



**MMC 6936**  
**Digital Persuasive Communication (#0961)**  
**Spring 2015**

College of Journalism and Communications  
University of Florida

Class Meeting: M 7-9 (1:55-4:55 p.m.), Weimer Hall 1074  
Professor: Dr. Eunice Kim  
Email: [eunicekim@ufl.edu](mailto:eunicekim@ufl.edu)  
Office: Weimer Hall 2084, (352)392-5059  
Office Hours: M 5-6 (11:45-1:40 p.m.) or by appointment

### Course Description

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Welcome to Digital Persuasive Communication! This course acquaints graduate students with the some of the more well-accepted literature in digital persuasive communication and provides the opportunity to apply the theoretical knowledge to understanding the psychology of persuasion in digital media environments. This course will deal with a wide range of issues and topics in the areas of advertising, marketing communication, and public relations in the digital age (e.g., consumer-generated content, electronic word-of-mouth, social media marketing and public relations, in-game/advergaming advertising,, and cross-media and integrated communications). We will examine a body of advertising and public relations literature in the context of digital communication and discuss their application to the practices in digital persuasion.

Specific objectives of this course are:

- To provide students an opportunity to carefully examine the academic literature and theories that have applications to advertising, marketing communication, and public relations in the context of digital media.
- To have students critically analyze and construct critical viewpoints of theory and research in the field of digital persuasive communication.
- To help students translate theoretical concepts to practical applications in digital persuasion settings.
- To develop students' critical thinking and research skills through writing research papers.
- To give students practice in defending their research against criticism from their colleagues.

### Readings

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- There is no textbook assigned for this class, however individuals are responsible for the readings that will be posted on Canvas (<https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>) under "Reading List".

## Expectations

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This course is designed around a discussion format—meaning it is a discussion-intensive class. You are expected to arrive in class having completed the readings assigned for each week and be ready to *actively participate and engage* in class discussion. The most valuable contributions will be your scholarly opinions and your efforts to synthesize and apply course readings.

A lively discussion among classmates is crucial to the success of any graduate-level course. You should be prepared to state and defend your position, as well as refute the position of others in a cogent manner. I hope you also develop supportive relationships with your classmates as we work through the issues in the field.

## Evaluation

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Your grade in this course will be based on the following components:

Participation/Discussion Leader	20%
Reading Synopsis	20%
Journal Review	10%
<u>Research Assignments</u>	<u>50%</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 1. Participation/Discussion Leader (20%)

Each week, 2-4 papers will be assigned. You are expected to read each paper carefully BEFORE class. Your aim, in reading the assigned papers, should be on recalling information from the papers and integrating the information into the class discussion.

Every student will be asked to take the role of the “lead discussant” for a particular article. The article will be assigned in advance. As the lead discussant, you will have to highlight the main objective and a summary of the article and point out what you believe are the strengths and weaknesses of the reading. In addition, the discussion leader will be responsible for generating discussion points/agendas for class to stimulate class conversation. If you wish, you may use PowerPoint to help lead the discussion, but remember that the class should be a “discussion” and not a “presentation”.

A major part of your class participation grade will be determined by (1) your ability to thoughtfully discuss the papers and contribute *meaningfully* to class discussions and (2) your performance in the role as the lead discussant.

## 2. Reading Synopsis (20%)

Throughout the semester you will be expected to demonstrate your grasp of assigned reading materials and to contribute to discussion relating the relevance of class readings to current practice in persuasive communication using digital media. Specifically, on designated weeks (refer to Preliminary Course Schedule on pages 7-10), you are expected to turn in synopsis of **(1) key points in the readings and (2) two questions on one or more of the papers assigned for that week.** This will be **due no later than 8 p.m. the Sunday before class.** Please upload your reading synopsis (a Word file) to the class Canvas under “Assignments”.

These questions should be thoughtful – going beyond definitional issues or areas of confusion. The questions may attempt to make links between the readings for the week or try to tie the current week’s topic with topics covered in other weeks. They may pertain to a specific connection you see between the article and a personal observation and/or another article. In short, the questions could be on any topic, so long as they are related to the readings, and indicate that you have spent time and effort to understand and digest the information in the readings.

## 3. Journal Review (10%)

Each student will complete a formal review of a recent article published in a peer-review journal. The review should include clear, detailed, and constructive comments on how the author(s) may improve. When making comments, be clear in identifying the strengths, weaknesses, and ways to make improvements – more specificity is better. Here are examples of topics you might address in the review:

- What is the significance of the study to the academia and/or practice in digital persuasive communication?
- Present the most critical issues from the article. What contrasting positions might be taken? Are these positions incompatible or can they be reconciled?
- Criticize a theoretical position – what has it clarified, ignored, confused, etc.
- Point out methodological problems. Suggest alternative explanations for the findings.
- Raise question(s) relevant to the topic but not answered in the article.

➤ **Due: February 23<sup>th</sup>**

➤ **Format: double-spaced, 3-page, 12-point Times New Roman; hard copy in class.**

#### 4. Research Assignments (50%)

Two written research assignments (research paper) and a presentation will be required for this group portion of your class assignment (for Ph.D students, these assignments should be done **individually**). The research assignments can be on any topic of your choice relevant to digital persuasive communication. Early in the semester you will be asked to choose a topic of your interest. Topic choice must be approved by me in advance in writing (due on February 16<sup>th</sup>, double-spaced, 1-page, 12-point Times New Roman; hard copy in class).

A thorough review of the literature and research questions should be included in the final paper (for Ph.D. students, specific hypotheses and research methods should be included). The goal for this final paper is that you leave the class with a paper that could be submitted to a conference in the future (e.g., AEJMC, AAA, ICA, NCA, etc.). Here are some guidelines to help you get started:

##### Part 1: Research Questions and Background Information (15%)

- Pick a general topic area and research question(s) relevant to digital persuasive communication. Provide your rationale for why this is an important topic to study and discuss the likely contribution(s) of the proposed research.
- Do a general search of the literature in the topic area. Summarize literature relevant to your study, which will provide the foundation for your final paper.
  - Turn in a paper based on Part 1 specified above (due on March 23<sup>th</sup>, hard copy in class)
  - Double-spaced, 10-page, 12-point Times New Roman (excluding reference section, tables, and figures) in APA style.

##### Part 2: Theoretical Explanations (35%)

- Expand on the above with additional literature review.
- Describe what the key theories are and provide detailed theoretical explanations relevant to a possible “answer” to your research question(s).
  - Deliver a 15-minute professional presentation on the last day of class combining Parts 1 & 2 specified above (April 20<sup>th</sup>).
  - Turn in a final paper containing Parts 1 & 2 specified above (due on Friday 5 p.m. April 24<sup>th</sup>, hard copy in my mailbox): double-spaced, 20-25 pages long, 12-point Times New Roman (excluding reference section, tables, and figures) in APA style.

##### Methodology (for Ph.D. students only)

- Describes the research design with the quantitative and/or quantitative method of your selection, including: subjects, procedure, measurement of variables, stimuli, and manipulation checks etc.

## General Course Policies

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### Late Work Policy

**NO** late assignments will be accepted. No exception.

### E-mail Policy

As e-mail has become a favored way to communicate in academia and industry, you must learn to use it appropriately. Thus, when e-mailing me, address it formally. I will generally return it within 24 hours of receiving it on weekdays or by Monday evening if I receive it on the weekend. If you need to discuss something in length, come see me during office hours or we can schedule an alternative time.

### Professional Courtesy

As a courtesy to your instructor and to your classmates, please make sure at the beginning of each class period that your cell phones are turned **OFF**. In-class laptop usage is restricted to taking notes about this particular class. Inappropriate use of a laptop—using the internet for reasons not related to this class—will not be accepted.

### Academic Dishonesty

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” By accepting this syllabus, you have agreed to these guidelines and must adhere to them. The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conducthonor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions.

Please see the plagiarism document in the Graduate Division, and be sure that you have signed it and it is on file (required, if you are in this college).

### Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to me when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

### **Religious Holy Days**

By UF policy, a student who misses classes or other required activities for the observance of a religious holy day must notify me of his or her pending absence as early as possible prior to the date of a religious holy day, so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment or activity within a reasonable time after the absence.

### **Online Course Evaluation**

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last 2-3 weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

### **Tentative Nature of the Syllabus**

I reserve the right to change and/or add readings throughout the semester. Furthermore, I reserve the right to change and or move around scheduled lectures in order to facilitate for potential unplanned events (cancellations or guest speakers). If changes in the schedule are necessary, students will be held responsible for such changes, which will be announced in class ahead of time.

## PRELIMINARY COURSE SCHEDULE

*The course outline is subject to change*

(\* indicates individual reading synopsis due in class)

### Week 1:

1/12- Welcome & Course Intro

### Week 2:

1/19- Martin Luther King Day – NO CLASS

### Week 3:

1/26- Digital Persuasive Communication – Overview, Opportunities, and Challenges

Kietzmann, J. H., Silvestre, B. S., McCarthy, I. P., & Pitt, L. F. (2012). Unpacking the social media phenomenon: towards a research agenda. *Journal of Public Affairs, 12*(2), 109-119.

Deighton, J., & Kornfeld, L. (2009). Interactivity's unanticipated consequences for marketers and marketing. *Journal of Interactive Marketing, 23*(1), 4-10.

Hennig-Thurau, T., Malthouse, E. C., Friege, C., Gensler, S., Lobschat, L., Rangaswamy, A., & Skiera, B. (2010). The impact of new media on customer relationships. *Journal of Service Research, 13*(3), 311-330.

### Week 4:

2/2- Digital Advertising - Customization and Interactivity\*

van Doorn, J., & Hoekstra, J. C. (2013). Customization of online advertising: The role of intrusiveness. *Marketing Letters, 24*(4), 339-351.

Bright, L. F., & Daugherty, T. (2012). Does customization impact advertising effectiveness? An exploratory study of consumer perceptions of advertising in customized online environments. *Journal of Marketing Communications, 18*(1), 19-37.

Liu, Y., & Shrum, L. J. (2009). A dual-process model of interactivity effects. *Journal of Advertising, 38*(2), 53-68.

Cauberghe, V., & De Pelsmacker, P. (2010). The effectiveness of telescopic ads delivered via interactive digital television: The impact of the amount of information and the level of interactivity on brand responses. *Journal of Interactive Marketing, 24*(4), 297-308.

### Week 5:

2/9- Consumer-generated Content and Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM)\*

Campbell, C., Pitt, L. F., Parent, M., & Berthon, P. R. (2011). Understanding consumer conversations around ads in a Web 2.0 world. *Journal of Advertising, 40*(1), 87-102.

Li, J., & Zhan, L. (2011). Online persuasion: How the written word drives WOM evidence from consumer-generated product reviews. *Journal of Advertising Research, 51*(1), 239-257.

Pan, L. Y., & Chiou, J. S. (2011). How much can you trust online information? Cues for perceived trustworthiness of consumer-generated online information. *Journal of Interactive Marketing, 25*(2), 67-74.

**Week 6:**

**2/16- Understanding Social Media Use\***

➤ *Research proposal Due*

- Kietzmann, J. H., Hermkens, K., McCarthy, I. P., & Silvestre, B. S. (2011). Social media? Get serious! Understanding the functional building blocks of social media. *Business horizons*, 54(3), 241-251.
- Chen, G. M. (2011). Tweet this: A uses and gratifications perspective on how active Twitter use gratifies a need to connect with others. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 27(2), 755-762.
- Kwon, E., Kim, E., Sung, Y., & Yoo, C. Y. (2014). Brand followers: Consumer motivations and attitudes toward brand communications on Twitter. *International Journal of Advertising*, 33(4), 657-680.
- Tsai, W. H. S., & Men, L. R. (2013). Motivations and antecedents of consumer engagement with brand pages on social networking sites. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 13(2), 76-87.

**Week 7:**

**2/23- Social Media Marketing**

➤ *Journal Review Due*

- Hill, R. P., & Moran, N. (2011). Social marketing meets interactive media: Lessons for the advertising community. *International Journal of Advertising*, 30(5), 815-838.
- Jansen, B., Zhang, M., Sobel, K. & Chowdury, A. (2009). Twitter power: Tweets as electronic word-of-mouth. *Journal of American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 60(11), 2169-2188.
- Jin, S. A. A., & Phua, J. (2014). Following celebrities' tweets about brands: The impact of Twitter-based electronic word-of-mouth on consumers' source credibility perception, buying intention, and social identification with celebrities. *Journal of Advertising*, 43(2), 181-195.
- Kwon, E., & Sung, Y. (2011). Follow me!: Global marketers' Twitter use. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 12(1), 4-16.

**Week 8:**

**3/2 – Spring Break – NO CLASS**

**Week 9:**

**3/9- Social Media for Public Relations\***

- McCorkindale, T., & DiStaso, M. W. (2014). The state of social media research: Where are we now, where we were and what it means for public relations. *Research Journal of the Institute for Public Relations*, 1(1).
- Lovejoy, K., & Saxton, G. D. (2012). Information, community, and action: How nonprofit organizations use social media. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 17(3), 337-353.
- Smith, B. G. (2010). Socially distributing public relations: Twitter, Haiti, and interactivity in social media. *Public Relations Review*, 36(4), 329-335.

- Men, L. R., & Tsai, W. H. S. (2014). Perceptual, attitudinal, and behavioral outcomes of organization–public engagement on corporate social networking sites. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 26(5), 417-435.
- Yang, S. U., Kang, M., & Johnson, P. (2010). Effects of narratives, openness to dialogic communication, and credibility on engagement in crisis communication through organizational blogs. *Communication Research*, 37(4), 473-497.

**Week 10:**

**3/16- The Rules of Engagement in Social Media\***

- Park, N., Kee, K. F., & Valenzuela, S. (2009). Being immersed in social networking environment: Facebook groups, uses and gratifications, and social outcomes. *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, 12(6), 729-733.
- Gil de Zúñiga, H., Jung, N., & Valenzuela, S. (2012). Social media use for news and individuals' social capital, civic engagement and political participation. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 17(3), 319-336.
- Lee, E. J., & Shin, S. Y. (2012). Are they talking to me? Cognitive and affective effects of interactivity in politicians' Twitter communication. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 15(10), 515-520.
- Kim, Y., Hsu, S. H., & de Zúñiga, H. G. (2013). Influence of social media use on discussion network heterogeneity and civic engagement: The moderating role of personality traits. *Journal of Communication*, 63(3), 498-516.

**Week 11:**

**3/23- Virtual Worlds and Avatars**

- *Research Paper Part 1 Due*

- Ahn, S. J. & Bailenson, J. N. (2011). Self-endorsing versus other-endorsing in virtual environments: The effect on brand attitude and purchase intention. *Journal of Advertising*, 40(2), 93-106.
- Keng, C. J., & Liu, C. C. (2013). Can avatar and self-referencing really increase the effects of online 2-D and 3-D advertising?. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 29(3), 791-802.
- Aguirre-Rodriguez, A., Bóveda-Lambie, A. M., & Miniard, P. W. (2014). The impact of consumer avatars in Internet retailing on self-congruity with brands. *Marketing Letters*, 1-11.
- Jin, S. A. A., & Sung, Y. (2010). The roles of spokes-avatars' personalities in brand communication in 3D virtual environments. *Journal of Brand Management*, 17(5), 317-327.

**Week 12:**

**3/30- In-Game Advertising & Advergimes\***

- Terlutter, R., & Capella, M. L. (2013). The gamification of advertising: Analysis and research directions of in-game advertising, advergimes, and advertising in social network games. *Journal of Advertising*, 42(2-3), 95-112.
- Peters, S., & Leshner, G. (2013). Get in the game: The effects of game-product congruity and product placement proximity on game players' processing of brands embedded in advergimes. *Journal of Advertising*, 42(2-3), 113-130.

- Yoo, S. C., & Peña, J. (2011). Do violent video games impair the effectiveness of in-game advertisements? The impact of gaming environment on brand recall, brand attitude, and purchase intention. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 14(7-8), 439-446.
- Steffen, C., Mau, G., & Schramm-Klein, H. (2013). Who is the loser when I lose the game? Does losing an advergame have a negative impact on the perception of the brand? *Journal of Advertising*, 42(2-3), 183-195.
- Waiguny, M. K., Nelson, M. R., & Terlutter, R. (2012). Entertainment matters! The relationship between challenge and persuasiveness of an advergame for children. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 18(1), 69-89.

**Week 13:**

**4/6- Assignment Consultation**

**Week 14:**

**4/13- Cross-Media Effects**

- Fulgoni, G., & Lipsman, A. (2014). Digital game changers: How social media will help usher in the era of mobile and multi-platform campaign-effectiveness measurement. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 54(1), 11-16.
- Voorveld, H. A., Neijens, P. C., & Smit, E. G. (2011). Opening the black box: Understanding cross-media effects. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 17(2), 69-85.
- Voorveld, H. A., Neijens, P. C., & Smit, E. G. (2012). The interacting role of media sequence and product involvement in cross-media campaigns. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 18(3), 203-216.
- Voorveld, H. A., & Valkenburg, S. M. (2014). The fit factor: The role of fit between ads in understanding cross-media synergy. *Journal of Advertising*, (ahead-of-print), 1-11.

**Week 15:**

**4/20- Final Presentations**

**Note: Final Paper Due on Friday 5 p.m. April 24<sup>th</sup> in my mailbox.**