

## **CAS 302: SOCIAL INFLUENCE**

Spring 2014

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The Pennsylvania State University

### **TEXTBOOK:**

Fischoff, B., Brewer, N.T., & Downs, J.S. (2011). *Communicating risks and benefits: An evidence-based user's guide*. Washington, DC: Food and Drug Administration.

This is available at no charge at:

<http://www.fda.gov/downloads/AboutFDA/ReportsManualsForms/Reports/UCM268069.pdf>

### **COURSE PURPOSE AND LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

This course is designed to introduce students to theoretical and applied issues in interpersonal persuasion and persuasion campaigns. It presents an overview of the area with an emphasis on critical thinking about the creation and consumption of persuasive messages.

By the end of the course each student should:

1. possess a working knowledge of theoretical concepts in persuasion.
2. be able to demonstrate knowledge of the steps in a persuasion campaign.
3. have analyzed multiple messages from the perspective of the theories covered in class.
4. have crafted a message utilizing principles from the concepts covered in class.
5. become a more critical consumer of persuasive messages and persuasive campaigns.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

There are three project assignments. The first, *problem analysis*, calls for students to identify and analyze a social problem that might be lessened by persuasion. The focus of the second assignment--the *formative research* project--is to better understand members of the target audience. *Message creation* is the third assignment. It calls for students to create a small scale campaign that addresses the problem identified in their first assignment.

#### *Presentations*

Each student will make or take part in making a class presentation on one of the project assignments. CAS302 assumes that students have already mastered the basics of presentation as it is covered in courses such as CAS100: Effective Speech.

#### *Pop Quizzes*

Occasional pop quizzes may be given. To earn points from pop quizzes, students must be physically present on the day the quiz is given.

#### *Evaluation*

The final course grade will be determined by combining scores from grades on:

papers (3 X 15% = 45%),  
examinations (3 X 15% = 45%) ,  
and presentations (1 X 10%).

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

DATE	TOPIC	READING
Wk 1:	What is persuasion? Models of persuasion	<a href="http://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/documents/Toulmin.pdf">http://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/documents/Toulmin.pdf</a>
Wk 2:	More on Argumentation Goals and Targets of Persuasion	Chapter 2
Wk 3:	Audience Analysis 1 Audience Analysis 2	
Wk 4:	Dual process models of attitude Heuristics	
Wk 5:	Exam 1 Presentations: Problem Analysis	Papers due.
Wk. 6-7:	Analyzing Behavior	
Wk 8:	Computational theory 1 Computational theory 2	<a href="http://www.cios.org/encyclopedia/persuasion/Gtheory_1reasoned">http://www.cios.org/encyclopedia/persuasion/Gtheory_1reasoned</a>
Wk. 9:	Formative research: Overview Formative research: Application	Chapter 3
Wk 10:	Formative research: Theory	
Wk 11:	Persuasion to Change Habits	
Wk 12:	Exam 2 Presentations: Formative Research	Papers due
Wk 13:	Warnings, risk, and fear Pressure and anger	chapter 15
Wk. 14	Metaphor Narratives	
Wk 15	Terrorism and persuasion	

Wk 16: Presentations: Campaign

Presentations: Campaign  
Final  
exam  
period: Exam 3

Papers due