COMM 311 – Persuasion
Spring 2015
Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. Stephanie Coopman
Communication, U of Louisville
Voice: 408-924-5366
Class email: uoflcomm@yahoo.com
UofL email: sjcoop03@louisville.edu
Alternate email: sjcoopman@gmail.com

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 need course adaptations because of a disability or if you have emergency medical information to share with me, please contact me as soon as possible.

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 Conduct.)

REQUIRED READING
The original version of the textbook is out of print. You can purchase the text in two ways; both have the same content:


COURSE OBJECTIVES
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.

CLASS COMMUNICATION
Here are the ways we'll communicate in the class:

- individual email messages
- roster email
- discussion board
- chat

Use **individual email messages** when you want to communicate with a specific person in the class. For example, if you have a question about your grade, email me at uoflcomm@yahoo.com. Or, if you want to form a study team with specific students in the class, email those people using Blackboard’s mail program.

I use the **roster email** function to send out general information and announcements pertaining to the class. Remember that when you use this feature on Blackboard, *everyone* in the class will receive your message. So, if you want to send an email just to me, send it to the email account I've set up specifically for this class, uoflcomm@yahoo.com. If it's information or a question of interest relevant to the entire class, send your message to everyone on the class roster.

**Discussion** is for asynchronous (not real-time) conversations about class readings. Go to the main Discussion page (go to the navigation bar on your left or the class homepage) to participate in those discussions. Go to the Participation page for more information about participating in the discussions.
Chat is another communication option. With chat, participants meet online in real time. We'll use chat for meetings with me. Email me at uoflcomm@yahoo.com if you want to talk with me in a chat room. You can also arrange to talk with others about class activities and assignments in a class chat room.

**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. Each quiz is worth 20 points. You may take each quiz twice. *No make up or early quizzes.*

Total possible: 300 pts.

**Persuasion Application Assignments.** You'll develop three wiki pages (360 points) in which you apply course concepts and theories to persuasive communication examples and you'll comment on others' wiki pages (60 points).

Total possible: 420 pts.

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

Total possible: 280 pts.

**GRADING**

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

| Quizzes: 300 points | Persuasion Applications: 420 points | Participation: 280 points | TOTAL: 1000 points |

**GRADING SCALE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>980-1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>950-979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>900-949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>870-899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>840-869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>800-839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>770-799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>740-769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>700-739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>670-699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>640-669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>600-639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>&lt; 600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

< 600 / F