

COM 210: Theories of Persuasion
Spring 2015
Dr. Jennifer Waldeck
Chapman University

TEXTBOOK:

Frymier, A. B., & Nadler, M. K. (2010). *Persuasion: Integrating theory, research, and practice* (3rd ed.). Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

A survey of advocacy from Aristotelian principles to contemporary practices. Emphasis is on the interdisciplinary generation of persuasion theories from post World War II to the present that empower us to recognize, analyze and evaluate persuasive messages and social influence communication. (Offered every semester.) 3 credits.

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Describe basic communication models and recognize and describe theories of persuasion, compliance, and social/interpersonal influence.
2. Recognize various types of persuasive appeals and tactics in a variety of print and visual media examples viewed in class, including audio, visual, and textual representations of Presidential rhetoric; print, TV, and radio advertisements; popular films; communication campaigns; speeches; government propaganda and other forms of popular media. Identify specific forms of reasoning used in different persuasive appeals.
3. Examine the role of ethics in persuasive appeals and evaluate political, social or cultural advocacy speeches, documents or events for ethical standards.
4. Understand the role of demographics, sociographics, and psychographics in the effective design and implementation of persuasive communication.
5. Demonstrate the skills of a competent receiver by analyzing significant persuasive events or campaigns and applying one or more theories of persuasion; recognize various persuasive appeals, forms of reasoning, and cultural accommodations.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Exams. There will be three exams, each consisting of multiple choice and true/false items covering information from the textbook and lectures. **Weekly study guides and testing forms will be provided.** (25 points each)

Persuasion Example Team Presentation. This ten-minute presentation will involve identifying a mediated example a persuasive message or campaign and using a theory, concept, or model discussed in class to help explain the intended/potential effects of the message. Your example might include a video of a speech, advertisement, political

campaign ad, TV program, a brief scene from a film, an internet message, public service announcement, or health-related message/campaign. The message itself should be no longer than four minutes; the remainder of the time should be spent discussing the persuasive message and applying class concepts. Each member of the team must participate in the presentation. Further criteria will be given in class for this assignment, which will be completed during the last weeks of class. (50 points)

Homework as assigned. Occasionally, you will be assigned a discussion question to prepare at home in advance of class, or a written reflection in response to some idea covered in a previous class. All details will be provided in class, including due dates, criteria, and point values. (25 points)

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

WEEK	TOPIC	READING
1	Introduction to the Course	
2	Persuasion & Attitudes	Ch. 2
3	Theories of Attitude Formation	Ch. 2 cont'd.
4	The Attitude/Behavior Relationship	Ch. 3
5	Ethics in Persuasion	Ch. 14
6	Source Characteristics	Ch. 10
7	Messages: Factors, Tactics, and Strategies	Ch. 11-12
8	Exam 1: Chapters 1-3, 14 Form teams and get final project assignment/time to work	
9	Receiver and Channel Factors	Ch. 13
10	Exam 2: Chapters 10-13 What is Theory?	
11	Social Judgment and Consistency Theories	Ch. 5-6
12	Self-Perception Theories	Ch. 7
13	Theories of Reasoned Action & Planned Behavior	Ch. 8
14	Elaboration Likelihood Model	Ch. 9
15	Team Presentations	
16	Team Presentations	

Final exam:

Chapters 10-13