



# Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - 2024-2025

## Exchange

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam offers many English-taught courses in a variety of subjects, ranging from arts & culture and social sciences, neurosciences and computer science, to economics and business administration.

The International Office is responsible for course approval and course registration for exchange students. For details about course registration, requirements, credits, semesters and so on, please [visit the exchange programmes webpages](#).

# Persuasive Communication

Course Code	L_AABACIW110
Credits	6
Period	P5
Course Level	100
Language Of Tuition	English
Faculty	Faculty of Humanities
Course Coordinator	dr. B.R. Huma
Examiner	dr. B.R. Huma
Teaching Staff	F. van Bruggen, dr. B.R. Huma
Teaching method(s)	Lecture, Seminar

## Course Objective

- To acquire knowledge of prominent theories of persuasive communication;
- To acquire knowledge about the theoretical landscape of social influence;
- To critically review theoretical models of persuasion;
- To acquire knowledge about the methods are used in conducting research of persuasive communication;
- To understand the relationship between persuasion and (news and social) media in today's fast-changing media landscape;
- To analyse and assess examples of persuasive messages and strategies;
- To develop persuasive communication skills.

## Course Content

Persuasion is a ubiquitous presence in our modern lives: stores and brands compete for our money, politicians plead for our votes, and NGOs urge us to take action on such causes as climate change. In this course, we will introduce you to the wealth of knowledge about persuasive communication accumulated over 2400 years of scholarly reflections on this topic. We will focus on the most prominent theories of persuasion from disciplines such as psychology, sociology, and communication studies; for example, the cognitive dissonance theory, the theory of planned behaviour model and the elaboration likelihood model. We also pay special attention to the relationship between persuasion and (news and social) media, addressing such topics as the spread of mis- and disinformation. Together, we will discuss and analyse examples of persuasive communication in political settings, sales, advertising, news and social media. The course will also introduce you to the research methods used to study persuasive communication as well as encourage you to think critically about their respective strengths and limitations. As part of the group project, you will have the opportunity to practically apply the knowledge acquired in the course in designing a persuasion campaign for an organisation of your choice.

## Additional Information Teaching Methods

In the first six weeks, there will be two lectures and one seminar per week. The latter will comprise mainly group work done towards the final project. For all classes, attendance is expected.

Note that this course has seminars, but you cannot self-register for a seminar group. If you want to know the times of all the seminar groups, go to [rooster.vu.nl](https://rooster.vu.nl), click on the options at the right-hand side of the course title and select 'Choose groups'. In the first week, your specific seminar group will be assigned by the course coordinator.

## Method of Assessment

The course will be assessed via a mix of individual and group coursework (40%). This includes a group project consisting of developing a persuasion campaign for an organisation of your choice. Additionally, at the end of the course, there will be a written exam (60%).

## Literature

The course handbook is Gass & Seiter. (2022). *Persuasion. Social Influence and Compliance Gaining* (7th edition). Routledge. There are two hard copies available in the VU library. If you buy the book, look for the international (not

US) edition, which is usually cheaper. Also, do not order the handbook from a US bookseller because they're usually more expensive.

Most weeks, you will read a few chapters from the course handbook. The rest of the readings are research articles and can be accessed via Canvas.

### **Additional Information Target Audience**

First year students of the BA program Communication and Information Studies, except for students in the track Language and Mind. This course welcomes exchange students.