

**Communication 302  
Persuasion  
Fall 2016**

**Number of Units: 4**  
**Tues, Thurs – 2:00 pm to 3:20 pm**  
**Section: 20465R**  
**Location: Ann L105A**

**Ken Sereno**  
**ASC 202-C**  
**(213) 740-3952 (work)**  
[sereno@usc.edu](mailto:sereno@usc.edu)

**Office Hours:**

Tuesdays: 10:00-10:40; 3:30-5:00  
Wednesdays: 10:00-11:30; 1:30-3:30  
Thursdays: 10:00-10:40; 3:30-5:00

Please drop by and introduce yourself. If you can't make my office hours, see me before or after class, or call or e-mail me, and we can arrange some other time. I'd like to get to know each of you personally.

**Teaching Assistants:**

**Yomna Elsayed** [yelsayed@usc.edu](mailto:yelsayed@usc.edu)

ASC G-4

**Kristen Steves** [steves@usc.edu](mailto:steves@usc.edu)

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**Bei Yan** [beiyan@usc.edu](mailto:beiyan@usc.edu)

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**Larry Xu** [zhimingx@usc.edu](mailto:zhimingx@usc.edu)

ASC G-4

**Texts:**

Cialdini, R.B. (2009) **Influence: Science and practice**. New York: Harper and Collins.

Gass, R.H. and Seiter, J.S. (2013) Persuasion, **social influence, and compliance gaining**. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Available in the USC Bookstore

Also available at Amazon.com in Kindle and Paperback versions.

**Top Hat:**

Top Hat is a web application that allows me to record attendance and that allows you to respond to Multiple Choice questions that I put on the screen using your laptop, tablet or mobile phone. **You must purchase a Top Hat account**, which you obtain from the Top Hat website. To obtain an account, go to <https://www.tophat.com>. Click on "Student Signup" and follow directions. Register for "Comm 302 Fall 2016." Join code: 092653.

**Course Description:**

This course focuses on the social scientific literature on persuasion. It looks at theories, variables, and research studies that explain persuasion processes and effects.

**Course Objectives:**

1. To have you gain an understanding of major theories, variables, and findings in the persuasion literature.
2. To have you consider ways in which you can apply the knowledge you're gaining to real-life situations.

**Grading:**

Examination 1	100 points
Examination 2	100 points
Final Examination	100 points
Term Paper	100 points

**Examinations:**

Each examination will consist of the following parts:

True-False/Multiple Choice	40-50 points (20-25 questions)
Short Answer	30-36 points (3-5 questions)
Essay	20 points (1 question)

**Final Examination:**

The Final Examination will **not** be cumulative.

**Term Paper:**

The term paper assignment will be given to you in the middle of the semester. You will be asked to explain in detail a theory you will learn in this class and to use constructs from the theory to explain the behaviors in a communication scenario that will be given to you. It should be about 8-10 pages long.

**Attendance:**

The total number of classes you attend in which attendance is recorded by Top Hat will determine attendance. You have 20 points already awarded (5 percent of your course grade). Attendance points will be added to your total examination points at the end of the semester. You are allowed 2 unexcused absences. Starting with the 3rd

unexcused absence, you will lose 4 points for every absence. If you attend class but arrive after attendance has been recorded or if you have trouble submitting your attendance response because of connection difficulties, contact your TA at the end of class and send her/him a confirming email right away.

If you are absent because of an illness or other justifiable reason you must provide an official excuse to your TA.

If you have a justifiable reason for missing an examination, you may take the make-up exam without a penalty (10 points for each school day after the scheduled exam). If you know in advance that you will have to miss an examination (e.g., because of a religious holy day), let your TA know ahead of time so that a time for the make-up exam can be arranged.

### **Participation:**

Your participation can raise your grade if your average is at the borderline between two grades (e.g., an 89 average).

You can participate by volunteering to answer substantive questions about content covered in the assigned readings. You should be able to describe the research studies that are discussed in the texts, be able to define and explain theoretic variables, and demonstrate how theoretic variables or strategies can be applied to real-life situations.

When you participate, email your TA immediately after class. Describe your participation with specific detail. Your TA will keep a record of the number of times you participate in class.

### **Students with Learning Disabilities**

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to Andrea or Poong as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website and contact information for DSP:

[http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home\\_index.html](http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html),  
(213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX)  
[ability@usc.edu](mailto:ability@usc.edu).

### **Academic Integrity Policy:**

The following is the USC Annenberg School of Communication's policy on academic integrity and repeated in the syllabus for every course in the school:

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *SCampus*, the Student Guidebook,

([www.usc.edu/scampus](http://www.usc.edu/scampus) or <http://scampus.usc.edu>) contains the University Student Conduct Code (see University Governance, Section 11.00), while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A.

All academic integrity violations will be reported to the office of Student Judicial Affairs & Community Standards (SJACS), as per university policy, as well as Communication school administrators.

In addition, it is assumed that the work you submit for this course is work you have produced entirely by yourself, and has not been previously produced by you for submission in another course or Learning Lab, without approval of the instructor.

### **Class Schedule**

Aug	23	Ch. 1	Orientation
	25		Weapons of Influence
Sept.	30	Ch. 2	Reciprocation
	1	Ch. 3	Consistency & Commitment
	6	Ch. 4	Continued
	8		Social Proof
	13	Ch. 5	Continued
	15		Liking

	20 22	Ch. 6	Continued Authority
	27 29	Ch. 7	<b>Examination 1</b> (Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6) Scarcity
Oct.	4  6	Ch. 8	Instant Influence Return Exam 1 Term Paper Assignment
	11 13	Ch. 1	Why Study Persuasion? TBA
	18 20	Ch. 2 Ch. 3	What Constitutes Persuasion? Attitudes and Consistency
	25 27	Ch. 4	Continued Credibility
Nov.	1 3		TBA <b>Examination 2</b> (Chapters 7, 8, 1, 2, 3 and 4)
	8 10	Ch. 5	Communicator Characteristics Continued Return Exam 2

15	Ch. 7	Language and Persuasion
17	Cha. 9	Structuring and Ordering Messages
22	Ch. 13	Motivational Appeals
24		<b>Thanksgiving Holiday</b>
29	Ch. 14	Visual Persuasion
		<b>Term Paper Due</b>
Dec. 1	Ch. 15	Esoteric Forms of Persuasion
8		<b>Final Examination</b> (2:00-4:00) (Chapts. 7, 9, 13, 14 & 15)

NOTE: The schedule may have to be changed.