

Speech 104: Critical Thinking/Persuasion
Ohlone College, Spring 2007, sect. 2
Portable 14 – Rm 14B

Instructor: Larissa A. Favela, Department of Speech & Communication Studies
Office hours: T, 5:30pm – 6:30pm or by appt.; Email: lbailon@ohlone.edu

*** Advisory for this course: Completion of ENGL – 101A or SPCH – 101 with grade of C or better.

Course Materials – What do I need for this course?

“Where there is much desire to learn, there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions; for opinions in good men is but knowledge in the making.”

-John Milton

Required text:

Larson, C.U. (2007). *Persuasion: Reception and responsibility* (11th ed.).
Belmont, CA: Thompson/Wadsworth Publ. Co.

Recommended text:

Some kind of APA Writing Handbook

Any daily newspaper (i.e. San Jose Mercury News, SF Chronicle) or editorial from a credible news/opinion publication (i.e. Newsweek). We will be exploring and discussing current issues and events throughout this semester. These materials encourage more informed discussion and participation from everyone.

Course Description – What is this course all about?

“Education is not merely a means for earning a living or an instrument for the acquisition of wealth. It is an initiation into a life of spirit, a training of the human soul in the pursuit of truth and the practice of virtue.”

- Vljaya Lakshimi Pandit

This course explores persuasion as a communication process from a variety of angles. You are all producers and consumers of persuasion. The goal of this course is to make you more critical, responsible consumers and producers of persuasion. Persuasion is a symbolic act between the persuader and the receiver. We will look at persuasive premises, the foundation of persuasive arguments, and how they influence how we are persuaded and how we attempt to persuade others. We will also look at how persuasion is enacted and operated in context, such as political campaigns, social movements, public speaking, interpersonal relationships, mass media, propaganda and advertising.

Course Objectives – What will I learn in this course?

“There are, then, these three means of effecting persuasion. The man who is to be in command of them must, it is clear, be able (1) to reason logically, (2) to understand human character and goodness in their various forms, and (3) to understand the emotions—that is, to name them and describe them, to know their causes and the way in which they are excited.”

- Aristotle

- Identify persuasive tools and their influence of the individual and society.
- Identify and evaluate the ethical, logical, and emotional components of persuasion.

- Identify factual and judgmental claims and differences between truths and preferences, facts and opinion.
- Understand forms of arguments and reasoning.
- Understand how to construct a well-reasoned argument and know how to use appropriate evidence to support conclusions.
- Analyze issues and isolate fallacies as indicators of defective reasoning.
- Identify ethical communication strategies to construct a logical argument
- Understand and value the influence of cultural diversity in communication, persuasion, and critical thinking.

Policies – What do I need to know?

“Not to know is bad; not to wish to know is worse.”

-African Proverb

- Regular attendance is an obligation assumed by every student at the time of registration. It is your responsibility to attend and participate in this class. This class is very interactive and requires active participation on an individual level as well as in group settings. Therefore, absences will affect individual and group performance.
- I do not accept late work.
- You must submit your own, original work for this course. I will uphold Ohlone College’s policy on academic dishonesty. Consequently, an instance of academic misconduct (e.g., plagiarism, cheating, taking credit for others’ work, submitting work for another course as work for this one, etc.) will likely result in a failing course grade. Please refer to Ohlone’s course catalog or make arrangements to chat with me to discuss this further if you have questions.
- If you need course adaptations or other assistance because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information you feel you should share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case this building must be evacuated, please arrange to chat with me during office hours.
- Please remember that, in order to receive general education credit for this course, you must earn at least a C or better.
- In order to foster an environment conducive to learning, as well as out of respect for the instructor and your fellow colleagues, please turn off or put on “silent” mode all electronic devices. Electronic interruptions take away from valuable class activities and discussions and are not appreciated by the instructor or classmates.
- This course is interactive and is dependent on your participation. We will be discussing current events and issues and sharing our own opinions. In

order to foster and encourage a supportive atmosphere for discussion, **respect** for each other and each other's opinions is necessary.

On Format – How should I format the assignments I turn in?

“Learning is not attained by chance, it must be sought for with ardor and attended to with diligence”.

- Abigail Adams

Please format all assignments as follows:

- Typed or word-processed (using a dark ink)
- APA citation style
- double-spaced
- 10 or 12 point font, one inch margins on all sides.
- 4-6 pages in length, unless otherwise specified

Be sure to include your name, as well as a title for the assignment. Please remember that all written assignments are to include a reference page (including some homework and journal assignments).

Assignments and Grading:

Group Project #1 – Analysis of a social movement	150 pts
Group Project #2 – Create a Persuasive Campaign	300 pts
Individual Papers (3 @ 100 pts each)	300 pts
Final Exam	50 pts
<u>Participation, In-class assignments, journals</u>	<u>200 pts</u>
Total	1000 pts

Your final grade is based on the following point scale:

A = 1000-900 points	C = 799-700 points
B = 899-800 points	D = 699-600 points
F = let's not think about this	

***Tentative Course Calendar**

Week	Date	Description	Reading Assign due	Assign
1	1/30	Introductions and Course Overview Persuasion in Today's World and Cultural Influences	Buy texts; Read syllabus	Read syllabus carefully; journal assign. #1
2	2/6	Ethics in Persuasion Critical Thinking, Knowledge, and Truth	Ch. 1-2	Read Postman handout; journal assign.

* May be subject to change

				#2
3	2/13	Approaches to Persuasion: Traditional and Humanistic	Ch. 3	Individual Paper #1
4	2/20	Approaches to Persuasion: Social Scientific	Ch. 4	Group Project #1
5	2/27	The use and misuse of symbols Individual Paper #1 due	Ch. 5	Group project #1
6	3/6	Persuasion as symbolic: Language and other persuasive symbols Work on group projects	Ch.6	Group project #1
7	3/13	Process Premises Work on Group Projects	Ch. 7	Group project #1
8	3/20	Group Project #1 presentations		
9	3/27	Spring Break!		
10	4/3	Content Premises and Reasoning Fallacies	Ch. 8	Individual Paper #2
11	4/10	Cultural Premises Individual Paper #2 due	Ch. 9	Bring in visual ad for analysis
12	4/17	Nonverbal messages	Ch. 10	Individual Paper #3
13	4/24	Persuasive campaign or movement	Ch. 11	Group Project #2
14	5/1	Becoming a persuader Individual Paper #3 due	Ch. 12	Group Project #2
14	5/8	Modern media and persuasion	Ch.13	Group Project #2
16	5/15	Persuasive premises in persuading Work on Group Projects	Ch. 14	Group Project #2; Final exam
17	5/22	Final Exam* Group Project 2 presentations		

*The final exam is a take home final. More information to follow as the semester progresses.

Grade Monitoring Form

There is up to 1000 points possible in this class. I encourage you to keep track of your progress in this course. Note the point breakdown for each assignment

<u>Assignments</u>	<u>Points Possible</u>	<u>Actual Grade</u>
Individual Paper #1	100 points	
<u>Individual Paper #2</u>	100 points	
Individual Paper #3	100 points	
<i>Individual Papers total</i>	<i>300 points</i>	
Group Project #1: Analysis of a Social Movement	150 points	
Group Project #2: Create a Persuasive Campaign	300 points	
<i>Group Projects total</i>	<i>450 points</i>	
<i>Final Exam</i>	50 points	
<i>Participation points total</i>	200 points	
Total Points	1000 points	