SPC 309 Persuasion and Propaganda

Credit Hours: 3
In-Class Instructional Hours: 3 Labs: 0 Field Work: 0

Catalog Description:
Prerequisite. Junior or Senior Standing

Theory and practice of persuasion in various media contexts; analysis of social implications, ethical base and impact of persuasive messages; analysis of contemporary propaganda in media contexts.

Reasons for Revision:
(Fall 2005) This course (formerly COM 309, Persuasion) was last revised in 1998 as part of a departmental program restructuring. A new focus on propaganda is added in this revision, because, in an age of unbalanced news coverage and deconstructed documentaries, propaganda has become more prevalent in mainstream media. This new proposal is part of a general program review, through which Communication seeks to update its courses in light of departmental experience with the previous program version, evolving departmental needs, and expanding scholarship in the field. Additionally, the department is undertaking this revision to position itself for accreditation by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

Note: As part of this overall revision, speech and criticism courses are being re-labeled as SPC rather than COM to distinguish between the humanistic base of the new SPC courses and the applied nature of the courses that will retain the COM prefix.

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<th>Student Learning Outcomes:</th>
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<td>Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:</td>
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<td>1. Analyze theoretical concepts guiding the construction of persuasive messages</td>
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<td>2. Construct an ethical persuasive message for public presentation</td>
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<td>3. Identify and analyze propaganda in various contemporary media</td>
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<td>4. Evaluate social and cultural implications of persuasive messages</td>
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<td>5. Evaluate ethical issues in various uses of persuasion</td>
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<th>Course Content References:</th>
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<th>Assessment:</th>
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<td>1. Exams, research/writing projects, oral presentations</td>
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Course Content:
I. Theoretical Premises
   A. Foundations of Persuasion
      1. Definitions
      2. Models
      3. Approaches
   B. Contemporary theories and principles of persuasion
   C. Contemporary theories and principles of propaganda
   D. Ethics and persuasion
   E. Symbol making and use
II. Elements of persuasion
    A. Source
    B. Message content
    C. Receiver
    D. Persuasive goals
III. Critical analysis of persuasion
    A. Tools of motivation
    B. Interpreting persuasive messages
    C. Interpersonal influence
    D. Cultural premises
    E. Nonverbal messages
IV. Becoming a persuader
    A. Audience analysis
    B. Credibility
    C. Forms of support
    D. Message delivery
    E. Common tactics of persuasion
V. Applications of persuasive premises
    A. Persuasive campaign
    B. Modern media and persuasion
VI. Propaganda
    A. Political applications
    B. Advertising applications
    C. Cultural applications
Resources:
Classic Scholarship in the Field

Current Scholarship in the Field

Periodicals
Argumentation and Advocacy
Quarterly Journal of Speech
Communication Monographs
Communication Quarterly
Journal of Communication
Journal of Advertising Research
Journal of Public Relations Research

Electronic and/or Audiovisual Resources
Outfoxed: Rupert Murdoch’s War on Journalism
Hijacking Catastrophe: 9/11, Fear & the Selling of American Empire
Deadly Persuasion: The Advertising of Alcohol & Tobacco
Why We Buy (2002)