

PERSUASION AND SOCIAL INFLUENCE

Com 319

Instructor:

Office:

Office hours:

Email:

Readings:

- Robert B. Cialdini, *Influence: Science and Practice* 5th ed. (Boston: Allen & Bacon, 2009).
- Other sources (such as handouts, online academic articles, videos, and website references).

Course Description: Because persuasion permeates public, professional, and private life, employing and responding to persuasion are intrinsic to daily activities. This course is designed to empower you to be an effective and ethical practitioner of persuasion, as well as a critical and savvy consumer of persuasion. These goals will be accomplished by surveying research, theory, and practice from two significant realms of scholarship that merge in the communication discipline. The first includes insights into persuasion, social influence, and compliance-gaining from the field of social psychology, while the second includes perspectives on persuasion, argumentation, and evidence from the field of rhetoric. Examining both these realms reveals a more complete depiction of persuasion than either realm could reveal alone. As we fit the many pieces of the persuasion puzzle together over the course of the semester, a clarifying picture will emerge that will serve as a useful guide whenever you construct or critique persuasive appeals.

Read this syllabus carefully. By remaining enrolled in the class, you have accepted the conditions and requirements of the course. The requirements and expectations indicated in this syllabus provide a framework for productivity and success. Drop the class immediately if any aspects of the course, its expectations, and/or requirements are not acceptable to you.

Teaching philosophy

I see myself as a guide and as a facilitator rather than a provider of information and/or knowledge. My role is to help you do your own thinking and to facilitate the discovery of your own ideas. I believe that learning is a collaborative process and my favorite practice in class is discussion. I think that the best way for us to learn is to continually ask significant questions and make connections between readings and our own experiences and observations. I will do my best to create a safe, positive classroom environment in which we can share ideas and questions so that we can learn from one another. The key aspect here is that everything we do in this class we do *together*. Thus, the success of your class experience also depends on you: it is up to you how much you will put into or take from this class.

I have planned this class in the way I thought was best, based on my previous experience in teaching this course. However, I want this class to serve your needs, your interests, and your abilities; I want this class to fit your learning styles, rhythms, and necessities. To accomplish these goals, I am not only welcoming but also strongly encouraging constant feedback. Feedback means asking questions about assignments and class material, offering comments or proposals for new courses of action. You can do this in class, via email, or face to face during office hours. Based on your feedback and on my own observation of how the class responds to schedule, assignments, and deadlines, I reserve the right to modify parts of the syllabus and/or schedule to ensure a better experience for everybody.

Policies and procedures

PROFESSIONALISM: you are expected to communicate in appropriate ways: be alert, respectful, motivated to learn, and ready to participate in class discussions and activities. Professionalism also include completing assignments on time, familiarizing yourself with the required readings and materials, being involved in your own learning process, respecting others' opinions, and using respectful and professional language when speaking in class, posting on class discussion boards, and emailing your peers and instructor.

TECHNOLOGY AND BLACKBOARD SITE: The blackboard site for this discourse will be used consistently during the semester as means of communication, as repository for additional class materials (including descriptions of assignments, deadlines reminders and so on), and as a tool for submitting your assignments. Therefore, you are responsible for your access to the BB site. To succeed in this course it is essential that you have regular and reliable online access to Blackboard, that you be familiar with the BB system, and that you regularly (i.e., daily) check the Announcements in the course BB.

I am not a computer or BB expert; the University has employees who are. If you have trouble with the technology of the course, please contact the university Help Desk. Computer issues or other technology fails are not valid/acceptable excused for late work, missed announcements etc.

THE USE OF ELECTRONICS IN CLASS is not allowed except on the days you have group meetings to prepare for the persuasion games. No laptops, no cell phones, no ipads etc. I am aware of the fact that this policy might be unpopular, but please trust that I carefully considered this issue and decided that this is a policy that actually facilitates your learning and learning experiences. If you are interested, you can do your online research in regards to this topic and I can also provide some helpful links.

DEADLINES. You are expected to complete every assignment and exam before or by the set due date (and time), following directions as they are provided. You will not receive ANY credit for late assignments. Technology issues do not constitute a valid excuse, so make sure plan ahead. You can have every good intention to turn in your work on time and through the correct channels, but if it does not happen (that is, it is not received) it will not get credit. I will not extend deadlines to any student for any reason – it would not be fair to the other students in the class.

The only exception to this policy: officially documented and university accepted excuses. Such documentation must be presented before the missed deadline or, the latest, by the next class period. If you are missing an assignment because of a University or/and religious event that is currently scheduled, you *must* notify the instructor one week before the assignment/activity you will be missing in order to make up for it.

ATTENDANCE is required everyday. If you choose to miss class, please read the policies listed above regarding missed or late assignments. In addition, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed (lecture notes, schedule changes, announcements) from a classmate who is willing to share that information. Please do not email the instructor to find out what you missed. In all fairness, please do not expect me to give extra-help on your assignments and class materials if you choose to skip class. Your final grade will be lowered by 3 points for each unexcused absence beyond two absences.

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR & DISRESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION: I reserve the right to remove anyone from our class that I feel is being disruptive and/or disrespectful. Also, I will not tolerate language/speech that denigrates another person or group of people (sexist, racist, heterosexist, ageist, etc.). Since the material covered is, at times, sensitive it is important that everyone is respectful of each person's ideas, beliefs, and standpoints. Students are entitled to receive instruction free from interference by other members of the class. Please refer to the ASU Student Services Manual, 201-10. In cases where disruptive behavior does not warrant removal from class at the instructor's discretion, a student's final grade will be lowered by 25% instead. Students are required to adhere to the behavior standards listed in the Arizona Board of Regents Policy Manual (see Chapter V – Campus and Student Affairs: Code of Conduct). Examples of aggressive behavior include, but are not limited to, cursing, raising your voice, and using nonverbals (e.g., proxemics, facial expressions, and hand gestures) in ways that could be reasonably interpreted as intimidating.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT: Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and there are severe sanctions for cheating, plagiarizing and any other form of dishonesty. Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University's policy is never considered an excuse for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review ASU resources on Academic integrity: <https://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>. All cases of academic misconduct will be reported to the Hugh Downs School of Human Communication and will become a part of the student's record (e.g., transcript). It can result in a zero on the assignment and a failing grade ("E") in the course.

GRADES AND GRADE APPEALS: Please wait at least 24 hours after you receive your grade for your assignment or presentation before appealing. Submit your appeal in writing (typed) detailing your concerns and rationale for appeal within seven days of receiving the grade, and then make an appointment to meet with instructor after submitting the written appeal. **All these procedures must be done in the course of one week. After this period, grades will not be open to discussion. Grade appeals will not be addressed after the last day of class and grades will not be changed after final posting on university rosters.** I do not hand out grades; students earn grades by their performance and effort or lack thereof. I cannot and will not give special treatment or extra points to any student for any reason; it would not be fair to the other students in the class.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION POLICY: Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible (documentation should be provided no later than the second week of class) so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate your educational opportunities. Course material will gladly be made available in alternate formats whenever necessary.

Graded Assignments

Pop Quizzes (10 @ 5 points each). On ten separate occasions, a no-notice pop quiz will be administered in class. The quiz will consist of a single, simple, direct question that is intended to make sure that you are keeping up with your readings and you remember the key facts / concepts presented in the material. Missing a class, or a portion of the class, in which a quiz is administered will result in a zero score for that quiz. You must be present when the quiz is administered in order to take the quiz and receive a score. These quizzes serve as a way to keep you on your toes in relation to the class material and as an incentive for class attendance. I will offer more precise directions as to how you should read the chapters and readings assigned in order to be successful in answering these quizzes. I will also provide, every class period, specific examples of questions that I might ask in a quiz for the subsequent class period.

In-class activities (5 x 10 points each). On five separate occasions, I will offer class activities that will help you earn points. The activities will consist of simple questions/reflections/activities that will not necessitate prior knowledge of the material. These activities serve as a way to stimulate your participation in class and as an incentive for class attendance.

This course will use a point system to determine the final grade. There are 500 possible points. Throughout the semester, I will strive to grade assignments in a timely manner, as feedback is important to enhance your learning. The following is the grading scale. Please note that no extra credit will be offered. Concentrate on doing your best work throughout the course rather than depending on extra credit at the end. This is a point system, and percentages will not be rounded up.

Take home exam (100 pts). The take home exam instructions will be offered in a timely manner (see schedule). The goal of this exam is to facilitate the thorough review of the class material and to stimulate your thinking about the ways in which the concepts and ideas can be related and integrated – in such a way that you will gain a deeper understanding of the persuasion processes and strategies.

Persuasive Analysis Paper (100 pts). This paper requires you to analyze the persuasive dimensions of a communicative act or artifact of your choice (advertising campaign, political speech, movie, sale strategy and so on). More specific instructions will follow in class and on the Blackboard site.

Persuasion Games (2 x 50 points). We will have three sessions of persuasion games but you will only the 2 best scores will be counted. This is a group project: groups of 4-5 people (on three different occasions you will participate in three different teams) will receive the same task – to design a persuasive strategy for a specific scenario. The groups will work together on the strategy for one class period and then they will present it to the class. After eac presentation, members of the other groups may “attack” the strategy, provided they have good arguments rooted in the theories and concepts we learned in the course of the semester.

Persuasion games assessments (18 x 5 pts each) This assignment will receive a score from the instructor (65%) and from you (35%), based on a formal assessment sheet (student will not grade the work of their own team). More info will be offered later in the semester.

Grading

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Quizzes (10 x 5 pts) -----	50 pts
In-class activities (5 x 10 pts) -----	60 pts
Take home exam -----	100 pts
Persuasive Analysis Paper -----	100 pts
Persuasion Games (2 x 50 pts) -----	100 pts
Persuasion Games Assessments (18 x 5) -----	90 pts
Total Points-----	500

Grade scale:

496-500 = A+	435-449 = B+	385-399 = C+	300-349 = D
465-495 = A	415-434 = B	350-384 = C	299 and below = E
450-464 = A-	400-414 = B-		Cheating=XE