

**PSYCHOLOGY 3721F Section 530**

**The Psychology of Persuasion**

**Fall 2017**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

**Description:** An examination of social, psychological theories and research relating to attitude formation and change. Both persuasion of others and self-persuasion will be considered. Specific topics to be covered include the effects of fear appeals, mass media, cognitive dissonance, cults, and advertising.

**Antirequisite(s):** Psychology 3723 F/G

**Prerequisite(s):** Psychology 2720 a/b, or the former Psychology 272/270, at least one half Psychology research methods course at the 2000-level, and enrolment in third or fourth year of a psychology module.  
3 lecture/discussion hours, 0.5 course

**COURSE INFORMATION**

**Course Instructor:** Dr. Leslie Janes  
E-mail: [ljanes@uwo.ca](mailto:ljanes@uwo.ca)  
Phone: 432-8353 ext. 28275  
Office: Room 122, St. James Bldg.

**Office Hours:** Tuesday 1:30 - 3:30 pm, or by appointment

**Class Time and Location:** Wednesday 11:30 - 2:30, room 135, St. James Bldg.

**TEXTBOOK**

Perloff, R. M.. (2014) *The dynamics of persuasion: Communication and attitudes in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. (5th Edition), Lawrence Erlbaum Associates; New Jersey.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, among other learning objectives, students should be able to:

Comprehend the extent and effects of persuasive communications in the modern world (*Brescia competencies: social awareness & engagement; critical thinking; self-awareness and development*)

Describe, and compare and contrast major theories of persuasion (*Brescia competencies: critical thinking; communication, inquiry & analysis*)

Collaborate with peers to develop a coherent and informative class presentation on a topic relevant to persuasion (*Brescia competencies: Self-awareness & development; Social awareness & engagement; problem-solving; communication; inquiry & analysis*)

Students will be able to apply psychological theory to real-life persuasive situations (*Brescia competencies: communication; critical thinking; problem-solving; self-awareness & development*)

Develop an awareness of how persuasive techniques can be employed to encourage healthy behaviours and discourage unhealthy ones (*Brescia competencies: critical thinking; inquiry & analysis; social awareness & engagement; valuing; problem-solving*)

## COURSE FORMAT

The primary **class format** will be lectures (although questions and discussions are desired and encouraged). Material covered in lectures will not always be the same as material covered in the textbook; these two sources of information should be viewed as complimentary, not redundant. As such, students who want to do well in this course are **strongly encouraged** to attend lectures on a regular basis.

## EVALUATION

### 1. Midterm Test: 30%

There will be a two-hour examination on October 18. The test will cover the lecture material and the assigned readings. The format of the exam will be multiple choice, short answers, and essay questions.

### 2. Class Presentation: 25%

Students, working in small groups, will make one presentation (20-25 minutes) on an issue or a problem that is related to the course (e.g., cults, propaganda, advertising.) The goals of the presentation are to describe the nature of the problem you have chosen and to demonstrate how social psychological theory and research illuminate our understanding of the problem. The use of visual aids is encouraged. **Your presentation topic must be approved by me.** Each student in the presenting group will receive the same mark, unless group members provide an alternate marking arrangement.

### 3. Reflection Paper: 10%

Reflection papers are an opportunity for students to critically assess their own learning and development in the course. Reflection papers can be on any topic relevant to the course, but an assignment outline will be provided in class, providing more information and some possible topics.

### 4. Final Exam: 35%

The final exam will cover the material after the midterm (non-cumulative). It will be similar in format to the midterm exam and will be held in the final exam period.

## LECTURE AND READING SCHEDULE

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics and Assigned Readings</b>
September 13	Course introduction and foundations (ch's 1 & 2)
September 20	Attitudes (ch's 3 & 4)
September 27	Attitudes cont'd (ch's 5 & 6)
October 4	Processing persuasive communication (7)
October 9-13	<b>FALL READING WEEK</b>
October 18	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>
October 25	Factors in persuasion (ch's 8-10)
November 1	Cognitive dissonance (ch. 11)
November 8	Interpersonal persuasion (ch. 12)
November 15	Advertising (ch 13)
November 22	Communication campaigns & Cults (ch 14)
November 29 & December 6	Student Presentations

**Note: reflection papers are due on December 6**

### **2017-18 BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC POLICIES AND REGULATIONS**

#### **1. POLICY REGARDING MAKEUP EXAMS AND EXTENSIONS OF DEADLINES**

When a student requests academic accommodation (e.g., extension of a deadline, a makeup exam) for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course, it is the responsibility of the student to provide acceptable documentation to support a medical or compassionate claim. All such requests for academic accommodation **must** be made through an Academic Advisor and include supporting documentation. Academic accommodation for illness will be granted only if the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete her academic responsibilities. Minor ailments typically treated by over-the-counter medications will not normally be accommodated. Documentation shall be submitted as soon as possible to the student's Academic Advisor indicating the period of illness and when the student should be able to resume academic responsibilities. Students must submit their documentation along with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested no later than two business days after the date specified for resuming responsibilities. Appropriate academic accommodation will be determined by the Dean's Office in consultation with the student's instructor(s). Please note that personal commitments (e.g., vacation flight bookings, work schedule) which conflict with a scheduled test, exam or course requirement are **not** grounds for academic accommodation.

A UWO Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is **required** if a student is seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician/nurse practitioner or walk-in clinic. A SMC can be downloaded from: [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf). The student must request documentation sufficient to demonstrate that her ability to meet academic responsibilities was seriously affected. Please note that under University Senate regulations documentation stating simply that the student “was seen for a medical reason” or “was ill” is **not** adequate to support a request for academic accommodation.

Whenever possible, requests for academic accommodation should be initiated in advance of due dates, examination dates, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and Academic Advisor in a timely manner.

The full policy on requesting accommodation due to illness can be viewed at: <http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg117.html>

## 2. ACADEMIC CONCERNS

If you feel that you have a medical or personal problem that is interfering with your work, contact your instructor and Academic Advisor as soon as possible. Problems may then be documented and possible arrangements to assist you can be discussed at the time of occurrence rather than on a retroactive basis. Retroactive requests for academic accommodation on medical or compassionate grounds may not be considered.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your work load is not manageable, you should consult an Academic Advisor. If you consider reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines (refer to the Registrar's website, <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/> or the list of official dates <http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg7.html>). You should consult with the course instructor and the Academic Advisor who can help you consider alternatives to dropping one or more courses. *Note that dropping a course may affect OSAP eligibility and/or Entrance Scholarship eligibility.*

The Dean may refuse permission to write the final examination in a course if the student has failed to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year or for too frequent absence from the class or laboratory (<http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg130.html>)

## 3. ABSENCES

**Short Absences:** If you miss a class due to a minor illness or other problems, check your course outline for information regarding attendance requirements and make sure you are not missing a test or assignment. Cover any readings and arrange to borrow notes from a classmate. Contact the course instructor if you have any questions.

**Extended Absences:** If you have an extended absence, you should contact the course instructor and an Academic Advisor. Your course instructor and Academic Advisor can discuss ways for you to catch up on missed work and arrange academic accommodations, if appropriate.

## 4. POLICY ON CHEATING & ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf).

Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences. Students are urged to read the section on Scholastic Offences in the Academic Calendar. Note that such offences include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for

credit in any course without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in the University or elsewhere. Students are advised to consult the section on Academic Misconduct in the Western Academic Calendar.

If you are in doubt about whether what you are doing is inappropriate or not, consult your instructor, the Student Services Centre, or the Registrar. A claim that "you didn't know it was wrong" is not accepted as an excuse.

The penalties for a student guilty of a scholastic offence (including plagiarism) include refusal of a passing grade in the assignment, refusal of a passing grade in the course, suspension from the University, and expulsion from the University.

### **Plagiarism:**

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

### **Computer-marked Tests/exams:**

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating. Software currently in use to score computer-marked multiple-choice tests and exams performs a similarity review as part of standard exam analysis.

## **5. PROCEDURES FOR APPEALING ACADEMIC EVALUATIONS**

All appeals of a grade must be directed first to the course instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the course instructor, a written appeal signed by the student must be sent to the Department Chair. If the response of the department is considered unsatisfactory to the student, she may then submit a signed, written appeal to the Office of the Dean. Only after receiving a final decision from the Dean may a student appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic. A Guide to Appeals is available from the Ombudsperson's Office, or you can consult an Academic Advisor. Students are advised to consult the section on Student Academic Appeals under Academic Rights and Responsibilities in the Western Academic Calendar (<http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg112.html>).

Note that final course marks are not official until the Academic Dean has reviewed and signed the final grade report for the course. If course marks deviate from acceptable and appropriate standards, the Academic Dean may require grades to be adjusted to align them with accepted grading practices ([http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/exam/evaluation\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/evaluation_undergrad.pdf) and [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/exam/finalgrades.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/finalgrades.pdf)).

## **6. PREREQUISITES**

Unless you have either the prerequisites for a course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from the course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisite(s).

## **7. SUPPORT**

### **Support Services**

The Brescia University College Registrar's website, with a link to Academic Advisors, is at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/> . The website for the Student Development Centre at Western is <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/> .

### **Mental Health and Wellness**

Students may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to your learning, such as increased anxiety, feeling overwhelmed, feeling down or lost, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. Services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about mental health and wellness at Brescia at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/mental-health-wellness/>. Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental\_Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

### **Sexual Violence**

All members of the Brescia University College community have a right to work and study in an environment that is free from any form of sexual violence. Brescia University College recognizes that the prevention of, and response to, Sexual Violence is of particular importance in the university environment. Sexual Violence is strictly prohibited and unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Brescia is committed to preventing Sexual Violence and creating a safe space for anyone in the Brescia community who has experienced Sexual Violence.

If you or someone you know has experienced any form of Sexual Violence, you may access resources at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/sexual-violence/>.

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Portions of this document were taken from the Academic Calendar, the Handbook of Academic and Scholarship Policy and the Academic Handbook of Senate Regulations. This document is a summary of relevant regulations and does not supersede the academic policies and regulations of the Senate of the University of Western Ontario.