Course Syllabus
COM 464
Theory and Practice of Persuasion
Summer 2016

Instructor: Dr. Sang-Yeon Kim, Johnston Hall 223, Email: sangyeon@uwm.edu


Description: This class introduces introductory theories and practices of persuasion and compliance gaining. Three major goals of this class involve (a) familiarizing with persuasion theories in general, (b) enabling students to use theories in explaining and analyzing real life incidents of persuasion/compliance gaining, and (c) empowering to create theory-driven persuasion/campaign strategies/messages in the domain of student's interest.

Course Objectives: Through course readings and quizzes, students will learn to (a) understand the fundamentals of diverse persuasion theories and the mechanisms through which those theories operate in reality. Essays and class discussions will provide students with the opportunity to (b) apply the theories to explain various social events where persuasion theories are in action (e.g., compliance gaining, TV commercials, public campaigns dealing with health, corporate, or political issues), (c) design a theoretically defensible public campaign in the issue domain of the student's interest.

Assessments
TBA

Learning Outcomes: In general, the quizzes are to promote student's theoretical knowledge. The essays and class discussions are intended to improve critical/creative thinking and effective written communication skills.

Basic Course Structure: This course comprises six learning modules, each of which is completed in one week. Each module requires student to (a) read assigned chapters, (b) take a quiz, (c) write a short essay in relation to the assigned readings, and (d) provide feedback on essays written by classmates. (a) and (b) will complete by Wednesday, and (c) and (d) will be completed by Friday each week (see Course Schedule). All daily assignments will be posted on D2L by the first day of class.

(a, b) Readings and Quizzes: Students read a chapter and take a quiz by Wednesday of each module. Students may decide to read chapters ahead of time. But it should be noted that content-specific questions may appear in quizzes and inability to memorize details may lead to a lower grade.

(c, d) Essays and Responses: By Friday of each module, students write a short essay in relation to the assigned reading and posts it on a designated discussion board. Each essay should NOT exceed 500 words in length. Imposing a maximum instead of a minimum requirement is to help students deliver their thoughtful arguments in a concise manner, NOT to encourage scattering unorganized pieces of weak ideas. The essay must represent a thorough understanding of the given topic. Arguments must be fully elaborated yet presented succinctly.

Student then reads at least two essays written by other classmates and leaves comment longer than 250 words each. Essays and responses must be posted on the discussion board directly, NOT as an attachment. Comments, whether they be an agreement or a disagreement, must be content-specific.
Responses containing no arguments, just summarizing the target essay, or just being nice e.g., ‘I liked your essay’ or ‘I liked how you wrote’ will be considered as non-response.

(e). Group Project: The most prominent goal of persuasion would be to ‘change’ whether it be one individual’s behavior or attitudes, social norms, or legal system. Society is being changed constantly toward more positive directions (e.g., reduced smoking population, fair treatment of people of color, spread of pro-environmental attitudes) thanks to those who practice persuasion with good will. Still, there remains much room for our society to improve; racism, continuing unhealthy eating habits, etc. This course requires students as a team find one such problem of our society and come up with a theory-based campaign plan. Group Project (GP) comprises four interim phases, and each team submits the fifth or the final draft by integrating the works done in the previous four stages and instructor’s suggestions. The scope of GP encompasses 1) electing one most serious social problem, 2) speculating potential causes of the problem, 3) documenting factual data regarding what has been done to solve the chosen problem and what has NOT been done so far, 4) coming up with a theory-driven campaign plan, including specific messages, that can lessen the severity of the problem. From the second draft, each team is required to locate and cite at least three supporting scholarly sources. Secondary online sources lacking in authority or expertise (e.g., Wikipedia, etc.) will be considered illegible. It is student’s responsibility to acquire skills necessary to locate scholarly journals in the main library. All five GPs are due by Friday from the second week.

Evaluation: Student’s performance will be evaluated using the following criteria.

1. 6 Quizzes: Each quiz contains up to 30 questions from readings assigned for each module. Regardless of the number of questions, each quiz will be graded such that the maximum score becomes 30. Quizzes will be given in a mixture of true-false and multiple choice questions. Each quiz will remain posted on D2L throughout the week. Quizzes submitted after due will be ignored. A time limit will be enforced such that students use one minute per question. In case of a 30-question quiz, 30 minutes will be given for example.

2. 6 Essays and Responses: Students can earn up to 30 points from each class participation. 15 points will be assigned to the essay and the rest 15 points to the two responses. Good essays and responses are (a) to the point, (b) well elaborated, (c) content-specific, and (d) conforming to the word limit (i.e., 500 maximum and 250 minimum for essays and responses, respectively), (e) logically sound, and (f) creative. Failure to meet these criteria may result in a lower grade. Essays or responses submitted after due will be ignored unless accompanied with verifiable emergent situations.

3. Group Project (GP): A maximum of 200 points will be awarded for GP. The 200 points will be allocated as follows:
   - Draft 1: 20 pts
   - Draft 2: 30 pts
   - Draft 3: 40 pts
   - Draft 4: 50 pts
   - Final: 60 pts

Specific guidelines regarding contents to be included and page limits will be announced on Monday of the week each module begins. The instructor may not accept papers that were submitted late or failed to follow the format specified below.

Paper Format: Each draft of Group Project (GP) must be SINGLE-spaced, has 1 inch margin on all four sides, be written in 12pts Times New Roman font. Written works violating any of these formatting guidelines may not be accepted for grading. As English composition is a prerequisite for this course,
the grader will expect that each submitted paper includes few grammatical errors and is properly organized. Papers disallowing for a smooth reading will subject to low grades with no regards to the quality of the contents. It is strongly recommended that students consult with tutors at the writing center (http://www4.uwm.edu/writingcenter) before submitting written works.

**Peer Evaluations:** It is important that each team member contribute equally to group projects. To deter potential free-riding, the instructor collects peer evaluations from all individual students when each GP is due. Each individual evaluates all other team members including him/herself. Students who are reported to have participated less than other team members will lose points accordingly. Conversely, those who are reported to have made more participation will earn extra points on top of the group score. The number of points to be deducted or added will be determined by (a) how well or poorly one was evaluated in the team and (b) how consistent the team judgment was.

In each peer evaluation, allot 100 points to your team members including yourself such that the amount of points represents the amount of contribution each team member has made to your group assignments. Make sure the allotted points sum to 100. **You do NOT have to submit your peer evaluation if you would assess that all members contributed equally.**

To maintain a good standing on GPs, make sure to (a) stay connected with the team members throughout the semester, (b) determine ‘who does what by when’ clearly and equally before beginning to work on GPs, and (c) fulfill your parts as best as you can. A poor peer evaluation results for good reasons. Work hard and let your team members are aware that you are making substantial contribution.

**Time Commitment:** It is anticipated that students spend a minimum of 144 hours to complete this course. At least 24 hours are to be committed to complete each module; 7 hours for reading assigned essays, preparing and taking the quiz; 7 hours to comprehend, and generate answers (including independent literature search) to, essay questions; 3 hours to produce a minimum of two peer reviews; and 7 hours on average working for the group projects (e.g., group discussion, independent research, writing).

**Discussion Etiquette:** Findings from empirical studies indicate that, in online conversations, people tend to feel less inhibited to engage in undesirable communication behaviors (e.g., using derogatory terms, name calling, etc.). This course will NOT tolerate any of those communication misconducts. Particularly, (a) criticisms toward peer writers instead of their written product or (b) use of racism-laden comments will result in a substantial point deduction from the participation score AND a warning from the instructor. **Discussants who received a second warning will be excluded from, and fail out of, the entire class.**
Important Rules

1. Student initiates communication with instructor through Q/A Board on D2L. Please refrain from emailing instructor unless it is an emergency.
2. Questions posted on Q/A Board will be answered within 24 hours.
3. Instructor assumes that student read the syllabus thoroughly on Day 1. Point deductions resulting from NOT reading the syllabus is student's responsibility and may be considered unreasonable excuse.
4. Submitting quizzes, essays, or responses after due because of technical problems (e.g., not having access to the Internet or D2L at the moment, problems with computer) may NOT be excused as an exception. It is student's responsibility to have all necessary tools and access to D2L up and running throughout the semester. Please contact UWM helpdesk at 414-229-4040 should you need assistance.
5. Academic misconduct including cheating and plagiarism will be tolerated under no circumstances, and students involved will fail out of the course immediately.

Course Policies

1. The Communication Department's Grievance/Grade Appeal policy is available at http://www4.uwm.edu/letsci/communication/policies/ under “Course Grade Grievance Procedure.” Consistent with Letters and Science policy, a student has 30 working days after the action that triggered the appeal to file with the Department’s Grievance Officer Nancy Burrell (nburrell@uwm.edu).
2. This course observes all university policies.
   (https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/faculty/1895R3_Uniform_abus_Policy.pdf)
### Point Breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Points per each</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 Quizzes</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>180</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Essays and Responses</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Group Project Drafts</td>
<td>20, 30, 40, 50, 60</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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### Grading Scheme

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<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93% and above</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>73%–76.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90%–92.9%</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70%–72.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87%–89.9%</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67%–69.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83%–86.9%</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>63%–66.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80%–82.9%</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60%–62.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77%–79.9%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>59.9% and below</td>
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## Tentative Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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| **Course Introduction** | Greetings  
Technology Test |
| **1** | Why Study Persuasion?  
What Constitutes Persuasion?  
Agenda 1 posted (Read CH. 1, 2; pp. 1-40)  
Quiz 1  
Discussion 1 posted  
Essay 1 Due  
Response 1 Due  
Group Project Draft 1 Due |
| **2** | Attitudes and Consistency  
Conformity and Influence in Groups  
Agenda 2 posted (Read CH. 3, 6; pp. 41-71, pp. 116-140)  
Quiz 2  
Discussion 2 posted  
Essay 2 Due  
Response 2 Due  
Group Project Draft 2 Due |
| **3** | Credibility  
Communicator Characteristics and Persuasibility  
Agenda 3 posted (Read CH. 4, 5; pp. 72-115)  
Quiz 3  
Discussion 3 posted  
Essay 3 Due  
Response 3 Due  
Group Project Draft 3 Due |
| **4** | Language and Persuasion  
Nonverbal Influence  
Structuring and Ordering Persuasion Messages  
Agenda 4 posted (Read CH. 7-9; pp. 141-203)  
Quiz 4  
Discussion 4 posted  
Essay 4 Due  
Response 4 Due  
Group Project Draft 4 Due |
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Module</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Sequential Persuasion</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Compliance Gaining</strong>&lt;br&gt;Agenda 5 posted (Read CH. 10, 11; pp. 204-247)&lt;br&gt;Quiz 5&lt;br&gt;Discussion 5 posted&lt;br&gt;Essay 5 Due&lt;br&gt;Response 5 Due</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td><strong>Deception</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Motivational Appeals</strong>&lt;br&gt;Agenda 6 posted (Read CH. 12, 13; pp. 248-291)&lt;br&gt;Quiz 6&lt;br&gt;Discussion 6 posted&lt;br&gt;Essay 6 Due&lt;br&gt;Response 6 Due&lt;br&gt;Final Group Project Due</td>
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