

Communication 311: Health Communication
Spring 2016
Course Syllabus

M 4:15-6:45 p.m.
SOC 003

Instructor

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Office Hours: Mon. and Wed. 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Mon. 3-4 p.m., or by appointment

Course Description

This course focuses on the growing field of health communication. Building on students' knowledge of communication – including public relations, advertising, journalism and marketing – this class aims to help students explore an area of specialization that offers excellent career opportunities in many settings. Through readings, case studies, guest speakers and field trips, the class is designed to provide an overview of what health communicators do and where they work. The class will also provide a broad introduction to physician-patient communication, mass communication, health journalism, corporate communication, communication by non-profit health organizations and government health agencies, and public health education campaigns. In addition, the course will examine a variety of theories used in health communication and explore such national health issues as health disparities, health literacy, patient safety and healthcare reform.

Course Objectives

- Provide a foundation of knowledge about the U.S. healthcare system.
- Enable students to synthesize and apply that knowledge through written communication.
- Understand the roles of interpersonal communication, mass communication and new/social media in health communication.
- Explore how communication can play a vital role in achieving personal and public health objectives.
- Provide examples of real-world health communication challenges and discuss how they were addressed by health communicators.
- Engage students in how health messages are developed and delivered and how health communication campaigns are designed, implemented and evaluated.
- Give students practical, hands-on experience researching and developing a public health education campaign.

Prerequisite

Any of the following: COMM 210 Principles of Public Relations, COMM 205 Reporting and Writing, enrollment as a graduate student, or permission of instructor.

Readings

No textbook is required. All assigned readings will be posted on Sakai or distributed in class.

Course Website

Slide lectures and required readings will be posted in advance on Sakai. This is designed to enable students to avoid having to take extensive notes in class and as an aid for studying for exams; it is not meant as a substitute for class attendance.

Expectations

Students are expected to be prepared for, attend and participate actively in all class sessions. That means arriving before class begins at 4:15 p.m. and staying for the entire class session. Because this class meets only once a week, missing a class is the equivalent of missing a week's worth of material. Class participation counts for 10 percent of students' grades in the course, and if you don't attend, you can't participate. Please inform me in advance if you believe you have a legitimate reason for an absence.

Client Project

Our class will partner with a non-profit health organization to develop a public health education campaign to serve the community. Student teams will conduct research, analyze the situation, and develop a comprehensive communication plan and materials to meet the client's objectives. Each student is expected to spend 20 or more hours on this community based project, as stipulated in the university's criteria for Engaged Learning courses.

Engaged Learning Reflection

All students enrolled in university designated Service Learning courses during spring 2016 are required to complete a reflection paper by the end of the semester. This paper will allow students to consider larger community health issues, social structures and/or topics of social justice. More information about this assignment will be provided later in the semester.

Exams

The midterm will cover material up to the midterm; the final will cover material from after the midterm to the end of the semester. Both exams will cover lectures, assigned readings, handouts, field trips, guest speakers, and videos. Neither exam may be made up at another time.

Grading Scale

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72

D+	66-69
D	62-65
F	60 or below

Course Grading

Mid-term	25 percent
Final exam	25 percent
Client project	30 percent
Class participation	10 percent
Engaged learning reflection	10 percent

Academic Integrity

Each student is expected to do his or her own work in the course. Allegations of academic misconduct will be forwarded immediately to the office of the Dean of the School of Communication for possible disciplinary action. Loyola regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter with consequences ranging from failure of the course to probation to expulsion.

Academic misconduct includes:

- Cheating on exams or aiding other students to cheat. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful.
- Stealing the intellectual property of others and passing it off as your own work (this includes material found on the Internet). Software will be used to identify plagiarism.
- Failing to quote directly if you use someone else's words and to cite that particular work and author. If you paraphrase the words or ideas of another, credit the source with your citation. Please ask me if you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism and/or how to cite sources.
- For closed-book exams, academic misconduct includes conferring with other class members, copying or reading someone else's test, and using notes and materials without prior permission of the instructor.
- Turning in the same work for two classes, whether in the same semester or not.

Classroom Behavior

To help create a positive learning community, turn off all phones and keep them in your bag, backpack, or pocket. Laptops and tablets should be used only to take notes or during in-class work sessions on the client project. Be respectful of fellow students and be in your seat when class begins.

Accommodations

Any student with a learning disability who needs accommodation during class sessions or exams should provide documentation from Services for Students with Disabilities to the instructor during the first week of class; this information will be treated in complete confidence. The instructor will accommodate student needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of course content and processes. It is the responsibility of each student to plan in advance to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.

Students are excused for recognized religious holidays. Please let me know in advance.

Course Schedule

(Reading assignments are to be completed before class on the date shown)

Week 1

Mon. Jan. 25

Course overview and introductions

Briefing by our nonprofit partner: Kiran S. Siddiqui, chief operating officer, and Neeli Sudin, family nurse practitioner, Hamdard Center

Snapshot: Healthcare in America

Reading: Review Hamdard Center website: <http://www.hamdardcenter.org/>
Finger, "U.S. Health Care System Ranks Lowest in International Survey"
Goozner, "High-Tech Medicine Contributes to High-Cost Healthcare"
Leonhardt, "Why Doctors so Often Get it Wrong"
Levey, "Obamacare Helping Improve Access to Medical Care for the Poor"
Nussbaum, Vekshin & Douban, "Obamacare Medicaid Split Creates Two Americas for Poor"
Picchi, "Evidence that Obamacare is Working"
Sanger-Katz, "Lost Jobs, Houses, Savings: Even Insured Often Face Crushing Medical Debt"
Ungar & O'Donnell, "Dilemma over Deductibles: Costs Crippling Middle Class"
Zuger, "Healthy Right up to the Day You're Not"

We'll also watch and discuss part of Michael Moore's film, "Sicko"

Week 2

Feb. 1

Traditions, Trends, Success Stories and Alarm Bells

Reading: Belluck, "Children's Life Expectancy Being Cut Short by Obesity"
Belluz & Hoffman, "America's Brutal Black-White Health Gap: Why Black Men can Expect to Live Five Years Fewer than White Men" (access at: <http://www.vox.com/2014/8/25/6052871/why-white-skin-works-better-than-most-medicine/in/5740388>)
Johnson, "Why Everyone Seems to Have Cancer"
Kolata & Harris, "'Moonshot' to Cure Cancer Relies on Outmoded View of Disease"
Knox, "50 Years after Landmark Warning, 8 Million Fewer Smoking Deaths"
Park, "America's Health Checkup"
Parker-Pope, "The Cancer Divide: Tackling a Racial Gap in Breast Cancer Survival"
Sack, "Research Finds Wide Disparities in Health Care by Race and Region"
Sataline, "Cash-Poor Governments Ditching Public Hospitals"

Watch video, "The War on Cancer: From Nixon until Now,"

<http://www.nytimes.com/video/us/10000002530506/the-war-on-cancer-from-nixon-until-now.html>

Initial organizing and brainstorming session for client project

Week 3

Feb. 8

Promoting Health Education, Changing Health Behavior

Reading: Wright, Sparks & O'Hair, Ch. 10 (p. 259-269 only)

In-class work on client project

Week 4

Feb. 15

Planning and Evaluating Public Health Education Campaigns

Reading: Elliott, "Steal This Idea, a Campaign Urges"

Also review examples of "best in class" creative from international public health campaigns mentioned in the Elliott article:

<http://www.weforum.org/best-practices/creative-good/search?issues=Health>

White, "HIV Education That Aims to Empower, Not Shame"

Wright, Sparks & O'Hair, Ch. 10 (p. 270-282 only)

In-class work on client project

Week 5

Feb. 22

Communication by Hospitals and Healthcare Systems

Site visit to communication department of local hospital

Reading: Landen, "Telling Their Stories"

In-class work on client project

Week 6

Feb. 29

Provider-Patient Communication

Reading: Wright, Sparks & O'Hair, Ch. 2

Brown, "Lost in Clinical Translation"

Chen, "How Much can a Patient Learn in a 15-Minute Doctor Visit?"

Gardner, "For Some Doctors, Empathy is in Short Supply"

Joshi, "Doctor, Shut up and Listen"

Landro, "What the Doctor is Really Thinking"
Parker-Pope, "When Doctors become Patients"
Topol, "The Future of Medicine Is in Your Smartphone"

Mid-term exam

Week 8

No class March 7 (spring break)

Week 9

March 14

Communication by Nonprofit Health Organizations

Guest speaker: TBD

Reading: Kolata, "A Growing Disenchantment with October 'Pinkification'"
Perry, "How Much Must Health Charities Disclose About Donors?"

In-class work on client project

Week 10

March 21

Health Communication at Public Relations Agencies

Field trip to healthcare communication practice at public relations agency

Reading: Bruell, "Finding the Right Target"
Fidelzeit, "Health Communication Roundtable: Under the Microscope"

In-class work on client project

Week 11

March 28

Communicating about Drugs and Medical Devices (Part I)

Reading: Kolata, "Searching for Clarity: A Primer on Medical Studies"
Harmon, "New Drugs Stir Debate on Basic Rules of Clinical Trials"
Marcus, "Trials." Read or download at:

http://projects.wsj.com/trials_ebooks/TRIALS.pdf

The New York Times, "The Mechanisms of a Controlled Trial"

In-class work on client project

Week 12

April 4

Communicating about Drugs and Medical Devices (Part II)

Reading: Arnold, "Prescription Project: VNRs on YouTube are Ads, Must Include Warnings"
Cratty, "Drug Giant Pfizer to Pay Record \$2.3B Fine"
Gann, "U.S. Has Drug Recall Problem, Study Says"
Gerth & Miller, "Use Only as Directed." Read at:
<http://www.propublica.org/article/tylenol-mcneil-fda-use-only-as-directed>
Harris, "What's Behind an FDA Stamp?"
LaMattina, "Maybe it's Time for Drug Companies to Drop TV Ads"
Ruiz, "Ten Misleading Drug Ads"
Singer, "In Recall, a Role Model Stumbles"

Guest speaker: TBD

In-class work on client project

Week 13

April 11

Communicating about Food and Supplements

Reading: Associated Press, "'Food Police' go after Happy Meal Toys"
Begley, "Food, Beverage Companies Slash Calories in Obesity Fight"
Fletcher, Frisvold & Teft, "Taxing Soft Drinks and Restricting Access to Vending Machines to Curb Child Obesity"
Hartocollis, "Calorie Postings Don't Change Habits, Study Finds"
Ritchel, "In Online Games, a Path to Young Consumers"
Rosenberg, "To Fight Obesity, a Carrot and a Stick"
Severson, "Told to Eat its Vegetables, America Orders Fries"
Singer, "Food with Benefits, or So They Say"
Strom, "Lawyers from Suits against Big Tobacco Target Food Makers"

In-class work on client project

Week 14

April 18

Communicating about Food Safety

Reading: Fox, "FDA's New Rules Aim for Clean Fruit, Veggies"
Grady, "When Bad Things Come from 'Good' Food"
Moss, "The Burger that Shattered her Life"
Nixon, "Obama Proposes Single Overseer for Food Safety"
Revkin, "Managing Risk in Booming Global Bazaar of Food and Drugs"
Schlosser, "Unsafe at any Meal"

Strom, "Social Media as a Megaphone to Pressure the Food Industry"

In-class work on client project

Week 15

April 25

Predicting and Managing Health Risks, Issues and Crises

Reading: Wright, Sparks, & O'Hair, Ch. 9

Fink, "The Deadly Choices at Memorial"

McCoppin & Dizikes, "Superbug Found at Suburban Hospital"

McKenna, "Imagining the Post-Antibiotic Future." Read at:

<https://medium.com/p/892b57499e77>

Sack, Fink, Belluck & Nossiter, "How Ebola Roared Back." For maps and videos: [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/30/health/how-ebola-roared-](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/30/health/how-ebola-roared-back.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&module=second-column-region®ion=top-news&WT.nav=top-news&r=0)

[back.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&module=second-column-region®ion=top-news&WT.nav=top-news&r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/30/health/how-ebola-roared-back.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&module=second-column-region®ion=top-news&WT.nav=top-news&r=0)

USA Today, "A Year Later, 5 Lessons from Swine Flu Outbreak"

Presentations to client (two hard copies of campaign communication plan and materials and one electronic copy – on flash drive or CD – due in class).

FINAL EXAM: Mon. May 2, 4:15 p.m.

ENGAGED LEARNING REFLECTION: Hard copy to be turned in at final exam; electronic copy to be submitted via Taskstream.