

**CMS 332K, THEORIES OF PERSUASION** Fall 2020 A WEB BASED COURSE  
unique# 07325

Instructor: Barry Brummett, CMA 7.150, office hours: by appointment

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**What the course is about:** This course treats persuasion as those intentional, planned efforts that are made so as to influence people, to change or reinforce attitudes, and to encourage or discourage behaviors. The course studies general principles of persuasion, the tools of persuasion in language, the individual mind, and social relations, and the applications of persuasion in different personal and social contexts. Students should emerge from this course with a better understanding of how persuasion is used on them and how to use persuasion to influence others.

**Readings:** There are two required books, both at the University Co-op on Guadalupe: Gary C. Woodward and Robert E. Denton, Jr., *Persuasion and Influence in American Life* 8<sup>th</sup> ed and Robert B. Cialdini, *Influence: Science and Practice* 5<sup>th</sup> ed

**Grading system and assignments:** There are five tests in the course, each on one of five units (I, II, IIIa, IIIb, IV) Each of these graded assignments is worth 100 points. There is no extra credit. Thus, your grade will be based on a total of 500 points. Any grievance of any grade in this course must be launched within one week of receiving the grade. Final semester grades, as per UT policy, may only be complained about on the basis of miscalculation.

Each assignment is graded on a scale in which 90-100=A, 80-89=B, 70-79=C, 60-69=D, below 60=F. The overall points based on 500 points possible are 450-500=A, 400-449=B, 350-399=C, 300-349=D, below 300=F. We do not do +/- grades. We do not determine grades on the basis of average or mean scores.

**Tests:** All tests are online, via the Canvas site, between 6 and 7:30pm Austin time on the announced dates. The tests will be mixed essay, short answer, multiple choice tests based on Woodward and Denton and on Cialdini, and also based on material presented in powerpoint lectures. See the study guide on the Canvas site for help in what to study for in the readings and ppts. If you cannot take a test on the day indicated you must notify the instructor and the TA no later than 24 hours before the test is given or you must have a documented, legitimate excuse such as a note from a doctor. Makeups are given at a time chosen by the teaching staff.

**Course policies:** We will follow guidelines for conduct as explained in the General Information Bulletin, e.g., don't plagiarize, let me know now if you have a relevant disability, let me know if you have a religious conflict, and so forth. The University of

Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471-6441 TTY. Any letters requesting accommodations via the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (SSD) must be received by this instructor by the end of the fourth week of the semester. I take plagiarism seriously: If you cheat on a test, turn in work that was submitted for credit in another course, or turn in any written work not original to you without proper reference, you will fail the course, I will turn you in to the University, and you will be locked away in the Tower with the spiders and black beetles.

***Course schedule and due dates:***

*Unit One: Persuasion: basic principles. Ethics.* Woodward & Denton (WD) chapters 1,2—Cialdini (C) Introduction and chapters 1, 8. **Test 6pm-7:30pm on September 16.**

*Unit Two: Tools of Persuasion: language manipulation* W&D chapter 3---*using the appearance of rationality* W&D chapter 4.—*aesthetics and design*, W&D chapter 9  
**Test 6pm-7:30pm on October 7**

*Unit Three/a: Theories of Persuasion: exploiting the source's credibility and authority* W&D chapter 5, C chapter 6-- *manipulating psychological processes* W&D chapter 6 to page 113, C chapter 3. **Test 6pm-7:30pm on November 4**

*Unit Three/b: Theories of Persuasion: creating and using social pressure* W&D chapter 6 p. 114 to end, chpt 7, C chapter 2, 4. **Test 6pm-7:30pm on November 30**

*Unit Four: Applications of persuasion: contexts of use* W&D chapter 8, C chapter 5, 7-- *interpersonal communication --public and mass communication---advertising—politics—*  
**Test December 11, 6-7:30pm**

**Important Safety Information:**

If you have concerns about the safety or behavior of fellow students, TAs or Professors, call BCAL (the Behavior Concerns Advice Line): 512-232-5050. Your call can be anonymous. If something doesn't feel right – it probably isn't. Trust your instincts and share your concerns.

***Title IX Reporting***

Title IX is a federal law that protects against sex and gender based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual misconduct, dating/domestic violence and stalking at federally funded educational institutions. UT Austin is committed to fostering a learning and working environment free from discrimination in all its forms. When sexual misconduct occurs in our community, the university can:

1. Intervene to prevent harmful behavior from continuing or escalating.

2. Provide support and remedies to students and employees who have experienced harm or have become involved in a Title IX investigation.
3. Investigate and discipline violations of the university's [relevant policies](#).

Faculty members and certain staff members are considered “Responsible Employees” or “Mandatory Reporters,” which means that they are required to report violations of Title IX to the Title IX Coordinator. **I am a Responsible Employee and must report any Title IX related incidents** that are disclosed in writing, discussion, or one-on-one. Before talking with me, or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX related incident, be sure to ask whether they are a responsible employee. If you want to speak with someone for support or remedies without making an official report to the university, email [advocate@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:advocate@austin.utexas.edu) For more information about reporting options and resources, visit [titleix.utexas.edu](http://titleix.utexas.edu) or contact the Title IX Office at [titleix@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:titleix@austin.utexas.edu).

I also take any other kind of discrimination or harassment very seriously, and I urge you to report such misbehavior. Discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, citizenship, veteran status, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression can be reported to the Office for Inclusion and Equity. Or tell me and I will report it.

- [Office for Inclusion and Equity \(OIE\)](#)  
The Office for Inclusion and Equity (OIE) investigates and helps to resolve complaints of sexual misconduct and discrimination.
  - [File a report of discrimination via online form](#)
  - [Call to report discrimination 512-471-1849](#) or email: [equity@utexas.edu](mailto:equity@utexas.edu)
- [Office for Civil Rights \(OCR\)](#)  
The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) in the US Department of Education is responsible for enforcing federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance from the Department of Education, including sex discrimination covered under Title IX. [Call the Office for Civil Rights 214-661-9600](#).
- [Equal Opportunity in Employment Commission \(EEOC\)](#)  
The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is responsible for enforcing federal laws that make it illegal to discriminate against a job applicant or employee on the basis of a protected class, including discrimination on the basis of sex. [Call the Equal Opportunity in Employment Commission 800-669-4000](#).

