

CMN 3100, Persuasion
Spring 2014
Coleman 1255, Tuesday and Thursday 12:30-1:45 (CRN #31036)

Instructor: Dr. T. M. Linda Scholz

Office: Coleman 2030

Email: tscholz@eiu.edu (**Note:** I frequently check my Panther e-mail account, therefore, this is the best way to reach me. I DO NOT frequently check the D2L e-mail. To ensure timely delivery, please use your EIU e-mail to contact me.)

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 9:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.; Wednesday, 10-11:30 am; and by appointment.

Teaching assistants: The TA's are here to assist you in your learning process. Please make an appointment to meet with them if you'd like help understanding class concepts or pointers on how to study for quizzes and exams. While the TAs are also here to help monitor class behavior and ensure a positive class environment, please DO NOT meet with them to argue about grades. If you have questions about your grades, come and speak directly with me. Also, the TAs will not reveal what questions will be on quizzes or the exams, and they will not provide you with PowerPoint slides from lecture ☺.

Ashley Gocken

ageocken@eiu.edu

Available to meet on Wednesdays from 12:00 – 1:00 in Coleman Hall 1282.

Mandy Marino

amarino@eiu.edu

Available to meet on Tuesdays from 11:30 – 12: 20 in the Communication Studies Lounge.

Antonio Taylor

ajtaylor2@eiu.edu

Available to meet on Wednesdays at 12:00 – 1:00 in the Communication Studies Lounge.

Course Description and Objectives

Course Description: This class will study symbolic communication intended to influence beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors. The course will focus on the critical assessment of persuasive messages, with additional attention to the theories and research behind persuasive message construction.

Course Objectives:

- a. Familiarize students with theories and research pertaining to persuasive communication.
- b. Students will learn how to critically evaluate persuasive messages.
- c. Understand the realm of persuasion via exposure to diverse theories.
- d. Develop an appreciation for the ethical dimensions of persuasion.
- e. Identify the basic components of persuasion.
- f. Construct a sound and effective criticism of persuasion.
- g. Understand the rhetorical contexts in which persuasive messages appear.

Readings

Persuasion in the Media Age, 3rd edition, Timothy Borchers
Additional readings uploaded to D2L

Accommodations

It is imperative that you are getting the most out of your educational experience. If you have a special need that qualifies for accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (217-581-6583) to arrange support services. Please also inform the instructor by providing the necessary documentation specifying the accommodations needed for the class **within the first week of class**.

Student Conduct Standards: Classroom Environment and Policies

All faculty in the Department of Communication Studies uphold the standards of good scholarship and expect our students to do the same. We expect that students earning a degree in Communication Studies will develop superior reasoning/critical thinking, argumentation, writing, and presentational skills while also building a comprehensive knowledge of their content area. Students in Communication Studies classes will be expected to read all assigned materials, write extensively (when appropriate to the course), complete their own work, and engage in respectful interactions in the classroom. We, as a faculty, agree to hold our students to these standards.

The majority of students are in college specifically to acquire a degree in the hope of finding an adequate job to attain a particular standard of living in the future. Therefore, you should consider college your “on the job training.” You should make this a priority in your life (particularly when you consider the amount of money that is being invested in your education).

It is also imperative that you understand that when you are an EIU student you are bound to the Student Conduct Standards.

Academic Honesty: Although the Student Conduct Standards comprise a lengthy document, and although each aspect of it is highly important, aspects of Standard I will be highlighted here so that there are no misunderstandings of what is considered appropriate behavior conducive to creating an appropriate learning environment. **If you are caught cheating, you will fail this course.** If you are confused about what constitutes cheating and or plagiarism, please ask. Also consider the aspects of Standards II, III, IV and V when interacting with the instructor, teaching assistants, and peers in and outside of the classroom, when responding to class materials, etc.

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.

The following items are also considered key aspects of these standards:

Language and Communication in the Classroom. My intent, in this large lecture format, is to establish an environment where you are able to ask questions openly, and respectfully. In an effort to co-construct this environment be courteous and respectful to one another AND to the instructor AND teaching assistants. Given the class size, we will not have a lot of time allotted to open class

discussion; however, on the occasions where you are given such an opportunity, please avoid dominating the discussion and be concise with your comments. Language is very powerful. Since the language we speak and write leads us toward particular perceptions, inclusive language will help us to perceive one another on more equal terms, participating equally in the world. In efforts to be effective communicators, please use inclusive and respectful language. Be aware of how you phrase comments and questions. Avoid the use of “bashing” or derogatory language toward one another and toward others outside of this class. Additionally, be open to other perspectives. Each of you has a perspective to offer as it pertains to your individual experiences.

Lastly, **please refrain from having side conversations during class with your peers, passing notes to one another, etc.—this is incredibly disruptive.** Part of being effective communicators entails good listening skills as well. Each day will provide you with an opportunity to put effective communication skills into practice.

CELL PHONES: Given that the university has created an emergency text message system for campus community safety, it is understandable why students have concerns about keeping cell phones handy. Unfortunately, as you all know perhaps better than I, few students who opt to have their cell phones out during class are monitoring text messages for possible campus-related emergency texts. Therefore, I ask that cell phones be turned off and put away. Text messaging or any other form of cell phone use (or inappropriate use of any other electronic device) during class is very disruptive, disrespectful and will NOT be tolerated, and may result in the dismissal of the student for that class period. You are in this class to learn the subject matter, and not to have personal conversations with friends and family via your cell phone, or laptop. Surely, your friends and family can wait to speak with you before or after class. Be respectful of your instructor and peers, and put your cell phones away.

ATTENDANCE: Attendance is critical to your success in this class. Lectures, films, and class discussions are designed to make the material comprehensible to you. You can certainly choose to not come to class, as I will not take attendance; however, be aware that in-class work may not be made up except by prior arrangement for a university excused absence and/or if you provide proper documentation proving a legitimate emergency (note from university administrators, **official** doctor’s note, court papers, and the like). Regardless of the reason for your absence, I will not provide you a personal lecture in my office or via e-mail. The teaching assistants will also not provide you with a personal lecture. It is up to you to get notes from a classmate. And the answer to the perpetual question of “Did I miss anything?” is always: YES!

LATE WORK: Most of the required work in this class consists of in-class quizzes, in-class application activities, and exams. The Out-of-Class Participation responses are due **NO LATER THAN APRIL 24TH** (after this date, no Out-of-Class Participation responses will be accepted). Quizzes and exams **CANNOT** be made up unless you have made prior arrangement for a university excused absence and/or if you provide proper documentation proving a legitimate emergency (note from university administrators, official doctor’s note, court papers, and the like).

NOTE ABOUT TARDINESS AND EARLY EXIT: Class begins at the designated time, and ends at the designated time. Consistent tardiness and/or consistent early exit are distracting to students and the instructor, and are also disrespectful. If you have a class or work schedule conflict that interferes with your ability to come to class on time and remain in the class until its official end, please consider taking this class during a different semester or make appropriate adjustments that will not interfere with your timely, regular, and complete participation. Lastly, if you come to class late on day during which a quiz was given at the beginning of class, you will **NOT** be able to make up that quiz.

Students who violate the conduct code during class will be given one verbal warning, either from me or from one of the TAs. 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.

Questions about Grades

If you have questions about your grade on quizzes or exams, I ask that you follow this procedure:

- a. First, we will abide by the **“24-hour rule.”** This means that after you’ve received the grade, reflect upon it for 24 hours before you come talk to me. To assist in your reflection, you should look through your notes and readings.
- b. Second, after 24 hours have passed, e-mail me to request an appointment to come in and talk with me in person. In most circumstances, you will need to look at a hard copy of a quiz and/or exam during our meeting.
- c. Finally, our meeting should determine if indeed there was an error made in grading, and/or provide you with clarification on concepts, and/or create strategies for more effective future study habits, etc.

Despite the amount of times that you come in and talk with me, this will not guarantee you a specific grade in the course. In other words, the points you earn on quizzes, activities, and exams are totaled and those points will coincide with the overall grade you earn in the class. Please be aware of where you stand throughout the semester. If you need assistance calculating your grade, I am happy to assist you. Do not wait until the last few days of the semester to figure out where your grade stands. Once the semester is over, it’s over, and no more points will be allotted. In short, I do not curve nor do I offer extra credit. Your grades will be posted on D2L.

After one week all grades are final!

Expectations of the Readings

This is a reading intensive course therefore, consider the time that you are willing to allot to careful and thorough reading and studying. You need to do the readings as they are assigned in order to come to class prepared to understand the lecture material, and to perform successfully on quizzes, in-class activities, and exams. It is okay if you face challenges comprehending some of the material, class lectures are designed to help you work through complications. Do not assume that by merely reading the titles of the required reading that you know what the chapter or essay is about. A quick skim before class will not be sufficient either.

COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT NOTE: You may not video record lectures or take pictures of the PowerPoint slides or other aspects of lecture, as this is illegal without appropriate permissions.

Course Content Note: Due to the nature of the issues and content (e.g., film clips, images, readings, etc.) discussed and used in this course, there may be language and/or topics considered offensive to some individuals because of personal, religious and/or political beliefs. Although I will work to accommodate concerns you may have, I do need to warn you ahead of time that you may hear and see things that you consider educationally and personally challenging. If you cannot watch a particular type of film clip due to religious or similar reasons, PLEASE see me ASAP so we can work something out. Materials are chosen NOT for their shock value but for centrality to issues relevant to the course’s goals of enhancing and educating about persuasion and rhetoric. The cultural texts are out there in society for consumption; our role as communication scholars is to interrogate and assess these texts for cultural conversation and perspective.

Course Assignments

Quizzes (20 points each; Total 200 points): You will be quizzed almost weekly on the class reading during the course of the semester. These quizzes will be somewhat “pop,” meaning they may be held on either class day, and at any time during the class period (at the beginning, middle, or end). 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. The quizzes will consist of five multiple choice, matching, and true/false questions. Quizzes are a way to measure your daily class preparation. **You cannot make up the quizzes; 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, legitimate illness and proof of such, court dates, etc.). There will be eleven quizzes administered, of which ten are counted toward your grade.

In-Class Application Activities (20 points each; Total points 100): During the semester you will be assigned 5 in-class application activities that will require you to identify and explain concepts from class that you see illustrated in a film and/or YouTube clips. **Some** of these activities will be open-book/open-notes. These activities are designed to alleviate some of the anxiety of quizzes while also requiring you to apply and identify the concepts you have learned in class and have read in the textbook and additional readings.

Out-of-Class Participation (50 points): You will be required to attend at least **two** events during the semester, for which you will turn a **no more than one-page, double spaced**, response. In your response you will need to address how **at least one concept** from class was illustrated during the event. Please share with the class any events that you are aware of as well. Additionally, please seek approval in advance for events that you are planning on attending that I have not announced—this is to ensure that the events coincide with the subject matter of the course.

Exams (Total 400 points): There will be three exams during the course of the semester. Each exam will consist of multiple-choice and matching questions. The **first two** exams are worth **100** points each; the **final** is worth **200 (and it will be somewhat comprehensive)**. Study guides will be posted on D2L.

Extra Credit: You will be given an opportunity to earn 10 points additional credit toward your grade for filling out the Communication Studies Department Survey that will be released sometime in April.

Total points possible: 750

Grading Scale

750-675 =	A
674-600 =	B
599-525 =	C
524-450 =	D
449-below =	F

Tentative Schedule
CMN 3100, Persuasion
Spring 2014
Coleman 1255, Tuesday and Thursday 12:30 – 1:45 (CRN #31036)
(The instructor reserves the right to modify the schedule if needed)

Readings are to be completed for the day on which they are noted.

Week 1

January 14— **Introduction to the course. Expectations.**

January 16— **Unit One: Defining Persuasion and Key Concepts**
Textbook reading: Ch. 1 (“Persuasion in Contemporary Society”)

Week 2

January 21— **Unit One, cont’d.**
Textbook reading: Ch. 1, continued (“Persuasion in Contemporary Society”)

January 23— **Unit One, cont’d.**
Textbook reading: Ch. 8 (“Persuasion and Culture”)

Week 3

January 28— **Unit One, cont’d.**
D2L reading: “Myths of Objectivism and Subjectivism” by Lakoff and Johnson.

January 30— **Unit One, cont’d**
Textbook reading: Ch. 7 (“Persuasion and Language”)

Week 4

February 4— **Unit One, cont’d**
Film: *Race the Power of an Illusion*

February 6— **Unit One, cont’d.**
Textbook reading: Ch. 5 (“Audiences and Attitudes”)

Week 5

February 11— **Unit One, cont’d.**
Textbook Reading: Ch. 3 (“Persuasion and Ethics in the Media Age”)

February 13— **Unit One, wrap-up.**

Week 6

February 18— **EXAM #1**

February 20— **Unit Two: Theories of Persuasion (Rhetorical Theory and Semiotics)**
Textbook reading: Chapter 2 (pp. 34-47 –Stop at “Audience Oriented Theories”)

Week 7

February 25— **Unit Two, cont'd.**
Textbook reading: Ch. 9 (“The Persuasiveness of the Source”)

February 27— **Unit Two, cont'd.**
Textbook reading: Ch. 10 (“The Reasoning Process”)

Week 8

March 4— **Unit Two, cont'd.**
Textbook reading: Ch. 11 (“Motivational Appeals”)

March 6— **Unit Two, cont'd. (Audience-Oriented Theories/Social Construction)**
Textbook reading: Ch. 2 (pp. 47-57—Stop at “Media Theories”)

March 10-14 SPRING BREAK. NO CLASS.

Week 9

March 18— **Unit Two, cont'd. (Media Theories)**
Textbook reading: Ch. 2 (pp. 57 - to end)

March 20— **Unit Two, cont'd.**
Textbook reading: Ch. 4 (“Media Influences on Persuasion”)

Week 10

March 25— **Unit Two, cont'd.**
Film, tba

March 27— **Unit Two, wrap-up.**

Week 11

April 1— **EXAM 2**

April 3— **Unit Three: Contexts and Resistance/Putting “It” All Together**
Textbook reading: Ch. 12 (pp. 321-341—Stop at “Persuasive Movements”)

Week 12

April 8— **Unit Three, cont'd. (Campaigns)**
D2L reading: Heath, “The Rhetorical Tradition”

April 10— **Unit Three, cont'd.**
Continued discussion of previous week’s readings

Week 13

April 15— **Unit Three, cont'd. (Movements)**
Textbook reading: Ch. 12 (pp. 341– end)

April 17— **Unit Three, cont'd. (Movements)**
D2L reading: Deluca, “Unruly Arguments”

Week 14
April 22—

Unit Three, cont'd. (Resistance)
D2L reading: Harold and Deluca, “Behold the Corpse”

April 24—

Unit Three, cont'd.
Continued discussion of previous week’s readings.

Week 15
April 29—

Unit Three, cont'd.
D2L reading: Chao, “Tattoo and Piercing”

May 1—

Unit Three, wrap-up.
Course wrap-up. Last day of class.

Final Exam: Wednesday May 7th, 8:00 am – 10:00 a.m.