

AMBERTON UNIVERSITY
SYLLABUS FOR LECTURE/CLASSROOM COURSE

COM4405.21 Persuasion
Fall 2025
Location: Frisco Center

PROFESSOR INFORMATION:

Name: Dr. Varaidzo Nyamandi
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Office Location: Virtual
Office Hours: Office Hours for session: Friday between 3:00 – 4:30 PM CST Via Zoom
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COURSE INFORMATION:

COM4405.21 Persuasion
Level: Undergraduate
Beginning Date of Session: Saturday, Sept. 13, 2025
Ending Date of Session: Thursday, November 20, 2025
The first class meeting is September 18, in **Room #F1 (Frisco Center)**

All Monday-Thursday lecture classes begin promptly at 6:30 p.m.
All Saturday lecture classes begin promptly at 8:30 a.m.

COURSE PREREQUISITES:

None

TEXTBOOK(S) AND REQUIRED MATERIALS:

Title: Persuasion and Influence in American Life
Author: Gary C. Woodward and Robert E. Denton Jr.
Publisher: Waveland Press
Year Published: 2019
Edition: 8th
ISBN: 10: **1478636122** or 13: 9781478636120
Price: Available at <http://amberton.ecampus.com>

Amberton University has an agreement with eCampus.com to provide a full-service online bookstore to students. The Amberton University Virtual Bookstore is accessible through the University's website, www.Amberton.edu. There is also a bookstore link in the Student Portal.

The AU Virtual Bookstore provides an easy to use interface, online buyback of books, and same day shipment of most titles with an average delivery time of 2-3 days depending on the student's location. Textbook options include new, used, rental, and electronic media as available.

Since no books are sold on campus, students should plan accordingly and purchase their books in advance of the first day of class, allowing time for shipping. Be certain you are enrolled in the course before purchasing your book(s). All textbook information (Title, Author, ISBN, etc.) is available in course syllabi so students can shop competitively. Most textbooks can be purchased from many different textbook vendors. Some textbooks may only be available on the University's Virtual Bookstore. Students should be careful to obtain the exact resource(s) required for the course.

APA Requirement

APA (American Psychological Association) style is most commonly used to cite sources within the social sciences. This resource, revised according to the 7th edition, offers examples for the general format of APA research papers, in-text citations, endnotes/footnotes, and the reference page. For more information, please consult the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, (7th ed.). All coursework at Amberton University will comply with the standards contained in the APA Publication Manual.

COURSE COMPETENCIES:

The persuasive communication class presents the major persuasive theories and helps students apply and analyze them in interpersonal communication, social contexts, and business persuasion. Key topic areas include credibility, motivation, social campaigns, manipulation, audience analysis, and adaptation. Additional activities include analyzing persuasive theories, fallacies, writing credibility arguments and using logic to support a position.

UPON COMPLETION OF THE COURSE, THE STUDENT WILL BE COMPETENT IN:

1. Comparing and contrasting persuasive theories.
2. Describing the different kinds of fallacies.
3. Identifying, describing, and analyzing fallacious arguments in the media.
4. Writing credibility arguments to persuade an audience, improving interpersonal relationships.
5. Hypothesizing how emotions can be used to influence audiences.
6. Using logic to support a position on a controversial topic.
7. Using information literacy skills to support credibility, emotional, and logic arguments.
8. Discussing methods of audience analysis and adaptation.
9. Analyzing and evaluating persuasive nonverbal behaviors.
10. Examining persuasive messages and speeches in politics, in organizations, and business.
11. Applying the theory of the stages of a social campaign to a movement that affects business.
12. Discussing and analyzing the rhetoric of a campaign.
13. Analyzing the process of manipulation—the unethical side of persuasion.
14. Assessing the characteristics of unethical manipulators.
15. Determining how a manipulator gains control over an audience.
16. Applying information literacy skills to research unethical persuasion.
17. Utilizing effective argumentation skills and techniques to persuade and influence an audience.
18. Developing a personal code of ethics for persuasion.
19. Understanding how artificial intelligence (AI) is used in the creation of messages in business, political, and social contexts

ACQUIRED SKILLS

1. Persuasion Analysis
2. Logical Reasoning
3. Information Literacy
4. Nonverbal Communication
5. Personal Ethics Development

COURSE POLICIES:

(You must log onto Moodle within the first two weeks to stay enrolled in the class.

- 2) All papers are to be loaded in the Moodle portal by the deadline in Microsoft Word. Papers not submitted in Word will not be accepted and must be submitted again. All penalties will apply.
- 3) Late papers will be penalized 5%. After six days, they will lose 10 points. After 13 days, they will lose 20 points. No paper will be accepted that is more than 14 days late.
- 4) No paper will be accepted if it is submitted any way other than the Moodle platform. In other words, no paper will be accepted if it is submitted via email. It will be considered late until it is submitted on Moodle.
- 5) No assignment will be accepted after Monday of the final week of class.
- 6) It is highly unlikely that you can pass the course without submitting all the assignments
- 7) Because this is a Communication-based course, correct spellings, grammar, and punctuation are expected in all assignments.
- 8) When sending me emails, please use your Gmail email address. Please do not use Moodle to send emails

- 9) Please communicate with me via my Amberton email address: VNyamandi@amberton.edu
- 10) To be considered present, you must answer the first discussion question within the first two weeks of class.
- 11) If your paper scores more than 20% plagiarism on Turnitin, this is unacceptable, and you will receive a zero.

(This section adapted from various sources.)

Student's Responsibilities

This syllabus contains information, policies, and procedures for a specific course. By enrolling, the student agrees to read, understand, and abide by the policies, rules, regulations, and ethical standards of Amberton University as contained in the current university catalog and schedule of classes.

Attendance Policy:

Regular and punctual class attendance and engagement is expected at Amberton University. In case of an absence, it is the student's responsibility to contact the professor as soon as possible. If a student intends on withdrawing from a course, it is the student's responsibility to follow the university's policy on formally withdrawing from a course. **Ceasing to attend classes does not constitute an official withdrawal.**

Attendance in a lecture course is defined as punctual arrival to, and engagement in, a full lecture session. A Student in a lecture course missing more than 20% (two class periods for weekday classes or one class period for Saturday classes) of the class meetings may be assigned a grade of an "F" or withdrawn at the discretion of Amberton University.

Attendance in a distance learning course is defined as active participation in the weekly online class sessions. "Active participation" can be defined as: submitting an academic assignment, taking an exam, engaging in an interactive tutorial, participating in an online discussion forum (or chat session), or initiating (or responding to) a communication with a faculty member about an academic assignment or the subject matter of the course. A student not meeting these requirements may be assigned a grade of an "F" or withdrawn at the discretion of Amberton University.

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work as though it were your own. If you use another person's words, ideas, or information; or if you use material from an outside source – whether a book, magazine, newspaper, business publication, broadcast, speech, or electronic media – you must acknowledge that source. Plagiarism is a violation of the University's code of student ethical conduct and is one that is taken seriously. Amberton University operates on an honor system; therefore, honesty and integrity are essential characteristics of all who are associated with the institution. All Amberton students are expected to abide by the honor system and maintain academic integrity in all their work. Amberton University and its instructors monitor student work for plagiarism and reserve the right to submit such work to technology-based plagiarism detection services and applications at any time.

Self-plagiarism means reusing work that you have already published or submitted for a class. It can involve:

- Resubmitting an entire paper
- Copying or paraphrasing passages from your previous work

Self-plagiarism misleads your readers by presenting previous work as completely new and original. Students may not submit the same paper in substance in two or more classes without prior written permission of the instructors involved.

Amberton University students who use Artificial Intelligence (AI) generated content must adhere to the following policies:

Originality: Students must avoid presenting AI generated content as their own original work. It is essential to acknowledge the involvement of AI in the content creation process in order to maintain academic and ethical standards.

Paraphrasing: When using AI generated content, students must rephrase and/or modify the generated text. Paraphrased AI generated content should also be properly cited.

Acknowledgement: When using AI generated content in any assignment, proper credit must be given to the AI system that generated the content. <https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>

Students agree that by taking this course, all required assignments may be subject to submission for a textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism and self-plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in future papers. Use of Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com website.

Turnitin is a writing improvement and plagiarism prevention tool which uses special algorithms, to compare text-based student submissions to the Turnitin database and other online sources. Turnitin produces a detailed **similarity report** that can be customized and viewed by instructors and students.

Turnitin “Draft Coach” is a Google based add-on to Turnitin which supports students in developing high-quality academic writing; and serves as an integrity coach. Draft Coach helps address errors and improve the quality of student’s writing by highlighting grammar mistakes, identifying incorrectly cited sources, and scanning for similarity across several databases. By providing formative feedback on how to address citation issues, incorrect grammar, and matches with the Turnitin database, Draft Coach provides explanations to help students become more confident writers, capable of producing higher quality work both in academics and in the workplace.

COURSE DELIVERY METHODOLOGY:

This course is offered as a Lecture/Classroom course. This course requires that students meet at a designated time in the classroom.

COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR:

Week	Topic	Assignment	Competencies Covered	Due Date
One: Sept. 13 - 19	Using the Library	Library Quiz	5	Library Quiz Due Sept. 19 on Moodle
One: Sept. 13 - 19	Introduction	Chapter One	5	Wk. One Class Discussion Activity: Introductions. Due Sept. 18 in class
Two: Sept. 20 - 26	Persuasion in an open society	Chapter Two	6	Wk. Class Discussion Activity: What do you say? Due Sept. 25 in class

Three: Sept. 27 – Oct. 3	Persuasion Theories	Chapters Five, Six	1	Wk. Three Class Discussion Activity: Select your Three Theories. Due Oct. 2 in class
Four: Oct. 4 - 10	Campaigns	Chapter Eight	3,9,10, 11,12	No assignments, a free week, yay!
Five: Oct. 11 - 17	Persuasion Theories	Chapters Five, Six	1,	Major Paper: Persuasion theories. Due Oct. 17 on Moodle
Six: Oct. 18 - 24	Manipulation; Persuasion Self-Assessment and AI Effectiveness	Chapter Three	3,9,10, 11,12,13, 14, 15, 16, 19	Class Discussion Activity: Which persuader are you? Presented in class, Oct. 23
Seven: Oct. 25 - 31	Social marketing messages	Chapter Nine	4, 6, 7, 11, 17	Week Eight Class Discussion Activity: Discuss your Winning Hearts and Minds Topic and Outline, and comment on a peer's topic and outline in class and on Moodle. Due Oct. 30 & 31
Eight: Nov. 1 - 7	Persuasion and audience analysis	Chapter Seven	5, 7, 8	No assignment, a free week, yay!
Nine: Nov. 8 - 14	Social marketing analysis	Six	1	Winning Hearts and Minds PowerPoint Presentation Video Presentation – presented in class: Due Nov. 13
Ten: Oct. 15 - 20	Persuasion Ethics	Chapter Four	2,18	Personal Code of Ethics, submitted on Moodle. Due Nov. 18

GRADING CRITERIA:

1	Library Quiz	You will watch Dr. Pendleton's video on the Amberton University Library website on how to use the library and then take the quiz	50	Sept. 19
1,2,3,6,8	Class Discussion Activities	Through 250 b 300- word discussion posts in response to prompts, you will interpret persuasion concepts and apply them to your personal or professional situations and comment on classmates' posts	(5x60) 300	Sept. 19, 26; Oct. 3, 24, 31
5	Major paper: Persuasion theories	You will write an 8-10 -page paper on persuasion theories, applying the theories to a specific organizational or business situation and integrating them with your personal life	250	Oct. 17
8	Hearts and Minds Persuasive presentation	You will research on a topic with the goal of changing the minds of a specific organizational audience	200	Nov. 13
9	Develop a Persuasion Code of Ethics	Inspired by the persuasion theories, you will develop a one-page personal persuasion code of ethics specific to you and to your current organization or career path	200	Nov. 18

70 b 79	C
60 b 69	D
Below 60	F

GRADE NOTIFICATION AND INSTRUCTOR FEEDBACK:

Each assignment/exam submitted will be reviewed, graded, and returned to the student in a timely manner, along with appropriate commentary.

Final grades are processed approximately one week after the last day of the session and may be located in the My Grades section of the online registration portal as well as being emailed to the student's Amberton University email. Amberton University staff will not release grades over the phone. University instructors will not leave a message with comments or grades in any type of media that is not secure.

For questions regarding grades after the semester has ended, students should use their email account and contact the instructor at the faculty email address as provided above in *Professor Information* area.

Incomplete Grades

An "I" (incomplete grade) is given at the discretion of the professor and may be given only when an emergency or illness prevents the student from completing course requirements. Should an "I" be granted, the student has 30 days from the end of the session to complete the conditions of the incomplete. An "I" which is not properly removed within 30 days following the session enrolled will become an "F" grade.

How to Withdraw From a Course

To be official, the class withdrawal must be in writing and signed by the student requesting the withdrawal; no withdrawal is accepted verbally. Please review the "Schedule of Classes" for procedures for class changes or withdrawals and the refund policy and schedule.

COURSE COMMUNICATIONS:

This course is offered as a lecture course; however, several technological options are available to faculty and students that can enhance communication both during the session and after the session has ended. The **Student Portal** is the gateway to email, Remote Research and General Tools. The Student Portal may be accessed through a link on the University's website, <http://www.Amberton.edu>, or at <http://apps.Amberton.edu>.

After selecting the "Student Portal" link, you will be prompted for a Username and Password. Use your assigned **username and password** (AUID) as described below:

Username = your capitalized firstname **initial**+lastname+last 3 digits of your SSN.

* Use your name exactly as it is listed on the University's records, including any suffixes or hyphenations, such as Jr, Sr, or II, as a part of your username.

For example: James Jones, Jr. SSN: 123-45-6789
Username: JJonesJr789

Password = your Amberton University ID# (AUID) **including the dashes**

For example: 04-999-999

Once your login has been validated, you may select from a variety of menu options, including online course materials, email access, Remote Research, General Tools, all Syllabi, and Research Tutorials.

Email Communication

Each student enrolled is assigned an Amberton email account, which gives the student access to the Amberton email system (my.Amberton.edu). This email account is provided by Google Apps for Education.

Students are encouraged to check their email regularly for University news, notices, and to communicate with instructors.

The student's assigned email address would be Username@my.Amberton.edu

Example: LJones-Smith789@my.Amberton.edu

The student Username is determined by:

firstname initial+lastname+last 3 digits of student ssn.

For example: Linda Jones-Smith SSN: 123-45-6789
Email Address = LJones-Smith789@my.Amberton.edu

Students will be prompted for a Username and Password when accessing their email account. Use the Username portion of the email address as the username (Example: LJones-Smith789) and your Amberton ID# (including the dashes) as the password.

If you already have a Google Gmail account, you might be prompted to add this account to your current settings. Click 'Yes' and you will be logged into your my.Amberton.edu email account. It will be a separate email account from your personal Gmail account.

If you need assistance with your email account, please visit <https://support.google.com/mail>

The Amberton University Moodle Website

Students enrolled in this course will also be using the Moodle Learning Platform, with access available through the Student Portal or by going to: <http://moodle.Amberton.edu>

For those utilizing Moodle for the first time, the **username and password** for the Moodle Learning Platform will be emailed to the student's email account prior to the start of the course. For those returning to Moodle who do not remember their username and password, click on the link "*Forgotten your username or password*" available on the Moodle log in page (<http://moodle.Amberton.edu>). Otherwise use the same username and password as previous session.

Moodle Tutorial:

Upon successful log in and access to the Moodle learning platform, there is a *Student Moodle Tutorials* course available, to learn about the basics of Moodle. Simply click on the link for the *Student Moodle Tutorials* and read through the various learning topics: Navigating; Communicating; Assignments & Exams; Grades; and Student Resources.

INSTRUCTOR/COURSE EVALUATION:

Each session, all Amberton students are requested to evaluate their courses. The evaluation process is an important one and provides students with an anonymous and confidential way to give meaningful feedback to the University. Summary information and comments are provided to faculty after the close of the session. Students' identities are not disclosed.

Students will be notified through the Amberton email system of the Course Evaluation procedures. Usually, the evaluations take place in class during week 9 of the session. Please take advantage of this opportunity and participate in the evaluation process.

RESEARCH RESOURCES:

The Library provides access to full-text, and peer reviewed articles, and digital research tools. Students can search Library holdings through the online catalog and databases search engines available on the Library website or browse the physical library space and holdings located at the Garland campus.

Research items not contained in the Amberton Library collection can be located through interlibrary Loan (ILL) or through the TexShare program with the help of the Library staff. Students with questions about available services, resources, or research, may contact the Library via email at Library@amberton.edu.

RESEARCH ACCESS:

Databases can only be accessed by authorized users, and students at Amberton must enter their Amberton ID credentials-same as Moodle login-to gain access when off-campus. Use an Amberton website, such as the University site (Amberton.edu) or the library site (Library.amberton.edu) to find links to databased and digital books. Online resources are available all day, every day.

Library Live Chat Feature

Library staff are available to assist students with research problems or questions during Library hours through a live online chat feature, telephone, email, "How-to" videos, or in person. The library telephone is (972-279-6511 ext. 185. You can email questions to library@amberton.edu or visit the library in person on the Garland campus for assistance.

Microsoft Office 365 Education:

Amberton University students have access to a license for Office 365 Education, a comprehensive suite of productivity tools. This package includes:

- Microsoft Word for document creation
- Excel for spreadsheets and data analysis
- PowerPoint for presentations
- OneNote for digital note-taking
- Microsoft Teams for collaboration
- Additional classroom tools to enhance your learning experience

To set up your student account and access these resources, please follow the instructions provided in our step-by-step guide: https://amberton.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Office365_Setup_Students.pdf

Google Workspace for Education:

All students are assigned a Gmail account in Google Workspace for Education.

To set up your student account and access these resources, please follow the instructions provided in our step-by-step guide: https://amberton.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Google_Drive_Students.pdf

Once logged into your student account, you'll have access to a suite of tools designed to enhance your learning experience:

- Google Docs: Create and edit essays, reports, and other written assignments
- Google Slides: Develop engaging presentations for projects and class discussions
- Google Sheets: Perform data analysis, create charts, and manage calculations
- Google Drive: Store, organize, and easily access all your files in the cloud
- Google Calendar: Schedule study sessions, track assignment deadlines, and manage your academic timetable
- Google Keep: Take and organize quick notes during lectures or study sessions
- Google Meet: Attend virtual classes, participate in group study sessions, or meet with teachers
- Google Classroom: Access course materials, submit assignments, and receive feedback from instructors
- Google Forms: Create surveys for research projects or participate in class quizzes
- Google Sites: Build websites or digital portfolios to showcase your work