

**Marshall University**

Course Title/Number	<b>Theories of Persuasion and Change: CMM 409</b>
Semester/Year	Spring 2014
Days/Time	Wednesday 6:30p - 9:00
Location	Smith Hall 261
Professor	Dr. Stephen M. Underhill
Office	Smith Hall 248
Phone	(304) 696-3020
E-Mail	underhills@marshall.edu
Office/Hours	Monday 8:00-10:00; 12:00-2:00 Wednesday 8:00-10:00; 12:00-2:00 Friday 8:00-10:00 *Please e-mail me in advance of your arrival.
University Policies	By enrolling in this course, you agree to the University Policies listed below. Please read the full text of each policy by going to <a href="http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs">www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs</a> and clicking on "Marshall University Policies." Or, you can access the policies directly by going to <a href="http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/?page_id=802">http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/?page_id=802</a>  Academic Dishonesty/ Excused Absence Policy for Undergraduates/ Computing Services Acceptable Use/ Inclement Weather/ Dead Week/ Students with Disabilities/ Academic Forgiveness/ Academic Probation and Suspension/ Academic Rights and Responsibilities of Students/ Affirmative Action/ Sexual Harassment
Class Policies	All assignments must be typed, size 12 font, 1 inch margins, double spaced

**Course Description**

Study of the relationship between persuasion and social change, including theories of attitude and behavioral change and contemporary theories of persuasion.

**General Education Program Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of the core curriculum at Marshall University, students will be able to master the following core domains of critical thinking:

1. Aesthetic/Artistic
2. Communication (oral, written, visual)
3. Information Literacy: Exploring; Questioning; Searching; Evaluating; Synthesizing; Creating; Communicating; Assessing.
4. Mathematical and Abstract
5. Multicultural/International
6. Scientific
7. Social/Ethical/Historical

**Relationships among Course, Program, and Degree Profile Outcomes**

Course Student Learning Outcomes	How students will practice each outcome in this Course	How student achievement of each outcome will be assessed in this Course	Program Outcomes	Degree Profile Outcomes
Students will understand theory as a context for communication.	Class discussion; Class reading; Class activities; Research Project.	Exams, Research Paper.	2,3,6,7	Applied learning; Intellectual skills;
Students will generalize communication patterns from qualitative inquiry.	In-depth interviews, observations, primary source data.	Research Paper.	2,3,6,7	Applied learning; Intellectual skills;
Students will assess the ways qualitative research methods inform theoretical understanding.	Class discussion; Class reading; Class activities; Research Project.	Exams, Research Paper.	2,3,6,7	Specialized knowledge; Applied learning; Broad, Integrative Knowledge
Students will analyze communication artifacts using qualitative communication theory.	Research Project.	Exams, Research Paper.	2,3,6,7	Applied learning; Broad, Integrative Knowledge; Intellectual skills
Students will synthesize qualitative data.	Research Project.	Research Project.	2,3,6,7	Broad, Integrative Knowledge; Intellectual skills
Students will analyze qualitative data.	Research Project.	Research Project.	2,3,6,7	Specialized knowledge; Applied learning; Broad, Integrative Knowledge; Intellectual skills; Civic learning.

### Required Texts, Additional Reading, and Other Materials

Herbert W. Simons and Jean G. Jones. *Persuasion In Society*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. New York: Routledge. 2011.

Course Requirements	Due Date	Points
Persuasive Speech & Editorial Submission	March 12	100
Persuasive Campaign	April 23	100
Persuasion Analysis Paper	May 7	100
Participation		200
<b>TOTAL</b>		500

### Attendance Policy

Attendance is not required for this course. PLEASE NOTE, I DO NOT RESPOND TO E-MAIL REQUESTS ASKING ME TO COVER WHAT YOU MISSED IN CLASS. You may visit me during my office hours to catch up on missed material.

### Electronics Policy

This course encourages students to bring laptop computers, tablets, smart phones, and any other devices for accessing the internet. Students without such devices will be paired in groups with these devices. In practically every class we will be applying communication theory to the daily news. For this to work, students must balance digital connectivity with class participation. Students who choose to be distracted and not participate will fall behind in skill development, which will become evident.

### Document Policy

All documents must be typed, size 12 font, 1 inch margins, double spaced and submitted to Dropbox.

### *Participation and Discussion* 200 points

This class will be conducted as a seminar, which is organized and conducted differently from typical undergraduate courses. Specifically, students will spend little time listening to lectures and much more time reading and analyzing course materials, participating in thoughtful and focused discussion about the material, and synthesizing old and new ideas. In hopes of fulfilling these goals, *you are required to bring at least four well developed discussion questions to class that pertain to that day's readings*. Questions might be related to inconsistencies between readings, misunderstandings you might have, questions for other students about how readings relate, problems with the research, ethical quandaries that arise, etc. These questions are expected to be intelligent and well thought out (simply asking questions that are answered in the readings won't be counted). The point of the questions is to stimulate interesting conversation and

demonstrate that you completed the assigned readings. You will email me the questions that you raised in class after each class period. NO QUESTIONS, NO E-MAILS = NO POINTS. Your willingness to participate in class will determine if you pass or fail. I will keep an on-going participation grade up-to-date on Blackboard.

## Assignment Breakdown

1) Persuasive Speech & Editorial Submission (100 points) – For this assignment you will develop and present an 8-10-minute persuasive speech, and write and submit for publication a 750-1000 word editorial, both on a topic (the same topic for both) of your choice. This assignment challenges you to incorporate multiple aspects of the course material in order to develop an effective persuasive message to two different audiences (your classmates and the readership of the outlet for your editorial). Your grade will be based on the following criteria, including the basic parameters of a good public speech (which you will learn in class), quality writing, and thoughtful persuasion strategy.

Speech – 50%

Content

- Introduction: hook, credibility, thesis, and preview
- Structure: main ideas, transitions, examples/explanations/illustrations
- Sound reasoning and arguments
- Effective use of persuasive appeals and premises
- Conclusion: intent to conclude, summary, and no new information
- Bibliography: 5-7 sources, documented correctly

Delivery

- Verbal: volume, rate, articulation, inflection, and conversational tone (no reading)
- Nonverbal: posture, gestures, body movements, facial expressions, and eye contact
- Overall personality, character, enthusiasm, and persuasiveness of delivery

Visual Aid

- Professional and credible
- Aesthetically pleasing
- Good balance of text, graphics, and whitespace
- Relevant - used effectively

Editorial Essay – 50%

Your goal is to develop a sound argument around a well-defined position to persuade the newspapers, magazine's (etc.) readership to adopt your view. You must provide evidence that you submitted your editorial to some kind of journalistic outlet, although your grade does not depend on whether or not your editorial is actually accepted for publication.

Your editorial will be graded based on the following criteria:

- Clear argument/position
- Effective use of persuasive appeals and premises
- Sound reasoning and arguments
- Within word count - Overall structure (intro, conclusion, transitions, etc.)
- Quality writing (grammar, spelling, etc.)

2) Persuasive Campaign (100 points) – For this assignment you will develop a persuasive campaign for a REAL project, service, or idea. This means you’ll have to find someone or organization who has a project, idea, or service that they could use your help with promoting. Your campaign must involve at least 3 vehicles/media of persuasion (i.e., print ads, videos, website, editorial, direct mail, billboard, radio ad, etc.) and must be complete at the time of presentation. In addition, you must provide a 1000-word executive summary explaining the details of your campaign, especially the thinking behind your persuasive messages. Here are the grading criteria for the assignment:

Campaign – 60%

- Clear message/argument
- Clear persuasive goal (i.e., Are you trying to get people to think or behave in a specific way? Purchase a product? Change an attitude or behavior? Something else?)
- Creative and aesthetically appealing - At least 3 vehicles/media of persuasion
- Overall persuasiveness (I understand this is somewhat subjective, but I should at least be able to see that this would be persuasive in a given context)
- Clear use of persuasive premises, principles, and/or appeals

Executive Summary – 20%

- Brief description of the campaign
- Explanation/justification of the media used
- Brief audience/market analysis
- Explanation of the persuasive principles/theories that support your thinking about persuasion in this campaign
- Brief summary about of the campaign and what you’re trying to accomplish

Presentation – 20%

You will give a 5-minute presentation that summarizes your campaign (content, strategy, evaluation, etc.) for the class. You will be graded for basic elements of content and delivery, and your presentation should incorporate a visual aid.

3) Persuasion Analysis Paper (100 points) – This assignment requires you to analyze an example of persuasion in society, such as an advertising campaign, a political campaign, a speech transcript, a social movement, an advocacy campaign, or other examples that are relevant to your academic concentration and career path. The goal is to provide analysis, critical evaluation, and insight about how persuasion functions in your example. Your analysis should be connected to textbook/course material and provide insight to the persuasive message(s) employed, providing critical evaluation and insight about how persuasion functions in your example. Here are some questions that can help guide your analysis:

- What is the overall message of this persuasive example?
- What persuasive appeals and premises are being used?
- Is this an “effective” message? Why or why not? How should we evaluate the “effectiveness” of this message?
- Who is this message aimed at? Does the message correspond with the intended audience?

- What are the implications of this persuasive message?
- What does this tell us about who we are as a society, how people think/ behave, or the role of persuasive communication in human relationships?
- Is this message ethical? Why or why not?

Your final paper should be 10-15 pages, not including references. In addition to your textbook, your bibliography should include additional research sources (like academic journal articles and books) to ground your analysis. Your paper will be graded based on the following criteria:

- Clear argument/position/subject of analysis (i.e., there should be a clear statement about the purpose of your analysis and what you're trying to accomplish)
- Insightful analysis and critical evaluation (not just summary and description)
- Within word count
- Connection to course material and other research sources
- Bibliography: 10-12 sources, at least are research sources (textbook counts as 1 research source)
- Quality writing (grammar, spelling, paragraph/sentence structure, intro/conclusion/transitions etc.)

Presentation – 20%

You also need to give a 5-minute presentation that summarizes your analysis for the class. You will be graded for basic elements of content and delivery, and your presentation should incorporate a visual aid. You should frame your presentation as an informative overview of your paper that briefly describes your unit of analysis and summarizes your major contributions/findings/insights/conclusions.

### **Semester Calendar**

Class Date	Reading/Assignment Due
1/15	Course Introduction
1/22	Simons and Jones Ch.1 The Study of Persuasion
1/29	Simons and Jones Ch.2 The Psychology of Persuasion
2/5	Simons and Jones Ch.3 Persuasion Broadly Considered
2/12	Simons and Jones Ch.4 Coactive Persuasion
2/19	Simons and Jones Ch.5 Resources of Communication
2/26	Simons and Jones Ch.6 Framing and Reframing
3/5	Simons and Jones Ch.7 Cognitive Shorthands
3/12	Simons and Jones Ch.8 Reasoning and Evidence
	• Persuasive Speech & Editorial Submission and Presentations
3/19	Spring Break No class
3/29	Simons and Jones Ch.9 Going Public: Delivering a Presentation that Persuades
4/2	Simons and Jones Ch.10 Persuasive Campaigns
4/9	Simons and Jones Ch.11 Staging Political Campaigns
4/16	Simons and Jones Ch.12 Analyzing Product Advertising
4/23	Simons and Jones Ch.13 Talking Through Differences: Persuasion in Social Conflicts
	• Persuasive Campaign Class Presentations

4/30  
5/7

Simons and Jones Ch.14 Leading Social Movements  
Final Exam 6:30-9:00

- Persuasion Analysis Paper Due