

THEORIES OF PERSUASION SYLLABUS, SUMMER 2016**Biddle 208****MTuThF 12:20-3:20**

Dr. Paul A. Lucas

Email: pal59@pitt.edu (best way to reach me)

Office: Biddle 249c

Office phone: 814-269-7150, Mailbox: Biddle 233 (look for my name)

Office hours: MTuThF 3:20-3:50; other days/times by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Theories of Persuasion is a course designed to explore various practices of persuasion—both historical and contemporary. Students will be given the opportunity to develop their persuasive skills in analysis, critical thinking, and application. By identifying and exploring persuasion, the course serves to relate to a variety of contexts, majors, and career paths.

REQUIRED TEXT

Larson, C. U. (2013). *Persuasion: Reception and responsibility* (13th ed.). Stamford, CT: Cengage.
ISBN: 1111349274 OR 13:9781111349271

COURSE STRUCTURE

This course relies heavily on active participation of students. While there will be periods throughout the semester where I will lecture to provide you with information regarding theories, the majority of the course is devoted to discussing the main theoretical issues brought forth in the readings and discovering how communication operates in different contexts throughout our everyday lives. **Participation points for this course are not awarded solely based on attendance (see "Participation" in Course Policies).*

COURSE GRADING SCALE

A+	98 - 100%
A	93 - 97.9%
A-	90 - 92.9%
B+	88 - 89.9%
B	83 - 87.9%
B-	80 - 82.9%
C+	78 - 79.9%
C	73 - 77.9%
C-	70 - 72.9%
D+	68 - 69.9%
D	63 - 67.9%
D-	60 - 62.9%
F	0 - 59.9%

ASSIGNMENTS

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points Possible</u>
Pro/Con Speech	15
Product Sales Presentation	20
Persuasive Theory Paper	25
Final Exam	30
<u>Participation</u>	<u>10</u>
TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE	100

COURSE POLICIES

Professionalism and Attendance. Documented participation in university events, such as athletics or academic conferences/competitions, and documented illnesses or family emergencies or other emergency situations can be excused and therefore not considered as absences as long as the necessary documentation is provided to me within two calendar weeks from the date of the absence. Sending me an email is not considered providing documentation. You should consult with me about options for documentation should any issues arise. Keep in mind that any provided documentation must include applicable date(s).

Classes missed for other reasons, or classes missed without documentation provided in the timeframe, are considered unexcused and therefore absences. If you suspect that you will need to miss a class at some point for things such as scheduling, advising, group meetings, work, weddings, vacations, etc., you need to save an unexcused absence for that day. In the event of any absence, whether excused or unexcused, you are responsible for obtaining the information covered in class. Please partner with someone in the class so you can get the necessary information in the event of an absence.

Note that I take attendance once each day. If you are ever late to class and miss when I take attendance, it is your responsibility to come to me by the end of that class period to make sure I have noted you as present—otherwise, I may not record that you are there, and the listed absence will stand. In addition, unless there is legitimate, good reason which you discuss with me, late arrivals, early departures, cell phone/electronic device usage, or anything else that may compromise the learning experience for others will lower your participation grade.

Your overall course grade will be lowered by five full points for each unexcused absence after one. Keep in mind that there is no limit on point deductions due to unexcused absences, and the final exam meeting is also considered a class day.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If a circumstance leading to your absence arises during the semester and you would rather not discuss it with me, or if for some reason you will have a prolonged period of absence, I would encourage you to speak with Dr. Newman in Blackington 248. I will accept as documentation any notes and emails with dates provided to me from Dr. Newman's office, and then I will work with you based on the specific situation in order to determine the best course of action moving forward.

Cell Phones/Electronic Devices. You are permitted to have phones and other devices out, you may check time, you may time classmates or yourself, and you may use electronic devices for note-taking and pulling up materials; however, it's simple: do not give me reason to suspect you are using a device for any other purpose! Furthermore, I respect that you may have situations that arise during the semester. If you are ever expecting an important call or text during a class period, please notify me prior to the start of class, turn your phone on vibrate, and step out of the classroom to answer the call or text.

Otherwise, absolutely no text messaging or phone calls (or any engagement of phones or other devices (unless related to circumstances as described above) will be permitted. I particularly dislike when students use cell phones or other devices in any capacity when their fellow students are speaking, or in-between speeches or presentations. Remember: you can always step outside to take or make a call or text. If you remain in class to do so, you will be negatively affecting the learning environment for myself and your classmates.

If you are noticed text messaging, taking a call, making a call, or otherwise engaging a cell phone or electronic device in class (again, not related to circumstances as described above), you will automatically lose two participation points per each offense (maximum of once per class meeting). If your participation grade ever reaches zero for any reason, these points will begin to come out of your overall course grade, and there is no limit on points lost due to this deduction. If you are caught text messaging or taking or making a call or otherwise engaging a phone or other electronic device during an exam, you will receive an automatic zero for the exam and procedural process may be initiated.

Use of Email. If you do not access your Pitt email on a regular basis, please redirect the Pitt account to the one you do access on a daily basis. I may occasionally provide course information through Pitt email.

I expect professionalism in all emails, so make sure to include an appropriate subject line, a greeting, and a closer whenever emailing me. Any emails not including both written text and your name in the email body will be disregarded and deleted; this is especially important to consider if you are sending me assignments.

Use of Blackboard/Courseweb. Blackboard (Courseweb) will be used for various purposes through the duration of the course. Please check Blackboard for course information, updates, documents, and course grades.

Academic Accommodations . If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and the Office of Health and Counseling Services, G-10 Student Union, 814-269-7119, as early as possible in the term. The Office of Health and Counseling Services will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course. Accommodations will not be granted retroactively.

Statement on Classroom Recording. To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, you may not record classroom lectures, discussions, and/or activities without my advance written permission, and any such recording properly approved in advance is for private use only.

Academic Integrity and Using Sources. Unless otherwise instructed, all assignments are to be completed as your original, individual work. Threats to academic integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating (copying from someone else, using electronic devices or notes to cheat), plagiarizing (using another person's ideas and stating their words as your own), fabricating of information or citations (making up sources), facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others (letting someone copy your paper or test), having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, and tampering with the academic work of other students. Any information obtained from the Internet or any other source must be cited or it will be considered plagiarism. Academic dishonesty simply will not be tolerated.

In the event that a student plagiarizes and/or commits an academic integrity violation (see above), he or she will automatically fail the applicable assignment (zero grade). In the case of a second violation, the student will automatically fail the course. Note that procedural process will be initiated in any plagiarism or academic integrity case, which can result in additional consequences.

Failing to properly cite sources in text, in the Works Cited or References, or verbally in presentations will result in deductions to the applicable assignment.

Wikipedia, other Wikis, Encyclopedias/Encyclopedia Websites, and/or Dictionaries/Dictionary Websites should never be used as sources for information in this course—with the one exception of operationalizing terms through Encyclopedia or Dictionary definitions in speeches or presentations. Wikis are not credible sources, and dictionaries and encyclopedias lack the communication application and theoretical depth we are looking for in the course. Utilizing such sources, except in the cases of Encyclopedias or Dictionaries used to operationalize terms in speeches or presentations, will result in a deduction in points on the assignment.

Submission of Course Papers and Projects. Unless otherwise directed by the instructor, all assignments are to be submitted in class on the date indicated in the schedule. Stapled, hard copies (8.5x11 paper) are expected for submissions. Double-sided is great!

All course papers and assignments need to be typed, 12-pt. font, Times New Roman or Calibri, and double-spaced. Presentation outlines may be single-spaced. You must abide by either MLA or APA for the Works Cited or References pages and in text citations. Headers and margins must also abide by MLA or APA standards. Any listed page or word count lengths in the syllabus or rubrics do not include References pages, Works Cited pages, or title pages. Listed minimum page lengths mean you must get onto that page in order to meet the requirement.

I do understand that printer malfunctions can occur and students can sometimes run late. If that happens, I want you to attend class on time. In such events, do not send me anything by email attachment unless and until specifically directed to do so—in other words, please speak to me or email me first; in that case, the email is due no later than 11:59 pm on the due date. A hard copy will then be required by the start of the next class meeting. Be sure to cc yourself on the email submission in case you/we need to verify the time stamp and that the email was actually sent. Also, be very mindful of the use of email policy (name and text in the body of the email) should you submit material this way. Speeches, presentations, exams, and any exam time activities cannot be submitted this way and must be completed by the end of the class period, and class can end early.

Do not place late assignments under my office door assuming I will accept them—I will not.

Regarding Rubrics: I do not require you to submit rubrics with your assignments; however, I am happy to fill them out if you like. If rubrics are provided for an assignment and you would like the rubric given to you with your grade

and feedback, please print the rubric and attach it to your assignment. Otherwise, I will just return the assignment with feedback, grading according to the established rubric criteria.

Additional Notes for Presentations. Please—if you find you feel especially anxious about giving speeches or presentations, I encourage you to speak with me prior to the presentation date. I try to make this a comfortable, encouraging environment, so please talk to me.

Unless approved in advance, you will be expected to present according to the presentation order determined in class. During presentation days in which you do not present, you will be expected to be a respectful and insightful audience member. **This includes the following: Q+A participation (if applicable) and cell phones off or silenced. If you are late on a presentation day or if you must exit the room during a presentation, please wait until the current presentation is over before you enter or reenter the room. This is expected of all students and audience members so that each speaker has the opportunity to present without unnecessary distractions. Failing to have phones off or silenced or failure to wait until presentations are over to enter the room will lower your participation grade.**

Depending on class size and how presentations go, there could be times when I need to assign students to present at later dates than originally given. I will do my best to accommodate you on date changes in these cases.

Dress Code. I am often asked about the dress code for presentations. You should have, at the very least, the academic version of business casual-style attire; a nice shirt and jeans, for example, would be fine. **It is important to me that you be as comfortable as possible when presenting, but remember that audiences ALWAYS assess credibility—hats, hoodies with the hood up, shorts, and/or sweat pants would be unacceptable attire for speeches. Chewing gum is also not acceptable. Failure to dress appropriately for a presentation or chewing gum will result in point deductions on the assignment.**

Late Assignments. Late work will not be accepted unless accompanied by documentation for an excused absence, and not all excused absences warrant an extension—you will need to contact me about the specific circumstance. Unless appropriate documentation is provided, papers, speeches, presentations, exams, and exam time activities must be completed on time.

Queries Regarding Grades. If there comes a time when you disagree with the grade you have earned on an assignment, you may come to me to argue your side. I will not hold conversations regarding grades until at least 48 hours after the assignment is handed back to you. I will not discuss grades or feedback through email or before, during, or after class. You need to schedule an appointment with me to discuss any grade or feedback in my office. I will certainly not entertain any discussions about grades posted to courseweb prior to you getting feedback. After 48 hours, you are to construct a one page, written request, submitted in hard copy form, clearly stating the reason for your appeal with a well-reasoned argument. **By requesting this appeal, you agree to disregard the contested grade entirely.** On appeal, the assignment will be graded again according to the criteria originally established for the assignment. **The new grade may be the same, higher, or lower than the original, contested grade.** The grade determined on review is then final.

Keep in mind! I will not entertain any subjective requests to alter or round grades at any point during or after the semester. I do not change grades because students feel they should be changed, and I do not round scores—ever!

Participation. This course is based largely on discussion. In fact, I rely on discussion. Therefore, as a student in this class, you need to come to class prepared, ready to ask questions and discuss your opinion. Participation points are not free points! Your participation in the course will comprise 10% of your overall course grade.

If you do not come to class AND frequently participate, the most you can earn is an 8/10 in participation. An 8/10 is the standard grade for participation; in order to exceed standard, you must participate in class discussions consistently (virtually every applicable class day throughout the semester), with meaningful and high quality comments and/or questions.

Due to the nature of the course, there will be instances in which the class may engage in heated discussions. You need to show respect to your classmates even when they express opinions that are different from your own. Though you will need to participate in discussions and speak frequently in class in order to get the full participation points, being an attentive audience member (paying attention and not distracting speakers/audience members) and a conscientious

group member and being able to listen to others' opinions and respond to them in a respectful manner is vital to the participation score. See all course policies above for additional information on the participation grade.

Extra Credit. If anyone is interested in extra credit, I can provide an extra credit assignment. Please contact me if at any point you would like to discuss extra credit. Once I establish an assignment and point value, I will make the assignment available to the whole class.

COURSE SCHEDULE*

*The following is the tentative course schedule; it is a supplement to the syllabus. The schedule, assignments, and due dates are subject to change at the discretion of the professor.

Week One (6/27, 6/28, 6/30, 7/1)—Starting Points, Ethics, Organization, Delivery, Tactics
To Be Read At Your Pace This Week: The Syllabus; Chapters 1, 2, 12, 10, 7, and 9
Due: Pro/Con Speeches will take place Friday, 7/1

Week Two (7/5, 7/7, 7/8)—Fallacies, Target Audiences, Humanities, Social Sciences, Symbols
To Be Read At Your Pace This Week: Chapters 8, 3, 4, 5, and 6
Due: Product Sales Presentations Will Take Place Friday, 7/8

Week Three (7/11, 7/12, 7/14, 7/15)—Media, Campaigns, IMC
To Be Read At Your Pace This Week: Chapters 11, 13, and 14
Due: Persuasive Theory Papers will be due Tuesday, 7/12
Final Exam Will Take Place Friday, 7/15

BRIEF COURSE ASSIGNMENT OVERVIEW (Specific rubrics will be provided)

Pro/Con Speech (15 points)

The first presentation in the course will function largely as a speech. It is a test of your knowledge, and it is also designed to get you thinking about persuasive strategy. You will select a topic and prepare BOTH pro and con sides. Both portions of the presentation should be 5-8 minutes in length. Q+A and discussion with the audience to follow. A minimum of four credible sources must be incorporated into the presentation (remember: you need to prepare both sides, so prepare two sources for each side!). Outlines for the presentations will be collected on the presentation day, and both a pro and con outline need to be submitted. On the days when you are not presenting, you are expected to be a respectful audience member; discussing thoughts and ideas and not using cell phones, electronic devices, etc.

Unless there is a unique perspective taken that I approve in advance, the “banned” topics are: capital punishment, abortion, smoking, drunk driving, organ donation, lowering the drinking age, same-sex marriage, and the legalization of marijuana. If seeking an attitudinal goal, there should be a viable counterargument.

Product Sales Presentation (20 points)

For the product sales presentation, the entire class will select the same, real, branded product. You will individually attempt to sell it to the class by making a persuasive case. Your focus needs to be on one of the typical strategic theories: Self-Actualization; Ego Gratification; Wisdom of the Rustic; The Value of Challenge; The Triumphant Individual; Myth of the Eternal Return; Mob at the Gates; Creative Outlets; Need for Roots; or Need for Immortality. Only one of each can be used by a student in class, and I will give selections on a first-come, first-serve basis. Your portion of the presentation should be 6-10 minutes

in length. Q+A from the audience and discussion of effectiveness of the theoretical approach to follow. A minimum of three credible sources, other than the textbook, must be incorporated into the presentation. Outlines for the presentations will be collected on the presentation day. On the days when you are not presenting, you are expected to be a respectful audience member; discussing thoughts and ideas and not using cell phones, electronic devices, etc.

Persuasive Theory Paper (25 points)

The persuasive theory paper will be a culmination of the theoretical and scholarly ideas on persuasion you have encountered throughout the semester. You will start by identifying three ideas/terms from the course which you believe have something in common. I will need to approve your selections. You will then locate, on your own, one example of persuasion for each term; these can come from magazines, newspapers, television, Internet, etc. You should then explain why the examples you found are effective forms of those persuasive strategies. Ultimately, you will develop/create your own theory of persuasion (with its own theory name and explanation) that accomplishes a fourth and connected persuasive goal. You are free to be as creative as you would like with this assignment; just remember that the writing should be professional and any material from the additional sources, textbook, or lectures needs to be cited. Aside from the course textbook and lectures and found examples, two credible sources are required. The paper should be 5-6 pages in length.

Final Examination (30 points)

The final examination is comprised of multiple choice questions and short answers covering chapters, course lectures, discussions, and videos from the course. Material in the book that is not covered in class may be tested on the examination. A review guide will be provided.

Participation (10 points)

See the description under “course policies.”