



Communication Studies Department

COM 3030 Persuasion

3 Units

Fall 2026

Meeting days/times: Tuesday/Thursday 8:00-9:15am

Meeting Location: Cabrillo Hall #202

Final Exam: 12/15/2026 7:30-10:00am

INFORMATION	SPECIFICS FOR THE COURSE
Instructor:	Dr. Johnny Capra
Phone:	619-849-2724
Email:	jcapra@pointloma.edu
Office location and hours:	Cabrillo Hall #207, Office Hours: Tuesday 11:00am-1:00pm, Thursday 11:00am-4:00pm, and by appointment.

PLNU Mission

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Course Description

This course studies the social scientific theory and practice of persuasion. Persuasion is situated within the broader notion of influence. Topics include persuasion tactics, audience analysis and research, and modern advertising practices. In this course students will be exposed to the concept of persuasion including how and why it functions. Using contemporary examples students will learn to understand and apply interdisciplinary persuasion theories in order to recognize, analyze, and evaluate persuasive messages across a variety of different communicative contexts.

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course, students should have a knowledge of the following course learning outcomes. Specifically, each student should be able to:

1. Accurately identify and explain the concept of persuasion across a variety of different communicative contexts.
2. Describe the differences between persuasion and propaganda.
3. Distinguish between persuasion and compliance gaining and identify different compliance-gaining strategies.
4. Describe basic communication models and recognize and describe different theories of persuasion from a variety of disciplines.
5. Apply theoretical concepts to interpersonal, political, social, and cultural examples of influence.
6. Analyze persuasive messages and deconstruct “how they work” persuasively.

Course Credit Hour Information

In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a 3-unit class delivered over 16 weeks. It is anticipated that students will spend a minimum of 37.5 participation hours per credit hour on their coursework. For this course, students will spend an estimated 112.5 total hours meeting the course learning outcomes.

Required Texts and Recommended Study Resources

Persuasion: Integrating Theory, Author: Frymier, Publisher: Kendall Hunt Publishing Company, Edition: 5th, Year Published: 2021.

This course is part of our course material delivery program, [LomaBooks](#). The bookstore will provide each student with a convenient package containing all required physical materials; all digitally delivered materials will be integrated into Canvas.

You should have received an email from the bookstore confirming the list of materials that will be provided for each of your courses and asking you to select how you would like to receive any printed components (in-store pick up or home delivery). If you have not done so already, please confirm your fulfillment preference so the bookstore can prepare your [LomaBooks](#) materials.

Communication

All communication for this course will take place via Canvas where you will receive reminders and updates related to the course regularly. Your instructor will utilize the Canvas page to communicate with the class as well as post the syllabus, reading materials, assignment descriptions, rubrics, grades, and any other information related to the course. Throughout the term it is essential that you actively check your canvas email and the course canvas page in order to succeed in this course.

Email: jcapra@pointloma.edu

I check my email frequently and try my best to respond to emails within 24 hours during the workweek (Monday- Friday). If you have not received a response from me within 48 hours, then please send me a follow up email.

General Course Concern Policy

If you have a concern related to the content or structure of this course, please bring your concern(s) to me (the instructor) in a timely manner, so that we have the opportunity to discuss your thoughts and work together toward a solution.

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an “F” grade.

COM 3030 Attendance Policy

Students are allowed two (2) absences during the course of the semester without penalty excluding university approved absences or Covid-related absences. Each absence over these two will result in a 15-point deduction from your final grade. Please notify me at least one week prior to excused absences. You are responsible for communicating with your instructor in order to make up missed work within one calendar week of the excused absence.

Final Examination Policy

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Traditional Undergraduate Records: Final Exam Schedules](#) site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for *one* of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.

Late Policy

In order to benefit from each class session and avoid interrupting the learning experience of their fellow classmates, it is important that students attend the entire class period. Tardiness exceeding 5 minutes at any point during the class period is taken note of. If a student demonstrates habitual tardiness points will be taken from their final grade.

Electronic Device Policy

The use of cell phones is prohibited in class. Laptops/tablets may be used for note taking or other class-related activities. If any of these devices becomes a distraction the student will be asked to put them away.

Reading Policy

This course requires that all assigned readings are completed prior to arriving in class on the day they are due. In-class time will be used to build on the concepts covered in the readings, not to review it. Come to class prepared to ask questions you have about the readings, and to thoughtfully analyze and apply the topics covered in the text.

Professionalism Policy

Please be respectful of your peers and instructor at all times by adhering to the guidelines provided below.

- Use your best communication skills. Actively engage in class discussions and be professional, positive, and supportive of others.
- Be respectful to your classmates and instructor.
- Use technology strictly for notetaking and course-related reasons.
- Put laptops away during in-person student presentations.
- Ensure appropriate grammar, spelling, and punctuation for all completed work.

Incomplete and Late Assignment Policy

Late assignments are not accepted in this course and should instead be submitted via Canvas on or before their assigned due date. If you are unable to attend class on the day an assignment is due for university excused reasons, communicate with your instructor and an alternative will be made available to you. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

Spiritual Care

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.

If you have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact your professor or the [Office of Spiritual Life and Formation](#).

State Authorization

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma

Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on [State Authorization](#) to view which states allow distance education outside California.

PLNU Copyright Policy

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU Recording Notification

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel.

Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.

PLNU Academic Honesty Policy

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. For all student appeals, faculty and students should follow the procedures outlined in the University Catalog. Please consult the [Academic Honesty Policy](#) in the [University Catalog](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU Academic Behavior Policy

Both faculty and students at Point Loma Nazarene University have the right to expect a safe and ordered environment for learning. Students are expected to take the initiative to learn and conduct themselves in a mature and civil manner in the classroom environment. Any student behavior that is disruptive or threatening is a serious affront to Point Loma Nazarene University as a learning community. Students who fail to adhere to these behavioral standards may be subject to disciplinary action, including removal from class or further university sanctions. For a full definition of disruptive behavior, response procedures, and the appeal process, please consult the [Academic Behavior Policy](#) in the [University Catalog](#).

PLNU Artificial Intelligence AI Policy

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini Pro, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc.) is prohibited in this course for any aspect of your work, including idea generation, drafting, editing, or final submissions. This course is designed to assess your independent critical thinking, writing, and research skills without the assistance of AI technologies. Any reliance on AI tools in this course is subject to an academic honesty violation.

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center, [by email](#) or phone at 619-849-2533. Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines approved accommodations. Professors are able to view a student's approved accommodations through Accommodate.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their approved accommodations in that particular course. Accommodations are not retroactive; as such, clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

Students who need accommodations for a disability-related need should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. In accordance with ADA, accommodations cannot constitute a fundamental alteration to course outcomes; therefore, planning ahead is vital in establishing appropriate accommodations for equal access to this course. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC eligibility process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any accommodations.

Language and Belonging

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice-free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant

generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

If you (or someone you know) has experienced other forms of discrimination, you can find more information on reporting and resources via the [Nondiscrimination and Anti-harassment Policy](#).

Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination

In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the [Title IX Office](#). Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the [Title IX Office](#).

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact [Counseling Services](#) or [consult the list of campus pastors](#).

If you (or someone you know) has experienced other forms of discrimination or bias, you can find more information on reporting and resources via the [Nondiscrimination and Anti-harassment Policy](#).

Loma Writing Center

Getting feedback from the Loma Writing Center while you're in the process of working on an assignment is a great way to improve the quality of your writing and develop as a writer. You are encouraged to talk with a trained writing consultant about getting started on an assignment, organizing your ideas, finding and citing sources, revising, editing for grammar, and polishing final drafts, and more.

Walk-ins are welcome, but we recommend making an appointment in advance. For information about how to make in-person or online appointments, see [Loma Writing Center webpage](#) or visit the Loma Writer Center on the first floor of the Ryan Library, room 221.

- [Appointment Calendar](#)
- [Website](#)
- [Email](#)

Assignments and Grading

Persuasion Highlights: This is an ongoing, progressive project that will involve collecting persuasive messages and applying rhetorical criticism and analysis. Complete instructions will be discussed in class. **120 points possible.**

Persuasion Highlight Presentation: At the end of the semester, students will showcase a selective sampling of their persuasion highlight collection in a 7-to-10-minute oral presentation. **50 points possible.**

Essays: Students will complete 2 open-book essays during the semester; full details will be given in class. **100 points possible** (50 pts. each).

Exams: There will be 2 scheduled quizzes during the semester, consisting of multiple choice, true/false, and short-answer questions. **100 points possible** (50 pts. each).

Final Project: Using what they have learned throughout the year students will be tasked with designing a persuasive message (50 points), as well as writing a rationale for the design of said message (50 points). More details will be provided in class. **100 points possible.**

Participation: During the course of our class, we will have a variety of homework assignments, and synchronous and asynchronous activities for which you will receive points. **30 points possible.**

Persuasion Highlights	120 points
Presentation	50 points
Essays x2 (@50pts)	100 points
Exams x2 (@50pts.)	100 points
Final Project	100 points
Participation	30 points
Total: 500 points	

Grading Scale: Grades are calculated by dividing the number of points you earn by the total points available (500). The grading scale is as follows:

A	93-100%	C	73-76%	D-	60-62%
A-	90-92%	C+	77-79%	F	59% and below
B+	87-89%	C-	70-72%		
B	83-86%	D+	67-69%		
B-	80-82%	D	63-66%		

COURSE OUTLINE

Below you will find a detailed course outline. Please keep in mind that this is a living document that may change at any time. It is your responsibility to actively and regularly check the course canvas page, as well as your canvas email to stay up to date on any changes made to this outline.

Week	Date	Topic/Activity	Reading / Assignment / Materials Due
1	9/1	Intro / Syllabus	
	9/3	The Concept of Persuasion	<i>Ch. 1</i>
2	9/8	Attitudes and Beliefs	<i>Ch.2</i>
	9/10		Persuasion Highlight #1 “One persuasive message and why it caught my attention”
3	9/15	The Relationship between attitudes and behaviors/Introduce Essay #1	<i>Ch. 3</i>
	9/17	Continued, Related article activity	Persuasion Highlight #2
4	9/22	Sources Factors	<i>Ch.4</i>
	9/24		Essay #1 & Persuasion Highlight #3
5	9/29	Message Factors	<i>Ch.5</i>
	10/1		Persuasion Highlight #4
6	10/6	Receiver and Channel Factors	<i>Ch.6</i>
	10/8	Midterm (Chp 1-6)	Persuasion Highlight #5
7	10/13	The Role of Theory in Persuasion	<i>Ch. 7</i>
	10/15		Persuasion Highlight #6
8	10/20	Social Judgment Theory	<i>Ch. 8</i>
	10/22	NO CLASS-FALL BREAK!	Persuasion Highlight #7
9	10/27	Consistency and Cognitive Dissonance Theory	<i>Ch. 9</i>
	10/29		Persuasion Highlight #8
10	11/3	A Reasoned Action Approach	<i>Ch. 10</i>
	11/5		Persuasion Highlight #9

11	11/10	Elaboration Likelihood Model	<i>Ch.11</i>
	11/12		Persuasion Highlight #10 due and Essay #2
12	11/17	Compliance Strategies	<i>Ch. 12</i>
	11/19	Introduce Final Project	Persuasion Highlight #11
13	11/24	Truth and Deception	<i>Ch.13</i>
	11/26	NO CLASS-THANKSGIVING!	
14	12/1	Ethics	<i>Ch.14</i>
	12/3	Final Exam Review	Persuasion Highlight #12 & Portfolio Presentation Visual Aid (Both due Sunday @ 11:59pm)
15	12/8	Persuasion Highlight Presentations	
	12/10	Persuasion Highlight Presentations	
16	12/15	Final Exam (Chp 7-14) Tuesday 12/15/2026 7:30-10:00am	Final Project (Due Friday 12/18 @11:59pm)