

COMM 311 – Persuasion

Spring 2018

Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. Stephanie Coopman

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Persuasion permeates your everyday life, particularly in an intensely mediated environment: friends asking for favors, advertisers selling products and services, health care providers seeking patient compliance, politicians campaigning for votes. You are both a persuader and persuadee, influencing others and influenced by others. Persuasion is often characterized in negative ways, and when asked, individuals typically deny trying to influence others. Although some persuasive strategies (such as coercion) are unethical, persuasive communication can, and many times does, produce positive results. For example, the intensive U.S. government public health campaigns against smoking have resulted in a dramatic decline in the number of smokers over the past 30 years.

In this class, you'll learn about theories, concepts, and research associated with persuasive communication. You'll also examine broader issues of persuasion and influence in U.S. society, and examine how those issues provide a context for the kinds and contexts of persuasion you encounter every day. Class activities, assignments, and discussions are designed to develop your knowledge of and skills in persuasive communication.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a disability that requires accommodation for you to participate and complete requirements for this class, please notify me immediately and contact the Disability Resource Center (119 Stevenson Hall, 852-6938) to verify eligibility and determine specific accommodations.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

By enrolling in this class, students agree to uphold and practice academic honesty and integrity in all activities associated with this class. All the work you complete for this class must be your own and may not be work completed for another class. In practical terms, this means that you will not:

- accept assistance or give assistance to others on quizzes.
- submit any work that is not your own without full and complete citation of all sources
- submit the same work for this class as for another class.

In practical terms, academic misconduct includes activities such as plagiarism, forging an instructor's signature, stealing quizzes (including downloading, except for purposes of completing the quiz), copying papers or tests from other students, or giving others quiz answers. For this course, academic misconduct, at a minimum, will result in a failing grade ('F') in the course. (More information about UofL's Code of [Student Rights and Responsibilities](#).)

REQUIRED READING

Borchers, T. (2013). *Persuasion in the Media Age*, 3rd edition. Long Grove, IL: Waveland. ISBN 1-57766-826-X. Available from the UofL bookstore and online retailers. **Be sure you buy the 3rd edition. Also available for rent from [VitalSource](#).**

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After successfully completing this course, you will be able to:

1. Define persuasion and discuss the differences among information, expression, and persuasion as forms of communication.
2. Discuss major theoretical perspectives and concepts associated with persuasion.
3. Identify and discuss contexts of persuasion: interpersonal, public/mediated, advertising.
4. Analyze, critique, and report on persuasive attempts that you observe and/or experience.
5. Demonstrate communication skills necessary for effective performance as a producer and consumer of persuasive communication.

SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS

More information about class assignments in the Assignments folder on the class website. I will not accept late assignments.

Quizzes. Open-book, open-note, multiple choice, covering assigned readings. You may take each quiz twice.

Total possible: 450 pts.

Application Papers. You'll write two papers in which you apply course concepts and theories to persuasive communication examples.

Total possible: 235 pts.

Discussion. You will earn points based on your participation in the class discussions. Specific requirements for discussions are on the Participation page.

Total possible: 315 pts.

GRADING

Your final grade will be based on the following point system:

Assignment	Points
Quizzes	450
Application Papers	235
Participation	315
TOTAL	1000 pts.

GRADING SCALE

Points	Grade	Points	Grade
950-1000	A	740-769	C
900-949	A-	700-739	C-
870-899	B+	670-699	D+
840-869	B	640-669	D
800-839	B-	600-639	D-
770-799	C+	< 600	F

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

TITLE IX/CLERY ACT NOTIFICATION

Sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, and any other nonconsensual behavior of a sexual nature) and sex discrimination violate University policies. Students experiencing such behavior may obtain **confidential** support from the PEACC Program (852-2663), Counseling Center (852-6585), and Campus Health Services (852-6479). To report sexual

misconduct or sex discrimination, contact the Dean of Students (852-5787) or University of Louisville Police (852-6111).

Disclosure to **University faculty or instructors** of sexual misconduct, domestic violence, dating violence, or sex discrimination occurring on campus, in a University-sponsored program, or involving a campus visitor or University student or employee (whether current or former) is **not confidential** under Title IX. Faculty and instructors must forward such reports, including names and circumstances, to the University's Title IX officer.

For more information, see the Sexual Misconduct Resource Guide

<http://louisville.edu/hr/employeerelations/sexual-misconduct-brochure>).