

## **Richard Slawsky - Assignment for Communication 112**

### **Assignment**

Students will try to identify the persuasive strategy deployed by a speaker as well as try to identify whether they used more than one strategy.

### **Fundamental and powerful concepts illustrated with this assignment**

Monroe's Motivated Sequence serves as the structure of many persuasive arguments. Persuasive arguments incorporate ethos, pathos and logos.

### **Key issue**

How are Monroe's Motivated Sequence and ethos, pathos and logos used in developing persuasive arguments?

### **Information**

The information needed for this assignment will be discussed in the class leading up to the deployment of the activity.

### **Concepts**

Persuasive arguments incorporate emotion, logic and credibility, both separately and together. A persuasive structure known as Monroe's Motivated Sequence serves as the pattern for many of the persuasive arguments students will encounter throughout their lives.

### **Assumptions**

Students are familiar with presenting arguments to their parents as a way to get what they want.

### **Implications**

Students will be bombarded with persuasive messages on a daily basis throughout their lives. Being able to decipher those messages and think critically about them will assist them in making better decisions. In addition, being able to make more effective persuasive arguments will likely be helpful in their careers.

### **Point of view**

Virtually everyone makes some form of a persuasive argument on a daily basis. Students are required to understand and use ethos, pathos and logos in the arguments they craft for their class assignments.

### **Overview:**

### **Persuasive terms to know:**

With logos, you construct logical arguments that support your point of view.

- Use reasoning and facts.
- Make considerable use of arguments (stated positions with support for or against an idea or issue)

Fallacies, or errors in reasoning, include:

- **Hasty generalization:** presents a generalization that is either not supported with evidence or is supported with weak evidence.
- **False cause:** you cannot prove causal relationship (just because two things happen one after the other does not mean that the first caused the second.)
- **Either-or:** argues that there are only two alternatives when others may exist.
- **Strawman:** a speaker weakens the opposing position by misrepresenting it in some way and then attacks that weaker position (distortion of the opposition's stance.)
- **Ad hominem:** attacks or praises the person making the argument rather than addressing the argument itself (think celebrity endorsements.)
- **Red Herring:** attention is diverted from the real issue through presentation of arguments that are not relevant.

With ethos, you argue that your competence, credibility, & character should persuade others.

- Convey goodwill – audience forms a perception of the speaker (he understands, emphasizes, and responds to us.)
- Convey competence and credibility.

With pathos, everything you say and do appeals to emotions.

- Evoke negative emotions: guilt, fear, anger, shame, sadness
- Evoke positive emotions: happiness, joy, pride, relief, hope, compassion

Identify your proposition – state your specific goal as a declarative sentence that clearly indicates the position you will advocate.

- **Proposition of Fact:** takes a position on something that is generally not known but that can be argued for as true. It's a statement designed to convince your audience that something did, probably did, possibly did, or did not exist or occur; is, probably is, probably is not, or is not true; will, probably will, probably will not, or will not occur.
- **Proposition of Value:** a statement designed to convince your audience that something is good, bad, desirable, undesirable, fair, unfair, moral, immoral, etc. You literally convince the audience that something has more value than something else does.

- Proposition of Policy: convinces your audience that a particular rule, plan, or course of action should be taken. Uses the words “should/should not” or “must/must not.”

Monroe’s Motivated Sequence:

1. Attention/Introduction
2. Need
3. Satisfaction
4. Visualization
5. Action/Appeal/Conclusion

### **“Persuasion Game – Panama City, Here I Come!”**

Using randomly assigned persuasive strategies, three volunteers will make a one-two minute speech to the rest of the class and three students picked to be judges/parents. The presenters have to convince “their parents” to pay for them to go to Panama City, Florida with three friends for spring break. The speakers will draw a card to determine their strategy.

The speaker must use the means of persuasion (Logos, Ethos, Pathos) on their card to convince the class that they should get to go. He or she can only use that means of persuasion.

The speaker will have a support team, and that team can help him/her devise a persuasive argument.

The rest of the class:

- Tries to identify the persuasive strategy employed
- Tries to catch the fallacies/lies in the arguments of speakers
- Tries to identify the use of persuasive strategies other than the main one identified
- Tries to catch speakers using the steps of Monroe’s Motivated Sequence out of order.

Speakers start off with a total of 10 points. One point is deducted for each infraction. The speaker with the most points at the end of the presentations is bound for Panama City! (in their imagination, of course)