IMC 454 – Communications and Persuasion

Course Goals

A. Analyze theories of persuasion and how they apply to marketing communications
B. Evaluate existing persuasive messages to identify strengths and areas for improvement
C. Create effective marketing communications content across the most commonly used channels, incorporating theories of persuasion and best practices of brand marketing
D. Strengthen writing, speaking, negotiating, and presentation skills within brand marketing channels

Session One: Introduction to Persuasion

Learning Objectives	Learning Assets		Collaboration Tools *(Discussion boards, blogs, journals, Wikis, Sync Sessions, etc.)*	Assignments and Assessments *(Individual/group projects, essays, exams, etc.)*
	Externally Developed *(Readings, videos, websites, etc.)*	**Internally Developed** *(Interactive practice, lecture videos, handouts, etc.)*		
1.1 Define persuasion in order to discuss its role in communications and brand marketing 1.2 Analyze ethical considerations inherent in persuasive communications 1.3 Define persuasion factors: sources, message, and receiver	**Textbook reading:** Perloff, R. (2014) *The Dynamics of Persuasion 5e.* New York: Routledge. [ISBN: 13: 978-0-415-50742-4] • Chapter 1 "Introduction to Persuasion" (pages 3 – 23; pages 34 – 37) • Chapter 2 (pages 55 – 61 only, "Persuasion and Ethics")	**Pre-reading handout:** Description of what will be covered this week; how it fits into the scope of the course; and specific questions for the students to ask themselves as they go through the reading and exercises. **Lecture video:** The Many Ways Marketers Create—and Encounter—Persuasion	**Synch session:** Intro to course and logistics **Discussion board: Your Persuasion Hero** Who is the most persuasive person you have encountered in your life? It could be a parent, a boss, a friend, a coach, a coworker--anyone who you know personally. It doesn't have to be someone you admire or even like; just someone who was able to persuade you to do things you wouldn't do on your	**Assignment: Website Analysis** Students must find a website that is persuasive because of its authority, a website that is persuasive because of its credibility, and a website that is persuasive because of its social attractiveness; students will analyze what aspects of the site establish those respective source factors. Students must also find sites that fail at establishing these source factors

1.4 Outline characteristics that determine a source's authority, credibility, and social attractiveness 1.5 Evaluate effectiveness of a source along authority, credibility, and social attractiveness factors	• Chapter 8 "'Who Says It': Source Factors in Persuasion" **HBR article:** Conger, J. (1998). The Necessary Art of Persuasion. *Harvard Business Review*, May-June 1998. http://hbr.org/1998/05/the-necessary-art-of-persuasion/ar/1		own. Thinking about the three primary source factors (authority, credibility, and social attractiveness), analyze what made that person so persuasive.	

Session Two: The Process of Persuasion

Learning Objectives	Learning Assets		Collaboration Tools (Discussion boards, blogs, journals, Wikis, Sync Sessions, etc.)	Assignments and Assessments (Individual/group projects, essays, exams, etc.)
	Externally Developed *(Readings, videos, websites, etc.)*	**Internally Developed** *(Interactive practice, lecture videos, handouts, etc.)*		
2.1 Define steps in the persuasive process 2.2 Analyze audiences according to receptiveness and decision-making style 2.3 Use receiver factors to identify an audience's potential biases, assumptions, and sources of resistance 2.4 Identify most effective persuasion structures for overcoming various sources of resistance 2.5 Compare common marketing audiences (B2C, B2C, internal) according to receiver factors 2.6 Analyze your personal strengths and weaknesses as a persuader	**Interactive learning exercises:** Harvard ManageMentorPlus. *Communicating for Results.* "Persuading Others." Students should read or complete the following components of "Persuading Others" in this order: - Where should you focus? - Core concepts (all eight of them: "What is persuasion?" through "Leveraging the power of audience self-persuasion.") - Practice - Test yourself - Tools: Persuasion self-assessment	**Pre-reading handout:** Description of what will be covered this week; how it fits into the scope of the course; and specific questions for the students to ask themselves as they go through the reading and exercises.	**Discussion board: Mamma said there'd be days like this** We've all been there. We've all had that great idea that we thought was sure to impress our boss or that client pitch that was sure to land the big account—except it didn't quite work out that way. Describe your most memorable situation at work where your attempts to persuade someone fell flat. (It can be one person or a large group; an internal audience or an external one.) Looking back, what were the audience's major sources of resistance and what could you have done differently to reach a better outcome?	**Assignment: Overcoming Sources of Resistance** Students will be given a scenario that includes two distinct audience subsets; students must identify each group's concerns and a persuasive strategy for overcoming those concerns.

	HBR article: Cialdini, R. (2001). Harnessing the Science of Persuasion. *Harvard Business Review*, October 2001. http://hbr.org/2001/10/harnessing-the-science-of-persuasion/ar/1 **Reading:** Heath, C. & Heath, D. (2008) *Made to Stick.* Random House: New York. Introduction. Chapter 1 "What Sticks?" and Chapter 2 "Simple"			

Session Three: Thinking Like a Journalist

Learning Objectives	Learning Assets		Collaboration Tools *(Discussion boards, blogs, journals, Wikis, Sync Sessions, etc.)*	Assignments and Assessments *(Individual/group projects, essays, exams, etc.)*
	Externally Developed *(Readings, videos, websites, etc.)*	**Internally Developed** *(Interactive practice, lecture videos, handouts, etc.)*		
3.1 Outline the major elements of a news story 3.2 Analyze a story to determine its newsworthy elements 3.3 Write effective leads, headlines, quotes, and captions 3.4 Create engaging questions for sources 3.5 Edit articles to improve clarity, accuracy, and impact	**Reading:** Knight, R. (2010) *Journalistic Writing: Building the skills, honing the craft.* Portland: Marion Street Press. ISBN: 978-1-933338-38-5 - Chapter 3: Leading the reader on - Chapter 4: Building the story **Reading:** Heath, C. & Heath, D. (2008) *Made to Stick.* Random House: New York. Chapter 3 "Concrete"	**Pre-reading handout:** Description of what will be covered this week; and specific questions for the students to ask themselves as they go through the reading and exercises. **Lecture video: Why marketers need to think like a journalist** Lecture will cover: - Why a strong news sense is essential for effective communicators - How news writing and editing skills apply to marketing - How to develop reliable sources **Interactive practice: EXTRA! EXTRA! Read all about it! (Writing Effective Headlines)** Exercise will review guidelines for good headlines and then provide students actual news articles, with the headline deleted. Then students will be provided	**Discussion board: Conflicts of interest** In what ways could a journalist's news sense and writing style conflict with the goals of brand marketing communications?	**Assignment: Journalism 101** Students will have to take the facts from a scenario and write an article that includes an effective headline, lead paragraph, and photo caption; students will also have to think of insightful follow-up questions and potential sources

		several sample headlines and must pick the best one. **Interactive practice: Writing Good Captions.** A picture is worth 1,000 words; but a good caption can make it worth even more. This exercise will explain the guidelines for writing good captions, using examples. Then students will be shown pictures and asked to pick among the best caption options.		

Session Four: Write on!

Learning Objectives	Learning Assets		Collaboration Tools *(Discussion boards, blogs, journals, Wikis, Sync Sessions, etc.)*	Assignments and Assessments *(Individual/group projects, essays, exams, etc.)*
	Externally Developed *(Readings, videos, websites, etc.)*	**Internally Developed** *(Interactive practice, lecture videos, handouts, etc.)*		
4.1 Identify differences and similarities between business writing and other forms of writing 4.2 Outline the steps in the writing process: target, research, brainstorm, outline, write, and edit 4.3 Analyze existing content's effectiveness and identify ways to enhance its clarity 4.4 Apply best practices of persuasion and clarity to common forms of business communication 4.5 Use statistics effectively to illustrate ideas	**Reading:** Garner, B. (2012) *HBR Guide to Better Business Writing.* Harvard Business Review Press: Boston. ISBN: 978-1-4221-8403-5 - Required: Section 1 "Delivering the Goods Quickly and Clearly;" Section 2 "Developing Your Skills;" Section 3 "Avoiding the Quirks that Turn Readers Off;" and Appendices A, B, C, D, and E - Optional: Section 4 "Common Forms of Business Writing."	**Pre-reading handout:** Description of what will be covered this week and how it fits into the arc of the course; specific questions for the students to ask themselves as they go through the reading and exercises. **Lecture video: Writing Is a Process** Lecture about the five steps of the writing process: 1) get your facts; 2) brainstorm, 3) organize, 4) write, and 5) improve. **Interactive practice on visual elements: Passing the Eye Test** This interactive practice will focus on how layout features, such as white space, paragraph length, headers and subheads, and bullet lists can improve a document's readability. The exercise will include several before and after looks at	**Synch session:** Group discussion to go over questions about upcoming assignments that are due; students will be encouraged to bring examples from their work or personal lives that illustrate ideas taught in session 1 -3. **Discussion board: Good Writing Isn't Hard to Find** Think of the most effective written communication you received at work in the past month. It could be an e-mail from your boss, a letter from your HR department, a brochure you received from a potential vendor, a website you can across that had particularly compelling copy, or any other type of written communication that came across your desk. What about the way that communication was written and/or laid out made it so effective?	**Assignment: Editing for Forsyth Motors email** In this assignment, students will have to edit an email by eliminating business jargon, adding subheads and transition sentences, adding bullet lists, adding charts, and adding a headline.

		documents that use best practices.		

Session Five: Writing for the Web

Learning Objectives	Learning Assets		Collaboration Tools (Discussion boards, blogs, journals, Wikis, Sync Sessions, etc.)	Assignments and Assessments (Individual/group projects, essays, exams, etc.)
	Externally Developed *(Readings, videos, websites, etc.)*	**Internally Developed** *(Interactive practice, lecture videos, handouts, etc.)*		
5.1 Identify the strengths and limitations of various channels for online communication: email, website, mobile 5.2 Explain the syntax and style differences between writing for hard copy and writing for online 5.3 Revise hard copy content for online use 5.4 Use best practices of online writing to create original content across online channels	**Reading:** Barr, C. (2010) *The Yahoo Style Guide.* St. Martin's Press: New York. ISBN: 978-0-312-56984-6 - Chapter 1: Write for the Web - Chapter 2: Identify Your Audience - Chapter 4: Construct Clear, Compelling Copy - Chapter 17: Optimize Your Site for Search Engines	**Pre-reading handout:** Description of what will be covered this week and how it fits into the arc of the course; specific questions for the students to ask themselves as they go through the reading and exercises. **Lecture video: Unlearning the Writing Rules** This lecture will point out ways in which many of the rules we've been taught throughout our lives about writing don't apply to writing for the Web and other electronic channels. Much of these differences stem from the fact that people read much differently online than they do with hard copy text. **Interactive practice: Scanability** This exercise will drive home the importance of making the page easy to scan for the reader. The student will be	**Discussion board: Trends in Web Copy** Over the past 10 years, what changes have you noticed in the way that websites are written and laid out? How are these changes affected the way that you consume information when browsing a website?	**Assignment: We the (Web Copy) People** Students will be given a PDF of a brochure about a company, and they will have to create copy for the company's website based on the content of the brochure. Students will be given keywords to incorporate into the website copy. The students won't actually build a website; rather they will just submit Word docs with the web copy. Students will also be given an audience persona that they are writing to.

		told what specific pieces of information they are surfing for, and then the student will be shown several different web pages for only 10 seconds at a time. After 10 seconds, the picture of the web page will disappear and then the student will be asked questions about what information is contained on that site.		

Session Six: Advertising & E-Mail Marketing

Learning Objectives	Learning Assets		Collaboration Tools *(Discussion boards, blogs, journals, Wikis, Sync Sessions, etc.)*	Assignments and Assessments *(Individual/group projects, essays, exams, etc.)*
	Externally Developed *(Readings, videos, websites, etc.)*	**Internally Developed** *(Interactive practice, lecture videos, handouts, etc.)*		
7.1 Analyze elements of effective advertising 7.2 Deconstruct advertisements along persuasion factors 7.3 Create engaging copy for advertising, including e-mail marketing 7.4 Identify limitations of advertising, including e-mail marketing 7.5 Evaluate platforms for creating and disseminating e-mail marketing	**Reading:** Alstiel, T. & Grow, J. (2013) *Advertising Creative: Strategy, Copy, Design.* SAGE Publications: Thousand Oaks. ISBN: 978-1-4522-0636-8 - Chapter 2: Strategy and Branding: Putting a Face on a Product - Chapter 6: Concepting: What's the Big Idea **Online presentation:** McNamara, S. (2013) "How to write a creative brief." http://www.adcracker.com/brief/Creative_Brief.htm Students are to go through the embedded slide show and read the "Sample creative brief for 2013" **PowerPoint deck:**	**Pre-reading handout:** Description of what will be covered this week; how it fits into the scope of the course; how the larger themes we've been discussing apply to advertising and e-mail marketing; and specific questions for the students to ask themselves as they go through the reading and exercises.	**Discussion board: Persuasion in 30 Seconds** What recent television or web-based ad campaign has been the most persuasive to you personally? How would you describe the elements of persuasion that were used by the ad? **Discussion board: You've Got E-Mail Marketing** Describe a recent e-mail marketing campaign by your company or organization. What was the goal of the campaign (direct sales, thought leadership, giving specific instructions or updates to your audience, or something else)? Describe one way that the messaging of the campaign could have been improved.	No assignment this week

	Marketo. "The Definitive Guide to Engaging Email Marketing." (2013) http://www.marketo.com/definitive-guides/engaging-email-marketing/ Only slides 71-86. **Blog:** Duistermaat, H. "37 Tips for Writing Emails That Get Opened, Read, and Clicked." *Copyblogger* *http://www.copyblogger.com/37-email-marketing-tips/*		

Session Seven: Content Marketing

Learning Objectives	Learning Assets		Collaboration Tools *(Discussion boards, blogs, journals, Wikis, Sync Sessions, etc.)*	Assignments and Assessments *(Individual/group projects, essays, exams, etc.)*
	Externally Developed *(Readings, videos, websites, etc.)*	**Internally Developed** *(Interactive practice, lecture videos, handouts, etc.)*		
8.1 Differentiate content marketing from other forms of brand marketing 8.2 Discuss content marketing's emerging role in building brand awareness and loyalty 8.3 Identify limitations of content marketing 8.4 Create production budget, schedule, and process for content marketing campaign 8.5 Calculate measures for content marketing ROI	**Reading:** Beaulieu, K. "The Rise of Content Marketing." *American Association of National Advertisers.* 13 January 2012. http://www.ana.net/blogs/show/id/22819 **Reading:** Creamer, M. "Content: Marketing's Best Hope, or Hype?" *AdAge.* 28 February 2012. http://adage.com/article/digital/content-marketing-s-hope-hype/232927/ **Reading:** Cohen, M. "A Revolutionary Marketing Strategy: Answer Customers' Questions." *The New York Times.* 27 February 2013. http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/28/business/smallbusiness/increasing-sales-by-answering-customers-questions.html?_r=2&	**Pre-reading handout:** Description of what will be covered this week; how it fits into the scope of the course; how the larger themes we've been discussing apply to content marketing; and specific questions for the students to ask themselves as they go through the reading and exercises. **Lecture video: Reconciling the Tension in Content Marketing** This lecture looks at how content marketing campaigns need to develop an appropriate editorial tone that balances objectivity and brand messaging.	**Discussion board: Content Marketing for Boring Brands** It's easy to think of ways to come up with engaging content for fun brands like Lego, exciting brands like Jaguar, or sexy brands like Victoria's Secret. But what about the companies that are selling mundane products or services that no one can possibly want to spend their time talking and reading about? What sorts of content marketing strategies should these boring brands use?	**Assignment: Making Your Pitch for Content Marketing** Students will have to come up with the content marketing campaign for their actual company. Students will have to submit a creative brief about the campaign and a memo to the CEO persuading her to reallocate part of the marketing budget to this new campaign.

	Video: "Content Marketing and the Power of Story." *Content Marketing Institute.* 10 September 2011. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a9fkC5tnx3E **Reading:** Pulizzi, J. "Seven Strategies for Developing Compelling Content in 2013." *Content Marketing Institute.* 13 October 2012. http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2012/10/7-content-marketing-strategies-for-2013/ **Reading:** Pulizzi, J. "The Seven Business Goals of Content Marketing." *Content Marketing Institute.* 11 November 2011. http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2011/11/content-marketing-inbound-marketing/ **Online presentation:** Pulizzi, J. & Rose, R. "The CMI Content Marketing Framework: 7 Building Blocks to		

Success." *Content Marketing Institute.* http://www.slideshare.net/CMI/cmi-framework

Online presentation: "A Field Guide to the Four Types of Content Marketing Metrics." *Content Marketing Institute.* *http://www.slideshare.net/CMI/a-field-guide-to-the-four-types-of-content-marketing-metrics*

OPTIONAL
Online presentation: "100 Content Marketing Examples." (2012) *Content Marketing Institute.* *http://www.contentmarketinginstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Ultimate_Ebook-1.pdf*

Session Eight: Negotiations

Learning Objectives	Learning Assets		Collaboration Tools (Discussion boards, blogs, journals, Wikis, Sync Sessions, etc.)	Assignments and Assessments (Individual/group projects, essays, exams, etc.)
	Externally Developed (Readings, videos, websites, etc.)	**Internally Developed** (Interactive practice, lecture videos, handouts, etc.)		
9.1 Identify areas of life and business where negotiating takes place 9.2 Analyze personal negotiating styles, strengths, and weaknesses 9.3 Apply principles of persuasion and value-based negotiating 9.4 Execute value-based negotiating techniques in real-time scenario 9.5 Evaluate performance within real-time negotiating scenario	**Interactive learning exercises:** Harvard ManageMentorPlus. *Communicating for Results.* "Negotiating." Students should read or complete the following components of "Negotiating" in this order: Core Concepts: - The Fundamental Framework - Two Types of Negotiation - Real Sources of Power - Special Problems - Frequently Asked Questions Steps: - Steps for Preparing for a Negotiation - Steps for Getting an Integrative or Win-Win Negotiation Under Way Practice: Scenario	**Pre-reading handout:** Description of what will be covered this week; how it fits into the scope of the course; how the larger themes we've been discussing apply to content marketing; and specific questions for the students to ask themselves as they go through the reading and exercises. **Interactive practice: House Hunters Create Options for Mutual Gain** This exercise will walk students through a scenario where two potential buyers get into a bidding war for a house. The scenario will show how the bidder with the lower final offer price was able to win the bidding by identifying other opportunities for mutual gain (flexible closing date).	**Synch session:** Group discussion to go over questions about upcoming group assignments for sessions 8 and 9; students will be encouraged to bring examples from their work or personal lives that illustrate ideas taught in sessions 4 – 7. **Discussion board:** Describe the most recent situation where you had to negotiate for something related to your job. In retrospect, what single change could have most improved the outcome of the negotiation: improving your best alternative to a negotiated agreement (BATNA), knowing the other party's BATNA, being more creative in identifying areas for mutual gain, or some other factor?	**Assignment: The Bargaining Table** Students will be divided into pairs for this two-party negotiating game. Students will be graded based on the outcome and their post-game summary of the different elements of the negotiation.

	Test Yourself: Questions **Reading:** Fisher, R. & Ury, W. *Getting to Yes.* (1991) Houghton Mifflin: New York. ISBN: 0-395-63124-6 Chapters: - 1: Don't Bargain Over Positions - 3: Focus on Interests, Not Positions - 4: Invent Options for Mutual Gain - 6: What if They Are More Powerful? (Develop Your BATNA) **HBR article:** Weeks, H. (2001). Taking the Stress Out of Stressful Conversations. *Harvard Business Review*, July 2001. http://hbr.org/2001/07/taking-the-stress-out-of-stressful-conversations/ar/1			

Session Nine: Presentation Skills

Learning Objectives	Learning Assets		Collaboration Tools *(Discussion boards, blogs, journals, Wikis, Sync Sessions, etc.)*	Assignments and Assessments *(Individual/group projects, essays, exams, etc.)*
	Externally Developed *(Readings, videos, websites, etc.)*	**Internally Developed** *(Interactive practice, lecture videos, handouts, etc.)*		
6.1 Identify best practices and common pitfalls of presenting in a corporate setting 6.2 Analyze their personal styles for speaking and presenting 6.3 Apply rhetorical techniques that complement student's personal style and training methods that improve on weaknesses 6.4 Create effective PowerPoint slides to assist in presentations 6.5 Anticipate questions and points of resistance from the audience	**Reading:** Duarte, N. (2012) *HBR Guide to Persuasive Presentations.* Harvard Business Review Press: Boston. ISBN: 978-1-4221-8710 - Section 1 "Audience – Know Your Audience and Build Empathy" - Section 2 "Message – Develop Persuasive Content" - Section 3 "Story – Use Storytelling Principles and Structure to Engage Your Audience" - Section 4 "Media – Identify the Best Modes for Communicating Your Message" - Section 5 "Slides – Conceptualize and Simplify the Display of Information"	**Pre-reading handout:** Description of what will be covered this week and how it fits into the arc of the course; specific questions for the students to ask themselves as they go through the reading and exercises. **Lecture video:** **PowerPoint is a Tool; Don't Abuse It** This lecture explains why it is so important to consider the context of how your slides will be delivered to you audience when creating a PowerPoint deck.	**Discussion board: Starting with a Bang** Smart presenters know that it's important to get the audience's attention right out of the gate. What is the best rhetorical device or other tactic that you've seen used to grab the audience from the get-go? Why was this tactic so effective?	**Assignment: Improving IMC 454** For this assignment, student will be divided up into groups and then asked to come up with an idea for improving this course by replacing one of the existing sessions with a new session. Each group will then have to persuade the instructor to adopt your recommended change by giving a live, online presentation.

	HBR article: Morgan, N. (2008). How to Become an Authentic Speaker. *Harvard Business Review*, November 2008. http://hbr.org/web/special-collections/insight/communication/how-to-become-an-authentic-speaker			

Session Ten: Session Title

Learning Objectives	Learning Assets		Collaboration Tools *(Discussion boards, blogs, journals, Wikis, Sync Sessions, etc.)*	Assignments and Assessments *(Individual/group projects, essays, exams, etc.)*
	Externally Developed *(Readings, videos, websites, etc.)*	**Internally Developed** *(Interactive practice, lecture videos, handouts, etc.)*		
No new learning objectives			**Synch session:** Group discussion to go over questions about upcoming assignments that are due; students will be encouraged to bring examples from their work or personal lives that illustrate ideas taught in session 7 – 9.	