

COURSE SYLLABUS

COM 382.01

Persuasion

Three Credit Hours

Fall, 2009

10:00 MWF, 201 Dan Rather Communications Building

Instructor: Dr. J. D. Ragsdale
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Office Hours: 1:30-2:30 MWF & 1:00-2:00 T*Th. Other hours by appointment.

The study of methods and theories of persuasion, social influence, and compliance gaining in the fields of communication. This is a lecture-discussion course, but some class meetings and assignments will be conducted online through Blackboard.

Textbook: Gass & Seiter, *Persuasion, Social Influence, and Compliance Gaining*, 3rd Ed.

Course Calendar

Week of	Topic	Readings in Text
08/24-08/28	Why Study Persuasion?	Chapter 1
08/31-09/04	What Constitutes Persuasion?	Chapter 2
09/07-09/11	LABOR DAY ; Attitudes and Consistency	Chapter 3
09/14-09/18	Credibility	Chapter 4
09/21-09/25	Communicator Characteristics and Persuasibility	Chapter 5
09/28-10/02	Conformity and Influence in Groups	Chapter 6
10/05-10/09	Language and Persuasion	Chapter 7
10/12-10/16	Nonverbal Influence	Chapter 8
10/19-10/23	Structuring and Ordering Persuasive Messages	Chapter 9
10/26-10/30	Sequential Persuasion	Chapter 10
11/02-11/06	Compliance Gaining	Chapter 11
11/09-11/13	Deception	Chapter 12
11/16-11/20	Motivational Appeals	Chapter 13
11/23-11/27	Visual Persuasion; THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY	Chapter 14
11/30-12/04	Visual Persuasion (cont.); Esoteric Forms of Persuasion	Chapter 15
12/07-12/11	Esoteric Forms (cont.)	

Course Objectives:

- To increase the student's awareness of the omnipresence of persuasion in society
- To develop persuasive, social influence, and compliance gaining skills
- To develop resistance to undesirable persuasion and propaganda
- To develop teamwork skills for the presentation of instructional materials.
- To provide an awareness of research literature in persuasion
- To develop scientific writing skills

Student Responsibilities:

1. Class attendance is expected, and absences are likely to affect your grade adversely. Following university policy, there is no penalty for three or fewer *hours* of absence (three class meetings), but each absence in excess of three will result in ten points being subtracted from your final total.
2. You must refrain from behavior in the classroom that intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the learning process and thus impedes the mission of the university. Please turn off or mute your cell phone and/or pager while in class, and keep all electronic devices out of sight (this includes laptop computers, but you may have permission to use your laptop by conferring with your instructor). You may not eat, use tobacco products, make offensive remarks, read newspapers or other material not relevant to the class, sleep, talk with others at inappropriate times, wear inappropriate clothing, or engage in any other form of distracting behavior. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result, minimally, in a directive to leave class or you being reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with university policy.
3. Toward the end of the semester, you will be asked to complete a teacher evaluation form.

Research Paper:

1. In addition to reading the textbook as assigned, you will be required to prepare a **research paper** worth 100 points. This may be a traditional term paper, or you may choose to do a literature review.
2. The topic of the paper is your choice, provided that it involves examining some aspect of persuasion, social influence, or compliance-gaining.
3. The paper should be about 10 pages in length (double-spaced) and should include a list of references. It should be word-processed according to the guidelines of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 5th Ed.
4. **NB:** Failure to cite the sources in your list of references within the text of the paper is plagiarism.
5. A one-page proposal for this paper, including an initial bibliography, is due on **Monday, October 12, 2009**. The paper itself is due on **Friday, November 20, 2009**.
6. You must submit your paper electronically through the turnitin function on Blackboard.

Grading System:

1. There will be a **quiz** on each chapter. Each will be worth 10-20 points. Questions will be multiple-choice and true/false types.
2. The **paper** is worth 100 points.
3. The grading scale is as follows: 90-100% A; 80-89% B; 70-79% C; 60-69% D; 59% or below F.
4. There will be no makeup quizzes. If your absence on the day of the quiz was for a legitimate reason, your point total will be adjusted so that you will not be penalized.

For course policies concerning Academic Dishonesty, Student Absences on Religious Holy Days, Students with Disabilities, and Visitors in the Classroom, see www.shsu.edu/syllabus.