



IT'S IN THE SYLLABUS

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COMM323 Argument & Persuasion

Fall 2013

Instructor: Michael Schandorf

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Office: BSB 1160C

Office Hours: Before class (2:45 – 3:30) and by appointment

Class Time: 3:30 – 4:45, Tues/Thurs

Class Location: BSB 285

Class Blog: <http://persuasioning.wordpress.com>

Course Overview

The study of *Argument & Persuasion*, in the form of Rhetoric, was the foundation of academic studies in the West. This course will provide a historical overview of approaches to the study and practice of argument and persuasion from the time of Plato and the ancient Greek Sophists through studies of propaganda, contemporary marketing practices, and persuasive technologies. We will examine the development of underlying theoretical bases of persuasion in the Humanities and the Social Sciences, including approaches to visual rhetoric and computer-mediated persuasion.

We will be reading *a lot* this semester. **You are expected and required to read and respond to all of the readings every week.** I do not expect you to absorb *all* of the material we will encounter this semester. I do, however, expect you to demonstrate an effort to understand, which means at least in part, making connections among the course materials, including material from earlier weeks as we move through the semester, as well as with other material you find on your own and your previous knowledge and experience. This also, of course, means *demonstrating* a familiarity with the ideas in the readings in discussions (both in class and online).

Texts

There are **NO REQUIRED TEXTS** for this course. All readings will be made available on Blackboard. Most of the readings are widely available online or are available to students through the UIC Library's online database access.

Requirements and Grades

Your participation and contribution to the class discussions will have a decisive impact both on the success of the course as a whole and on your individual grade. This means two things: 1) you must attend class, and 2) you must be prepared to participate. Individual grades will be computed as follows:

Participation (in class): 20%
 Participation (online): 15%
 Weekly Response Blogs: 20%
 Group Work: 15%
 Midterm: 10%
 Final: 20%

Participation (35% in total)

Argument & Persuasion is a seminar-style class. There is nothing to memorize. There are no quizzes. There are no tests. Your performance will not be evaluated, and your grade in this course will not be based, on your ability to regurgitate arbitrary facts or definitions from the materials and lectures. There will be as little “lecturing” as possible. Your grade will ultimately be based on the effort you demonstrate in engaging with the ideas we will be confronting this semester. Your engagement will be demonstrated most directly by your participation in class discussions. In order to do this, you will need to read the assigned materials very carefully and work to incorporate their ideas and perspectives into your own experience and understanding. You are not required to “believe” the material. You are not expected to agree with everything we read or talk about in the course (I certainly hope not!). You are not expected to agree with each other. You are not required or expected to agree with *me*. You *are* expected to work toward understanding these ideas, concepts and perspectives and to at least begin to make up your own mind.

Your engagement and effort will be demonstrated in class discussions, both during weekly class meetings and online, as well as in your reading responses. In order to participate in class discussions, you must attend class. **Absences and tardiness will negatively and significantly affect your participation grade.** Sitting quietly in class and hoping others do the talking is not an option. **Silence and reticence will negatively affect your participation grade.** Do not be afraid to say something “dumb.” We are going to be reading materials that will sometimes be entirely alien, and will more often than not be very difficult. The only way to get a grip on them will be to confront them openly together as a class. Go ahead and say something “dumb” – it probably won’t be as dumb as you think (and you’ll probably find that you’re not the only one thinking it), and at you may, at least, bring up interesting questions.

At the same time, do not ever assume that you “get it.” If things seem easy or simple, you’re probably missing something. Try to figure out what you’re missing. Talk to each other. Ask questions. Lurking online or ignoring others’ reading responses and comments are not options. **Lack of online interaction will significantly and negatively affect your participation grade.** Do not expect to whip up a flurry of activity in the last week of the semester in order to “make your points.” Similarly, the online discussions should be an ongoing process of engagement rather than a weekly burst of activity at the beginning of the week. Try not to think of the in-class and online discussions as separate events. Let them reference and engage with one another in an ongoing dialogue. **Your participation, both in class and online, will be evaluated in terms of activity, depth, and consistency.** There are no hard-and-fast quantifiable measures that I am looking for: no minimum/maximum number of comments, no checklist of who speaks and who doesn’t in each class, no minimum number of absences. That’s too easy. This class is not a game. It’s not a competition. There is no score. Your job is to read, think, engage and learn. Do that, and your grade will take care of itself.

Class Notes on the Wiki: Another way to participate in the course (and thereby “earn your points”) is to add your class notes to the Wiki. On the Class Schedule & Sign-Up Wiki on Blackboard, links are available to the outlines of the week’s readings (posted by group responsible for that week’s material and discussions) and a link to “Class Notes” for each week. Adding your own notes from our class discussions is a form of online participation for which you will get credit. However, if others have posted notes before you, **DO NOT** simply paste your notes below what is already there. Integrate your own notes into what others have posted. Otherwise the page will just be a big, muddled, redundant, and

useless mess—and you won't get any credit for being lazy and making a mess. The Class Notes on the wiki are specifically for collecting notes on our class discussions. It is not a place for extended commentary—that's what the blog is for.

Weekly Response Blogs (20%)

Weekly reading responses will be due every Monday (no specific time) and will cover the readings for the coming week (*not the readings we've already discussed in class*). There are no absolute requirements, and no minimum/maximum word limits. The purposes and goals of the reading response as an assignment are:

- 1) to show me that you've read the material,
- 2) to show me that you've thought about the material,
- 3) to allow you a dedicated space to begin making connections among the readings, the lectures, and the class discussions, and
- 4) to allow a space for discussion of the material beyond the classroom—commenting on and referring to your classmates' posts is a good way to show you're paying attention.

Do not just summarize the readings. (We're all reading them, too. Someone will be doing an outline for each of them. We don't need you to summarize the reading for us. *Think* instead.) We will be using a group WordPress blog (<http://persuasioning.wordpress.com/>) for reading responses, and online discussion is an important part of your participation grade – commenting (respectfully) on others' posts is encouraged (to say the least). This will let us share thoughts and ideas and interact with each other online throughout the semester.

Directions for the class blog: Send me the email that you will use to sign in to Wordpress. I'll send you an invitation to become a Contributor to the blog. After accepting the invitation you'll be able to post your responses and/or other related fun stuff. The Persuasioning blog is available to anyone in the interwebs. Remember when you write your responses that your audience is not limited to our class. **You do not have to use your real name.** Your responses should explore the ideas in each week's readings for a general audience, following the guidelines above. You are welcome and encouraged to post more than your weekly responses when you find something related to our discussions or readings (this can include video, links to other things, etc.). The blog has an rss feed and an email notification that you can sign up for to find out when new posts are available. You are not required or expected to read *all* of your classmates' responses or posts, but you should, at least loosely, keep up with the discussions (remember that online participation is part of your grade). You are also able to look back through previous posts by students in previous sections of the course. If you have never had a blog before and/or are unfamiliar with Wordpress, don't worry, it won't hurt. Play with it. Ask questions (of me or your classmates or others) if you need to. You'll figure it out.

Group Work (15%)

During the first week of class, you will sign up for a week to lead discussions in groups of 2 or 3. As a group, you will be responsible for the following:

1. **Presenting a brief overview in class of the week's readings, including, the main points, arguments, and claims of each reading.** However your group wants to do this is fine. No visuals (Powerpoint etc) are required—this is not a formal presentation. Your overview of the week's materials should not last more than 10-15 minutes, in total. The overview should refresh our memories about the readings, and give us a place to start discussions. Your group should have a few good discussion questions ready for class. (A good place to start looking for these is in your classmates' reading response posts.)
2. **Putting together a general outline of each of the week's readings on the Blackboard wiki.** The outlines will give all us an easy way to go back to the materials once we've covered them. They will also help us to relate all of the course materials to each other, and will help with midterms and final papers.

3. **Leading discussions in class and online.** Each group will be expected to generate online discussion by commenting on your classmates' response posts. A good way to encourage online participation is to ask people specific questions that relate responses to in-class discussions.

Each group will be expected to be thoroughly familiar with their week's readings and be able to answer (as well as ask) questions about the material and its relation to earlier readings. Your group will be considered the "experts" on readings in the week you sign up for.

Midterm (10%)

You have two options for the midterm. Option 1 is the default. If you want to take Option 2, you need to let me know by **Monday October 7** (and you need to know exactly who is in your group) so we can decide all together on the conditions. No switching after the 7th.

Midterm Option 1: Write 3000 words or so comparing two of the theorists or approaches we've covered to that point (your choice) in terms of the themes we've explored in class. The midterm paper is due by **Saturday October 19** (no specific time) by email (I do not take paper).

Midterm Option 2: In a group of no less than 5 and no more than 8, carry out a dialogue on the Blackboard Discussion Board concerning one or more interrelated themes of the course up to that point. Your group will have one week (from Sunday, October 13 through Saturday, October 19) to carry out your discussion. We'll decide together beforehand on the topic(s) of discussion and the requirements and criteria of a "good" dialogue, according to which each group member will be graded.

Final Paper/Project (20%)

The final project will be to a 10-12 page paper (or the equivalent) of your own design. The idea is apply what you've learned over the semester to something in the real world and/or from your own experience. We'll talk more about it as the end of the semester approaches. You will need to provide me with some ideas for your final project by **Monday, November 18**. This can be little more than a couple or a few very rough ideas (though if you have a clear idea and goal, that's good, too). We will work out a plan together over the following couple of weeks. Your project must be approved by me prior to beginning work. I will not accept unapproved final projects.

Academic Integrity

You are responsible for reading and abiding by the University Principles Regarding Academic Integrity (available online: www.uic.edu/ucatalog/GR.shtml#o). Make sure to document all of your work and acknowledge the ideas and the work of others.

Course Schedule

Week 1: Basics—Intro to Rhetoric August 27, 29
 Franz-Hubert Robling, *In Defense of the Orator*
 Dissoi Logoi

Week 2: Agonistic Rhetoric September 3, 5
 Plato, *Gorgias*

Week 3: Rhetoric & Dialectic 1 September 10, 12
 Plato, *Phaedrus*

Week 4: Rhetoric & Dialectic 2 September 17, 19

Peter Ramus, *Against Quintillian* vs. Richard Weaver, *Language is Sermonic*
Michael Leff, *Rhetoric & Dialectic in the 21st Century*

Week 5: Kenneth Burke September 24, 26

Excerpts from *Grammar of Motives*, *Rhetoric of Motives*

Week 6: Rhetoric & Reasoning October 1, 3

Chaim Perelman, excerpts from *The New Rhetoric: A Theory of Practical Reasoning*
William Regh, *Rhetoric & Reason in Habermas's Theory of Argumentation*
Eugene Garver, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics & Prudence in the Interpretation of the Constitution*

Week 7: Argument October 8, 10

Daniel O'Keefe, *Two Concepts of Argument*
Wayne Brockertide, *Where is Argument?*
Stephen Toulmin, excerpts from *The Uses of Argument*
Wayne Brockertide, *Rhetorical Criticism as Argument*

Week 8: Persuasion Processes October 15, 17

Daniel O'Keefe, *ELM*
Richard Petty, *Two Routes to Persuasion*
Judee Burgoon et al, *Cognitive Biases & Nonverbal Cue Availability*
Todd Oakley, *Attention & Rhetoric*

Midterm Due Saturday October 20

Week 9: Propaganda & Persuasion October 22, 24

Garth Jowett & Victoria O'Donnell, *Propaganda & Persuasion* Chpt 4
Edward Bernays, *Manipulating Public Opinion* vs Kenneth Burke, *Hitler's Battle*
Philip Taylor, *Munitions of the Mind*, Chapter 26: "The Gulf War of 1991"
John Arthos, *The Just Use of Propaganda(?)*

Week 10: Changing Attitudes & Behavior October 29, 31

Michael Slater, *Stages of Change Framework*
Barbara Rimer & Matthew Kreuter, *Advancing Tailored Health Communication*
JS Swindell et al, *Beneficent Persuasion*
Ya Hui Michelle See, et al, *When Message Tailoring Backfires*

Week 11: Myth, Narrative & Persuasion November 5, 7

Markus Appel & Tobias Richter, *Transportation & Need for Affect in Narrative Persuasion*
Walter Fisher, *Reaffirmation & Subversion of the American Dream*
Walter Fisher, *Romantic Democracy, Ronald Reagan, and Presidential Heroes*

Week 12: Metaphors, Frames & Associations November 12, 14

Javier Horcajo et al, *Consumer Persuasion*
Mark Landau et al, *Self-Relevant Motives & Metaphoric Framing Interact to Influence Political & Social Attitudes*
Micheal Jones & Geoboo Song, *Making Sense of Climate Change*
George Lakoff, *Metaphors of Terror*

Final Paper/Project Topic Ideas Due Monday, November 18

Week 13: Marketing & Advertising – Consumers & Politics November 19, 21

Richard Eliot, *'Absolut' Consumption*

Mike Featherstone, *Perspective on Consumer Culture*

John Sloop, *People Shopping*

Jennifer Sandlin et al, *Now I Ain't Sayin' She a Gold Digger*

Week 14: Visual Rhetorics November 26

J. Anthony Blair, *Rhetoric of Visual Arguments*

Kevin Michael DeLuca, *Image Politics* (chpt 5)

Diane Hope, *Gendered Environments*

David Dietrich, *Avatars of Whiteness*

Week 13: Persuasive Technologies December 3, 5

Donald Steiny, *Network Awareness, Social Context, & Persuasion*

BJ Fogg, *Mass Interpersonal Persuasion*

Rosanna Guadano et al, *Social Influence Online*

Kaptein & Eckles, *Selecting Effective Means to Any End*

Smids, *Voluntariness in Persuasive Technology*

Final Paper/Project Due Friday, December 13