



Persuasive Theory & Strategy in Business Communications Module 4, 2025-2026

Course Information

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Office Hour: Mondays & Thursdays 8:00am – 9:30am; Wednesdays 10am – 11am; or email for appointment

Teaching Assistant: TBD

Phone:

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Classes:

Lectures: TBD

Venue: PHBS Building, Room TBD

1. Course Description

1.1 Context

This course addresses important topics and theories related to persuasive theories and strategy for business communication in the digital era. The course begins with consideration of relevant theories, including persuasion, message/media effects, social psychological, and behavioral theories. Then, we will further discuss how these theories inform the practice of persuasive and strategic communication in corporate, non-profit, commercial (marketing, advertising, strategic communication), political, health, and social contexts. Students are expected to finish assigned readings before class to make sure they're ready to ask questions, agree, disagree, share relevant cases and experience, argue, and provide your own points of view. Students need to participate in the class discussion.

1.2 Textbooks and Reading Materials

There is no required textbook for this course. Readings will be shared by the instructor/TA. Course reading materials are based on a mix of industry and academic articles appropriate to the assigned topic of the week.

2. Learning Outcomes

2.1 Intended Learning Outcomes

Learning Goals	Objectives	Assessment (YES with details or NO)
1. Our graduates will be	1.1. Our students will produce quality	YES

effective communicators.	business and research-oriented documents.	
	1.2. Students are able to professionally present their ideas and also logically explain and defend their argument.	YES
2. Our graduates will be skilled in team work and leadership.	2.1. Students will be able to lead and participate in group for projects, discussion, and presentation.	YES
	2.2. Students will be able to apply leadership theories and related skills.	YES
3. Our graduates will be trained in ethics.	3.1. In a case setting, students will use appropriate techniques to analyze business problems and identify the ethical aspects, provide a solution and defend it.	YES
	3.2. Our students will practice ethics in the duration of the program.	YES
4. Our graduates will have a global perspective.	4.1. Students will have an international exposure.	YES
5. Our graduates will be skilled in problem-solving and critical thinking.	5.1. Our students will have a good understanding of fundamental theories in their fields.	YES
	5.2. Our students will be prepared to face problems in various business settings and find solutions.	YES
	5.3. Our students will demonstrate competency in critical thinking.	YES

2.2 Course specific objectives

1. To learn important theories relevant to persuasive communication
2. To apply theories to the practice of persuasive communication
3. To be able to conduct original research and design creative messages for persuasive communication

2.3 Assessment/Grading Details

Assessment task	Weighting
Class Participation (individual)	30%
Discussion Leader (individual)	30%
Final Project - Research Proposal (team)	40%

2.4 Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

It is important for a student's effort and credit to be recognized through class assessment. Credits earned for a student work due to efforts done by others are clearly unfair. Deliberate dishonesty is considered academic misconducts, which include plagiarism; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; or altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying of data, research procedures, or data analysis.

All assessments are subject to academic misconduct check. Misconduct check may include reproducing the assessment, providing a copy to another member of faculty, and/or communicate a copy of this assignment to the PHBS Discipline Committee. A suspected plagiarized document/assignment submitted to a plagiarism checking service may be kept in its database for future reference purpose.

Where violation is suspected, penalties will be implemented. The penalties for academic misconduct may include: deduction of honour points, a mark of zero on the assessment, a fail grade for the whole course, and reference of the matter to the Peking University Registrar.

AI tools requirements:

Using AI tools to complete assignments or assessments without the approval of the course instructor will be regarded as an act of academic dishonesty. Depending on the severity of the situation, penalties will be implemented in accordance with the provisions of the Peking University Graduate Student Handbook.

For more information of plagiarism, please refer to *PHBS Student Handbook*.

3. Topics, Teaching and Assessment Schedule

Topics
Session 1: Introduction & Overview
Session 2: Basic Principles of Persuasion
Session 3: Mindful and/or Mindless Persuasion
Session 4: Attitudes, Normative Influence, and Behaviors
Session 5 & 6: Rational & Emotional Approach I & II
Session 7: Narrative & Exemplification
Session 8: Social Proof & Authority
Session 9: Framing & Regulatory fit/focus
Session 10 & 11: Social Identity & Comparison
Session 12: Social Presence & Embodied Cognition & Mixed Reality
Session 13: In-class review
Session 14: Fluency & Language
Session 15: Scarcity & Reactance & Defensiveness
Session 16: Persuasion Knowledge
Session 17: Technology, Media Literacy & Ethical Persuasion
Session 18: Final Presentation

NOTE: The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this timeline and the courses