

AMBERTON UNIVERSITY
SYLLABUS FOR LECTURE/CLASSROOM COURSE

COM5405.01 Persuasion
Fall 2026
Location: Garland Center

PROFESSOR INFORMATION:

Professor: Sidney (Skip) Redd, Ph D
Amberton Extension: 972-279-6511 ext. 238
Office Hours: Office Hours 30 minutes after in-class sessions, or message for an appointment
Amberton Email: **SRedd@amberton.edu**

COURSE INFORMATION:

COM5405.01 Persuasion
Level: Graduate
Beginning Date of Session: Saturday, September 12, 2026
Ending Date of Session: Thursday, November 19, 2026
The first class meeting is Saturday September 12, 2026, in **Room #19 (Garland Center)**
Session 3 – September 26, Session 5 – October 10, Session 7 – October 24, Session 9 – November 7

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

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: 2018
Edition: 8th
ISBN: 10: 1478636122 or 13:9781478636120
Price: Available at <http://amberton.ecampus.com>

Students should verify enrollment in course before purchasing textbooks. Textbook information and ordering options are available through the Amberton Virtual Bookstore. 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.

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 Persuasion course presents the major persuasive theories and helps students apply them in interpersonal communication, social contexts, and business persuasion. Key topic areas include credibility, motivation, social campaigns, manipulation, audience analysis, and adaptation. Activities include comparing and contrasting persuasive theories, types of fallacies, and persuasion.

CAVEAT: No graduate credit will be awarded if COM4405 has been successfully completed.

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 logical 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 in interpersonal communication, business persuasion, and in political messages.
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. Examining how to utilize artificial intelligence (AI) responsibly to create and evaluate persuasion messages in business, political, and social contexts.

ACQUIRED SKILLS

1. Personal Code of Ethics
2. Persuasion
3. Public Speaking

COURSE POLICIES:

- 1) You must attend the first class and 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 three days, they will lose 10 points. After five 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) Please communicate with me via Moodle messaging.
- 9) To be considered present, you must answer the first discussion question within the first two weeks of class.
- 10) If your paper scores more than 20% plagiarism on Turnitin, this is unacceptable, and you will receive a zero.
- 11) If you use AI to write your assignments and claim that as your work, this would be considered plagiarism; you would receive a zero and also face other institutional penalties. Please read the section on using AI.

STUDENTS' 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.

The activities used in the classroom are: lecture, group discussions, oral reports, written reports, research papers.

COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR:

Week	Topic	Assignment	Competencies Covered	Due Date
1	Introduction	Chapter 1	5	Class Discussion - Introductions. In class September 12th
2	Persuasion in an open society	Chapter 2	6	Moodle – Discussion Board
3	Persuasion Theories	Chapters 5 & 6	1	In class September 26 th Select your Three Theories
4	Campaigns	Chapter 8	3, 9,10, 11,12	Moodle – Discussion Board
5	Persuasion Theories	Chapters 5 & 6	1	Moodle – Discussion Board In class October 10 th Persuasion Theories Paper due Wednesday October 7th
6	Manipulation; Persuasion Self-Assessment and AI Effectiveness	Chapter 3	3,9,10, 11,12,13, 14, 15, 16, 19	Moodle – Discussion Board
7	Social marketing messages	Chapter 9	4, 6, 7, 11, 17	In class October 24 th Activity: Which persuader are you? Presented in class
8	Persuasion and audience analysis	Chapter 7	5, 7, 8	Topic and Outline due on Moodle
9	Social marketing analysis	Chapter 6	1 Persuasion and audience analysis	In class November 7 th Winning Hearts and Minds PowerPoint Presentation presented in class
10	Persuasion Ethics	Chapter 4	2, 18	Personal Code of Ethics, submitted on Moodle due Wednesday November 12th

GRADING CRITERIA:

Week	Assignment	Description	Points	Due Date
1, 2, 4, 6, 7	5 Discussion boards	Through meaningful and active participation in class, you will interpret persuasion concepts and apply them to your personal or professional situations and comment on classmates' ideas	5 sessions x 20 points 10 points initial response, 5 points for 2 responses to other students Total 100 points	Sept 12, 19, Oct 3, 17, 31
5	Major paper	You will write an 11–12-page paper theories on persuasion theories, applying the theories to a specific organizational or business situation and integrating them with your personal life	150	Wednesday October 7th
9	Hearts and Minds Persuasion Ethics	You will research on a topic with the goal of changing the minds of a specific organizational audience	150	Wednesday November 4
10	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	100	Wednesday November 11
			500 points	TOTAL

Graduate

92 – 100	A
82 – 91	B
72 – 81	C
62 – 71	D
Below 62	F

GRADE NOTIFICATION AND INSTRUCTOR FEEDBACK:

Students should review instructor feedback provided through Moodle or Amberton CampusWeb Portal. Final grades are processed approximately one week after the session and may be viewed through the student portal. Grades will not be released by phone or through unsecured channels. 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 university 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 granted only at the professor's discretion for emergencies or illness.

Students have 30 days from the end of the session to complete the course requirements. If the conditions are not met within this 30-day window, the "I" automatically converts to an "F".

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" (online or in-print) for procedures for class changes or withdrawals and the refund policy and schedule.

COURSE DELIVERY METHODOLOGY:

This course is delivered through Moodle. Students are expected to have reliable internet access, basic computer skills, the ability to upload/download files, use Amberton email, and submit assignments in the required format. Students needing assistance should use the Amberton SSO support/ticket process.

HOW TO ACCESS YOUR COURSE:

SINGLE SIGN-ON (SSO) INSTRUCTIONS FOR AMBERTON UNIVERSITY:

Students should access Amberton systems through the Single Sign-On portal at <https://sso.amberton.edu>. After logging in, students can access Moodle, Amberton email, CampusWeb, and other assigned applications. Students who need help accessing SSO should submit a support request through the SSO support option or contact support@amberton.edu.

MOODLE TUTORIAL:

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

COURSE COMMUNICATIONS:

Students will communicate with faculty through the Moodle Learning Platform or the Amberton University email system.

EMAIL COMMUNICATION:

Students are expected to use their Amberton email account and Moodle for course communications. Students must use their official university email account for all university related communication and should check their Amberton emails regularly for course and university notices.

Upon completion of a session, all communication and course specific information is removed from the Moodle system. If a student needs to maintain a record of communications or assignments, the student is strongly encouraged to print out or download these items to a disk for their own records.

FORMAT AND SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS:

Assignments must be submitted through the appropriate Moodle assignment link unless otherwise directed by the instructor. Students are responsible for submitting files in the format required by the instructor.

INSTRUCTOR/COURSE EVALUATION:

Students will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous course and instructor evaluation near the end of the session. Instructions and dates will be provided through Moodle and/or Amberton email.

RESEARCH RESOURCES:

The Amberton Library provides access to full-text articles, peer-reviewed databases, and research tools, with options like Interlibrary Loan (ILL) and TexShare for items outside its collection. For research assistance, students can connect with library staff during operating hours via email (library@amberton.edu), phone (972-279-6511 ext. 185), "How-to" videos, live online chat, or in person at the Garland campus. The online library is available through Single Sign On (SSO).

MICROSOFT OFFICE 365 EDUCATION:

Amberton University students may access Microsoft 365 Education resources as provided by the university.

GOOGLE WORKSPACE FOR EDUCATION:

Amberton students are assigned a Google Workspace for Education account, including Amberton Gmail, Google Drive, Google Docs, Sheets, and Slides. Students should use their Amberton Google account for course-related work when required.