



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Persuasion and Attitude Change - 50129

Last update 06-10-2021

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: Communication & Journalism

Academic year: 0

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. Eran Amsalem

Coordinator Email: eran.amsalem@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Tuesday, 12:00-13:00, Room 5408

Teaching Staff:

Dr. Eran Amsalem

Course/Module description:

Persuasion is at the core of various communication processes: a company selling a product, a politician who wants us to vote for her, our partner who wants to draw our attention to something - all are engaging in persuasion efforts. This course reviews the rich, diverse and long-standing field of research called persuasion. In the course, we will define the persuasion process and examine the most effective (and ineffective) ways of influencing people's attitudes and behavior. We will discuss a variety of theoretical and practical aspects related to persuasion. Our discussions will be accompanied by examples from a variety of applied contexts, including politics, interpersonal communication, advertising, and the news media.

Course/Module aims:

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- 1. Describe the process of persuasion.*
- 2. Compare different types of persuasive effects.*
- 3. Describe the main theoretical models explaining the persuasion process.*
- 4. Analyze messages, situations and interactions from everyday life using the principles of persuasion.*

Attendance requirements(%):

80%

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: We will meet every week in class for a lecture, discussion of examples, and Q&A.

Course/Module Content:

Introduction: What is persuasion?

Attitude: Definition, structure, and measurement

The relationship between attitude and behavior

Attitude strength

Persuasion theories

Source factors

Message factors

Audience factors

Resistance to persuasion

Required Reading:

Perloff, R. M. (2020). *The dynamics of persuasion: Communication and attitudes in the 21st century (7th ed)*. London: Routledge.

Additional Reading Material:

Attitudes:

Tourangeau, R., & Galessic, M. 2013. *Conceptions of attitudes and opinions*. In W. Donsbach, & M. W. Traugott (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of public opinion research*, pp. 141-154. London: Sage.

The relationship between attitude and behavior:

Ajzen, I. & Fishbein, M. (2005). *The influence of attitudes on behavior*. In D. Albarracín, B. T. Johnson, & M. P. Zanna (Eds.), *The handbook of attitudes* (pp. 173-221). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Attitude strength:

Krosnick, J. A., & Petty, R. E. (1995). *Attitude strength: An overview*. In R. E. Petty & J. A. Krosnick (Eds.), *Attitude strength: Antecedents and consequences* (pp. 1-24). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Luttrell, A., & Sawicki, V. (2020). *Attitude strength: Distinguishing predictors versus defining features*. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 14(8), e12555.

Persuasion theories:

Druckman, J. N., & McGrath, M. C. (2019). *The evidence for motivated reasoning in climate change preference formation*. *Nature Climate Change*, 9(2), 111-119.

Lau, R. R. (2020). *Classic models of persuasion*. In E. Suhay, B. Grofman, & A. H. Trechsel (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of electoral persuasion* (pp. 29-42). New York: Oxford University Press.

Source factors:

Hovland, C. I., & Weiss, W. (1951). *The influence of source credibility on communication effectiveness*. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 15(4), 635-650.

Message factors:

Bilandzic, H., & Busselle, R. W. (2013). *Narrative persuasion*. In J. P. Dillard & L.

Shen (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of persuasion: Developments in theory and practice* (pp. 200–219). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

O’Keefe, D. J. (1999). *How to handle opposing arguments in persuasive messages: A meta-analytic review of the effects of one-sided and two-sided messages*. *Annals of the International Communication Association*, 22(1), 209-249.

Audience factors:

Cacioppo, J. T., & Petty, R. E. (1982). *The need for cognition*. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 42(1), 116-131.

Resistance to persuasion:

Compton, J. (2013). *Inoculation theory*. In J. P. Dillard & L. Shen (Eds.), *The handbook of persuasion: Developments in theory and practice* (pp. 220–236). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 0 %

Presentation 0 %

Participation in Tutorials 0 %

Project work 80 %

Assignments 20 %

Reports 0 %

Research project 0 %

Quizzes 0 %

Other 0 %

Additional information:

The grade will be based on four short writing assignments to be submitted on the course website during the semester (20%) and on a final paper (80%).