GHENT UNIVERSITY

Course Specifications

Valid as from the academic year 2026-2027

Persuasive Communication (A704163)

Course size *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

Credits 3.0 **Study time 90 h**

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2026-2027

A (semester 2)	Dutch	Gent	lecture
			independent work

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

Claeys, An-Sofie	LW22	lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027	**crdts**	**offering**
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, English, French)	3	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, English, German)	3	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, English, Italian)	3	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, English, Language Technology)	3	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, English, Russian)	3	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, English, Spanish)	3	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, English, Turkish)	3	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, French, German)	3	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, French, Italian)	3	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, French, Language Technology)	3	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, French, Russian)	3	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, French, Spanish)	3	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, French, Turkish)	3	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, German, Italian)	3	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, German, Language Technology)	3	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, German, Russian)	3	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, German, Spanish)	3	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, German, Turkish)	3	A

Teaching languages

Dutch

Keywords

Communication, persuasion

Position of the course

This is an introductory course that aims to offer students an overview of the most important theories and principles in persuasive communication. The course offers a theoretical background in persuasive communication, that students can build upon in future courses about specialized communication areas. They will also begin to apply theories about persuasive communication in the practice of diverse disciplines related to communication (e.g., corporate communication, marketing communication, copywriting, political communication, health communication, government communication). Throughout the course, students learn how language can affect the persuasiveness of a variety of messages.
Each day, people and organizations try to influence our attitudes and opinions through persuasive communication efforts. A persuasive message can impact our attitudes about politicians, organizations, societal issues, products and health matters. These changing attitudes might ultimately affect our behavior. The theories, concepts and principles that are discussed in this course can be used by students to increase the effectiveness of their own communication efforts, and to critically evaluate messages from others. The course therefore aims to provide students with a broad theoretical basis, but leaves enough room for practical applications and interaction.

Contents

This course discusses important basic principles of persuasive communication, such as cognitive dissonance and dual process theories. Students will also be taught principles of interpersonal influence. People, for example, attach more value to information that is scarce or difficult to obtain, and they will more easily respond favorably to a request from someone who granted them a favor before. These are principles that we experience ourselves each day in corporate and marketing communication. Throughout this course, students learn to recognize, understand, and apply them. They also learn how influence and persuasion can affect group decisions and what phenomena like groupthink mean. We will also discuss how communication can affect our health behavior. Throughout this course a connection will be made between persuasion and language. We discuss, among others, why narratives can be so convincing in diverse contexts. In addition, we consider the persuasive power of humor, and the manners in which organizations or politicians use humor in rhetoric. That way, students learn to use language to communicate in a convincing manner.

Initial competences

The general competences that can be expected after successfully completing Bachelor 2.

Final competences

1 Having a command of Dutch at professional native speaker level in terms of comprehension, oral and writing skills.
2 Having basic knowledge and understanding in supporting sciences and applying it to the interpretation of text.
3 In Dutch, reporting on research in applied language studies, tailored both to peers in an academic register and to lay people in a more general register.
4 Based on scientific knowledge, thinking and reasoning analytically and creatively and based on this, solving unfamiliar, complex problems.
5 Adequately interpreting, analyzing and assessing written and oral communication, including messages of a specialised nature.
6 Expressing oneself in complex, communicative situations in the studied languages appropriate to the purpose, target group and media.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is unrestricted: the student takes into consideration the conditions mentioned in 'Starting Competences'

Conditions for exam contract

Access to this course unit via an exam contract is unrestricted

Teaching methods

Lecture, Independent work

Extra information on the teaching methods

Lectures
Guided self-study: Process recorded knowledge clips, academic articles and/or cases from practice independently.
Lecture recordings are made available to all students.

Study material

Type: Handbook

Name: Persuasion: Psychological Insights and Perspectives
Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty
Optional: yes
Language : English
Available in the Library : Yes

Type: Slides

Name: Slides
Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty
Optional: no
Language : Dutch
Available on Ufora : Yes

Type: Reader

Name: Reader
Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty
Optional: no
Language : English
Available on Ufora : Yes

References

Course content-related study coaching

Interactive support via UFORA and during classes. Individual and collective feedback during classes, via e-mail or via UFORA

Assessment moments

end-of-term assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Written assessment with open-ended questions

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Written assessment with open-ended questions

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

not applicable

Calculation of the examination mark

Facilities for Working Students

Absence is allowed. Supporting teaching material is available (i.e., slides, for part of the lectures recordings, knowledge clips and literature).