

COLORADO WOMEN'S COLLEGE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

COMN3300: Principles of Persuasion

Fall, 2014; Saturdays, 1:30pm-5:20pm

Class Session Dates:

Sept. 13, 20, & 27; Oct. 4, 11, 18, & 25; Nov. 1, 8, & 15.

INSTRUCTOR'S NAME: Robert D. Melvin, Ph.D.

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I will respond to email or voicemail messages within 48 hours.

PREREQUISITES:

Students are responsible for completing course prerequisites before registering for a class. Students may be removed from a course for which they have not fulfilled the prerequisite course work.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The overall objective of the course is for each student to understand the history and practice of persuasion. The art of persuasion has been the subject of study since the beginning of recorded history, yet few people know how to employ it effectively. Understanding how to influence others pays big personal and professional dividends. The course provides an opportunity for the student to become familiar with persuasion theory and to apply that theory to real persuasion situations.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Be able to define ethical and unethical means of influencing others.
2. Be able to describe the basic elements of persuasive messages.
3. Be able to explain various theories and to demonstrate their use.
4. Construct and execute a persuasive strategy in a real life setting.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

The Women's College fully endorses the University of Denver's Honor Code and the procedures put forth by the Office of Citizenship and Community Standards. Academic dishonesty—including plagiarism, cheating, and falsification of data and research—is in violation of the code and will result in a failing grade for the assignment or for the course.

As student members of a community committed to academic integrity and honesty, it is your responsibility to become familiar with the DU Honor Code and its procedures (www.du.edu/honorcode).

REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS AND MATERIALS:

1. Book: Persuasion (13th) by Charles U. Larson
2. Book: Influence, Science and Practice (4th) by Robert B. Cialdini

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Class participation: It is best to come to class and to participate! (20% of grade)
2. Reading assignments: Read the books as soon as possible. A general guide to dates particular authors and chapters are covered is shown in the class schedule below.
3. Exams: A take-home midterm exam. (25% of grade)
4. Projects: A persuasion project. (30% of grade)
5. Papers: A 5-7 page research paper. (25% of grade)
6. Presentations

Percentage	Grade
95-100	A
90-94	A-
87-89	B+
84-86	B
80-83	B-
77-79	C+
74-76	C
70-73	C-
67-69	D+
64-66	D
60-63	D-
0-59	F

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Attendance is mandatory in all class sessions. Active participation in class and online discussions is also required and will be a determiner in a student's final grade. An absence, for any reason, will result in forfeiting points for in-class student presentations. These may not be made up in another class session. If an emergency arises, it is the student's responsibility to contact her instructor.

A grade of incomplete will be granted only under special circumstances as determined by the instructor. <http://www.du.edu/registrar/records/incompletpolicy.html>

TECHNOLOGY USE IN THE CLASSROOM

In order to create and maintain an optimal learning environment in the classroom, students should use technology appropriately as directed by the instructor for the purposes of the course. Work done on laptops, cell phones, and other devices that is not relevant to the class can hinder the process of communication and shared discussion of ideas that require full engagement by all participants.

ADA ACCOMODATIONS

Students who require accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act must contact the instructor to discuss their needs. Failure to notify the instructor immediately may hinder the college's ability to accommodate accordingly. Students with learning disabilities should also contact the University Disability Services Program at <http://www.du.edu/studentlife/disability/> . University Disability Services houses the Learning Effectiveness Program (LEP) and the Disability Services Program (DSP).

OBSERVATION OF RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Students wishing to observe a religious holiday not celebrated on the academic calendar may do so provided advanced written notice is given the instructor during the first two weeks of the quarter. With advanced written notice, the absence will be considered an excused absence. For additional information, contact DU's Center for Religious Services (<http://www.du.edu/crs/>).

COURSE SCHEDULE

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE FIRST CLASS:

1. Read chapters 1 & 2 in Larson
2. Read chapter 1 in Cialdini
3. Prepare a brief summary (no more than one page) of an instance when you were a victim or persuasion. Briefly describe what happened and be prepared to report informally during the first class.

Class Date & Class Topics:

Session One:

9/13 Review of syllabus and assignments. Introduction to the history of persuasion and how persuasion works. Ethical issues.
Larson, chapters 1 & 2; Cialdini, chapter 1.

Session Two:

9/20 Language, semantic, symbols, and what persuasion is about. Traditional and social scientific approaches. Introduction to audience analysis. Larson, chapters 3, 4, & 5.

Session Three:

9/27 Plain and simple persuasion techniques. Cialdini, chapters 2 – 8.

Session Four:

10/4 Basic premises of persuasion. Larson, chapters 7 – 10.

Session Five:

10/11 Further discussion of persuasive models. Introduction to persuasive campaigns. Larson, chapters 11 & 12. Midterm given to students and due in Session Six on 10/15.

Session Six:

10/18 Midterm due. Mass media, marketing, advertising, and propaganda. Larson, chapters 13 & 14. Persuasion projects due / presentations of results in class.

Session Seven:

10/25 Persuasion projects due/ informal presentation of results in class.

Session Eight:

11/1 Propaganda and myth. The defense of critical thinking.

Session Nine:

11/8 Research paper due/ informal presentation of results.

Session Ten:

11/15 Advanced persuasion techniques.

Please call or email me if you have any questions about the course.