WRIT 201.07
College Writing II: Advertising as Argument
Spring 2017

Instructor Information

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- **Course Website:** accessible on Moodle

Office Hours: Thursday 2:00 – 5:00pm or by appointment
Class Meeting Time: Tuesday & Thursday 11:00 – 12:20pm

Course Description

“What you call ‘love’ was invented by guys like me… to sell nylons.” – Don Draper, Mad Men

“Don’t tell me how good you make it; tell me how good it makes me when I use it.” – Leo Burnett

“Early to bed, early to rise, work like hell and advertise.” – Ted Turner

Although the exact number is difficult to pin down, some estimates claim that the average American is exposed to 5,000 advertisements every day (New York Times, “Anywhere the Eye Can See, It’s Likely to See an Ad”). How could this be possible? Well, with advertising appearing on TV, Facebook, Instagram, radio, highway billboards, beer coasters, subway turnstiles, bus tickets, flyers, magazines, airport security trays, in spam emails, direct mailings, and trailers for others films that appear before you can watch the film you paid to see, it’s no wonder that we’re bombarded by hundreds or even thousands of advertisements each day. In fact, we encounter so many ads that we likely don’t even notice the majority of them. But if it’s true that we won’t recognize or recall most of these ads, why are companies, individuals, and organizations paying so much to advertise to us? As anyone who has ever seen an advertisement or watched an episode of Mad Men could tell you, it’s to sell us something. Most significantly, advertisers want to persuade us to do or believe a certain thing—they want to convince us that Verizon has better coverage than Sprint, that we need to upgrade to an iPhone 7 this year, that Allstate will protect us in case of “mayhem,” that Reese’s Peanut Butter Cups are delicious. Advertisers’ end goal is to cause us to view an item, person, or idea as cool, funny, beautiful, stylish, necessary, or desirable. Advertisers are in the business of persuasion, and you and I are typically the ones who are being persuaded, often without us even recognizing it. In this class, however, we’ll turn the tables: you’ll learn to recognize the ways in which advertisements try to persuade you, and you will learn how to use advertisers’ skills of persuasion to write argumentatively and convincingly, to make your case no matter the topic.

This course (College Writing II: Advertising as Argument) is designed to challenge you to learn the skills you’ll need to become a stronger writer, and throughout the semester you will learn to read, examine, and discuss writing and advertisements in ways that will ensure you become more confident in your ability to read critically, analyze texts carefully, and write persuasively. We will focus on revealing the skills, processes, and techniques essential to the persuasive essay, which we will explore by closely examining the way advertisements function in our lives. We will look at advertisements that appear in numerous mediums (e.g., video, online, print, radio), and we will become expert readers, ever-improving literary analysts, and more advanced writers. We will even try our hands at producing an advertisement of our own, and we will come to know the joys and sorrows (as every writer should!) of the writing workshop and revision.

Together we will learn more about how to read critically and write persuasively. Significantly, we also will discover how to effectively communicate our opinions about both published and peers’ works through both verbal and written means. Listening to each other openly will be vital, so the expectation is that we will all receive each other’s questions and ideas with curiosity, care, and respect. Any comments or actions that are perceived by the instructor or a member of the class as discriminatory or impeding anyone from joining the discussion are not welcome in our classroom. Please feel free to speak with me if you have any questions regarding this policy.
Learning Outcomes
WRIT 201 is an Approved Writing course. Its university learning outcomes include:

- Use writing to learn and synthesize new concepts
- Formulate and express opinions and ideas in writing
- Compose written documents that are appropriate for a given audience or purpose
- Revise written work based on constructive feedback
- Find, evaluate, and use information effectively
- Begin to use discipline-specific writing conventions
- Demonstrate appropriate English language usage

Course Texts

- Various handouts, PDFs of essays and articles, and advertisements (both print and online)
- Course website (on Moodle)

Required Materials

- Notebook and pen/pencil for in-class writing and notetaking
- Folder for collecting handouts, essays, photocopies
- Folder for final portfolio

Major Inquiry Projects

Expect to write and revise five different projects and one reflective introduction over the course of this class, in addition to other informal writing in and out of class. I will give you a detailed assignment sheet as we begin each of these major assignments.

1. Super Bowl or Super Bust? Which Ads Worked and Why? DUE: Tuesday, February 7
2. Case Study: Close Analysis of Notable Print Ad DUE: Thursday, February 16
3. For Sale By Owner: Selling Your Prized Possession with Rhetoric DUE: Thursday, March 2
4. Sex, Drugs, and Rock & Roll: Ethics of Advertising the Vices DUE: Thursday, March 30
5. From Market Research to Making a Pitch: Create Your Own Ad DUE: Tuesday, April 25
6. Portfolio and Portfolio Introduction DUE: Thursday, May 4

Your five major inquiry projects will give you the opportunity to compose in a range of genres for a range of academic and civic situations. You’ll have opportunities to use observations and experience as evidence, as well as learn strategies for composing effective arguments and conducting academic research.

- You will have the chance to develop your major projects through a process of inquiry and drafting. You’ll compose papers in and out of class, alone and with a small group. For some of your writings, I’ll ask you to bring enough draft copies to share with your group or ask you to email your papers to group members for an online workshop. All inquiry projects must be completed for you to pass the course. I will respond to these projects with written comments focused on suggestions for revision, but I will also mark them using a check system to help you know where you stand on a specific project.
Course Requirements

• **Writing Assignments and Exercises:** Daily short writing assignments and exercises will be given to you regularly over the course of the semester. Although we may not examine all of your written work in class, you are still required to perform and submit all assignments on time.

• **Readings and Responses:** You are responsible for completing the assigned reading for each class. Frequently, you may be asked to write a short reflection in response to the reading. Please read or examine the assigned essays or advertisements at least twice in order to be able to talk about them easily.

• **Major Inquiry Projects:** You will draft five essays and one portfolio introduction this semester, and you will have your essays workshopped in class. You will also significantly revise your essays for submission in your final portfolio.

• **Final Presentation:** Your final major inquiry project includes a group presentation component. You will be required to make a brief presentation (around 5 minutes) with your group in front of the class. Do not fear—the goal is not to scare you. Instead, this project will help you hone your communication skills in both written and oral forms. I will discuss the specifics of this assignment when I assign it.

• **Final Portfolio:** Your final for this course will be a portfolio that includes the first draft of your major inquiry projects along with significantly revised drafts of those essays. You will also include a final one-page reflective piece that discusses how your revisions went and why you made these changes.

Class Policies and Procedures

General Expectations

➢ **Essays and Assignments:** All of your essays must be typed and titled. Please double space and use 12-point Times New Roman font. Keep backup copies of all of your work, and always bring all of your writing assignments to class.

➢ **Conferences:** Please make use of my office hours—I am more than happy to talk, to answer questions, to discuss your writing, to agonize, to commiserate. If you cannot meet during my office hours, feel free to send me an email and we can schedule an alternate time to meet.

➢ **Late Work:** Will not be accepted or given credit.

Grading
You will be graded on your active participation in class, your written work, your improvement from draft to revision, and your attendance. I encourage you to talk with me at any time to better understand my comments or to discuss your overall progress and success in the class.

★ **35% of your grade is based on active participation.** Show up prepared (and on time), share comments and ask questions in class, provide constructive comments on your peers’ essays, submit assignments on time, and contribute to the classroom community.

★ **65% of your grade is based on your final portfolio.** For your portfolio, you will revise your major essays and write a portfolio introduction. Put thought into your written work, and type and double-space all out-of-class work. You will receive comments and a “check,” “check minus,” or “unsatisfactory” on your major inquiry projects, but not a letter grade.

**You must turn in your portfolio and complete all major papers by their deadlines in order to receive credit for this course.**

**You must earn at least a C- in this class to be awarded credit.**

Grading Policy

Students enrolled in WRIT 201 are graded by the traditional letter grade A, B, C, D, F, or are given NC for no credit. The NC grade does not affect grade point average. It is reserved for students who have worked unusually hard, attended class regularly, and completed all assignments but whose skills are not at a passing level at the end of the semester.

Attendance
If you miss the first 2 classes, you will need to drop the course on CyberBear and enroll in another semester. This is university policy and the reasoning behind it is that important groundwork for the semester is put in place in the first
few class meetings. Students without that foundational framework are better served by taking the course when they can give it the attention it deserves.

More than 2 absences will compromise your grade, and 5 or more absences will result in a failing grade. Here’s the breakdown:

- 3rd absence: final grade drops one letter grade
- 4th absence: final grade drops one additional letter grade
- 5th absence: final grade is an F

Do not arrive late to class. I will mark the number of minutes late any student has arrived, and if any student’s ongoing tally reaches or exceeds 50 minutes over the course of the semester, he or she will be marked as absent for one class period. Additionally, late arrival to class will count against your participation grade.

Here’s the reasoning behind the attendance policy. Without attending class (or by arriving late), you cannot perform your role as a student involved in learning, planning, inventing, drafting; discussing reading and writing; learning and practicing concepts; or collaborating with your instructor and classmates. Personal situations and required university events may arise that, on a rare occasion, make it impossible for you to be in class. Remember, however, that this is why a few absences are allowed; please reserve those for emergencies.

I reserve the right to adjust the policy in cases of significant, documented illness or emergency. Please note that instances of poor time management on your part do not constitute extenuating circumstances. If you must miss class, you are responsible for obtaining any handouts or assignments for the class from a classmate. Make sure you talk with me in advance if you are worried about meeting a deadline or missing a class.

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Participation

Participation includes coming to class prepared and on time, taking part in class discussions, asking questions, contributing your knowledge and insights in whatever form is appropriate, and striving to make all your contributions excellent. It also includes completing the required reading for each class and writing responses to your peers’ stories. Note: Please come to class on time. Lateness will hurt your grade because it is an unnecessary interruption and because latecomers are likely to miss valuable information. Please see Participation Letter Grade Descriptors for more information.

Late Work

Your work needs to be typed, printed, and in class with you to be considered "on time."

- Late or handwritten homework does not receive credit.
- Emailed assignments are considered late.
- Late formal essays are unacceptable. They will receive no revision comments from me.
- If you miss class, the homework is due the next class period.

You are always welcome to complete assignments early if you will be missing class.

Workshop Etiquette

Becoming a good reader is an important part in your development as a writer. Learning how to identify the strengths and weaknesses in others’ writing will help you recognize the strengths and weaknesses in your own. When reading another student’s work, be kind and be generous. Read another’s work as you would like your own work to be read. Don’t shy away from making suggestions. (Being too nice is its own kind of irresponsible workshop behavior.) Comment with an eye toward helping another writer create the best essay possible. Barbara Kingsolver once said that the wonderful thing about being a writer is that everyone can win! It’s not like running a marathon where only one person breaks the tape at the finish line.

This is a class in which we will be sharing written work with each other. It is essential to this class that we maintain a respectful attitude toward each other personally and toward each other’s work. While it is important that we be critical at times, the point is not to knock down anybody’s stuff. Obviously, respect and open-mindedness are required from all of us. Hopefully it goes without saying that discrimination or harassment of any kind will not be tolerated in our classroom community.
Evaluation
Revision is a crucial (and, in this class, mandatory) part of the writing process. Although I will assign final grades based on your portfolio, which will document your progress as a writer, your daily short assignments and major inquiry projects will receive a mark on the check spectrum, and will include some written feedback from me. These marks do not have letter-grade counterparts; rather, taken with my feedback, they reflect your performance on a particular assignment, and suggest how much work you might need to do in order to elevate your writing.

Daily Short Assignments
You will receive a mark on the check spectrum and brief comments from me, but no grade on informal writing submissions. Short assignments play an important part in your overall participation grade.

Major Inquiry Projects
To give you a sense of the check system I’ll be using, please refer to the following descriptors:

* **Check**: A project with a check generally engages its genre, takes successful risks, meets assignment requirements, avoids grammatical and syntactical errors, and uses persuasive writing to argue effectively. Written comments will elaborate on strengths, weaknesses, and strategies for focused revision.

* **Check minus**: A project with a check minus meets the basic requirements, but would benefit from significant revision and a stronger understanding of the assignment. Written comments will elaborate on strengths, weaknesses, and strategies for revision.

* **Unsatisfactory**: A project with a U does not meet basic standards, and requires extensive development and attention. An unsatisfactory submission may be incomplete or inappropriate to the assignment. Such a submission may receive a request to rewrite within a week in order to receive teacher comments.

Academic Conduct
You must abide by the rules for academic conduct described in the Student Conduct Code. If you have any questions about when and how to avoid academic dishonesty, particularly plagiarism, please review the Conduct Code and talk with your instructor. The University policy states, “Plagiarism is defined in the UM Student Conduct Code as representing another person’s words, ideas, data, or materials as one’s own. Consequences include failing an assignment, failing a course, or even expulsion.” Academic honesty is highly valued in the University community and acts of plagiarism will not be tolerated. All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course, and all students must practice academic honesty. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code, which is available for review online at http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php

Participation in University-wide Program-level Writing Assessment
This course requires an electronic submission (via Moodle) of an assignment stripped of your personal information to be used for educational research and assessment of the university’s writing program. Your paper will be stored in a database. A random selection of papers will be assessed by a group of faculty and staff using a rubric developed from the following Writing Learning Outcomes:

* Compose written documents that are appropriate for a given audience or purpose
* Formulate and express opinions and ideas in writing
* Use writing to learn and synthesize new concepts
* Revise written work based on constructive feedback
* Find, evaluate, and use information effectively
* Begin to use discipline-specific writing conventions (largely style conventions like APA or MLA)
* Demonstrate appropriate English language usage

This assessment in no way affects either your course grade or your progression at the university. The rubric that will be used to score the papers can be found here: http://www.umt.edu/facultysenate/committees/writing_committee/UPWA.php

Students with Disabilities
Qualified students with disabilities will receive appropriate accommodations in this course. Please speak with me privately after class or in my office. Please be prepared to provide a letter from your DSS Coordinator.

This syllabus is subject to change.
**Portfolio Letter Grade Descriptors for WRIT 201.07**

**A**
Superior portfolios will demonstrate initiative and rhetorical sophistication that go beyond the requirements. A portfolio at this level is composed of well-edited texts representing different writing situations and genres that consistently show a clear, connected sense of audience, purpose, and development. The writer is able to analyze his or her own writing, reflect on it, and revise accordingly. The portfolio takes risks that work.

**B**
Strong portfolios meet their rhetorical goals in terms of purpose, genre, and writing situation without need for further major revisions of purpose, evidence, audience, or style/mechanics. The writer is able to reflect on his or her own writing and make some choices about revision. The writer takes risks, although they may not all be successful.

**C**
Consistent portfolios meet the basic requirements, yet the writing would benefit from further revisions of purpose, evidence, audience, or writing style/mechanics (or some combination) and a stronger understanding of rhetorical decision-making involved in different writing situations and genres. The writer composes across tasks at varying levels of success with some superficial revision. The writer has taken some risks in writing and exhibits some style.

**D**
Weak portfolios do not fully meet the basic evaluative standards. Most texts are brief and underdeveloped. These texts show a composing process that is not yet elaborated or reflective of rhetorical understanding related to composing in different genres and for a range of writing situations. Texts generally require extensive revisions to purpose, development, audience, and/or style and mechanics.

**F**
Unacceptable portfolios exhibit pervasive problems with purpose, development, audience, or style/mechanics that interfere with meaning and readers’ understanding. Unacceptable portfolios are often incomplete. A portfolio will also earn an F if it does not represent the writer’s original work.
Participation Letter Grade Descriptors for WRIT 201.07

A
Superior participation shows initiative and excellence in written and verbal work. The student helps to create more effective discussions and workshops through his/her verbal, electronic, and written contributions. Reading and writing assignments are always completed on time and with attention to detail. In workshop or conferences, suggestions to group members are tactful, thorough, specific, and often provide other student writers with a new perspective or insight.

B
Strong participation demonstrates active engagement in written and verbal work. The student plays an active role in the classroom but does not always add new insight to the discussion at hand. Reading and writing assignments are always completed on time and with attention to detail. In workshop or conferences, suggestions to group members are tactful, specific, and helpful.

C
Satisfactory participation demonstrates consistent, satisfactory written and verbal work. Overall, the student is prepared for class, completes assigned readings and writings, and contributes to small group workshops and large class discussions. Reading and writing assignments are completed on time. In workshop or conferences, suggestions to group members are tactful and prompt, but could benefit from more attentive reading and/or specific detail when giving comments.

D
Weak participation demonstrates inconsistent written and verbal work. The student may be late to class, unprepared for class, and may contribute infrequently or unproductively to classroom discussions or small group workshops. Reading and writing assignments are not turned in or are insufficient. In workshops or conferences, suggestions to group members may be missing, disrespectful, or far too brief and general to be of help.

F
Unacceptable participation shows ineffectual written and verbal work. The student may be excessively late to class, regularly unprepared, and not able to contribute to classroom discussions or small group workshops. This student may be disruptive in class. Reading and writing assignments are regularly not turned in or are insufficient. In workshops or conferences, the student has a pattern of missing, being completely unprepared, or being disruptive.
Composition Program Plagiarism Policy for WRIT 201

According to the University of Montana Student Conduct Code, plagiarism is “representing another person's words, ideas, data, or materials as one's own.” The Composition program recognizes that plagiarism is a serious academic offense, but also understands that some misuse of information can occur in the process of learning information literacy skills. Therefore, if student writing appears to have been plagiarized, in full or in part, intentionally or unintentionally, or due to poor citation, the following will procedure will take place:

- The student will be made aware of areas in the text that are not properly integrated or cited.
- The student will receive no credit on the paper; it is up to him/her to prove that he/she turned in original work.
- The student will be asked to provide the teacher with copies of the research she/he used in writing the paper.
- The student and teacher will meet to discuss research integration.
- **If the student cannot provide documentation of her/his research, further disciplinary action will be taken.**

In the case that the student is unable to provide evidence of his/her original work or in the case that the teacher has evidence that the student has repeatedly plagiarized his/her work, the teacher will consult with the Director of Composition for direction with further disciplinary action.

In the case of blatant or egregious offenses, or in the case of repeated plagiarism, the Director of Composition will work with the Dean of Students to determine further disciplinary action.

*Students should review the Student Conduct Code so that they understand their rights in academic disciplinary situations. The Student Conduct Code can be found here: http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php*