A, A+</td>
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<tr>
<td>80 - 89</td>
<td>B-, B, B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 - 79</td>
<td>C-, C, C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 – 69</td>
<td>D-, D, D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Below 59</td>
<td>F</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* The instructor reserves the right to adjust this scale depending on the distribution of scores.

**TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Jan 11</td>
<td>Introduction to the Course</td>
<td>Overview of Social Influence Research and Ways of Knowing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Jan 18</td>
<td>Overview of Attitudes and Persuasion</td>
<td>Ch. 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Be ready to discuss the topic of your paper
The basis of source credibility and interpersonal power

** 1-page outline of the research paper due

Effective message organization

Compliance resistance

Attitude-behavior relationships

** 10-page outline of the research paper due

Receiver Factors: Fear Appeal, Deception

Midterm exam due

Cognitive Dissonance Theory

Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM)

Attribution Theory

No class (Spring Recess)

Persuasion in Group Settings: Conformity
Persuasion in Political Campaigns

Persuasion in Health Settings
Persuasion in Advertising
Course Policies

Make-up Exams: Exams must be taken at the scheduled time unless arranged with the instructor PRIOR TO THE DAY OF THE EXAM. Make-up exams will not be allowed without a legitimate and verifiable excuse.

Attendance: You are allowed two absences. Two tardies are equivalent to one missed class. Please avoid coming to class late as it disturbs and interrupts both the instructor and your classmates in the class. After two absences, your final grade will drop 3.0% for each additional day absent (no exceptions). Use these days wisely. You never know what may come up. These days include: sickness, hospitalization, death in the family, laziness, oversleeping, job, etc. You need not provide excuses to the professor. Those students with perfect attendance will be given extra credits (to be determined) at the end of the semester.

Participation: It is expected that you will have read the chapters/readings assigned by the day they are listed on your schedule. On that day, you are presumed to be an expert on these readings. You will be called on to explain various concepts and theories and to provide examples for them. Class Participation will be factored into student grades. Students must participate in thoughtful discussion forums on a weekly basis.

Appeals Process: On occasion, a student may feel that he or she has not received all of the points deserved for an assignment. In such cases, (1) within 72 hours you must identify in writing to the course instructor the nature of the discrepancy and why you should receive a higher grade, and (2) an appointment will then be made to review and act on your case.

Academic dishonesty: Cheating on papers or exams (e.g., copying other's answers) constitutes grounds for a failing grade on that assignment, and potentially on the entire course.