

I. COURSE INFORMATION

SPRING 2018

CRN: 22266

Communication 2352: Persuasion and Social Influence

Required Texts: Persuasion: Integrating theory, Research and Practice, by Frymier and Nadler, 3rd Ed.

II. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Sherry Lewis, Lecturer

Office Phone: (915) 747-5914

Office: 104 Quinn Hall

Email: shelewis@utep.edu

Office Hours: M 10:30 am-2:00 pm

T 8-10 am & 12-2

W 10:30 am-2 pm

R 7-10:00 am

F 10:30- 12 pm Or by appointment

Class Sessions: TR 10:30-11:50

QUIN 103

III. COURSE CONTENT

A. COURSE DESCRIPTION FROM THE CATALOG: "COMM 2352. Persuasion & Social Influence. Persuasion and Social Influence (3-0) An introduction to theories of persuasion. Analysis of the communication process as social influence in various contexts of communication. 3 Credit Hours 3 Total Contact Hours 0 Lab Hours 3 Lecture Hours 0 Other Hours"

B. COURSE OBJECTIVES: The course provides an introduction to the study of persuasion from a communication studies perspective. The study of persuasion includes strategies that people and other entities (e.g., advertisers) use in an effort to get others to follow their suggestions. There are no magic strategies; however, the development of effective communication strategies can make one a much more influential or persuasive communicator. The course focuses on persuasion at the interpersonal level. However, we will also devote part of the semester to the study of persuasion at the macro level. We will specifically examine: (a) the ethics of using persuasion communication, (b) strategies for effective persuasive messages, and (c) the role of persuasive messages in society.

C. LEARNING OUTCOMES: The theories and practice of persuasion will be discussed and demonstrated to the students in an interactive environment, which focuses on the implementation and detection of persuasive techniques which are practiced daily. Students will have ample opportunities to check their abilities to detect and evaluate persuasive messages, to understand the processes and to practice techniques in an effective manner.

D. ASSIGNED READINGS: Carefully read all assigned chapters; lectures will provide the connection between theories and practice of persuasion. Each section of your text will provide in-depth explanations of each approach to Persuasion.

E. ASSIGNMENTS/ASSESSMENT/GRADING: 1. Examinations (2 total; 50 points each) 100 points 2. Persuasive essay 75 points 3. Attendance/Quizzes 25 points 4. Persuasive Presentation 100 points Instructor reserves the right to alter the grading schedule

Examination: The exams for this course may consist of both multiple choice and essay questions. The written portion of the exam must be legible and follow the basic rules of

essay writing. It should have a topic sentence and show development of critical thinking. You must attend class in the timeliest manner on exam days; tardiness will be assessed more harshly on test days. A tardy does not earn extra time; an absence does not guarantee a makeup, except under extreme circumstances.

Persuasive Essay: Each student will complete a 5-7 page essay that examines a social issue that generates controversy in mainstream society (e.g., birth control, death penalty, etc.). The essay will include the standard elements of a good essay: Introduction, body, and conclusion. It will also promote a position in favor of or opposition to the selected issue. You are to use an academic “voice” in the paper. That means it must conform to an academic style of writing and must include at least 8 academic sources related to your topic. You may use either MLA or APA style for your source citations and list.

IV. **RULES, CLASSROOM POLICIES: ATTENDANCE:** In this class, regular attendance provides the student with ample opportunities to observe other classmates’ attempts, as well as suggestions and examples from the instructor. Therefore, repeated/excessive absences will result in a lower grade due to missing the life experiences provided. If a student anticipates an absence, report it to the instructor, so that they can coordinate presentation dates, etc. **Academic Honesty:** Cheating/plagiarism will not be tolerated in any form. Students caught in acts of academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with UT El Paso policy. You will at a minimum fail the assignment a grade of zero.

Disabilities: If you need ADA-related or special accommodations, please contact CASS at (915) 747-5148 or email cass@utep.edu or additional information at: sa.utep.edu/cass.

Excessive Absences: Students may miss up to three classes without penalty. After that, absences will affect the final grade. Note: Unless the student requests it, I will not drop a student from the roster.

Grading: All assignments are graded using the same criteria: (a) Grammar/spelling (b) Organization (c) Accuracy in using concepts (d) Originality of analysis (e) Depth of critical thinking (f) Quality of arguments—using evidence to support opinions (g) Following instructions.

An “A” paper will be a paper that is superior. It will address all of the issues assigned (i.e., directions are followed). The writer(s) will demonstrate exceptional fluency and use of language. The paper will be distinguished by the quality of its content, the amount of detail used to support or illustrate its central ideas, and the coherency of the analysis presented. It will contain very few grammatical errors. It will include original analysis of the theories/concepts. It will accurately cite strong, academic sources (using MLA style). There will be substance from the sources that is accurate. Finally, the paper will be well organized with a clear purpose/thesis statement, clear topic sentences for paragraphs, transitions, previews and reviews of main points.

A “B” paper will be above average. It will be well organized and developed, and demonstrate a clear understanding of the assignment (i.e., all issues are addressed—directions followed). Although it may contain minor flaws, the writing will exhibit an ability to use the language effectively and the analysis presented will be relatively coherent. It will include original analysis of the theories/concepts, but not quite as compelling as an A paper (e.g., not as well supported with evidence). It will accurately cite strong academic sources (using MLA or APA style). The amount of substance is strong, but not as well developed as

an A paper and there may be minor flaws in the evidence. The sources are strong, academic sources. Finally, the paper will be well organized, but with some minor flaws in organization (presented above).

A “C” paper will be an average paper. It will demonstrate an adequate level of organization and development. It will contain enough specific information to illustrate a described experience or a proposed argument. Although the paper may contain writing errors, they will not be serious or frequent enough to distract the reader from the content. All issues must be addressed for it to receive a “C” (i.e., you must follow directions to get a C. The analysis is largely repetitive with what is presented in class or texts and thus is not original. Sources are not cited properly or the amount of substance from the sources is limited (An example of limited substance is using one quotation—usually a definition—from the source to show you used it in order to count as one of the required sources.). All of the sources are not strong academic ones. Finally, the organization has some flaws. For example, main points may not be clear.

A “D” paper will be below average. It will reveal one or two of the following weaknesses: (1) all objectives of the assignment are not addressed; (2) serious problems of organization or focus; (3) insufficient information to illustrate experiences or support the arguments; (4) serious problems in sentence structure; (5) errors in writing that are sufficient to distract the reader from the content of the paper; (6) not enough outside sources (or none); and (7) lacking original analysis.

An “F” paper will demonstrate little understanding of the assignment or the mechanics of writing. Essentially, it will include three or more of the weaknesses presented in the “D” paper. Of course, a paper may also earn an “F” if it is not turned in.

Late Papers: I do not accept late papers unless there are circumstances beyond your control that you can document. If you will be absent on the day an assignment is due please make arrangements to turn in your work prior to the due date. You may be allowed to email your paper; it is due before midnight of the due date in class. A late date stamp on the email will cause it to be rejected.

Time: The class runs on my watch. If people are frequently late to class there will be attendance quizzes at the start of class.

READING ASSIGNMENTS/ACTIVITIES (I RESERVE THE RIGHT TO ALTER THIS SCHEDULE)

Day Topics/Readings

01/15 Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday—University Closed

01/16 Introductions and Course Overview Frymier and Nadler: Chapter 1, especially page 2, “The Concept of Persuasion”

01/18 Frymier and Nadler: Chapter 2, “Attitudes”

01/23 Frymier and Nadler: Chapter 3, “The Relationship between Attitudes and Behaviors”

01/25 Frymier and Nadler: Chapters 4, “The Role of Theory in Persuasion”

01/30 Frymier and Nadler: Chapter 5, “Social Judgment Theory” 02/02 Review of Readings

02/01 Film: 12 Angry Men (c. 1957) Part I 02/09 Finish 12 Angry Men- Part II 02/14 Exam I

02/06 Review Exam results; Frymier and Nadler: Chapter 6, "Consistency and Cognitive Dissonance"

02/08 Frymier and Nadler: Chapter 7, "Self-Perception Theory" Nonverbal card game exercise

02/13 Frymier and Nadler: Chapter 8, "Theory of Reasoned Action and Theory of Planned Behavior"

02/15 Frymier and Nadler: Chapter 9, "Elaboration Likelihood Model"

02/20 Frymier and Nadler: Chapter 10, "Source Factors"

02/22 Frymier and Nadler: Chapter 11, "Message Factors: Content and Style"

02/27 Frymier and Nadler: Chapter 12, "Message Factors: Tactics and Strategies"

03/01 Exam II

03/06 Frymier and Nadler: Chapter 13, "Receiver and Channel Factors"

03/08 Frymier and Nadler: Chapter 14, "Ethics"; Assign groups and Fallacies exercise

03/12-16-- Spring Break! Enjoy!

03/20 Fallacies exercise; discussion

03/22 Frymier and Nadler: Complete book and recap

03/27 Watch: "Deadly Persuasion: the advertising of alcohol and tobacco"

03/29 Watch: "Icons and Symbols. The Power of Persuasion"

04/03 Preparation for Group Presentations: Questions, Issues, Discussion

04/05 Group Presentations

04/10 Group Presentations

04/12 Group Presentations

04/17 Group Presentations

04/ 19 Finish Group Presentations and final exam review

04/24-05/03 Pick-up for final

05/03 Finish review

05/10 Exam Day: Thursday, May 10, 10:00 am –12:45 pm. Your final consists of the Persuasive Essay, which MUST be in my hands, in my office, no later than 3:00 pm. I will not accept any late papers, since you may turn in your Final Essay at any time after May 1. My office is located in Quinn Hall, room 104 (First floor, under the stairs).

Persuasive Presentation Near the end of the semester, you will form small work groups and prepare a presentation on some aspect or special assignment regarding the art of persuasion.

These are some ideas:

1. Pick an element of persuasion and discuss it with the class; include a brief skit to demonstrate how this element would serve to achieve persuasion in that circumstance. For example, the offer of a cool lemonade will work better on a sunny day at the beach than during a snowstorm in the office.
2. Pick one of the theorists we have studied and explain their work in the field of persuasion. You may include a biography, but the main focus should be to explain one or more of their theories in the field.
3. Describe persuasion in advertising over the past 100 years. You may focus on print, radio, television or the Internet, as appropriate for the historical presence of the medium. So, print

goes back for at least 150 years, radio for about 100. Television dates from the late 1940's and Commercial Internet from about 15 years ago.

4. If you have another idea for a topic, please write out the thesis and present it to me for consideration.

These are called **Group Presentations**; by definition, a group must have at least 3 members. By common sense and experience, a group should not exceed 5 members. An odd number of members is better than an even number; there can be no ties in decision-making strategies, that way!

Each group should turn in:

- 1) A list of members' names (to be submitted two weeks prior to presenting)
- 2) An outline of the group presentation (to be submitted on the day of the presentation)
- 3) Individual outlines from each group member I am available for consultation on outlines and presentation aids, etc.



Persuade Me!
