City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus

offered by Department of English
with effect from Semester A 2019 / 2020

Part I   Course Overview

Course Title:	Persuasive Writing
Course Code:	EN2720
Course Duration:	1 Semester
Credit Units:	3 credits
Level:	B2
Proposed Area: *(for GE courses only)*	☐ Arts and Humanities ☐ Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations ☐ Science and Technology
Medium of Instruction:	English
Medium of Assessment:	English
Prerequisites: *(Course Code and Title)*	Nil
Precursors: *(Course Code and Title)*	Nil
Equivalent Courses: *(Course Code and Title)*	EN2722 Studies in English: Knowledge and Pathways
Exclusive Courses: *(Course Code and Title)*	Nil

Part II   Course Details

1.   Abstract
(A 150-word description about the course)

This course aims to provide a practical introduction to persuasive writing in English across multiple creative and critical genres. Drawing upon both classical and contemporary theories of rhetoric, composition, linguistics, and cognition, students will examine important topics such as the relationship between writer and audience, psychological aspects of persuasion, the cognitive science of reading, lexical and syntactical components of persuasion, and the development and organisation of an argument across all stages of the writing process. Relevant examples of persuasive writing from areas such as academia, politics, philosophy, media, law, branding, and image management will be studied, and students will analyse these texts as a means by which to develop their own skills as persuasive communicators. Overall, the course advocates a reader-centred approach to writing that promotes clarity and simplicity as the cornerstone to persuasive writing. Students are also trained in the logistics of writing, which involves sticking to a writing schedule, forming writing groups, overcoming writing blocks, and managing multiple writing projects.

2.   Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)
(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

No.	CILOs	Weighting* (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	*A2*	*A3*
1.	**Explain and put into practice** relevant theories and techniques of rhetoric/composition across a range of writing genres.		X	X	X
2.	**Critically analyse** historical and contemporary persuasive texts to develop an understanding of best-practice in persuasive writing.		X	X	
3.	**Independently manage** each stage of the writing process from pre-writing to self-reflective evaluation and diagnosis.		X	X	X
4.	**Produce** compelling persuasive texts in a variety of genres that are presented in portfolio form.		X	X	X
	* If weighting is assigned to CILOs, they should add up to 100%.	100%			

A1:   *Attitude*
Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.
A2:   *Ability*
Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.
A3:   *Accomplishments*
Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

3.   Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)
(TLAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

TLA	Brief Description	CILO No.						Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4			
Lecture	The instructor will introduce students to relevant theories of rhetoric/composition, writing strategies, and examples of persuasive texts.	X	X	X	X			

Seminar discussion and reading analysis	Using relevant concepts and terms, students will analyse and reflect upon an array of persuasive texts in small group and whole-class settings.	X	X	X	X			
Peer-review meetings and discussion	In small peer-review groups, both during and outside of class, students will read and respond to one another's writing as a way to reflect upon and develop various stages of the writing process.	X	X	X	X			
Portfolio Development	Students will document and reflect upon learning through the creation of a persuasive writing portfolio that draws upon formative feedback from both their peer-review group and from the instructor.	X	X	X	X			

4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)
(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.						Weighting*	Remarks
	1	2	3	4				
Continuous Assessment: 100 %								
Critical analysis essay (1250 words)	X	X	X				25%	Students will critically analyse a persuasive text using relevant concepts and terminology.
Formative Portfolio Submission 1	X	X	X	X			15%	Students will submit one recent portfolio piece of approximately 300 words for formative assessment. Formative Portfolio Submissions 1 & 2 must each come from a different genre of persuasive writing and will form part of the Final Portfolio Submission following revision.
Formative Portfolio Submission 2	X	X	X	X			15%	Students will submit one recent portfolio piece of approximately 300 words for formative assessment. Formative Portfolio Submissions 1 & 2 must each come from a different genre of persuasive writing and will form part of the Final Portfolio Submission following revision.
Final Portfolio Submission	X	X	X	X			45%	Students will submit a collection of persuasive writing totalling approximately 2500 words that has been developed following formative feedback from the peer-review group and instructor. A short reflective response describing how these

								pieces have been developed and refined will be included in the final portfolio.

Examination: _____% (duration: , if applicable)

* The weightings should add up to 100%.   100%

5. Assessment Rubrics

(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. Critical Analysis Essay	Knowledge (20%)	Excellent understanding of relevant theories and concepts	Good understanding of relevant theories and concepts	Adequate understanding of relevant theories and concepts	Marginal understanding of relevant theories and concepts	No understanding of relevant theories and concepts
	Awareness of persuasive techniques (20%)	Excellent understanding of how persuasive techniques are used by the writer	Good understanding of how persuasive techniques are used by the writer	Adequate understanding of how persuasive techniques are used by the writer	Limited understanding of how persuasive techniques are used by the writer	No understanding of how persuasive techniques are used by the writer
	Critical analysis (20%)	Excellent critical analysis of persuasive techniques used in the text	Good critical analysis of persuasive techniques used in the text	Adequate critical analysis of persuasive techniques used in the text	Limited critical analysis of persuasive techniques used in the text	No critical analysis of persuasive techniques used in the text
	Organisation and development (20%)	Excellent development and structure of analysis	Good development and structure of analysis	Adequate development and structure of analysis	Limited development and ineffective structure of analysis	No development or organisational structure
	Language (20%)	Excellent English language usage with minimal errors	Good English language usage with minimal errors	Adequate English language usage with numerous errors	Weak English language usage with numerous errors that limit understanding	Serious issues with English language usage and/or extensive errors that limit understanding.
2. Formative Portfolio Submissions	Topic (20%)	Excellent selection of topic with a clear persuasive element	Good selection of topic with a clear persuasive element	Adequate selection of topic with a limited persuasive element	Weak selection of topic with limited persuasive element	Weak selection of topic with no persuasive element
	Application of persuasive techniques (20%)	Excellent use of relevant persuasive writing techniques	Good use of relevant persuasive writing techniques	Adequate use of relevant persuasive writing techniques	Limited use of relevant persuasive writing techniques	No use of relevant persuasive writing techniques
	Task fulfilment	A highly	A largely	A somewhat	A text with limited	An unpersuasive text

	(20%)	persuasive text, which shows outstanding understanding of audience	persuasive text, which shows a good understanding of audience	persuasive text, which shows some understanding of audience	persuasiveness, and minimal understanding of audience	with no understanding of audience
	Organisation and development (20%)	Excellent development and structure of persuasive writing	Good development and structure of persuasive writing	Adequate development and structure of persuasive writing	Limited development and structure of persuasive writing	No development or clear structure
	Language (20%)	Excellent English language usage with minimal errors	Good English language usage with minimal errors	Adequate English language usage with numerous errors.	Weak English language usage with numerous errors that limit understanding	Serious issues with English language usage and/or extensive errors that limit understanding
3. Final Portfolio Submission	Topic (20%)	All entries show an excellent selection of topic with a clear persuasive element	All entries show a good selection of topic with a clear persuasive element	Most entries show an adequate selection of topic with a limited persuasive element	Most entries show a weak selection of topic with limited persuasive element	All entries show a weak selection of topic with no persuasive element
	Application of persuasive techniques (20%)	All entries show an excellent use of relevant persuasive writing techniques	All entries show a good use of relevant persuasive writing techniques	Most entries show an adequate use of relevant persuasive writing techniques	Most entries show a limited use of relevant persuasive writing techniques	No entries show relevant persuasive writing techniques
	Task fulfilment (20%)	All entries are highly persuasive and show outstanding understanding of audience	All entries are largely persuasive and show a good understanding of audience	Most entries are somewhat persuasive and show some understanding of audience	Most entries are limited in persuasiveness with a minimal understanding of audience	All entries are unpersuasive and show no understanding of audience
	Organisation and development (20%)	All entries show excellent development and structure of persuasive writing	All entries show good development and structure of persuasive writing	Most entries show adequate development and structure of persuasive writing	Most entries have limited development and structure of persuasive writing	All entries are seriously lacking in development and clear structure
	Language (20%)	All entries use excellent English with minimal	All entries use good English with minimal errors	All entries use adequate English with numerous	Most entries use weak English with numerous errors that	All entries have serious issues with English and/or

		errors		errors	limit understanding	extensive errors that limit understanding

Part III   Other Information (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

1.   Keyword Syllabus
   (An indication of the key topics of the course.)
persuasion, rhetoric, writing, audience, structure, influence, psychology, syntax, lexis,

2.   Reading List
2.1   Compulsory Readings
   (Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)

1.	Graff, Gerald and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say, I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing* (New York: Norton, 2009).
2.	
3.	
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2.2   Additional Readings
   (Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)

1.	Michael Austin, *Reading the World: Ideas that Matter* (New York: Norton, 2015).
2.	Cialdini, Robert, *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion* (New York: Harper, 1984).
3.	Killingsworth, M. Jimmie, *Appeals in Modern Rhetoric* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois UP, 2005).
4.	Frederick, Peter, *Persuasive Writing: How to Harness the Power of Words* (London: Prentice Hall, 2011).
5.	Silvia, Paul. (2007). *How to Write a Lot*. APA.
6.	Silvia, Paul. (2014). *Write It Up*. Chicago.
7.	Pinker, Steven. (2014). The sense of style. The thinking person's guide to writing in the 21st century. Penguin.
8.	Douglas, Yellowlees. (2015). *The Reader's Brain. How Neuroscience Can Make You A Better Writer.* Cambridge University Press.
9.	*Billig, Michael. (2014). Learn to Write Badly. How to Succeed in the Social Sciences. Cambridge University Press.*
10.	Zinnser, William. (2006). *On Writing Well.* Collins.
11.	Williams, Joseph. (1990). *Style: Towards Clarity and Grace*. Chicago. Selected chapters