

Info about the PSYC-331 paper (A2007)

General instructions

For this paper, you will have to (1) analyse a social situation/issue through the eyes of a social psychologist and propose an intervention based on your understanding of the psychosociological processes involved in the situation and (2) analyse a persuasive message.

Instructions to choose the situation/issue for part 1

The social situation/issue has to be specific and contextualized. It also has to be something that could be improved. For example, racism and the Kyoto protocol are not specific enough. However, homophobia in high schools and the impact of internet on copyrights (the mp3 problem) are adequate.

Instructions to choose the persuasive message for part 2

The message also has to be specific and contextualized. It also has to be short enough so that I can read/see it in less than 5 min. For example, the canadian war propaganda is not specific enough but the car ad you saw in the metro is specific enough. Many types of persuasive messages could be analysed such as (but not limited to) an ad, a political party's web site, a fund raising campaign, a religious/political tract given to you on the street or an urban legend sent to you via email.

Important sections of your paper

Part 1- Analysis of a social situation (6 pages max)

- 1) Description of the chosen situation/issue
 - Identify and briefly describe the situation/issue
- 2) Justify your choice
 - Explain why is it important/interesting to understand that situation
- 3) Analysis of the actual situation from the point of view of social psychology
 - Identify and explain the processes involved in the situation (i.e. what is happening)
- 4) Proposed intervention
 - Propose an intervention to improve the situation and justify your proposition with psychosocial arguments
 - Base your proposition both on psychosociological theories AND recent scientific literature

Part 2- Analysis of a persuasive message (1.5 pages max, excluding the appendix)

- 1) Brief description of the message
 - Mention the purpose, the origin and the context of the message
- 1) Analysis of the message (e.g. types of heuristics used)
 - Describe the techniques/strategies used to persuade (e.g. heuristics, use of distraction, one- vs two-sided appeal,...)
- 2) Evaluation of the potential efficiency of the message
 - Use your knowledge of social psychology to critically assess the efficiency of the message (e.g. pros and cons, potential problems,...)
- 3) Appendix
 - Factual information about the message (e.g. copy of the ad, info about the context)

Technical information

The paper has to be done in teams of 2-3 students

Double spaced, size 12, times new roman or equivalent.

Maximum number of pages : 6 pages for part 1 and 1.5 pages for part 2 (excluding appendix)

Deadline to tell me the topics you chose (in class) : Oct 30th (part 1) and Nov 13th (part 2)

Deadline to give me your paper : Nov 29th