

COMM 346: Persuasion
Fall 2014
Dr. Angela M. Jerome
Western Kentucky University

TEXTBOOK:

Wahl, S. T. (2013). *Persuasion in your life*. Boston, MA: Pearson.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

COMM 346 uses political, mass media, advertising, marketing, public relations, organizational, and internet-based messages to teach the critical theories and concepts of persuasion. This course is structured so that students will:

1. Understand the history and development of persuasion
2. Engage persuasive messages aimed at a variety of target audiences
3. Learn how audience diversity affects the resonance of persuasive messages with different audiences
4. Be able to use argumentation and evidence to build effective persuasive messages and campaigns
5. Apply persuasion principles to “real world” situations, interactions, and messages
6. Garner the ability to craft effective, ETHICAL persuasive messages
7. Become knowledgeable, responsible persuaders/persuadees in the global marketplace of ideas
8. Apply their knowledge and training to critically evaluate persuasive messages from a number of perspectives and provide recommendations for the increased success of persuasive messages/campaigns

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. **Application papers (3 @ 30 points).** During the course of the semester, the instructor will pose reflection topics/questions/activities. Topics/Questions/Activities will be relevant to the concepts/theories that have been discussed in prior class periods. For each application paper, students must provide a thoughtful, typed, double-spaced, 1 ½-2 page response on the topic/question/activity posed (all that needs to be on the paper is your name; don't take up ¼ of the first page with identifying information). On many occasions, more than one topic/question/activity will be offered, allowing each student to pick the topic/question/activity that most significantly resonates with his/her own experiences/thoughts.
2. **Exams (3 @ 75 points).** The make-up of each course exam will be discussed in class. Each will include some combination of True/False, Multiple Choice, and Short Answer questions.
3. **Participation/Activities/Homework (80 points).** The professor intends for this class to be interactive. For it to be so, all course readings need to be completed by every student. Your input is expected for both course discussions and activities. While your grade in this area may be assessed through participation in class activities, discussion, and short homework assignments, the professor reserves the right to administer pop-quizzes on course readings if she suspects students are not reading.

4. **Comprehensive Course Project (225 points).** This project will assess your ability to design an effective, ethical persuasive campaign. For this project you will be acting as a persuasion consultant for an organization of your choice and designing a persuasive campaign for your client that includes a campaign rationale and goals statement, a slogan and logo, copy points, a media plan, a sample message, and evaluative structures (A detailed project guide will be provided on Blackboard).

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

| Week | Topics | Reading | Assignments Due |
|-------------|---|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | Introduction to the Course and Persuasion in Your Life | Chapter 1 | |
| 2 | Persuasive Ethics and Persuasion Theories | Chapter 2&3 | Persuasion in Your Life Homework |
| 3 | Persuasive Theories | | |
| 4 | Message Analysis Examples and Exam #1 | | Application #1 |
| 5 | Persuasive Campaigns | Chapters 7&10 | |
| 6 | Persuasive Campaigns | | Comprehensive Project Organization Selection |
| 7 | Audience Needs, Emotions, Lifestyles, and Cultural Beliefs | | |
| 8 | Argumentation and Evidence | Chapter 4 & pp. 285-306 | Application #2 |
| 9 | Argumentation and Evidence and Exam #2 | | Comprehensive Project Part 1 |
| 10 | Writing and Speaking in Persuasive Contexts | pp. 273-281; Chapter 13 | |
| 11 | Writing and Speaking in Persuasive Contexts and Visual Persuasion | Chapter 5 | |
| 12 | Persuasion in New Media and Nonverbals | Chapters 6&9 | Application #3 |
| 13 | Persuasion in Personal Relationships and Exam #3 | Chapter 8 | |
| 14 | In-class work on Comprehensive Projects | | |
| 15 | Project Presentations | | Final Comprehensive Projects Due |