

COM 202: PERSUASIVE COMMUNICATION

Fall 2019

INSTRUCTOR: Spencer Coile
OFFICE: Fell Hall 58
ROOM: Fell Hall 280
TIME: T/TH 8:00 – 9:15

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OFFICE HOURS: T/TH 9:30 – 11:00
**please make an appointment first!!!*

COURSE TEXT(S):

- Borchers, T. (2013). *Persuasion in the Media Age* (3rd ed). McGraw Hill.
- Supplemental readings/texts will be posted on ReggieNet (which you will also need access to)

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND GOALS:

- Understand the types, functions and roles of persuasive communication in today's society – its power to evoke change for the better and for the worse.
- Apply the process of persuasive communication – the strategies of researching, building, and presenting persuasive messages designed to evoke change within a target group – to a variety of communication contexts.
- Situate the role persuasion plays in our current understanding of mediated texts. Essentially, how does the media we consume – in its many capacities – inform, guide, and/or shape our understanding of the world around us.
- Improve skills needed to consume, use, evaluate, and respond to persuasive messages.

EVALUATION:

Presentations: Each student will submit//deliver//write 4 presentations.

****All of these presentations must be completed to pass the class (regardless of your final point total).***

- a. Media Analysis (written)
- b. Policy Presentation (Oral: 5-7 minutes)
- c. Special Occasion Speech (Digital: 5-7 minutes)
- d. Group Campaign Presentation (Oral or Digital: 15-20 minutes)

Each presentation will be evaluated on content and delivery. Specific details and rubrics will be on ReggieNet and discussed in class. ***Typed outlines and reference lists are required for each.***

Exams (100 pts. each): There will be two, non-cumulative, online course exams. They will assess your understanding of communication concepts and theories, as well as your application and integration abilities. While they are designed to be taken individually (not as a group), exams allow open book and open notes and will consist of a variety of multiple choice, short answer, true or false, and essay questions. More details will be provided closer to exam days.

Participation (100 pts.): The best way to maintain a good grade and maximize participation points is to make sure you regularly complete assigned readings. There will be lectures and PowerPoints, but considering the scope and importance for course material, this will also be a discussion heavy class. Therefore, participation is built upon the assumption that you've done

the required reading, and the **exams will include material from the text that we may not have time to address in class.**

Participation Arguments: 10 times this semester (for 10 points each), I will ask you to provide a one paragraph argument defending what your participation grade (a specific numerical value of 0-10) for that week should be. If I agree with your assessment, the grade will stand; if I disagree, I'll offer some feedback about why our scores differ and how you can improve. *Don't be afraid to get creative with your answers! Keep in mind: I read 30 of these a week, so a simple "I came to class, wrote down some notes, and stayed off my phone" won't cut it. In my mind, that is doing the bare minimum. What precisely are you doing to uphold strong participation in the class?*

Additionally, I will ask a question (or multiple questions) that pertain to the previous week's readings/discussion. They will require specific, thought-out answers. To earn full points, you must defend your participation grade as well as answer the questions asked. Participation Arguments can be found on ReggieNet under the **Assignments** tab. The assignment will close before class begins on the day it is due. Arguments are available each week between Thursday after 9:30 am and the following Tuesday at 8:00 am.

Unexcused absences forfeit participation credit on the day of the absence.

Homework / Quizzes: If it is apparent that the class is unprepared (namely, there is no discussion being had), I will assign a quiz and/or homework to make sure the key concepts are reinforced. These points are flexible and will be added to the course total as needed.

Extra Credit: I *may* offer extra credit opportunities throughout the semester. However, it is not guaranteed. You will be notified in advance should an opportunity arise. **Do NOT email me about extra credit opportunities.**

Extra Deductions: Sort of the opposite of extra credit, your final grade can be penalized in two ways: *Poor Communication Habits and Speech Day Absences/Lateness.*

- A purpose of this course is to identify standards for good communication practices and develop the skills necessary to improving them. Poor Communication Habits are considered violations of these standards. Your behaviors as a participant (speaker and listener) in class, online, in small groups and in your interactions with me are all opportunities for you to demonstrate what you've learned. Point penalties will depend on the severity of the situation. This policy is not meant to limit your participation in the course, but to encourage you to think carefully about how you interact with the people around you, and to utilize the best practices we will cover.
- I am relatively flexible about attendance/lateness (more on that later). That said, on presentation days, I have a **mandatory attendance policy** (except for instances of actual emergencies, which usually involve a trip to a hospital or jail). ***If you are absent on a speech day – whether you are scheduled to speak or not – you will be penalized 20 points off your speech grade and will not be allowed to make up any other missed points for that day.*** If you miss a speech day for emergency reasons, please refer to the excused absence policy detailed later in the syllabus. ***Additionally, if you are late on a speech day – whether or not you are scheduled to speak – you will be penalized 10 points off your speech grade.***

Breakdown: Here is the point breakdown for the course (*I reserve the right to add or subtract points from the course total as needed*):

TOTAL: 700 pts
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Participation – 100 pts<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 10 weekly participation arguments▪ Presentations – 400 pts<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Media Analysis (100)▪ Policy Presentation (100)▪ Special Occasion (100)▪ Group Campaign (100)▪ Exams – 200 pts<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Exam #1 (100)▪ Exam #2 (100)

COURSE POLICIES / PROCEDURES:

Attendance: Given the significance of your participation grade, attendance is an expectation for your success in this class. While I do take attendance every day, there is no mandatory attendance policy. Meaning, I do not enforce a “miss three classes and I’ll reduce your grade” rule. However, I repeat, *unexcused absences forfeit your participation for the classes you miss*. Having class at 8am is not ideal, I know, but sleeping in doesn’t qualify as a legitimate excuse for missing class!

Of course, I understand serious things come up and you may not make it to class on a given day. That’s okay! *First and foremost, you have to tell me in advance*. Don’t email five hours after class saying, “Sorry, I was sick.” That won’t cut it and that is not excused. Within reason, give me fair warning and I generally excuse it. For instance, if you’re in an organization and taking a trip? Great! Just tell me and prove that you’re actually going. Same with doctor visits, funerals, etc. Extreme emergencies are absolutely excused – just provide documentation for it. All this to say, life happens, and Persuasive Communication isn’t your only priority. Just be honest with your attendance.

Expectations: Creating a productive, supportive environment is vital to helping you grow and sharpen your communication skills. Specifically, I expect students to:

- Complete all readings and assignments on time
- Learn and use each other’s names
- Bring your text and notes to each class
- Don’t plagiarize. Just don’t do it
- Be respectful in your communication with your classmates and me
- Please use your best judgment in topics, language choices, and humor
- Please turn off cell phone ringers (I don’t care if you use your phone – just don’t distract your classmates)
- Same goes for additional technology! You know how you learn better than I do
- Please be attentive during class – do not do homework for another class, listen to music, etc. The class is small enough, I’ll probably notice
- Please treat course interactions (online, in-class, meetings and correspondence) professionally and respectfully. Use these interactions as opportunities to demonstrate what you’re learning.

- Please stay awake in class – if you’re too tired to be polite, stay home
- Arrive on time (ESPECIALLY on speech days)

Grade Boosts: If you’re thinking about sending me an email asking to bump your grade up at the end of the semester, please refer to THIS section first. ***I do not boost grades.*** Please refrain from sending emails suggesting I do. And with this in mind, refrain from also sending the “Hey, I know you said not to email you, but....” email either. I will not respond to them.

Submitting Assignments and Late Work: Unless you’re directed otherwise, all assignments must be turned in to ReggieNet on time in order to receive credit. **I do not accept handwritten assignments, assignments via email, and you may not shove an assignment under my office door.** Illness or an excused absence is not an acceptable reason to turn in an assignment late.

Digital Submission – Save all submissions using the format **[Last name], [First name] [Assignment Title]**. For example, my Ad Analysis would be submitted as **CoileSpencerAdAnalysis.docx**. I will deduct 3 points for improperly labeled submissions.

Problems: Since all work is expected on the date it is due, you should make sure to anticipate those predictable problems so that you can prevent them. Generally, it’s a bad idea to try and finish an assignment the same day it’s due – you end up rushing around, and this is typically when you forget things or problems arise (crashed computers, lost flash drives, forgotten items, etc.). In real emergencies I will make arrangements, but such cases are relatively rare. Like most instructors, I am more understanding if you keep me informed. If you encounter problems, please let me know right away. I may be able to help. A few things to note about tech problems:

- With the exception of campus-wide server outages, *problems with ReggieNet are not acceptable reasons to submit assignments late.* If you have a technical issue with ReggieNet, drop me an email to let me know, and then immediately contact the HelpDesk either at www.ilstu.edu/helpdesk or 309-438-4357. After the HelpDesk has resolved your issue, they will send you an email to “close your ticket.” Please forward me a copy of this email so I know your problem has been resolved properly.
- There are many excellent computer labs available on campus including 3 in Fell Hall. *Problems with your personal computer should not impact your ability to submit assignments on time.*

Cheating/Plagiarism: Students are expected to be honest in all academic work, consistent with the academic integrity policy as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct. All work is to be appropriately cited when it is quoted or paraphrased from another source. Unauthorized and unacknowledged collaboration on paper topics, misrepresentation of sources, or the presentation of someone else’s work as your own is considered plagiarism. Students found to commit unintentional or intentional acts of plagiarism will be referred for appropriate disciplinary action through Student Dispute Resolution Services. All papers should have parenthetical citations and a reference list. Missing any one of these is an automatic D for the assignment; failure to cite sources at all is an automatic zero.

Furthermore, because your exams are online (meaning, I will not be monitoring how and where you take them)

Safe Space: This classroom is a safe space. Given the nature of this course, controversial ideas may be discussed in class, but only with civility and respect for others. Disparaging remarks

toward another's race, religion, sex, socio-economic status, family status, gender identity, mental capacities, sexual orientation, or any immutable trait will not be tolerated.

Special Needs: Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability should contact Student Access and Accommodation Services at 350 Fell Hall, 438-5853 (voice), 438-8620 (TDD).

Contacting Me: If you have questions/ ideas for class projects, or just want to chat, amazing! However, in addition to teaching, I also coach the speech team. This means that I coach many hours a week and travel 2 or more weekends a month. Contacting me outside of my regular office hours can often be a challenge, especially if you have questions between Thursday night and Monday afternoon. Here are your best options for getting answers to any questions you might have throughout the semester (*in the order you should try them*):

1. **Course Syllabus / Email:** I spend a lot of time ensuring that everything you need to know is typed out and accessible to you somewhere. Most often, the answers you need are in the Syllabus or in course announcements that I send out via ReggieNet. If I make any changes to the schedule or to an assignment, those changes will be discussed in class and reinforced with an announcement. Check all of these resources before you move to the next option.
2. **Email Me:** This will work best for you during the week. I usually ask for a 24-hour response window on weekdays and a 48-hour response window on weekends. *Do NOT message me on ReggieNet. I also do not reply to emails regarding your grade. If you have questions or concerns about that, please schedule a time to meet with me.*
3. **Call Me:** Seriously, if it's a time-sensitive issue don't wait for me to email you back! Call me! I have provided both my cellphone number as well as my office number. PLEASE (and I cannot stress this enough) be responsible and professional if you text/call me on my personal number. Only use this if you need immediate attention. Should you call/text me, please be sure to include your name so I know who it is.
4. **Visit My Office:** If you need to discuss an assignment, a grade, have a personal problem or need to ask me for a favor, I am more likely to be sympathetic if you make time to discuss it in person. I do have office hours, but I also may have coaching appointments happening during those times. So please make an appointment first. To make an appointment, email me. Because my days fill up quickly, please schedule appointments at least 24 hours in advance. Thank you for understanding!

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date		Material Covered		Major Assignment Due
AUG WEEK ONE	T	20	Course Expectations/ Syllabus/ Introductions	
	TH	22	Persuasion in Contemporary Society	Chapter 1
WEEK TWO	T	27	Theories of Persuasion	Part Arg. 1 Chapter 2
	TH	29	Persuasion & Ethics in Media Age	Chapter 3
SEPT WEEK THREE	T	3	Media Influence on Persuasion <i>Assign Policy Presentations</i>	Part Arg. 2 Chapter 4
	TH	5	The Reasoning Process	Chapter 10
WEEK FOUR	T	10	The Persuasiveness of the Source (Credibility)	Part Arg. 3 Chapter 9
	TH	12	Motivational Appeals	POLICY TOPICS DUE (on ReggieNet at 11:55pm) Chapter 11
WEEK FIVE	T	17	Persuasion & Language	Part Arg. 4 Chapter 7
	TH	19	POLICY SPEECH PRESENTATIONS	POLICY SPEECH OUTLINES DUE (on ReggieNet by 8:00am)

WEEK SIX	T	24	POLICY SPEECH PRESENTATIONS	Part Arg. 5
	TH	26	POLICY SPEECH PRESENTATIONS	
OCT WEEK SEVEN	T	1	Midterm Review	
	TH	3	Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11 (ONLINE)	MIDTERM
WEEK EIGHT	T	8	Special Occasions and Humor in Persuasion <i>Assign Special Occasion Speeches</i>	
	TH	10	Audiences and Attitudes	SOS TOPICS DUE (on ReggieNet by 11:55pm) Chapter 5
WEEK NINE	T	15	Interpersonal Persuasion and Compliance Gaining <i>Assign Media Analysis</i>	Part Arg. 6 Chapter 14
	TH	17	Online Assignment (No Meeting)	
WEEK TEN	T	22	Persuasion in Advertisements	Part Arg. 7 Media Analysis Topics Due (on ReggieNet at 11:55pm) Chapter 13
	TH	24	Persuasive Campaigns and Movements	Special Occasion Speeches Due (outline/write-up on ReggieNet & video in Google folder by FRIDAY at 11:55pm) Chapter 12
WEEK ELEVEN	T	29	Visual Persuasion <i>Assign Group Presentation</i>	Part Arg. 8 Chapter 6

	TH	31	Online Assignment (No Meeting)	
NOV WEEK TWELVE	T	5	Persuasion and Culture	Part Arg. 9 Chapter 8
	TH	7	GROUP WORK DAY	GROUP SPEECH TOPIC DUE (on ReggieNet by 11:55pm)
WEEK THIRTEEN	T	12	GROUP WORK DAY	Part Arg. 10
	TH	14	GROUP WORK DAY	Media Analysis Due (on ReggieNet; FRIDAY at 11:55 PM)
WEEK FOURTEEN	T	19	GROUP CAMPAIGN PRESENTATIONS	GROUP SPEECH OUTLINES DUE (on ReggieNet by 8:00am)
	TH	21	GROUP CAMPAIGN PRESENTATIONS	
WEEK FIFTEEN	T	26	FALL BREAK! NO CLASS!	
	TH	28	FALL BREAK! NO CLASS!	
DEC	T	3	TBA: STAY TUNED!	
WEEK SIXTEEN	TH	5	FINAL EXAM REVIEW Chapters 5, 6, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15 (ONLINE)	LAST DAY FINAL EXAM