

COMM 346 Persuasion

Call Number: 18607/44058

Room: FAC 137

Dates & Times: Wednesday 5:30-8:15

Section: 500-1

Spring 2018



Instructor Information:

Name	Office	E-mail	Office Hours
Dr. Jessica Furgerson	GCC 215	Jessica.furgerson@wku.edu	Wed: 3:00-5:00 and by appointment

Required Texts

Wahl, S. T. (2013). *Persuasion in your life*. Pearson: United States.

Course Description and Goals

This class will focus on understanding the construction and deployment of persuasive messages in a variety of contexts. We will explore political, mass media, advertising, marketing, public relations, organizational, and internet-based messages to teach the critical theories and concepts of persuasion to reach an understanding of key theories and concepts of persuasion.

Our learning will be guided by (but not limited to) the following goals:

- Exploring the analytical processes by which persuasive messages are constructed
- Engage persuasive messages aimed at a variety of target audiences
- Understanding how audience diversity affects the construction and reception of persuasive messages
- Be able to use argumentation and evidence to build effective persuasive messages and campaigns
- Finding connections between course materials and our lived experiences;
- Reflecting on how persuasive messages operate in our own lives;

Professionalism

Professionalism includes respecting others' opinions, being courteous to those who are speaking during lectures and discussion, and working together in a spirit of cooperation. This is an extremely interactive and at times controversial class, and it is important that we all respect one another, participate to the best of our abilities, and learn to feel comfortable with one another.

Cellular phones, MP3 players, PDA/Blackberry devices and other electronics are **NOT** to be utilized during class time as they distract both the user and the rest of the class. If you must leave your cell phone on during class (due to special circumstances), please talk to me in advance and turn your phone on silent or vibrate to avoid disrupting class activities.

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance and active participation is required. This class meets so infrequently that your attendance to all meetings is of the utmost importance. ***Missing more than one day will result in your grade being lowered one full letter grade for each additional absence.*** Excused absences are only granted for university sponsored travel (it is your responsibility to provide documentation) or dire personal emergencies (that are approved by me ahead of time and accompanied by proper documentation). Short of *your* being admitted to the hospital, most situations are not considered dire *personal* emergencies. Meetings for other classes, appointments with advisors, work excuses, catching rides home, sleeping through alarm clocks, failure to find parking places, common colds,

computer/printer problems, and many other personal reasons for missing class are not considered “excused” absences. *You cannot make up work missed for unexcused absences—you simply receive a zero. Any student missing three or more class periods for any reason should withdraw and retake the class, as s/he will fail the course regardless of performance on course assignments.*

Late Work and Incomplete Grade Policy

All assignments must be completed on the date assigned. THERE WILL BE AN AUTOMATIC 10% LATE PENALTY PER DAY FOR ANY WORK TURNED IN PAST THE DUE TIME. Be sure to anticipate possible problems that may arise, including computer/printer problems and questions—begin working on your assignments in advance in order to avoid late night emails to the instructor the night before an assignment is due.

In emergencies I will make other arrangements with individual students, but such cases are relatively rare. I am more understanding if you keep me informed. If you encounter problems, please let me know right away. In the case of documented university sponsored travel, assignments should be completed prior to the absence. *If you are going to miss class on an assignment day, it is your responsibility to send the assignment via email or turn in a hard copy of your assignment before the due date.*

Special Needs Accommodation

I am happy to accommodate any special needs you may have throughout the class. Please contact me if there are things I can do to make your learning experience more productive. In compliance with university policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services in Downing University Center, A-200. The phone number is 270 745 5004. Please DO NOT request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services

Academic Misconduct Policy

Students are expected to be honest in all academic work. All work is to be appropriately cited in both oral and written form when it is borrowed, directly or indirectly, from another source. Unauthorized and unacknowledged collaboration and/or the presentation of someone else’s work warrant plagiarism. Documented cases of academic misconduct will result in a failing grade for the course and a referral to the judiciary office. We do not make distinctions about severity; all academic misconduct will be treated the same. Please refer to the Student Handbook for a discussion of the penalties for plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic misconduct.

Western Kentucky University and the Department of Communication are committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found guilty of plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on an exam, or purchasing papers, speeches, or other assignments will immediately receive a failing grade on the assignment and in the course, and will be reported for disciplinary action. Falsified medical excuses and presenting another student’s work as your own fall within the guidelines of this academic integrity policy.

Title XI Policy

WKU Code of Conduct Related to Sexual Misconduct/Assault

Is defined as actual or attempted sexual contact with another person without that person's consent- Sexual Assault includes but is not limited to the following. Intentional and unwelcome touching, coercing, or an attempt to coerce, and forcing; Involvement in any sexual contact when the victim is able to consent; Forcing another individual to touch a person's intimate parts (defined as genital area, groin, inner thigh, buttocks, or breasts); Sexual intercourse without consent, including acts commonly referred to as "rape".

WKU Code of Conduct Related to Harassment

Harassment. Physical abuse, threatening comments, or intimidation of any person on University owned or controlled property or at University sponsored or supervised functions, or conduct which threatens or

endangers the health or safety of any member of the University community or any other person or persons. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to stalking, cyber stalking, harassment, and retaliation as a result of complaints or alleged misconduct.

WKU Counseling and Testing Center: 270-745-3159
Hope Harbor Sexual Trauma Recovery Center: 270-782-5014
WKU University Police: 270-745-2548

Course Assignments and Grades

Persuasion in Practice - Once during the semester, you will be responsible for leading a discussion on a selected example of persuasive communication. You may choose anything from the last year that has a clear persuasive function such as a commercial, political speech, advertisement, campaign, etc. Discussion leadership assignments will be determined on the second day of class. On your leadership day, you will prepare both a written reflection and a set of discussion questions which you will use to lead a 5-7 minute discussion following a brief (2-3 minute) overview of the selected example.

Application Paper – Three times during the semester, you will be responsible for applying course concepts to a selected topic in a 2-page paper. You should apply a minimum of 2 course concepts in each application paper. A hard copy of the assignment must be turned in at the beginning of the class period.

Persuasive Speech – Each student will write and deliver a 6-7 min persuasive speech on a selected issue currently being debated at either the local, state, or federal level. You should directly reference the legislation that your speech supports/refutes in your speech. Although you will select an issue that you feel passionate about, this is NOT solely an opinion speech, but should be well supported by research and non-biased scholarly sources.

Exams – Twice during the semester, you will take two exams covering course content and readings. Exams will be comprised of multiple choice questions, matching, and short answer. Tests will be administered during our scheduled class time. Any make-ups need to be scheduled PRIOR to the examination date and must be accompanied by appropriate documentation.

Final Project – Working in groups of 5-6 people you will complete a semester long advocacy project that asks you to apply the concepts and theories learned in the course to design and execute a persuasive media campaign about a chosen topic. You will complete milestones throughout the course that will culminate in your group's final project/portfolio.

Assignments	Points Possible
Cultural Artifact	50
Application Paper	150 (3@50 pts each)
Persuasive Speech	100
Exams	200 (2@100 pts each)
Final Project	200
Participation	50
	Total: 750

In this class, grades are not assigned. They are earned. Therefore, simply doing an assignment does not necessarily result in an “A.” Failure to follow directions or meet criteria will result in a loss of points. Also, simply doing an assignment does not guarantee a passing grade. Please note the definition of each letter grade:

“A” is reserved for work that is exceptional

“B” is reserved for work that is above average

“C” is reserved for work that is average (meets criteria)

“D” is reserved for work that is below average

“F” is reserved for work that is failing, late, or not submitted for evaluation

Although I am happy to discuss your assignments and your grades with you, my policy is that *any questions or concerns you have about your grade need to wait until 24 hours after you get your assignment back.* This gives you a chance to read through all the comments, re-read the assignment criteria, and formulate more specific questions based on your understanding of how well your assignment met the criteria provided.

The schedule, procedures, and policies in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances. I will notify you in a timely manner of all changes related to the course syllabus and schedule. In addition, I reserve the right to handle situations with students on a case-by-case basis.

Tentative Schedule

Week	Day	Topic	Assignment
1	Jan. 24	Course Introduction and Overview	
2	Jan. 31	Understanding Persuasion & Ethical Dimensions of Persuasion <i>Reading: Chapter 1 & Chapter 2</i>	Cultural Artifact Selection Due
3	Feb. 7	Persuasion Theories <i>Reading: Chapter 3; CA Day 1</i>	Application Paper # 1 Due <i>Group Milestone 1 Due</i>
4	Feb. 14	Argumentation and Evidence <i>Reading: Chapter 4; CA Day 2</i>	<i>Group Milestone 2 Due</i>
5	Feb. 21	Persuasion in Practice – Balloon Debates	Application Paper #2 Due
6	Feb. 28	EXAM # 1	
7	Mar. 7	Persuasive Presentations and Non-verbals <i>Reading: Chapter 12 & 9; CA Day 3</i>	<i>Group Milestone 3 Due</i> Persuasive Speech Topic Due
8	Mar. 14	SPRING BREAK	
9	Mar. 21	Outline Workshop <i>CA Day 4</i>	Speech Outline Due <i>Group Milestone 4 Due</i>
10	Mar. 28	Persuasive Speeches	
11	Apr. 4	Persuasive Campaigns <i>Reading: Chapter 7; CA Day 5</i>	Application Paper #3 Due
12	Apr. 11	Persuasion and New Media <i>Reading: Chapter 6; CA Day 6</i>	<i>Group Milestone 5 Due</i>
13	Apr. 18	EXAM # 2	Administered via Blackboard
14	Apr. 25	Visual Persuasion <i>Reading: Chapter 5</i>	<i>Campaign Imagery Workshop</i>
15	May 2	Final Project Work Day	<i>Group Milestone 6 Due</i> <i>Sign up for time via Blackboard</i>
FINALS	WEEK	Final Project Presentations	Final Project Due