

**MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES**

**Persuasion  
(CMST 154)**

Fall Term 2005  
Tuesday and Thursday 2:00 – 3:15pm – Johnston Hall 415

Instructor: Gary Meyer, Ph.D.  
Office: 111 Johnston Hall  
Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday 3:30 – 4:30pm and by appointment  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

***Required texts:***

Cialdini, R.B. (2001). *Influence: Science and Practice* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Roberto, A.J., & Meyer, G. (2002). *Influence in action: A student handbook for Robert B. Cialdini's Influence: Science and Practice*. New York, NY: Allyn & Bacon.

Gass, R.H., & Seiter, J.S. (2003). *Persuasion, social influence, and compliance gaining* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

***Course focus:***

Persuasion has been of interest to human beings through the ages. From the ancient Greeks to the executives on Madison Avenue, persuading and influencing others has been a primary concern. In this course you will develop a thorough understanding of the process of persuasion and social influence. The course focuses on persuasion and social influence at both theoretical and applied levels. Persuasion will be studied through readings, lectures, class discussions, and applied exercises.

It is my hope that you will come to view persuasion as a structured and focused area of communication with a set of underlying theories and values, a rich history and a dynamic future.

### ***Primary course objectives:***

At the end of this course students should be able to:

1. Apply judgment heuristics within appropriate contexts to effectively persuade others.
2. Discuss the overarching criteria that constitute persuasion and differentiate pure versus borderline cases of each.
3. Describe the theoretical underpinnings of at least five models of persuasion and apply them in real world settings.
4. Apply several sequential persuasive strategies within appropriate contexts to effectively persuade others.
5. Articulate the role of ethics in persuasive encounters and defend a personal position.

### ***Course requirements:***

Your grade in this course will be determined by your performance on (1) a midterm examination, (2) one individually prepared paper, and (3) a final examination. A more complete description of each requirement, along with the allocation of points, follows.

**Midterm examination** – The midterm examination is worth 35 points and may consist of multiple choice, true/false, and essay-type questions. The midterm examination will take place in class on **Thursday, October 13**.

**Term (Mall) paper** – For this assignment you are to write a 10-12 page paper based on your observations at the Grand Avenue Mall (or some other suitable site(s)). The goal of this assignment is to allow you to apply the concepts discussed in the text and/or in class to how you were “persuaded” to purchase items. This paper is due on **Thursday, November 10** and is worth 30 points.

**Final examination** – The final examination is worth 35 points and may consist of multiple choice, true/false, and essay-type questions. The final examination will **NOT** be cumulative. The final examination will take place in on **Wednesday, December 14**.

<u>Course Requirement</u>	<u>Possible Points</u>	<u>Grading Scale</u>	
Midterm examination	35	93-100	A
Term (Fall) paper	30	88-92	A/B
Final examination	<u>35</u>	83-87	B
		78-82	B/C
Total	100	73-77	C
		68-72	C/D
		60-67	D
		00-59	F

***Course policies:***

**Attendance** -- Attendance is extremely important in this course. You will find it difficult to pass this course unless you attend regularly, take notes, and remain current on the assigned readings. I suggest you read the assigned materials prior to attending class, as you will be able to comprehend and participate more during class.

**Late assignments** – Each assignment is to be turned in at the beginning of the class period it is due. If a student knows that s/he will not be able to attend that particular class, arrangements should be made with the professor to turn in the assignment at an earlier date. Late assignments will be marked down five percent for each day (not class period) late. The most any assignment will be marked down for being late is 35 percent.

**Make-up exams** – Exams must be taken on the scheduled day at the scheduled time unless negotiated with the instructor PRIOR TO THE DAY OF THE EXAM. Exceptions will be made only in the case of family hardship or verifiable medical problems, and then only at the professor's discretion.

**Academic dishonesty** – In accordance with the high standards of excellence set forth by, and for, all members of the Marquette University community, the College of Communication finds it imperative that each student understand that the responsibilities associated with high standards of excellence include ensuring that all class work undertaken in this College is performed in an environment that promotes serious scholarship and moral rectitude. Therefore, the College herein delineates a zero-tolerance policy for acts of academic dishonesty. All acts of suspected academic dishonesty will be thoroughly investigated in a manner that is fair, timely, and efficient and done so in a manner that protects the rights of both the faculty member and the student. Any individual that is found to have committed an act of academic dishonesty may receive a penalty, up to and including expulsion from Marquette University.

**Tentative class/reading schedule**

<b><u>Week #</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>General Topic</u></b>	<b><u>Readings</u></b>
Week 1	8/30 (T)	Course introduction; syllabus review	G & S – Chapter 1
	9/01 (R)	Elements of persuasion Controlled and heuristic processing	G & S – Chapter 2 Cialdini – Chapter 1
Week 2	9/06 (T)	Attitudes	G & S – Chapter 3
	9/08 (R)	Cognitive consistency / dissonance	Cialdini – Chapter 3
Week 3	9/13 (T)	Credibility	G & S – Chapter 4
	9/15 (R)	Liking	Cialdini – Chapter 5
Week 4	9/20 (T)	Liking (continued)	
	9/22 (R)	Reciprocation	Cialdini – Chapter 2
Week 5	9/27 (T)	Sequential persuasion	G & S – Chapter 10
	9/29 (R)	Group conformity	G & S – Chapter 6
Week 6	10/04 (T)	Social proof	Cialdini – Chapter 4
	10/06 (R)	Scarcity	Cialdini – Chapter 7
Week 7	10/11 (T)	Authority	Cialdini – Chapter 6
	10/13 (R)	<b>Midterm examination</b>	
Week 8	10/18 (T)	No Class (Mall Day)	
	10/20 (R)	No Class (Midterm Break)	

**Tentative class/reading schedule**

<u><b>Week #</b></u>	<u><b>Date</b></u>	<u><b>General Topic</b></u>	<u><b>Readings</b></u>
Week 9	10/25 (T)	Persuasive environment	
	10/27 (R)	Applied Persuasion (Guest Speaker)	
Week 10	11/01 (T)	No Class (Mall Day)	
	11/03 (R)	Visual persuasion	G & S – Chapter 14
Week 11	11/08 (T)	Visual persuasion (continued)	
	11/10 (R)	Esoteric persuasion <b>Term Paper Due</b>	G & S – Chapter 15
Week 12	11/15 (T)	Nonverbal influence	G & S – Chapter 8
	11/17 (R)	Developing persuasive messages	G & S – Chapter 9
Week 13	11/22 (T)	Motivational appeals	G & S – Chapter 13
	11/24 (R)	No Class (Thanksgiving Break)	
Week 14	11/29 (T)	Motivational appeals (continued)	
	12/01 (R)	Deception	G & S – Chapter 12
Week 15	12/06 (T)	Deception (continued)	
	12/08 (R)	Ethics	G & S – Chapter 16
Week 16	12/14 (W)	<b>Final Examination (1:00 – 3:00pm)</b>	