



PS410: Social Influence and Persuasion ONLINE
Spring 1 2008

Instructor Contact Information

Instructor: Jean Mandernach, PhD
Email: jean.mandernach@park.edu
Office Hours: I will respond to all email within 24 hours.
Phone: 308-236-5828 CST

Course Description

Examine empirical evidence regarding the impact of social influence on individual behavior. Specifically, addressing the role of compliance, conformity, and obedience in shaping ideas, attitudes, and behavior. 3 credit hours.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course. A generalized knowledge of social psychology and psychological research methods is recommended to maximize your educational experience in this course.

Overview and Course Goals

Social influence is the broad study of how our individual thoughts, actions, and feelings are changed (actively or unconsciously) by the influence (deliberate or unintentional) of others. So, what does this mean? We live in a social world, we are social creatures; we can't help but be shaped by the range of influences around us. Sometimes we intentionally change our behaviors or beliefs; sometimes we don't even realize that they have changed. Sometimes we respond to the direct requests of others to adjust our thinking and actions; sometimes other people aren't even aware that they are influencing us. Social influence is a complex issue; but then again, we are complex creatures!

The primary goal of this course is to introduce you to the perspectives, research methods, and empirical findings of social influence. Equally important is the goal of cultivating your skills for analyzing social situations and events that you will encounter everyday. This course will enable you to critically examine the role of influence in your own life.

Core Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. Identify key theories, principles, and strategies of social influence and persuasion.
 2. Analyze everyday contexts in which social influence takes place to highlight the psychological foundations of conformity, compliance, obedience and persuasion.
 3. Evaluate the value and application of empirical investigations on persuasion, social influence, and compliance-gaining tactics.
 4. Apply strategies and techniques of persuasion relating to a wide variety of real-life contexts, situations, settings, and communications.
-

Required Texts/Materials

Cialdini, R. B. (2001). *Influence: Science and Practice*. Allyn & Bacon; ISBN 0-321-01147-3

Order Texts at: <http://direct.mbsbooks.com/park.htm>

Student Responsibilities

You are expected to:

- Read the Course Home page, Course Syllabus, Instructor Office, Course Schedule, and Course Overview. It is also recommended that you print out this information for your reference.
- Complete the Course Tour in the Help and Resource page.
- Post an introduction about yourself in the Introductions page.
- Read each Weekly Home page. Complete the assigned readings, learning activities, and assessments each week according to the class schedule.
- Read your Park email regularly while you are taking this course.
- Comply with all University policies and procedures.

Attendance

I am required to keep attendance records and report absences throughout the term. Excused absences can be granted for medical reasons, school sponsored activities, and employment-related demands including temporary duty. You are responsible for completing all missed work. If you fail to attend class for two consecutive weeks, without an approved excuse, you will be administratively withdrawn and notified via email that you have been withdrawn and a grade of "WH" will be recorded.

An attendance report of "P" (present) will be recorded if you have logged in to the Online classroom at least once during each week of the term. PLEASE NOTE: Recording of attendance is not equivalent to participation. Participation grades will be assigned according to the criteria in the Grading Policy section of the syllabus.

More details on the attendance policy can be found in the [Park University Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs](#).

Course Structure

Each week contains a Weekly Overview which contains the learning outcomes, activities, and assessments for that week. You should read and print out the Weekly Overview for each week.

Weekly structure of the course:

- This course is split into eight weekly units.
- The unit starts and ends on Sunday at midnight CST (CST is the Central Standard Time zone, the time zone of the Parkville Campus).
- Course Attendance requirements will require all students to log into the course at least once during each week.
- Course Participation requirements will require you to log in by Wednesday for an initial post and post to four more student comments at a minimum throughout the week.

Learning Activities

Weekly online lectures will focus on key concepts, theories and examples. The online lectures will include a combination of text, graphics, audio PowerPoint presentations, audio clips, videos and links to relevant resources. In addition, the lectures will include links to various activities that will allow you to interact with the course material.

Learning Assessments

Final Exam - The final exam will consist of a combination of multiple choice, matching, fill-in-the-blank and short essay questions that focus on key concepts underlying social influence and persuasion. The final exam is a closed-book, closed-note, comprehensive exam that must be taken under proctored conditions.

Analysis Activities - Analysis activities will be integrated throughout the course to provide an opportunity to apply your understanding of social influence and persuasion. Analysis activities will require you to read classic empirical investigations into targeted topics of social influence, summarize the findings, and apply the research to modern examples.

Discussion - Discussions will challenge attitudes and opinions concerning the use of social influence tactics, the ethical concerns of deliberate influence, and personal experiences with persuasion.

Personal Influence Journal - A major goal of this course is for you to examine the role of influence in your own life. In order to promote this type of reflective understanding, you are required to keep a personal influence journal. As you read the textbook and participate in class activities, you will examine how influence principles have been used to shape your attitudes and behaviors. Each journal entry should highlight an experience you have had with social influence tactics, the theory or rationale behind how the tactic works, and a personal reaction to the experience. Specific journal topics and questions will be assigned.

Core Learning Assessment – Experiential Project in Social Influence:

Experiential projects will consist of an activity or experience that students design which allows them to interact personally with a concept relevant to social influence and persuasion. The best experiential projects are creative, interesting, well-designed, and effectively communicated. The experiential project will consist of two components: the experiential component and the research component.

Requirements:

- Final project report must be a minimum of 10 pages in length (not including title page, abstract, or reference page)
 - Double-spaced, one-inch margins, 12 point Times or Arial font
 - Written in an interesting style, grammatically sound, spell checked, APA Style
 - Include references to at least seven (7) different sources; a minimum of three (3) of these sources must be empirical journal articles
-

Course Grading Policy

Grades will be determined by performance on a final exam, personal influence journal, social influence research project, and class participation. Points will be assigned as follows:

Final exam		100 points
Analysis activities	4@20 points each	80 points
Discussions	16@10 points each	160 points
Personal influence journal	4@15 points each	60 points
Core assessment		100 points
<i>Total available</i>		<i>500 points</i>

Letter Grade Policy

Final course grades will be determined as follows:

A	90% and higher	448 points and higher
B	80% - 89%	398 – 447 points
C	70% - 79%	348 – 397 points
D	60% - 69%	298 – 347 points
F	59% and lower	297 points and lower

Late Assignments

Late work will only be accepted with written permission from the instructor.

Communication Modes

- **Course interaction** – You are responsible for checking email, monitoring online discussion threads, and reading all course announcements on a regular basis. I will use email, discussion threads, and/or announcements to communicate important course information.
 - **Email** - You should use email for private messages to me and other students. When sending email other than assignments, you must identify yourself fully by name and class in all email sent to me and/or other members of our class. I will check email frequently and will respond to course-related questions within 24-48 hours. Email is the preferred form of communication for private, course-related communications.
 - **Online threaded discussions** – Online discussions are public messages and all writings in this area will be viewable by the entire class or assigned group members.
 - **Announcements** - Announcements will be posted to remind you of important information or to highlight course activities. Announcements can be found at the top of the Course Home.
 - **Submission of electronic assignments** - Create a back up file of every piece of work you submit for grading. This will ensure that a computer glitch or a glitch in cyberspace won't erase your efforts. When files are sent attached to an email, the files should be in either Microsoft Word, RTF, ASCII, txt, or PDF file formats.
-

Participation Standards

You are expected to actively participate in this course. All your Online communications need to be composed with fairness, honesty and tact. Spelling and grammar are very important in an Online course. What you put into an Online course reflects on your level of professionalism. For more information, see writing online at <http://goto.intwg.com/> and netiquette at <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>.

Participation Rubric

All online discussions will adhere to the following guidelines:

- **Due Dates** - Initial responses due on Thursday by midnight; two peer replies (per discussion topic) due on Sunday by midnight. Peer replies should be substantial responses and/or insightful questions. Responses that simply state "I agree" or something similar to this will not be accepted. You must have a minimum of six posts (three posts per discussion topic): your initial response to the discussion question as well as two peer replies. There will be two different discussion topics each week; you must participate in BOTH.
- **Grading** - Your discussion postings will be graded according to the quality of your response. In order to earn the full 10 points, your posting should be clear, complete, insightful and original; in addition, you must have high-quality peer replies. Responses that are incomplete, vague, lack-detail or repeat previous postings will receive reduced grades. Remember, you should always relate your postings to psychology. Postings are not simply your opinion; they involve your opinion but include an application to the relevant psychological principles.

Online discussions will be graded according to the following rubric. Note that additional points will be subtracted for late submission or failure to complete peer replies.

9 - 10 points	Discussion is clear, relevant and insightful. Interactions go beyond a basic response to the question to provide a critical examination of the issue and/or stimulate critical thinking. Posts show a strong mastery of the content and promote ongoing dialogue.
7 – 8 points	Discussion is clear and relevant. Interactions convey the basic information and show strong content knowledge. Postings would benefit from incorporation of critical analysis and insight; need to expand on the reasoning and logic.
4 – 6 points	Discussion addressed the main points but lacks explanation or elaboration. Interactions provide minimal information; need to include justification, support and additional content.
0 - 3 points	Discussion is vague, irrelevant or off-topic. Interactions are missing or fail to encourage continued dialogue.

Student Resources

- **McAfee Memorial Library** - Online information, links, electronic databases and the Online catalog. Contact the library for further assistance [via email](#) or at 800-270-4347.
- **Park University Online Bookstore** - Select "Online Learning- Graduate," or "Online Learning - Undergraduate," and then click on the appropriate course code (ex. AC 201, PA 501) to see the list of required and optional texts for each course that you are enrolled in.
- **Advising** - Park University would like to assist you in achieving your educational goals. Your Campus Center Administrator can provide advising to you, please contact them for assistance. If you need contact information for your Campus Center, [click here](#).
- **Online Tutoring Services** - Park University has arranged for Online students to receive five hours of free access to Online tutoring and academic support through Smarthinking. If you would like Online tutoring, please contact me to receive their recommendation and information on how to access the Online tutoring.
- **Career Counseling** - The Career Development Center (CDC) provides services for all stages of career development. The mission of the CDC is to provide the career planning tools to ensure a lifetime of career success.
- **Online Classroom Technical Support** - For technical assistance with the Online classroom, email helpdesk@parkonline.org or call the helpdesk at 866-301-PARK (7275). To see the **technical requirements** for Online courses, please visit the <http://parkonline.org> website: click on the "Technical Requirements" link, and click on "BROWSER Test" to see if your system is ready.
- **Park Helpdesk** - If you have forgotten your User ID or Password, or if you need assistance with your PirateMail account, please email helpdesk@park.edu or call 800-927-3024.

Course Schedule

There are 5 main activities in this course: 1) weekly discussions, 2) analysis activities, 3) personal influence journal, 4) experiential project (core assessment), and 5) a comprehensive final exam. The following provides a brief overview of each:

- *Discussion:*
 - Discussions will challenge attitudes and opinions concerning the use of social influence tactics, the ethical concerns of deliberate influence, and personal experiences with persuasion.
 - *Analysis Activities:*
 - Analysis activities will be integrated throughout the course to provide an opportunity to apply your understanding of social influence and persuasion.
 - *Personal Influence Journal:*
 - A major goal of this course is for you to examine the role of influence in your own life. In order to promote this type of reflective understanding, you are required to keep a personal influence journal. As you read the textbook and participate in class activities, you will examine how influence principles have been used to shape your attitudes and behaviors. Each journal entry should highlight an experience you have had with social influence tactics, the theory or rationale behind how the tactic works, and a personal reaction to the experience.
 - *Experiential Project (Core Assessment):*
 - Experiential projects will consist of an activity or experience that students design which allows them to interact personally with a concept relevant to social influence and persuasion. The best experiential projects are creative, interesting, well-designed, and effectively communicated. The experiential project will consist of two components: the experiential component and the research component.
 - *Final Exam:*
 - The final exam will consist of a combination of multiple choice, matching, fill-in-the-blank and short essay questions that focus on key concepts underlying social influence and persuasion.
-

The following overview provides some guidelines to assist you in planning your coursework and scheduling the major learning activities in the course:

Week	Readings	Due Thursday	Due Sunday
Week 1	Chapter 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial response to discussion topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal introduction Peer responses (2 per discussion topic) to discussion (<i>10 points per discussion</i>) Personal Influence Journal #1 (<i>15 points</i>)
Week 2	Chapter 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial response to discussion topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer responses (2 per discussion topic) to discussion (<i>10 points per discussion</i>) Analysis Activity #1 (<i>20 points</i>)
Week 3	Chapter 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial response to discussion topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer responses (2 per discussion topic) to discussion (<i>10 points per discussion</i>) Personal Influence Journal #2 (<i>15 points</i>)
Week 4	Chapter 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial response to discussion topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer responses (2 per discussion topic) to discussion (<i>10 points per discussion</i>) Analysis Activity #2 (<i>20 points</i>)
Week 5	Chapter 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial response to discussion topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer responses (2 per discussion topic) to discussion (<i>10 points per discussion</i>) Personal Influence Journal #3 (<i>15 points</i>)
Week 6	Chapter 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial response to discussion topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer responses (2 per discussion topic) to discussion (<i>10 points per discussion</i>) Analysis Activity #3 (<i>20 points</i>)
Week 7	Chapter 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial response to discussion topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer responses (2 per discussion topic) to discussion (<i>10 points per discussion</i>) Personal Influence Journal #4 (<i>15 points</i>) Core Assessment – Experiential Project in Social Influence (<i>100 points</i>)
Week 8	Chapter 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial response to discussion topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer responses (2 per discussion topic) to discussion (<i>10 points per discussion</i>) Analysis Activity #4 (<i>20 points</i>) Final Exam (<i>100 points</i>)

Park University

Vision Statement

Park University will be a renowned international leader in providing innovative educational opportunities for learners within the global society.

Mission Statement

The mission of Park University, a entrepreneurial institution of learning, is to provide access to academic excellence which will prepare learners to think critically, communicate effectively and engage in lifelong learning while serving a global community.