

# CMN 3100: Persuasion

## Fall 2012

**Dr. Marita Gronnvoll**

**Email:** [mgronnvoll@eiu.edu](mailto:mgronnvoll@eiu.edu) (This is the best way to reach me. To insure delivery, please use only your EIU e-mail to contact me.)

**Class meets:** T/TH 11:00-12:15, Coleman 1255

**Office:** Coleman Hall 1753

**Office Hours:** Tuesday 12:30-2:30, Thursday 2:30-4:30, and by appointment.

**Teaching Assistant:**

**Jonathan Mattson**

**Email:** [jkmattson@eiu.edu](mailto:jkmattson@eiu.edu)

**Office:** Coleman 1691

**Office Hours:** Tuesday/Thursday 9:15-10:45

### Course Description

Our class will study mediated symbolic and visual communication in public culture as a means of uncovering the process of meaning production that influences audiences to identify with particular beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors. This semester we will explore the realm of persuasion as viewed primarily from the perspectives of rhetoric and media studies. The course examines the ways in which various messages operate persuasively. The course will focus on the critical assessment of persuasive messages and mediated communication, with additional attention to the theories and research behind message construction.

### Course Objectives

- 1) To become familiar with the nature of persuasive messages
- 2) To understand the rhetorical and media contexts in which persuasive messages appear
- 3) To acquire the theory-based methodological tools to study persuasive messages
- 4) To develop skills in criticism while analyzing mediated public discourse.

### Readings

*Persuasion: Reception and Responsibility*, 12<sup>th</sup> Edition by Charles U. Larson  
Additional readings uploaded to WebCT

### Policies

The Department of Communication Studies has published a document outlining student standards and expectations. All students are expected to be familiar with this document. It can be accessed by following this link:

<http://www.eiu.edu/~commstudies/documents/Student%20Expectations%20and%20Standards.pdf>

**Preparation:** The success of this class is based in part on your willingness and ability to contribute to class discussions and studying your texts. It is important that you carefully and thoughtfully complete all reading assignments prior to the beginning of the listed class period. You will be administered quizzes to determine your level of preparation.

**Class Civility:** Communication is central in building strong communities. I view each class I teach as a community and therefore encourage positive communication. This means that I expect you to share your ideas with your classmates in a thoughtful and well-argued manner. In addition, I expect each of you to listen respectfully but thoughtfully to the ideas of one another. Appropriate student conduct is very important to this class. Disruptive and/or disrespectful behavior is not acceptable to me, your classmates, or the university. Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to, not respecting the learning environment by talking out of turn, distracting class members, holding private discussions with classmates during the class session (this particular behavior is quite common in large lecture halls and will not be tolerated), arriving to and leaving class at inappropriate times, ridiculing class members, using inappropriate language (name calling, racist, sexist, homophobic language), and other behaviors that detract from a productive learning environment. Students who violate the conduct code will be given one verbal warning, either from me or from one of the TA's. After that, you will receive a written reprimand. Once you have received that reprimand, you may not attend class again until you have met with me and worked out a plan to adjust the disruptive behavior.

**Electronic Devices and Classroom Conduct:** Electronic devices such as cell phones, laptop computers, and iPods have made our lives much easier and more enjoyable. But they have also become a scourge in the classroom. Texting, surfing the Internet (such as Facebooking or downloading music), and “discretely” listening to iPods shows great disrespect for me and for your fellow students who are distracted by this conduct. In keeping with this climate of respect, **please turn off all phones and iPods (or similar clones) before class begins. If you take notes on a laptop, I expect you to show respect for me and your classmates by not surfing the internet during class.** If you absolutely must make a call or send a text, leave the room. Please do not think you can discretely text in class and that I won't notice. The layout of the lecture hall makes it very hard to hide anything, and I see so much more than you think I do. The TA will also be alert to disruptive behavior and I expect you to follow her instructions and show her appropriate respect.

Because the abuse of electronic devices has become so problematic in classrooms, I will be taking a very hard line with their usage in my classroom. You will receive one verbal warning. After that, you will receive a written reprimand. Once you have received that reprimand, you may not attend class again until you have met with me and worked out a plan to adjust the disruptive behavior.

**Attendance:** Attendance is critical to your success in this class. Both lectures and class discussions are designed to make it easier for you to understand the material. I expect you to value your own education more than I do, therefore, I will not be taking attendance. Be aware that in-class work may not be made up except by prior arrangement for a university excused absence. Regardless of the reason for your absence, my lectures are not subject to reruns. In other words, **please do not e-mail me or use my office hours to catch you up on what you missed.** It is up to you to get notes from a classmate.

**Academic Honesty:** Learning and teaching take place best in an atmosphere of intellectual freedom and openness. All members of the academic community are responsible for supporting freedom and openness through rigorous personal standards of honesty and fairness. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty undermine the very purpose of the university and diminish the value of an education.

Standard I. Eastern students observe the highest principles of academic integrity and support a campus environment conducive to scholarship.

Violations of this standard:

A. Conduct in subversion of academic standards, such as cheating on examinations, *plagiarism*, collusion, misrepresentation or falsification of data.

B. Theft or the unauthorized possession of examinations; alteration, theft, or destruction of the academic work of others, or academic records, library materials, laboratory materials, or other University equipment or property related to instructional matters or research.

C. Submitting work previously presented in another course unless specifically permitted by the instructor.

D. Conduct which disrupts the academic environment; disruption in classes, faculty offices, academic buildings, or computer facilities.

E. Complicity with others in violations of this standard.

It just isn't worth it not to do your own work. If you are caught cheating or plagiarizing, you will fail the class. Why take the chance?

**Grade disputes:** Because quizzes are administered by TurningPoint and exams are scantron, there are few grounds for grade disputes. Nonetheless, there are times when students receive a grade that they genuinely believe to be in error and/or unfair. Should this occur, there is a strict procedure that must be followed. First, we will abide by the “**24-hour rule.**” This means that after you've received the grade, you must reflect upon it for 24 hours before you attempt to e-mail me or talk to me about your grade. Second, after 24 hours have passed, you must e-mail me to request an appointment to come in and talk to me about your grade. **DO NOT** make your argument in your e-mail! Finally, you must put your argument(s) in writing and either send me a separate e-mail prior to our appointment, or bring a hard copy with you to our appointment. If you follow these guidelines, I promise to give you a fair hearing. I do not promise that I'll agree with you and change your grade, but I will hear you out. If you do not follow these guidelines, I will not hear your dispute.

### **After one week all grades are final!**

**A Note about Grades:** I realize that grades are a high priority for most students. Please be aware of where you stand throughout the semester. Do not wait until the last few days of the semester and then suddenly have a panic attack because your grade is not where you thought it would be. Once the semester is over, it's over, and no more points will be allotted. I will not accept appeals for more points, or to be “bumped up” to the next letter grade. I do not curve grades.

**Students with Special Needs:** Students with special needs (as documented by the Office of Disability Services) should identify themselves at the beginning of the semester in order to arrange any necessary assistance.

**Public Service Announcement:** In this class, we will be heavily engaged in studying visual media and its effects. On occasion we will be viewing images that some may find exceptionally disturbing. I will do my part to alert students to the content of the images before they are displayed, so please do your part to protect yourself. If you are someone who is sensitive to violent or graphic imagery, for whatever reason, please take appropriate action prior to viewing the images to preserve your own well-being.

## Course Requirements

**Exams:** There will be three exams during the course of the semester. Each exam will include multiple choice and short answer questions. The first two exams are worth 100 points each; the final is worth 200. Total exam points for the semester: **400 points**

**Impromptu Assessments (“pop quizzes”):** You will be quizzed weekly on the class reading during the course of the semester. These quizzes will be completely random, meaning they may be held on either class day, and at any time during the class period. It is important to keep up on the assigned reading. You will not be able to pass the course without the completion of your weekly reading assignments, including reading the message board. You are expected to reinforce comprehension of the class material with **studying** your texts. Impromptu assessments are a way to measure your daily class preparation. **You cannot make up the impromptu assessments; you must be present in class to obtain these points.** The *only* exception to that rule is for university excused and documented absences (e.g., athletic events, ROTC, speech team, etc.). There will be sixteen impromptu quizzes, and the lowest grade will be dropped at the end of the semester. Because one quiz will be dropped, this should cover any random illnesses or other interferences that may keep you from attending one class. Total assessment points for the semester: **300 points/20 points per quiz**

**Please note: After the first two weeks of class, these assessments will be administered through the use of TurningPoint technology. This requires everyone in class to obtain a “clicker” from the bookstore and have it registered no later than the 2nd week of class. You are required to bring your clicker to class with you every day. Forgetting your clicker will result in a zero on any quiz that may be administered that day. There will be no paper backups, no exceptions.**

**Participation Portfolio:** In order to assess and evaluate your engagement with this course, you are required to keep a participation portfolio which will contain various in-class assignments. Your portfolio will be turned in 4 times throughout the semester, randomly, without prior warning. Please bring your portfolio with you to class every day as not having it with you on the day(s) it is requested will not count as an acceptable excuse. Total: **100 points**

**Extra Credit:** There will be no extra credit offered for this course.

### Grading Scale and Criteria:

800-720 = A  
719-640 = B  
639-560 = C  
559-480 = D  
479-below = F

Grades are administered based on performance, meeting assignment criteria, punctuality and original thought.

A= Exemplary work that far exceeds the expectations of the assignment.

B= Commendable work that exceeds the expectations of the assignment.

C= Satisfactory work that meets the expectations of the assignment.

D= Below satisfactory work that does not meet the expectations of the assignment

F= Failure to complete the assignment.

## Daily Schedule

(Please note: Learning does not always occur according to schedule. Therefore, I reserve the right to alter the schedule and/or assignments as we progress through the semester.)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Class Topic</u>	<u>Reading Assignment</u>
8/21	Introduction	

### **Unit One: Theoretical Perspectives**

8/23	Persuasion: An Overview	Larson Ch. 1
8/28	Persuasion and Ethics	Larson Ch. 2
8/30	Traditional, Artistic, and Humanistic Theories	Larson Ch. 3
9/4	Social Scientific Theories	Larson Ch. 4
9/6	Symbolic Theories	Larson Ch. 5
9/11	Audiences and Attitudes	Larson Ch. 7
9/13	Persuasion and Culture	Larson Ch. 9

### **Unit Two: Persuasion and Media**

9/18	<b>EXAM #1</b>	
9/20	Modern Media and Persuasion	Larson Ch. 13
9/25	Militainment	Stahl (WebCT)
9/27	Film Day: <i>Militainment</i>	
10/2	News Media	Bennett (WebCT)
10/4	Visual Rhetoric, Photojournalism...	Lucaites & Hariman (WebCT)
10/9	Violent Images	Harold & Deluca (WebCT)
10/11	Persuasion and Culture	Larson Ch. 8

### **Unit Three: Advertising**

10/16	Advertising	Larson Ch. 14, pp. 369-390
10/18	Advertising (cont.)	Larson Ch. 14, pp. 390-417
10/23	Advertising Is Our Environment	Kilbourne Ch. 2 (WebCT)
10/25	Advertising and Violence	Kilbourne Ch. 12 (WebCT)
10/30	We are the Product	Kilbourne Ch. 1 (WebCT)
11/1	The Corruption of Relationships	Kilbourne Ch. 3 (WebCT)
11/6	<b>EXAM #2</b>	

### **Unit Four: Persuasion on the Ground**

11/8	Persuasion and PR	Miller (WebCT)
11/10	Persuasive Campaigns and Movements	Larson Ch. 11
<b>11/15</b>	<b>Review and evaluate</b>	
<b>11/19-11/23</b>	<b>No class – Thanksgiving break</b>	
11/27	Alternative Resistance	DeLuca (WebCT)
11/29	Nonverbal Persuasion	Larson Ch. 10
12/4	Interpersonal Persuasion	Borchers Ch. 14 (WebCT)
12/6	Bodily Expressions	Chao (WebCT)

***Final Exam: Monday, December 10, 2012, 10:15-12:15***