

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMUNICATION
COMM 4304 and 5304
Fall 2014

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Office Hours: 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm Monday, Tuesday, & Thursday

The relevance of health communication to our daily lives has become increasingly important over the last decade. Communication concerning health, fitness, illness, disease, and medicine saturates our daily lives. It bombards us from every angle – our friends, family, health care providers and especially the media. Communication about health is increasingly significant as diseases such as cholera, T.B., etc, have been replaced by health threats resulting from lifestyle practices. Since many of these lifestyle practices are not subject to traditional medical intervention, communication campaigns and strategies to promote altered, healthier behavior are becoming increasingly important in the medical community and to our social and physical well-being.

Course Description: This course will introduce you to the field of health communication, exploring the social construction of health and illness and examining the mediated images of health, public relations, and marketing health campaigns. The course will include consideration of strategies in the development of health communication messages and campaigns, social marketing techniques, the process of media literacy, and uses of media advocacy.

Some Understandings

1. You are responsible for reading and understanding the contents of the syllabus.
2. Students are expected to be familiar with and abide by University regulations regarding academic honesty. Specifically, students must give proper credit when others' ideas are used (see APA manual for more detailed description).
3. You should attend class regularly. Although attendance does not directly figure into your grade, it has been my experience that attendance and class performance are strongly and positively related. It is your responsibility to cover material that you miss.
4. All written assignments must be typed and turned in on the due date. Late submission of written assignments will result in a reduction of your grade on that assignment.

Course Materials: Required readings for the course are available on Blackboard arranged in unit folders.

Related University Policies: As a student, you are responsible for being familiar with and following all university policies related to academic work. I have mentioned some of the key policies below. If you are unsure of what the University Policies are I strongly recommend you access the Student Handbook on the SRSU website.

Academic Honesty

“The University expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is beyond reproach and to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of their classroom. The University may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials.”

--Excerpt from the Student Handbook

For online students, this also means that you should compose your own answers to discussion questions and case study questions, do not simply copy what one of your classmates has written. You are also expected to cite any information source you use to support your answer including the textbook, internet sources, journal articles or any other published source of information.

ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)

Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact Mary Schwartz, M.Ed, L.P.C. in Counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall, Room 112. The mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, TX 79832. Telephone: 432-837-8203. E-mail: mschwartz@sulross.edu.

Distance Education

Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the universities support services, library resources, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should submit online assignments through Blackboard or SRSU email, which requires secure login information to verify students’ identities and to protect students’ information.

Grading:

40% Discussion Questions

30% Short assignments

30% Project

(10% - identification & evaluation of target population)

(30% - design of intervention program)

(10% - program evaluation plan)

(10% – presentation of program)

Graded Assignments:

Discussion Questions: Each week you will be given a discussion question related to the week’s readings. You will need to type an answer to the discussion question and bring to class on the assigned day. You will also be asked to post your discussion question

response in Blackboard. Your responses to the discussion questions will help support the class discussion for the week.

Short Assignments

You will complete three short assignments. The due date of each assignment is indicated by the description of the assignment. It is important that you complete the assignment by the date due as they will contribute to the discussion in class.

1: Defining Public Health

Due: September 16

1. Go to cnn.com and run a search for “Public Health”. Limit your search to cnn.com.
2. Make a list of the topics addressed. Explain how these topics relate to public health.
3. Identify as many government, nonprofit, and corporate sources of public health information that you can find through your search.
4. Type a one to two page essay discussing what you have discovered. Based on what you found how would you define public health?

2: Theory Application

Due: October 14

1. Locate a journal article addressing a public health issue that interests you.
2. Identify what theory the journal article draws on to support the research.
3. Write a one to two page essay summarizing the conclusions drawn by the authors. Also discuss in the essay how well you think the theory applies to the public health issue what other theories might be applicable as well.

3: Audience Analysis

Due: November 13

1. Locate articles in three different magazines related to your topic.
2. Look up the reader demographics for the three magazines.
3. Locate a journal article reporting research related to a particular audience and the public health issue.
4. Write a one to two page essay describing how well the articles are tailored to meet the different demographic groups? What differences do you see in the information provided by the articles, or the persuasive message of the articles based on the expected audiences? How do the articles in the magazines reflect the results reported in the journal article.

4: Channel Selection

Due: June 22

1. Identify the communication channels that are available in Alpine.(or the area where you are located)
2. Identify an audience
3. Write a one to two page essay discussing what communication channel(s) you would use if you wanted to generate discussion among the audience members

about a health issue? Explain why you think these channels would generate discussion.

Final Project: The final class project will be to design an intervention designed to address problems related to a health problem or issue. The project will include:

1. Identify a population. Describe your target population, description of the population should include demographic characteristics, cultural characteristics and psychological characteristics that would influence the decisions made in designing a health communication campaign to reach the audience.
2. Identify a health problem or issue. Explain what problem(s) related to health effects this population.
3. Identify a communication channel. Discuss what communication channels are available to reach the target audience and the advantages and/or disadvantages of each channel identified.
4. Design an intervention program to address the problem.
5. Evaluation: what methods would you use to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention
6. Type a report.

Presentation of project to class.

Semester Schedule

Unit One - Defining Health Communication

Tuesday	8/26/2014	Welcome & Introduction to course
Thursday	8/28/2014	Bernhardt, J.M. (2004). Communication at the core of effective Public Health. <u>American Journal of Public Health</u> 94(12), 2051-2053.; Parrott, R. (2004). Emphasizing "Communication" in Health Communication. <u>Journal of Communication</u> 54 (4), 751-787.
Tuesday	9/2/2014	Welch-Cline, R.J. (2003). <u>Mapping the Borders and Borderlands of Health Communication</u> . Paper presented International Communication Association, San Diego, CA, Koplan, J.P. (2003) Communication during public health emergencies. <u>Journal of Health Communication</u> 8, 144-145.
Thursday	9/4/2014	Ratzan, S.C. (2003) Making sense of risk. <u>Journal of Health Communication</u> 8, 399-400. Ropeik, D., & Slovic, P. (2003). Risk Communication: A neglected tool in protecting public health. <u>Risk in Perspective</u> 11(2) 1-4.
Tuesday	9/9/2014	Tinker, T.L. (1996) Recommendation to improve health risk communication: Lessons learned from the U.S. Public Health Service. <u>Journal of Health Communication</u> 1, 197-217.
Thursday	9/11/2014	Review current news media for health risks currently being covered. Evaluate coverage based on readings.

Tuesday	9/16/2014	Present and discuss analysis of current news media coverage in class
Unit Two - Theory		
Thursday	9/18/2014	Rudd, R.E., Comings, J.P., & Hyde, J.N. (2003) Leave no one behind: Improving health and risk communication through attention to literacy. <u>Journal of Health Communication</u> 8, 104-115.
Tuesday	9/23/2014	Unit Exam
Thursday	9/25/2014	Aldoory, L. (2005) <u>Integrating health communication theory for the design of injury prevention campaigns</u> . Paper presented at the Annual Meeting, International Communication Association, New York, NY.
Tuesday	9/30/2014	Dutta-Bergman, M.J. (2005) Theory and practice in health communication campaigns: A critical interrogation. <u>Health Communication</u> 18(2), 103-122
Thursday	10/2/2014	Chew, F., Palmer, S., & Soohong, K. (1998) Testing the Influence of the Health Belief Model and a television program on nutrition behavior. <u>Health Communication</u> 10(3), 227-
Tuesday	10/7/2014	Schuster, D.V. et.al. (2006) Intermedia processes in the adoption of tobacco control activities among opinion leaders in California. <u>Communication Theory</u> 16 (1), 91-117.
Thursday	10/9/2014	Shanahan, J., Scheufele, D., Fang, Y., & Hizi, S. (2004) Cultivation and spiral of silence effects: The case of smoking. <u>Mass Communication and Society</u> 7(4), 413-428
Tuesday	10/14/2014	
Thursday	10/16/2014	Present and discuss research articles related to the health issues you identified in unit one. What theories have been applied to the health issue?
Tuesday	10/21/2014	Unit Exam
Unit Three - Analyzing Audiences		
Thursday	10/23/2014	Albrecht, T.L., & Bryant, C. (1996) Advances in segmentation modeling for health communication and social marketing campaigns. <u>Journal of Health Communication</u> 1, 65-80.
Tuesday	10/28/2014	Noland, C., & MacLennan, J. (2006) Perplexing questions about culture, gender, and sex research: Why isn't awareness enough? <u>Texas Speech Communication Journal</u> (30)2, 158-169.
Thursday	10/30/2014	Zoller, H. (2005) Women caught in the multi-causal web: A gendered analysis of Healthy People 2010. <u>Communication Studies</u> 56(2), 175-192.

		Murray-Johnson, L., Witte, K., Liu, W.Y., Hubbell, A.P. (2001) Addressing cultural orientations in fear appeals: Promoting AIDS-protective behaviors among Mexican immigrant and African American adolescents and American and Taiwanese college students. <u>Journal of Health Communication</u> , 6, 335-358.
Tuesday	11/4/2014	Green, E.C., Witte, K. (2006) Can fear arousal in public health campaigns contribute to the decline of HIV prevalence? <u>Journal of Health Communication</u> 11(3), 245-259
Thursday	11/6/2014	Egbert, N., Mickley, J., & Coeling, H. (2004) A review and application of social scientific measures of religiosity and spirituality: Assessing a missing component in health communication research. <u>Health Communication</u> 16(1), 7-27.
Tuesday	11/11/2014	Viswanath, K., et.al. (2006) Cancer knowledge and disparities in the information age. <u>Journal of Health Communication</u> 11:1-17. Dearing, J.W., et.al. (1996). Social marketing and diffusion-based strategies for communicating with unique populations: HIV prevention in San Francisco. <u>Journal of Health Communication</u> 1: 343-363.
Thursday	11/13/2014	Present and discuss research articles related to the health issues you identified in unit one. What audiences have been addressed in relation to the health issue?
Tuesday	11/18/2014	Unit Exam
Thursday	11/20/2014	Dutta-Bergman, M.J. (2004) Primary sources of health information: Comparisons in the domain of health attitudes, health cognitions, and health behaviors. <u>Health Communication</u> 16(3), 273-288.
Tuesday	11/25/2014	Guttman, N., & Ressler, W.H. (2001) On being responsible: Ethical issues in appeals to personal responsibility in health campaigns. <u>Journal of Health Communication</u> 6, 117-136. Wang, C.C. (1998) Protraying stigmatized conditions: Disabling images in public health. <u>Journal of Health Communication</u> 3 (2).
Thursday	11/27/2014	
Tuesday	12/2/2014	Present and discuss research articles related to health issue you identified in unit one. What communication channels have been used to reach the intended audiences? What channels are available in your area to address the health issue?
Tuesday	12/9/2014	10:15 Final Project/Paper Presentations