

MMC 6936 | Social Influence in New Media Environments

Syllabus

[TR 9:35 – 12:35] | 1074 Weimer Hall

Instructor: Troy Elias, Ph.D. Office: 2084 Weimer Hall, 352.392.5059
telias@jou.ufl.edu Office Hours: M: 11AM – 12PM; T: 2PM-3PM

Texts:

- Katz, E., & Lazarsfeld, P. (1955). *Personal influence: The part played by people in the flow of mass communications*. New York: Free Press.
- Readings about the social animal. E. Aronson (ed.). New York, NY: Worth Publishers.
- Rogers, E. (1983). *Diffusion of innovations* (3rd edition). New York: The Free Press.

Additional readings for the course are compiled in [e-Learning](#)

Please read the assigned materials *before* each class meeting. The course lectures will interpret, demonstrate, and extend the information and ideas in the readings, so be sure to take careful notes during each class.

Course Requirements:

1. Weekly Response Papers & In-class Participation. Consists of 30% of overall grade. Short 1-2 page papers will critically discuss, and analyze ideas and concepts from the readings.
2. Class Discussant. Consists of 20% of overall grade. Each student will serve as discussion leader twice during the semester.
3. Final Paper. Consists of 50% of overall grade. Final paper (approx. 15-20 pages) addressing a question related to issues and problems in social influence, diversity, and emerging technology.

Course Overview:

This graduate level course examines the impact of social psychological processes on intergroup behavior in new media environments. The course will highlight past and current research on social influence in advertising, important questions that have not been adequately addressed in mainstream advertising research, and explore how current theories can be used to inform and construct better strategic communication plans. The book chapters, articles, and case studies draw upon existing literature and problems from the fields of social psychology, advertising, marketing, communication, and related disciplines to amplify understanding and insight into developing effective advertising and strategic communication approaches to reach diverse audiences. The course will also contribute to the understanding of the diversity of people, the changing landscape of the U.S., and the need for a more inclusive society.

Evaluation & Descriptions of Assignments:

Weekly Response Papers (15%)

Beginning the second week of the semester, you are required to write one 1-2 page response paper per week based on your reactions to the readings. You may write about any aspect of the readings that you liked, disliked, found interesting, found confusing, etc. At the end of each paper, include three possible discussion questions for the class. Submit your paper via Sakai no later than 5pm the day before the corresponding class. These papers will count for 15% of your final grade.

Class attendance and participation (15%)

A significant portion of your grade is based on your attendance, engagement and participation in class, including reading and synthesizing the materials, and actively participating in seminar discussion. Each student should be prepared to participate in class discussion.

Class discussants (20%)

Each student will serve as discussion leader twice during the semester. Being a discussant means leading discussion on that day's topic during class.

On e-Learning - No later than 5pm the night before class, discussants must post at least five questions or observations from the readings to help stimulate discussion.

In class - A successful discussant may:

- ❖ Review relevant material from the readings
- ❖ Pose intriguing questions
- ❖ Make provocative points
- ❖ Bring related ideas and material beyond the readings into the discussion

Final Paper (50%)

For the final paper, you will write a 15-20 page proposal on social influence in new media in which you design an original research study, using any methodology (e.g., experiment, survey, content analysis, qualitative). This proposal should be inspired (but need not be constrained) by the course material. Although you will be encouraged to collect some pilot data for this proposal, you are not required to do so. At a minimum, the paper must include an introduction, theoretic framework, methods, questionnaire/survey/interview questions, and references. Please prepare your paper according to the American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines.

Toward the middle of the semester, you will be asked to bring in and discuss three tentative study ideas for the proposal. We will devote one class session to this activity in order for you to get as much constructive feedback as possible before settling on a topic. The paper will be due on the last day of class. The research proposal will count for 50% of your final grade. **Note:** You can work in groups of up to 3 for your research project. Each group member will get the same grade for the paper.

Honor code:

Preamble: In adopting this Honor Code, the students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students who enroll at the University commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the Honor Code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action. **The Honor Code:** We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. 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."

For more information about academic honesty, contact, Student Judicial Affairs, P202 Peabody Hall, 392-1261.

You can review UF's academic honesty guidelines in detail at: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/honestybrochure.php>

Thursday, January 9 **Introduction to the Course**

Thursday, January 16 **II. Mass Media vs. Interpersonal Influence - A Historical Perspective**

Asch, S.E. (1955). Opinions and social pressure. *Readings about the social animal*. E. Aronson (ed.). New York, NY: Worth Publishers. (Reprinted from *Scientific American*, 1955, 193, 5).

Sherif, M. (1956). Experiments in group conflict. *Readings about the social animal*. E. Aronson (ed.). New York, NY: Worth Publishers. (Reprinted from *Scientific American*, 1956, 195, 5).

Katz, E., & Lazarsfeld, P. (1955). *Personal influence: The part played by people in the flow of mass communications*. New York: Free Press. (Chapters 1&2; pp. 15-42).

Chaffee, S.H. (1979). Mass media vs. interpersonal channels: The synthetic competition. Paper presented at annual meeting of the Speech Communication Association, San Antonio, Texas, November 1979.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED READING:

*Milgram, S.E. (1963). Behavioral study of obedience. *Readings about the social animal*. E. Aronson (ed.). New York, NY: Worth Publishers. (Reprinted from *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 1963, 67, 4).

Thursday, January 23 **III. The Multiple Roles People Play in the Dissemination of Innovations**

Granovetter, M. (1973). The strength of weak ties. *American Journal of Sociology*, 78(6), 1360-1380.

Rogers, E. (1983). *Diffusion of innovations* (3rd edition). New York: The Free Press. (Chapter 1; pp. 1-37).

Katz, E., & Lazarsfeld, P. (1955). *Personal influence: The part played by people in the flow of mass communications*. New York: Free Press. (Chapters 4-6; pp. 48-81).

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED READING:

Gladwell, M. (2000). *The tipping point: How little things can make a big difference*. New York, NY: Back Bay Books/Little Brown and Company. (Chapters 1&2; pp. 15-88).

Thursday, January 30

IV. Social Identity Theory

- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1986). The social identity theory of intergroup behavior. In S. Worchel & W. G. Austin (Eds.), *Psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 7-24). Chicago, IL: Nelson-Hall.
- Turner, J.C. (1982). Towards a cognitive redefinition of the social group. *Social identity and intergroup relations*. H. Tajfel (ed.). Great Britain: Cambridge University Press.
- Mastro, D. E. (2003). A social identity approach to understanding the impact of television messages. *Communication Monographs*, 70(2), 98-113.
- Elias, T., Appiah, O., & Gong, L. (2011). Effects of Black's strength of ethnic identity on consumer attitudes: A multiple-group model approach. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 11 (2).

Thursday, February 6

V. Social Categorization

- Hogg, M.A. (2004). Social categorization, depersonalization, and group behavior. In M.B. Brewer and M. Hewstone (Eds.). *Self and social identity*. Blackwell Publishing.
- Hogg, M. A., & Reid, S. A. (2006). Social identity, self categorization, and the communication of group norms. *Communication Theory*, 16, 7-30.
- Hogg, M. A., & Terry, D. J. (1995). Social identity and self-categorization processes in organizational contexts. *The Academy of Management Review*, 25, 1, 121-140.
- Brewer, M.B., & Gaertner, S. L. (2004). Toward reduction of prejudice: Intergroup contact and social categorization. In M.B. Brewer and M. Hewstone (Eds.). *Self and social identity*. Blackwell Publishing.

Thursday, February 13

VI. Social Comparison

- Festinger, L. (1954). A theory of social comparison process. *Human Relations*, 7, 117-140.
- Gulas, C., & McKeage, K. (2000). Extending social comparison: An examination of the unintended consequences of idealized advertising imagery. *Journal of Advertising*, 29 (2), 17-28.
- Buunk, B.P., & Oldersma, F.L. (2001). Social comparisons and close relationships. In G.J. Fletcher & M.S. Clark (Eds.). *Blackwell handbook of social psychology: Interpersonal Processes* (pp. 388-409). Blackwell Publishing.
- Buunk, A., & Gibbons, F. (2007). Social comparison: The end of a theory and the emergence of a field. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 102 (1), 3-21.

Thursday, February 20

VII. Psychological Distinctiveness

Vignoles, V., Chrysoschoou, X., & Breakwell, G. M. (2000). The distinctiveness principle: Identity, meaning, and bounds of cultural relativity. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 4(4), 337-354.

Brewer, M. B. (1991). The social self: On being the same and different at the same time. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 17, 475-482.

Desphande, R., & Stayman, D. (1994). A tale of two cities: Distinctiveness theory and advertising effectiveness. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 31, 57-64.

Appiah, O., & Elias, T. (2009). Effects of ethnically-targeted and ethnically-ambiguous computer generated agents on browsers' evaluations of a commercial web site. *Virtual Social Identity and Consumer Behavior*. Advertising and Consumer Psychology Book Series. M.E. Sharp.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED READING:

Aaker, J., Brumbaugh, A., & Grier, S. (2000). Non-target market effects and viewer distinctiveness: The impact of target marketing on attitudes. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 9 (3), 127-140.

Thursday, February 27

VIII. Market Mavens & Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence

Burnkrant, R.E., & Cousineau, A. (1975). Informational and normative social influence in buyer behavior. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 2(December), 206-215.

Deutsch, M., & Gerard, H. (1955). A study of normative and informational influence upon individual judgment. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 51 (November), 629-636.

Feick, L.F., & Price, L.L. (1987). The market maven: A diffuser of marketplace information. *Journal of Marketing*, 51, 83-97.

Clark, R.A., & Goldsmith, R.E. (2005). Market mavens: Psychological influences. *Psychology & Marketing*, 22 (4), 289-312.

Thursday, March 6

No Class - SPRING BREAK

Thursday, March 13

IX. Class Discussion - RESEARCH PROPOSALS

Thursday, March 20

X. Social Identity Model of De-Individuation Effects

Postmes, T., Spears, R., & Lea, M. (1998). Breaching or building social boundaries: SIDE effects of computer-mediated communication. *Communication Research*(25)6, p. 689-715.

Postmes, T., Spears, R., Sakhel, K., & de Groot, D. (2001). Social influence in computer-mediated communication: The effects of anonymity on group behavior. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 27 (10), 1243-1254.

- Lee, E.J. (2004). Effects of visual representation on social influence in computer-mediated communication. *Human Communication Research, 30* (2), 234-259.
- Lee, E.J. (2007). Deindividuation effects on group polarization in computer-mediated communication: The role of group identification, public self-awareness, and perceived argument quality. *Journal of Communication, 57*, 385-403.

Thursday, March 27

XI. New Media Effects

- Chaffee, S.H., & Metzger, M.J. (2001). The end of mass communication? *Mass Communication & Society, 4*(4), 365-379.
- Dellarocas, C. (2003). The digitization of word of mouth: Promise and challenges of online feedback mechanisms. *Management Science, 49*(10), pp. 1407-1424.
- Hennig-Thurau, T. & Walsh, G. (2003). Electronic word-of-mouth: Motives for and consequences of reading consumer articulations on the Internet. *International Journal of Electronic Commerce, 8*(2), 51-74.
- Phelps, J.E., Lewis, R., Mobilio, L., Perry, D. & Raman, N. (2004). Viral marketing or electronic word-of-mouth advertising: Examining consumer responses and motivations to pass along email. *Journal of Advertising Research, 333-348*.

Thursday, April 3

XII. Technology and Advertising

- Lee, M., & Faber, R. J. (2007). Effects of product placement in on-line games on brand memory: A perspective of the limited capacity model of attention. *Journal of Advertising, 36*, 75- 90.
- Park, T., Shenoy, R., & Salvendy G. (2006). Effective advertising on mobile phones: A literature review and presentation of results from 53 case studies. *Behaviour & Information Technology, 27* (5), 355-373.
- Jansen, B.J., Zhang, M., Sobel, K., & Chowdury, A. (2009). Twitter power: Tweets as electronic word-of-mouth. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology, 60* (11), 2169-2009.
- Holzwarth, M., Janiszewski, C., & Neumann, M.M. (2006). The influence of avatars on online consumer shopping behavior. *Journal of Marketing, 70*, 19-36.

Thursday, April 10
Asians & Native Americans

XIII. Influence Through Source Effects—Whites, Blacks, Hispanics,

Entman, R. M., & Rojecki, A. (2000). Advertising Whiteness. *The Black image in the White mind*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Schumann, D., Lee, Jinkrook, L., Watchravesringkan, K. (2004). The case for separation of Asian-American ethnic groups as we consider our target market strategies. In J. D. Williams, W. Lee, & C.P. Haugtvedt (Eds.) *Diversity in Advertising*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Mastro, D., & Stern, S. (2003). Representations of race in television commercials: A content analysis of prime-time advertising. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 47 (4), 638-647.

Merskin, D. (2001). Winnebagos, Cherokees, Apaches, and Dakotas: The persistence of stereotyping of American Indians in American advertising brands. *The Howard Journal of Communications*, 159-169.

Thursday, April 17 XIV. Source Effects – Asian Americans, Religion, & Elderly in Advertising

Webster, J.G. & Zsiazek, T.B. (2012). The dynamics of audience fragmentation: Public attention in an age of digital media. *Journal of Communication*, 62, 39-56.

Bhat, S., Leigh, T. W., & Wardlow, D. L. (1998). The effect of prejudices on ad processing: Heterosexual consumers' responses to homosexual imagery in ads. *Journal of Advertising*, 27 (4), 9-25.

Fairfield, D., & Johnson, M. (2004). The presence of religious symbols and value in advertising. In J. D. Williams, W. Lee, & C.P. Haugtvedt (Eds.) *Diversity in Advertising*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Greenlee, T. B. (2004). Mainstream marketers advertise to gays and lesbians: Strategic issues and research Agenda. In J. D. Williams, W. Lee, & C.P. Haugtvedt (Eds.) Diversity in Advertising. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Thursday, April 24

>>FINAL PAPER DUE<<
