

Attitudes and Persuasion  
PSY 333, section S  
Tues & Thurs 3:30-4:45  
FLIPSE 301

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### Course Objectives

The study of attitudes and their relationship to behaviors is fundamental to the study of social psychology. The aim of this course is to present the student with the social psychological study of attitudes and persuasion. This will be done in this course in two parts. The first part will present the student with the necessary groundwork for the understanding of attitudes such as background information, theory and measurement. The second part of the course will examine the various theories of persuasion as well as persuasion techniques and their practical applications.

### Course Evaluation

Your final grade will be based on three exams, the proposal and presentation. The exam average will be 60% of your final grade, the proposal 30% and the proposal presentation 10%.

#### Exams

There will be three non-cumulative in-class exams based on material covered in class and required readings.

#### Proposal and presentation

You will be required to develop and write a proposal for an intervention to change a behavior or an attitude in any of several areas to be discussed in class. The proposal must include an introduction in which you critically review existing research. The proposal must be written in APA style and should not exceed 7 pages. This proposal is due the last day of class. Late papers will be penalized one letter grade for each day late. No late papers accepted after 3 days.

You will also be required to do an in-class presentation on the proposal. You will be graded separately on the presentation.

#### Attendance

Attendance in this class is not mandatory. Although, because of the nature of the lectures and the extensive class discussions, if you miss a class you may miss important information that is not found in your textbooks, therefore excessive absences will ultimately be reflected in a poor semester grade. If you must miss a lecture, make sure to get your notes from someone in class.

### Academic Honesty and Cheating Policy

The Undergraduate Honor Code is clear, as are the penalties for breaking it. Any attempt to cheat on an exam will result in a failing grade for the course and may result in suspension or expulsion from the University of Miami.

### Administrative information

This syllabus is provided for your information and may change during the course of the semester at my discretion. You are responsible for the material in the syllabus as well as anything that may be added during the semester.

I will hold office hours Monday and Wednesday from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in Flipse 459. Appointments may also be scheduled outside of office hours. If you need to speak to me, please email me or the TA for an appointment.

### Required Readings and Text

You are responsible for all assigned reading. The required texts can be found in the bookstore. These are:

Albarracin, D., Johnson, B.T., Zanna, M. P. (2005). The Handbook of Attitudes. Mahaw, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.  
Gass, R.H., Seiter, J.S. (2007). Persuasion, Social Influence, and Compliance Gaining (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education Inc.

### COURSE OUTLINE

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Required Reading</b>
Wk 1 8/23	Welcome and Syllabus distribution. Team assignments.	
Wk 2 8/28 8/30	Introduction to Attitudes: formation and function Measurement	Albarracin 1 Albarracin 2
Wk 3 9/4 9/6	Structure Each group member should think of several behaviors in their interest area. What are the attitudes related to that behavior? What are the beliefs related to that attitude?	Albarracin 3; Reading on BB
Wk 4 9/11 9/13	Attitudes and Behavior Each person in the group find two scholarly journal articles on a topic in your area of interest. Read articles and prepare to discuss in class. What is the behavior? What is the attitude (or attitudes) related to that behavior? What beliefs, if any, are mentioned by the researchers? How does the researcher address attitude / behavior change?	Albarracin 5 & 6

Wk 5		
9/18	Once again, brainstorm with your group members on behaviors in your topic area that could benefit from change. For example for health, compliance with mammogram screenings or condom use. For other areas, increasing voter turnout, taking public transportation, and prejudice. Decide what behavior you would like to work with for the rest of the semester. What is the behavior now? How do you think it should change? Discuss why you think it is important to change that behavior. Discuss attitudes and beliefs related to that behavior. Discuss how you think those attitudes should change. <b>HOMEWORK for 9/27</b> Please bring a well thought out behavior and attitude that you are interested in working on based on today's group exercise. Read and bring one recent research article from a scholarly journal that addresses your selection.	
9/20	Exam 1	
Wk 6		
9/25	Attitudes and Beliefs	Albarracin 8 & 9
9/27		
Wk 7		
10/2	Attitudes and Affect	Albarracin 11
10/4		
Wk 8		
10/9	Introduction to Persuasion	Gass 1
10/11	Dual Process Models	Gass 2; Albarracin 15
Wk 9		
10/16	Credibility	Gass 4
10/18	Communicator Characteristics	Gass 5
Wk 10		
10/23	Test 2	
10/25	Conformity / Influence	Gass 6
Wk 11		
10/30	Message Characteristics	Gass 9
11/1	Tactics of Persuasion	Gass 10
Wk 12		
11/6	Motivational Models	Gass 13

11/8       Groups: After having been exposed to the different approaches to persuasion you will select the approach or approaches you think would be best suited for your intervention. Discuss your choice with group members. How do you think you would design your intervention? How would you apply the theory you've selected? Speak in terms of your attitude and behavior of choice. Why do you think that model is the better choice? Would more than one model better address the issue? How well does the model/theory translate to real world application?

Wk 13

11/13       Test 3

11/15       Presentations

Wk 14

11/20       Presentations

11/22       HAPPY THANKSGIVING

Wk 15

11/27       Presentations

11/29       Presentation