

**Fall 2014**

**PERSUASION  
BACM-30490  
TH 11:00 to 12:15**

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**The Eugene D. Fanning Center for Business Communication  
Mendoza College of Business  
University of Notre Dame**

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The instructor for this course is Dr. Sandra Collins. Office: 234C Mendoza College of Business. Office Hours: MW 12:30-1:30, and by appointment. E-mail: scollin1@nd.edu. Business phone: 574-631-3919. Home phone: 574-232-7376.

The Director of the Eugene D. Fanning Center for Business Communication is Prof. James S. O'Rourke. The Center is located in 234 Mendoza. Telephone: 574-631-8397. Fax: 574-631-5255. E-mail: james.s.orourke.2@nd.edu. The assistant for the Fanning Center is Judy Bradford, room 234 Mendoza, 631-4827.

**TEXT**

Collins, Sandra D., *Persuasion*, Edited by James O'Rourke, (Mason, OH, South-Western, 2009).

Chapters, cases, and articles available on Sakai and on e-reserve.

Materials available through our Harvard Business Publishing Coursepack (link is on Sakai).

Various materials distributed in class.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Explain important terms, concepts, and theories of social influence.
- Apply general concepts and theories of persuasion to business situations and problems.
- Integrate concepts and theories within this course (and connect them to concepts from other courses) to approach complex problems and create influential messages.
- Critically evaluate persuasive messages and identify their persuasive elements for a given audience.
- Differentiate between ethical and unethical persuasion.

## GENERAL COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- You must complete the assignments described in this syllabus and submit them on the specified dates.
- You must participate fully and actively in our classroom discussions and exercises.
- You must attend class. Your professor will take roll at each meeting session to determine who is present and who is not.

## SPECIFIC COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**Participation.** Participation is more than just attendance. This class will involve case discussions and in-class exercises. Attendance and preparation for class are expected. Ability and willingness to contribute to class discussions and exercises will be evaluated and will count toward your grade for the class.

**Exams.** There are two exams for the class. The exams may include multiple choice, true or false, short answer, and short essay questions. Exams will cover material presented in class and from reading assignments (even if not discussed in class).

**Assignments.** Three individual assignments are due for the class and are worth five points each. Late assignments will be accepted but will be graded down for lateness. In addition, an online learning module accessible through our Harvard Business Publishing Coursepack is assigned and completion of this module is worth 10 points.

**Group Project.** You will work in groups of 4 to 5 on a group project. The project requires defining a problem, posing and researching a solution, supporting your recommended solution with relevant evidence, and giving a written summary and a persuasive presentation of your solution. Details about the project will be distributed in class and posted on Sakai. Typically, all group members will receive the same grade for the group project. However, the instructor reserves the right to grade group members differently based on individual contributions to the project.

## GRADING AND GRADE WEIGHTS

**In accordance with a requirement of the Provost, the Mendoza College of Business Department and Program Grade Guidelines mandates a mean class grade of no higher than 3.4 for Management classes.**

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Percent of Grade</u>
Assignments	25	25%
Group Project	20	20%
Exams (2@25 points each)	50	50%
Classroom Discussion & Participation	<u>5</u>	<u>5%</u>
	100	100%

## GRADING PHILOSOPHY

Your grade for any particular assignment in this course is a reflection of your professor's judgment of the quality of your work. We can only grade on the basis of what you give us, not on what you had sincerely intended to do. Submit your work on time, follow the assignment directions, do your own work, and you'll have little trouble achieving the course objectives.

Grades will not be distributed on a curve. You are attempting to meet our standards of quality work. Those standards have been developed over a period of more than 30 years, dealing with business, government, industry, the press and the public. We are asking you to do what your employers will ask of you: prompt, competent, effective work.

Once a grade has been assigned and recorded, it cannot and will not be changed unless evidence is provided that your professor has made an error. A difference of opinion between you and your professor about the quality of your work is not evidence of error.

## COURSE POLICIES AND STANDARDS

Please seek help as soon and as often as you need. Do not wait until it is too late for us to help you. We are here to assist you with the task of learning and improving your communication skills.

**Deadlines.** There are no automatic extensions, make-ups, or incompletes. Assignments will be accepted late; however, you will be graded down. Please let me know in advance if you are unable to take an exam at the scheduled time.

**Absence.** We regard your presence as especially important, even if your instructor does not formally take roll at the beginning of each class. If you cannot be here, let your instructor know about it in advance. We have found, over the years, a remarkable correlation: those who come to class faithfully seem to do better in the course.

**Incompletes.** As a rule, we do not award incompletes. They're genuinely a pain in the neck. You begin the new term with the obligations of the previous semester hanging over your head. Both instructor and student feel harried and unhappy about the situation. In unusual cases, though, such as hospitalization or genuine emergency, an incomplete will be assigned. The student must complete all class assignments within one semester or the Registrar will assign a grade of "F" unless an extension is approved by both the instructor and the Dean, and we notify the Registrar.

**Appeals.** Your first course of appeal for any grade, assignment requirement, due date or other course-related decision is your instructor. If you either do not understand or cannot accept your instructor's decision, you may appeal in writing to the course director. Subsequent appeals may be directed to the Associate Dean and, from there, to the Dean of the College. Keep in mind that most administrators will be reluctant to overrule routine, course-related decisions of their faculty.

**The Notre Dame Honor Code.** Much of the educational process in the Mendoza College of Business involves group discussion and collaborative activities. Neither the College nor the Fanning Center for Business Communication wish to hinder the learning that can and often does take place in that environment. Fairness, however, requires that certain limits be observed in the actual production of assignments.

Certain cautions should be followed when written work or slide presentations are being prepared for class:

- All sources for any written assignment must be cited.
- No work should be copied word-for-word from a website or any other source unless it is offered as a quote and is properly credited.
- Files for written work should not be shared between students, unless the work is part of a group assignment.
- Graphs, tables, or charts copied from a website and used in a PowerPoint presentation should have the source cited on the slide.

## Schedule of Classes

<p><b>Monday, October 27</b></p> <p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Course</li> <li>• Forms of Social Influence</li> </ul>	<p><b>Preparation:</b></p> <p>None</p>
<p><b>Wednesday, October 29</b></p> <p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethical Influence</li> </ul> <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applying the TARES test to examples.</li> </ul> <p><b>Due: Assignment 1, Examples for TARES discussion.</b></p>	<p><b>Preparation:</b></p> <p>Read: <i>Skim TARES</i> article on Sakai; <i>Persuasion</i>, Chapter 1.</p> <p>Do: Find examples of messages that fail the TARES test.</p>
<p><b>Monday, November 3</b></p> <p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conformity</li> </ul> <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using conformity principles</li> </ul>	<p><b>Preparation:</b></p> <p>Read: <i>Persuasion</i>, Chapter 2 and "Conformity and Influence in Groups" on e-reserve and OPOWER from Harvard coursepack.</p>
<p><b>Wednesday, November 5</b></p> <p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance</li> <li>• Sequential requests</li> <li>• Obedience</li> </ul> <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Miracle-Gro</li> <li>• Overview of Group Project</li> <li>• Form Groups</li> </ul> <p><b>Due: GenCoat Letter</b></p>	<p><b>Preparation:</b></p> <p>Read: "Harnessing the Science of Persuasion" by Cialdini from Harvard coursepack.</p> <p>Do: Prepare a letter in response to the GenCoat Case described in Assignment 2 below.</p>

<p><b>Monday, November 10</b></p> <p>Topic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attitudes and persuasion</li> </ul> <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Act case</li> </ul> <p><b>Due: Response to First Act</b></p>	<p><b>Preparation:</b></p> <p>Read: Read <i>Persuasion</i> Chapter 3 and <b>First Act</b> case on Sakai.</p> <p>Do: Prepare your response to the First Act question described in Assignment 3 below. Do not respond to the questions in the case.</p>
<p><b>Wednesday, November 12</b></p> <p><b>Exam 1</b></p>	<p><b>Preparation:</b></p> <p>Study readings and class notes. Powerpoints will be posted but are not a complete review.</p>
<p><b>Monday, November 17</b></p> <p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ELM</li> <li>• Problem Definition, Group Problem Solving</li> </ul> <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brainstorming Session</li> </ul>	<p><b>Preparation:</b></p> <p>Read: "The Elaboration Likelihood Model" on e-reserve.</p>
<p><b>Wednesday, November 19</b></p> <p>Topic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audience Assessment</li> <li>• Arguments and Evidence</li> <li>• Questionnaires</li> </ul> <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem solving and structuring your argument.</li> </ul> <p><b>Due: Problem Definition (group)</b></p>	<p><b>Preparation:</b></p> <p>Read: "Strategies for Argument" on e-reserve and Appendix A in <i>Persuasion</i>.</p>
<p><b>Monday, November 24</b></p> <p>Research in BIC library.</p>	<p><b>Preparation:</b></p> <p>Read: <i>Persuasion</i>, Chapter 4 and "\$2+\$2=5" on Sakai.</p> <p>Bring in all work you have completed for the project.</p>
<p><b>Wednesday, November 26</b></p> <p><b>Happy Thanksgiving</b></p>	

<p><b>Monday, December 1</b></p> <p>Topic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotional Appeals</li> </ul> <p><b>Due: Argument map</b></p>	<p><b>Preparation:</b></p> <p>Read: Argument Mapping on Sakai.</p>
<p><b>Wednesday, December 3</b></p> <p>In-class Exercise</p> <p><b>Due: ManageMentor Certificate</b></p>	<p><b>Preparation:</b></p>
<p><b>Monday, December 8</b></p> <p><b>Exam 2</b></p>	<p><b>Preparation:</b></p> <p>Study readings and class notes. Powerpoints will be posted but are not a complete review.</p>
<p><b>Wednesday, December 10</b></p> <p><b>Due: Group Presentations</b></p>	

## BACM 30490 Persuasion Individual Assignments

**1. Examples for TARES discussion.** Find and bring to class two examples of messages that fail the TARES test on at least one dimension. You can bring in a print ad, an article, an op-ed piece, or write a paragraph describing a message. Write a short paragraph for each message on why you believe it fails the TARES. Be prepared to share your examples with the class and discuss them.

**2. GenCoat Case.** You are the Human Resources Manager for GenCoat, a metal-coating company. Like many other organizations, GenCoat is suffering from the high cost of health care. GenCoat is known as a great place to work and rarely does anyone who starts working for the company leave it. With an aging workforce, the burden on the company for insurance costs is growing every year. With other costs rising and foreign competition increasing, GenCoat is facing financial pressures that could spell the beginning of the end.

You have been charged with reducing the costs of health coverage for GenCoat employees. Thanks to copious research and some tough negotiating on your part, you have found a company that will give GenCoat a discount on insurance coverage *if* employees complete a health maintenance and prevention program offered by a third party provider. The first step for participation is to complete an online health and lifestyle questionnaire.

Because the questionnaire is offered by the third party provider, the identities of those filling out the questionnaire and their responses are not known by GenCoat. This confidentiality is an important part of this arrangement, since many employees do not want their employers to know about their health issues. However, *the level* of participation (in other words, the *number* of GenCoat employees who complete the online questionnaire) will be known. The initial discount on the insurance coverage is based on the percentage of employees who complete the online questionnaire.

Your task is to write a letter to employees influencing them to complete the online questionnaire **using conformity messages, compliance gaining tactics, and obedience** as you see fit. Use a full block style of format (e.g., everything starts at the left margin) and in the margins of the letter indicate (by hand if you choose) where you have used a conformity message, a compliance gaining tactic, or a directive. In the letter you may refer to things you plan to do as part of your overall campaign designed to gain high levels of participation, however, you have a very small budget of \$2500 to work with (enough for copies, a few posters, some prizes, beverages and snacks for one event, and the like). GenCoat operates out of one location, runs two shifts, and has 170 employees. Of those employees, about 110 of them work on the shop floor and do not have company email addresses or in-boxes.

By the way, your purpose in negotiating this deal was to achieve a desperately needed reduction in expenses for GenCoat; therefore, the savings on insurance cannot be passed on to employees to reward them for completing the questionnaire.

**3. First Act Question.** Write a response to this question: In the First Act case, why was the ISO alert so effective? Your response should be typed using 12 pt. font, 1.5 spacing, and be one page in length.

**4. ManageMentor: Persuading Others.** Complete the online module on Persuading Others accessible through our Harvard Business Publishing coursepack. You may complete the module at your own pace. Total time required is 1.5 to 2 hours. When you have completed the module, print the certificate of completion. You will turn the certificate in for course credit.

# BACM 30490 Persuasion Group Projects

## Overview

Your group will develop a proposal for a project targeting sustainability. You have three choices for your focus:

1. Your group could identify an area of improvement in sustainability efforts on campus.
2. Your group could propose a sustainability related project for an organization.
3. Your group could propose a sustainability related project for a community.
4. Your group could argue for or against a sustainability related practice in an industry.

Regardless of your choice, your group will need to develop a definition of the problem and propose a solution. You will then build a case for your recommended solution. Finally, your group will write a proposal for your recommended solution and give a brief presentation of your project to the rest of the class. You must demonstrate in your proposal and your presentation that your recommendation is practical and will have a significant impact on the problem.

## Steps in the Process and Deliverables

**1. Group members list and first thoughts.** Form a group and discuss ideas for your project. (For example, if you target campus you could discuss: Where could we use energy more efficiently? Where could waste be reduced? Where could behaviors be modified in small ways to create a big impact?)

**Deliverable:** Turn in your list of names of group members and select three possibilities for your project.

**2. Problem Definition and Hypothesis.** As a group, brainstorm ways of defining the problem you have chosen for your project and generate your initial hypothesis for how to solve the problem.

**Deliverable:** The problem selected by the group and the group's initial hypothesis for addressing the problem.

**3. Argument Map.** You must support your recommendation (a.k.a., your argument) with evidence to show that it will have an impact on the problem and lead to financial savings. As a group, complete an argument map to show your evidence and structure your argument.

**Deliverable:** Argument map.

**4. Questionnaire.** You must assess the attitudes of those affected by your proposed changes or a similar audience using a questionnaire constructed by your group. The results of your data collection should be described in your proposal.

**Deliverable:** Clean copy of your questionnaire attached to your proposal as an appendix.

**5. Proposal.** Write a proposal describing your project in detail and making the argument for acceptance of the project. **Be sure to cite all sources.** Use a standard memo format for your proposal.

**Deliverable:** Proposal narrative with supporting financial documents.

**Structure for Proposal Document:**

Your proposal should include the following elements:

- Introduction (One or two lines about the problem you are addressing and a clear statement of your recommendation.) (1 paragraph)
- Demonstration that a problem exists. (1 page)
- Proof that your recommendation will address the problem. (1 page)
- Evidence that your recommendation is a practical and affordable solution. (1-2 pages)
- Evidence that the advantages of your solution outweigh the disadvantages. (1-2 pages)
- Conclusion (1 to 2 paragraphs)
- Appendices: Questionnaires, supporting financial documents, etc.

**6. Presentation.** Each group will give a ten minute presentation to the rest of the class on their proposal. The presentation should be persuasive, offering a clear recommendation and supporting that recommendation with evidence.

**Deliverable:** Ten minute presentation to the class and hard copy of PowerPoint slides.

## **Grading for the Projects (20 total points)**

- 2 points      Problem Definition and Hypothesis Worksheet (appendix)
- 2 points      Argument Map (appendix)
- 10 points     Written proposal  
                  Writing (organization, mechanics, clarity, flow)  
                  Argument/Evidence (quality of support, clarity or reasoning,  
                  sources cited)  
                  Solution (solves the problem presented, creative thinking)  
                  Questionnaire (appendix)
- 6 points      Presentation  
                  Introduction  
                  Flow of points  
                  Visual support  
                  Conclusion  
                  Delivery  
                  Overall persuasiveness