

**Communication 302  
Persuasion  
Spring 2020**

**Number of Units: 4  
Mon. – Wed. – 2:00 pm to 3:20 pm  
Section: 20465R**

**Location: ASC 204**

**Ken Sereno  
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**Office Hours:**

Tuesdays: 10:30-12:30; 3:30-5:00  
Thursdays: 10:30-12:30; 3:30-5:00

Drop by and say hello. I'd like to get to know each of you. If you can't make my office hours, we can arrange some other time.

**Teaching Assistants/Graders**

**Hye Min Kim  
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**Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (15 weeks: 1/13/20 – 5/1/20):**

**Friday, January 31:** Last day to register and add classes for Session 001

**Friday, January 31:** Last day to drop a class without a mark of “W,” except for Monday-only classes, and receive a refund for Session 001

**Tuesday, February 4:** Last day to drop a Monday-only class without a mark of “W” and receive a refund for Session 001

**Friday, February 28:** Last day to drop a course without a mark of “W” on the transcript for Session 001. [Please drop any course by the end of week three (or the 20 percent mark of the session) to avoid tuition charges.]

**Friday, February 28:** Last day to change pass/no pass to letter grade for Session 001. [All major and minor courses must be taken for a letter grade.]

**Friday, April 3:** Last day to drop a class with a mark of “W” for Session 001

**Texts:**

Cialdini, R.B. **Influence**. Either Fifth Edition (2009) Boston: Allyn and Bacon; or Revised Edition (2007). New York: Harper & Collins.

Gass, R.H. and Seiter, J.S. (2018) **Persuasion, social influence, and compliance gaining**. (Sixth Edition) Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Available in the USC Bookstore. Also available at Amazon.com in Kindle and paperback versions.

**Course Description:**

This course focuses on the social scientific literature on persuasion. It examines theories, variables, and empirical research studies that explain persuasion processes and effects. Course material is applicable to interpersonal, group, political, organizational, business, mass media and cultural persuasive contexts. No background in communication is required. Course content is applicable to students in every major. The course utilizes multimedia. PowerPoint lecture notes are posted on Blackboard. The course uses Top Hat and Packback applications. Top Hat is an online application that allows you to record your attendance and respond to multiple-choice questions using your laptop, tablet, or phone. Top Hat Test allows you to take your examinations using your laptop. Packback is an online discussion application. You raise questions about course content and respond to questions posed by other students. Packback enhances your involvement with the course content. The course may be taken as pass/no pass by non-communication majors.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. Understand major theories, variables, and findings in the persuasion literature. You should be able to name, define, describe and explain the major theories, variables and research findings. Three examinations will determine your understanding.

2. Apply the knowledge you're gaining to a real-life situation. The Term Paper will ask you to use theories and strategies of persuasion to solve a real-life problem relevant to students, such as excessive stress and anxiety.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Recommended Background:** Communication 200-Communication as a Social Science

**Class Notes:** PowerPoint Lecture Notes are posted on Blackboard.

**Description and Assessment of Assignments:**

Three examinations that test your knowledge of the variables, theories and research findings that describe and explain persuasion processes and effects. Exams will have multiple choice, short answer and essay questions.

A term paper that asks you to use theories and strategies of persuasion to solve a problem relevant to students, such as excessive stress and anxiety. The term paper is a problem-solving assignment—you must describe a problem and propose a potential solution to the problem that utilizes theories and strategies of persuasion. The term paper will require online research to find academic books and journal articles that support assertions and claims that you make.

**Grading:**

Examination 1	100 points	20%
Examination 2	100 points	20%
Final Examination	100 points	20%
Term Paper	100 points	20%
Packback Discussion Participation	80 points	15%
Top Hat Class Participation	20 points	5%
Total	500 points	100%

**Grading Scale:**

A = 93 to 100	B+ = 87 to 89	C+ = 77 to 79	D+ = 67 to 69	F = Below 60
A- = 90 to 92	B = 83 to 86	C = 73 to 76	D = 63 to 66	
	B- = 80 to 82	C- = 70 to 72	D- = 60 to 62	

**Grading Standards:**

**A:** Superior recall and ability to describe and explain

- B:** Above average recall and ability to describe and explain.  
**C:** Average recall and ability to describe and explain.  
**D:** Below-average recall and ability to describe and explain.  
**F:** Inability to recall, describe and explain.

**Grading Timeline:**

Examinations will be graded within 7 to 10 days.  
 Term Paper will be graded by the day of the Final Exam.

**Assignment Submission Policy:**

Exams must be taken on the date assigned unless prior arrangements are made for an alternative date due to athletic travel, illness, or documented emergency. The term paper must be submitted on the date assigned. Unless there is a prior arrangement with the instructor, late papers will receive a grade of F.

**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 solve a problem directly relevant to college students using persuasion strategies that you have learned.

**Top Hat Participation:**

You have 20 participation points (5% of the course) already awarded to you. You participate by answering Top Hat questions and by attending class. Classes in which attendance is recorded by Top Hat determine attendance. You will lose participation points when you are absent.

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, send me and your TA an email at the end of class indicating that you were in class but had difficulty connecting or came late.

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, athletic team travel, surgery), let your TA know at least a week ahead of time.

### **Packback Participation:**

You may earn 80 points (15% of the course) by participating in online Packback discussions. There will be 10 discussion sessions. You may earn a maximum of 8 points for each session.

#### Posting Requirements:

For each session, you must ask 1 Question and post 2 Responses by Sunday 11:59 pm.

Note: *On Packback there are no early or late posts. Posts are recorded for the session that is active when you make your posts.*

#### Grading:

You may earn a maximum of 8 points for every session:

1 Question with a Curiosity Score of 60 worth 4 points. *Half credit for lower Curiosity Score.*

2 Responses with Curiosity Scores of 60 worth 2 points each. *Half credit for lower Curiosity Scores.*

Note: Packback utilizes Artificial Intelligence that will *moderate (remove) posts* if they don't meet the [Community Guidelines](#). If your post is moderated, you will receive a coaching email, prompting you to edit & re-submit for credit. However, it can take up to 24 hours for the Packback team to moderate a post and send a coaching email. *This is why it is important that you complete your Packback questions and responses far before the Sunday 11:59 pm deadline!*

If you have ANY questions or concerns regarding Packback registration or throughout the semester, please contact the customer support team at [holla@packback.co](mailto:holla@packback.co)!

[Packback FAQ](#) ♦ [Coaching & Question Tutorial Video](#) ♦ [Curiosity Score FAQ](#) ♦ [Terms of Use](#)

### **Oral 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 research studies that are discussed in the texts, 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.

Participate in 10 or more different lectures, and your course grade will be bumped to the next higher level.

### **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 your TA 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/academicssupport/centerprograms/dsp/home\\_index.html](http://sait.usc.edu/academicssupport/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).

### **Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

#### **a. Academic Conduct**

##### Plagiarism

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](http://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, [policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct](http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct).

#### **b. Support Systems**

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

[studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling](http://studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling)

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call

[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), *press “0” after hours* – 24/7 on call

[studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault](http://studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault)

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)- (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298

[equity.usc.edu](http://equity.usc.edu), [titleix.usc.edu](http://titleix.usc.edu)

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources

for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

[usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care\\_report](https://usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report)

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

[dsp.usc.edu](https://dsp.usc.edu)

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710

[uscса.usc.edu](https://uscса.usc.edu)

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

[diversity.usc.edu](https://diversity.usc.edu)

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

[dps.usc.edu](https://dps.usc.edu), [emergency.usc.edu](https://emergency.usc.edu)

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

[dps.usc.edu](https://dps.usc.edu)

Non-emergency assistance or information.

### Annenberg Student Success Fund

<https://annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/resources/annenberg-scholarships-and-awards>

The Annenberg Student Success Fund is a donor-funded financial aid account available to USC Annenberg undergraduate and graduate students for non-tuition expenses related to extra- and co-curricular programs and opportunities.

### Breaking Bread Program [undergraduate students only]

<https://undergrad.usc.edu/faculty/bread/>

The Breaking Bread Program is designed to provide individual undergraduate students with an opportunity to meet and have scholarly discussions with faculty members outside of the normal classroom setting. Through this program, students and faculty enjoy good company and great conversation by literally “breaking bread” over a meal together and USC will pick up the tab! Your meal event can take place anywhere outside of the normal classroom setting. Your venue can be a restaurant or eatery on or off-campus.

### Class Schedule

Jan.	13		Orientation
	15	Ch. 1	Weapons of Influence
	20		<b>Martin Luther King Holiday</b>
	22	Ch. 2	Reciprocation
	27	Ch. 3	Consistency & Commitment
	29		(Packback Assignment 1. Due by Sunday, Feb. 2, 11:59 pm) Continued
Feb.	3	Ch. 4	Social Proof
	5		(Packback Assignment 2. Due by Sunday, Feb. 9, 11:59 pm) Continued



	10	Ch. 5	Liking (Packback Assignment 3. Due by Sunday, Feb. 16, 11:59 pm)
	12		Continued
	17	Ch. 6	Authority (No Packback assignment this week. Study for Exam 1.)
	19		TBA
	24		<b>Examination 1</b> (Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6) (Packback Assignment 4. Due by Sunday, Mar. 1, 11:59 pm)
	26	Ch. 7	Scarcity Assign Term Paper
Mar.	2	Ch. 8	Instant Influence (Packback Assignment 5. Due by Sunday, Mar. 8, 11:59 pm)
	4	Ch. 1	Why Study Persuasion?
	9	Ch. 2	What Constitutes Persuasion? (Packback Assignment 6. Due by Sunday, Mar. 15, 11:59 pm)
	11	Ch. 3	Attitudes and Consistency
	16		<b>Spring Break</b> (No Packback assignment this week. Have fun.)
	18		<b>Spring Break</b>
	23		Continued

	25	Ch. 4	(No Packback assignment this week. Study for Exam 2.) Credibility
	30		<b>Examination 2</b> (Chapters 7, 8, 1, 2, 3 and 4) (Packback Assignment 7. Due by Sunday, Apr. 5, 11:59 pm)
Apr.	1	Ch. 5	Communicator Characteristics
	6		Continued (Packback Assignment 8. Due by Sunday, Apr. 12, 11:59 pm)
	8	Ch. 7	Language and Persuasion
	13	Ch. 9	Structuring and Ordering Messages (No Packback assignment this week. Finish your term paper.)
	15	Ch. 13	Motivational Appeals
	20	Ch. 14	Visual Persuasion <b>Term Paper Due</b> (Packback Assignment 9. Due by Sunday, Apr. 26, 11:59 pm)
	22		Continued
	27		TBA (Packback Assignment 10. Due Sunday, May 3, 11:59 pm.)
	29	Ch. 15	Esoteric Forms of Persuasion
May	11		<b>Final Examination</b> (2 to 4 pm) (Chapts. 5, 7, 9, 13, 14, 15)

NOTE: The schedule may have to be changed.