

OFFICIAL UNDERGRADUATE COURSE OUTLINE FORM

Note: The University reserves the right to amend course outlines as needed without notice.

Course Code and Number: CMNS 385		Number of Credits: 3 Course credit policy (105)													
Course Full Title: Language as Persuasion: Communication Theory in Action Course Short Title: Language as Persuasion															
Faculty: Faculty of Humanities		Department/School: School of Communication													
Calendar Description: Students analyze the ways language is persuasive in the world around them. Students use a variety of communications/rhetorical theories to examine the means of persuasion in diverse contemporary contexts such as advertising, social media, graffiti, and social movements. Note: This course is offered as CMNS 385 and ENGL 385. Students may take only one of these for credit.															
Prerequisites (or NONE):		60 university-level credits including one 200-level CMNS, ENGL, MACS, or PHIL course.													
Corequisites (if applicable, or NONE):		None.													
Pre/corequisites (if applicable, or NONE):		None.													
Antirequisite Courses <i>(Cannot be taken for additional credit.)</i> Former course code/number: Cross-listed with: ENGL 385 Equivalent course(s): ENGL 385 <i>(If offered in the previous five years, antirequisite course(s) will be included in the calendar description as a note that students with credit for the antirequisite course(s) cannot take this course for further credit.)</i>		Course Details Special Topics course: No <i>(If yes, the course will be offered under different letter designations representing different topics.)</i> Directed Study course: No <i>(See policy 207 for more information.)</i> Grading System: Letter grades Delivery Mode: May be offered in multiple delivery modes Expected frequency: Every other year Maximum enrolment (for information only): 25													
Typical Structure of Instructional Hours <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Lecture/seminar</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tutorials/workshops</td> <td>35</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total hours</td> <td>45</td> </tr> </table>		Lecture/seminar	10	Tutorials/workshops	35							Total hours	45	Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) PLAR is available for this course.	
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Total hours	45														
Scheduled Laboratory Hours Labs to be scheduled independent of lecture hours: No		Transfer Credit (See bctransferguide.ca .) Transfer credit already exists: No Submit outline for (re)articulation: No <i>(If yes, fill in transfer credit form.)</i>													
Department approval		Date of meeting: April 10, 2026													
Faculty Council approval		Date of meeting: June 5, 2026													
Undergraduate Education Committee (UEC) approval		Date of meeting: September 3, 2026													

Learning Outcomes *(These should contribute to students' ability to meet program outcomes and thus Institutional Learning Outcomes.)*

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe key concepts in communications/rhetorical theory.
2. Analyze relationships between power, language, authority, and persuasion in a range of contexts.
3. Apply communications/rhetorical concepts to texts, events, and/or cases from diverse authors/communicators intended for different audiences.
4. Analyze communications/rhetorical methodologies from varied disciplinary fields and perspectives, including Indigenous approaches to persuasion.
5. Apply contemporary communications/rhetorical theory and methodologies to a communications research project.
6. Demonstrate how language is used to motivate action in contemporary events and for diverse audiences.

Recommended Evaluation Methods and Weighting *(Evaluation should align to learning outcomes.)*

Assignments:	95%	%	%
Holistic assessment:	5%	%	%

Details:

Response papers	20%
Seminar presentation and paper	15%
Proposal for term project	10%
Oral briefing of proposal	10%
Term paper/project	30%
Oral presentation of term paper/project	10%
Collaborative activities and reflection	5%

NOTE: The following sections may vary by instructor. Please see course syllabus available from the instructor.

Typical Instructional Methods *(Guest lecturers, presentations, online instruction, field trips, etc.)*

Discussion, collaborative exercises, seminars, lecture.

Texts and Resource Materials *(Include online resources and Indigenous knowledge sources. [Open Educational Resources](#) (OER) should be included whenever possible. If more space is required, use the [Supplemental Texts and Resource Materials form](#).)*

Type	Author or description	Title and publication/access details	Year
1. Textbook	Longakre, M. G. & Walker, J.	Rhetorical Analysis: A Brief Guide for Writers	2011
2. Textbook	Perloff, R	The Dynamics of Persuasion: Communication and Attitudes in the Twenty-first Century, 5 th edition	2014
3. Textbook	Native American Rhetoric	University of New Mexico Press	2021
4. Online resource	Engaged Persuasion in a Post-Truth World	Cognella	2021

Required Additional Supplies and Materials *(Software, hardware, tools, specialized clothing, etc.)***Course Content and Topics**

Introduction and course overview: key communications/rhetorical theories and concepts

- Learning key terminology, theories, and concepts from communications/rhetorical theory
- Students will become familiar with key theories and concepts by working with them in response papers and classroom discussion

Applying communications/rhetorical theory in action

- Working with key concepts in communication and rhetorical case studies by observing how they are applied in diverse contemporary contexts such as advertising, social media, graffiti, and social movements
- Students will develop a seminar paper and lead a seminar presentation that demonstrates application of key concepts in communications/rhetorical theory to a contemporary situation

Doing communications/rhetorical analysis

- Introduction to methodological approaches to doing communications/rhetorical analysis
- Students will identify a context of analysis and relevant methodology and develop and present a term project proposal

Term project conference-style presentations

- Students will present their findings from their communications/rhetorical analysis