COMM 4737
Health Communication in Mass Mediated Contexts

Spring 2025

General information

Instructor	**Meeting times**	**Office location**
Dominik Stecuła, PhD	M & W - 11.10am-12.30pm	3105 Derby Hall

Classroom	**Email**	**Office hours**
Derby Hall 029	stecula.3@osu.edu	Wednesdays 2-4 or by appointment

Description

This course is an **in-person lecture-based** class designed to increase your knowledge and understanding of an important applied area of communication science: Health Communication. This course aims to provide a substantive foundation of relevant theories, research, practices and current issues related to various aspects of health communication. Students will analyze theoretical frameworks, evaluate real-world campaigns, and design their own media-driven health interventions. The course emphasizes the political, social, and psychological dimensions of health communication.

COMM 4737 Goals and Expected Learning Outcomes (ELOs)

Course goals and learning outcomes are described below. See course assignments below for information on how each course ELO is assessed.

COMM 4737 Goal 1*: By the end of this course, students will have an appreciation for the role of theory in explaining and influencing health attitudes and behavior resulting from mass media exposure.*

Successful students will be able to:

ELO 1.1: Identify individual, social and cognitive predictors of health behaviors as defined by relevant theories.

ELO 1.2: Recognize theoretical constructs embedded within health messages.

ELO 1.3: Compare and contrast major theories and methods used in health message design.

ELO 1.4: Critique the potential effectiveness of health messages based on relevant theories.

COMM 4737 Goal 2*: By the end of this course, students will understand techniques for developing effective theory-based health communication messages.*

Successful students will be able to:

ELO 2.1: Illustrate the steps involved in the health message design process.

ELO 2.2: Apply theory to the development of health messages.

ELO 2.3: Design effective health messages.

ELO 2.4: Identify strategies to assist the lay public in accessing credible health information.

ELO 2.5: Articulate the reasons that persuasive health messages may fail.
ELO 2.6: Identify and assess innovative methods of generating persuasive health messages.

General Education Goals and Expected Learning Outcomes (ELOs)

In addition to being a required course in the health communication certificate program, it is also listed as a thematic course (Health and Wellness) in the General Education (GE) Curriculum. Students successfully completing activities designed to assess course ELOs, students will also meet GE course ELOs. See course assignments below for information about how GE ELOs are assessed.

GE Goal 1: Successful students will analyze an important topic or idea at a more advanced and in-depth level than the foundations.
GE ELO 1.1: Engage in critical and logical thinking about the topic or idea of the theme.
GE ELO 1.2: Engage in advanced, in-depth, scholarly exploration of the topic or idea of the theme.

GE Goal 2: Successful students will integrate approaches to the theme by making connections to out-of-classroom experiences with academic knowledge or across disciplines and/or to work they have done in previous classes and that they anticipate doing in future.
GE ELO 2.1: Identify, describe and synthesize approaches or experiences as they apply to the theme.
GE ELO 2.2: Demonstrate a developing sense of self as a leader through reflection, self-assessment and creative work, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts.

GE Goal 3: Students will explore and analyze health and well-being through attention to at least two dimensions of well-being (e.g., physical, mental, emotional, career, environmental, spiritual, intellectual, creative, financial, etc.).
GE ELO 3.1: Explore and analyze health and wellbeing from theoretical, socio-economic and scientific, historical, cultural, technological, policy or personal perspectives.
GE ELO 3.2: Identify, reflect on, or apply strategies for promoting health and well-being.

Class schedule

Week 1.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Monday	January 6	Introductions	- How to read an academic article - Re-reading is inefficient. Here are 8 tips for studying smarter.
Wednesday	January 8	Introduction to health communication	- Rimal, R. N., & Lapinski, M. K. (2009). *Why health communication is important in public health*. Bulletin of the World Health Organization, 87(4), 247-247

- Listen to this podcast episode: Health communication: why getting it right impacts us all
- Optional: Kreps, G. L. (2001). "The Evolution and Advancement of Health Communication Inquiry." Communication Yearbook, 24, 231-253.

- Syllabus quiz due by the end of the day on Friday, Jan 10, 2025 on CarmenCanvas

Week 2.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Monday	January 13	Media's role in shaping health perceptions	- Viswanath, K., & Emmons, K. M. (2006). "Message effects and social determinants of health: Its application to cancer disparities." Journal of Communication, 56, S238-S264. - Ophir, Y., Liu, A., Shah, P., Wang, R., Acosta, N., & Gillis, S. (2024). Science and Health Journalism and Its Effects on Audiences. In K. Walsh-Childers & M. McKinnon (Eds.), Palgrave Handbook of Science and Health Journalism (pp. 401–419). Springer.
Wednesday	January 15	Media's role in shaping health perceptions	- Crosby, R., & Noar, S. M. (2011). What is a planning model? An introduction to PRECEDE-PROCEED. Journal of public Health Dentistry, 71, S7-S15. - Short Assignment #1 due by the end of the day on

Week 3.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Monday	January 20	NO CLASS MLK DAY	- No assigned content, but I recommend this video about MLK Day
Wednesday	January 22	The Health Belief Model	- Jose, R., Narendran, M., Bindu, A., Beevi, N., Manju, L., & Benny, P. V. (2021). Public perception and preparedness for the pandemic COVID 19: a health belief model approach. *Clinical epidemiology and global health, 9*, 41-46. - Watch: Last Week Tonight segment on vaccines from 2017

Week 4.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Monday	January 27	Using Social Cognitive Theory in health campaigns	- Bandura, A. (2004). "Health promotion by social cognitive means." Health Education & Behavior, 31(2), 143-164. - Optional: NPR podcast "How to start a new habit: think small"
Wednesday	January 29	Theory of Planned Behavior	- Ajzen, I. (1991). *The theory of planned behavior*. Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 50(2), 179-211. - Listen: NPR podcast "Creatures Of Habit: How Habits Shape Who We Are — And Who We Become" - Short Assignment #2 due by the end of the day on Friday, Jan 31, 2025 on CarmenCanvas

Week 5.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Monday	February 3	Gain vs. Loss framing	- Rothman, A. J., & Salovey, P. (1997). "Shaping perceptions to motivate healthy behavior: The role of message framing." Psychological Bulletin, 121(1), 3-19. - Optional: Article from The Guardian "The power of framing: It's not what you say, it's how you say it"
Wednesday	February 5	Fear Appeals and Hope Appeals	- Witte, K., & Allen, M. (2000). "A meta-analysis of fear appeals: Implications for effective public health campaigns." Health Education & Behavior, 27(5), 591-615. - The Atlantic article "The Psychology of Irrational Fear"

Week 6.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Monday	February 10	Psychological reactance and mixed emotions	- Reynolds-Tylus, T. (2019). "Psychological reactance and persuasive health communication: A review of the literature." Frontiers in Communication, 4, 56. - Optional: Ball, H., & Wozniak, T. R. (2021). "Why do some Americans resist COVID-19 prevention behavior? An analysis of issue importance, message fatigue, and reactance regarding COVID-19 messaging." Health Communication, 36(14), 1838-1845.

Wednesday	February 12	Storytelling in health communication	- Kreuter, M. W., et al. (2007). "Narrative communication in cancer prevention and control: A framework to guide research and application." Annals of Behavioral Medicine, 33(3), 221-235.
			- Listen: The Nocturnists podcast episode "Lost & Found"
			- Short Assignment #3 due by the end of the day on Friday, Feb 14, 2025 on CarmenCanvas

Week 7.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Monday	February 17	Cultural influences on health communication	- Kreuter, M. W., & McClure, S. M. (2004). "The role of culture in health communication." Annual Review of Public Health, 25, 439-455.
			- Fierce article "Lost in translation: When parents and pediatricians don't speak the same language"
Wednesday	February 19	Health disparities and communication	- Gollust, S. E., & Cappella, J. N. (2014). Understanding public resistance to messages about health disparities. Health Education & Behavior, 41(6), 724-733.
			- Optional: Braveman, P. (2006). Health disparities and health equity: Concepts and measurement. Annual Review of Public Health, 27, 167-194.
			- Optional: Thomas, S. B., et al. (2011). "Toward a Fourth Generation of Disparities Research to

Achieve Health Equity." *Annual Review of Public Health*, 32, 399-416.

Week 8.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Monday	February 24	Catching up and Group Project Introduction	- No new readings, catch up on any material we haven't covered and discuss the group project
Wednesday	February 26	Midterm	- In person exam. Bring a pen.

Week 9.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Monday	March 3	Politics of health communication	- Vox article "Health shouldn't be contentious. But it's incredibly polarizing." - Listen: The New Republic podcast "The Fiery Gas Stove Wars" - Optional: Stecuła, D. A. (2024). Politics Rules Everything Around Me? A Review of Pandemic Politics. *Political Science Quarterly*, qqae045 - Optional: Politico article "The partisan divide in vaccinations is starker than you realize"
Wednesday	March 5	Mass media and health literacy	- Nutbeam, D. (2008). The evolving concept of health literacy. Social Science & Medicine, 67(12), 2072-2078. - Wired article "Surprise! The Pandemic Has Made People More Science Literate" - Short Assignment #4 due by the end of the day on

Week 10. Spring break

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Monday	March 10	Spring break, no class	
Wednesday	March 12	Spring break, no class	

Week 11.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Monday	March 17	Social media and influencers	- BBC article "How food influencers affect what we eat" - The Atlantic article "The Wellness Women Are on the March" - Optional: Rethinking Wellness podcast "How Wellness Culture and Lifestyle Gurus Spread Misinformation" - Optional: The Guardian article "TikTok has opened the door to a new age of medical misinformation – and I'm seeing the results in A&E".
Wednesday	March 19	Health misinformation	- Spies, S. (2019, October 22). *Defining "Disinformation" – MediaWell.* - Listen: Science Friday podcast "The Basics Of How Health Misinformation Spreads" - Group project proposals due by the end of the day on Friday, Mar 21, 2025 on CarmenCanvas

Week 12.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Monday	March 24	Combating misinformation	- Harvey, A. (2021). Combatting Health Misinformation And Disinformation: Building An Evidence Base. *Health Affairs Forefront* - Roozenbeek, J., van der Linden, S., Goldberg, B., Rathje, S., & Lewandowsky, S. (2022). Psychological inoculation improves resilience against misinformation on social media. *Science Advances, 8*(34), eabo6254
Wednesday	March 26	Designing effective health messages	- Noar, S. M. (2006). A 10-Year Retrospective of Research in Health Mass Media Campaigns: Where Do We Go From Here? *Journal of Health Communication, 11*(1), 21–42. - Short Assignment #5 due by the end of the day on Friday, Mar 28, 2025 on CarmenCanvas

Week 13.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Monday	March 31	Digital technologies and health	- Yeung, A. W. K., Torkamani, A., Butte, A. J., Glicksberg, B. S., Schuller, B., Rodriguez, B., Ting, D. S. W., Bates, D., Schaden, E., Peng, H., Willschke, H., van der Laak, J., Car, J., Rahimi, K., Celi, L. A., Banach, M., Kletecka-Pulker, M., Kimberger, - Optional: Wired article "How tech is changing healthcare"

| Wednesday | April 2 | AI and health communication | - TechCrunch article "WTF is AI"
- Watch: Hard Fork from the New York Times segment "ChatGPT Better Than Doctors?!"
- Brookings Institution report "Generative AI in health care: Opportunities, challenges, and policy" |

Week 14.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Monday	April 7	Catch up session	- No new readings, catch up on any material we haven't covered
Wednesday	April 9	Group project working session	

Week 15.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Monday	April 14	Group presentations	
Wednesday	April 16	Group presentations	
			- Final projects due by the end of the day on Friday, Apr 18, 2025 on CarmenCanvas

Week 16.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Monday	April 21	Review	

Class schedule

Important dates

Day	Date	Time	Assignment or Exam
Friday	January 10	Due by 11.59pm	Complete a brief syllabus quiz on CarmenCanvas
Friday	January 17	Due by 11.59pm	Short assignment #1 due on CarmenCanvas
Friday	January 31	Due by 11.59pm	Short assignment #2 due on CarmenCanvas
Friday	February 14	Due by 11.59pm	Short assignment #3 due on CarmenCanvas
Wednesday	February 26	9.35-11.10am	Midterm exam, in class, bring a pen
Friday	March 7	Due by 11.59pm	Short assignment #4 due on CarmenCanvas
Friday	March 21	Due by 11.59pm	Final Project proposal due on CarmenCanvas
Friday	March 28	Due by 11.59pm	Short assignment #5 due on CarmenCanvas
Friday	April 18	Due by 11.59pm	Final Project due on CarmenCanvas
Friday	April 25	10-11.45am	Final exam, bring a pen

Course policies

Participation

Your attendance and participation are not just important for your learning and understanding of the course material. It is also important to generate a positive classroom environment conducive to learning. I expect you to show up prepared and ready for class. I will take attendance and foster some class discussion using Top Hat. You can join this class on Top Hat using the following code **769810**.

Class decorum

Remember that this is an academic environment. Therefore, I ask that you minimize unnecessary disruptions (this includes, but it is not limited to, side conversations, web surfing, email and social media use, shopping, texting, and similar disruptive activities). Students are expected to always be respectful of their classmates. Debate about the ideas and theories presented in this class is encouraged. However, please remember to challenge the idea and not the person.

Course materials

There is **no textbook** in this course. Textbooks are expensive and I would rather have you spend your money on other stuff. Instead, you will be asked to read a combination of peer reviewed academic articles, magazine and newspaper articles, as well as watch videos and listen to podcasts. Hopefully, the variety of assigned types of content will make learning a more enjoyable experience.

Late submissions

Deadlines are meant to keep you on track. Deadlines make the world go round. Without deadlines, there would be chaos. Please submit your work on time. All the deadlines are in the syllabus on Day 1 of class. Short assignments submitted up to 48 hours past the due date will receive maximum of half credit. Any late submissions beyond 48 hours will result in a 0. There will be no late submissions on the final project or the syllabus quiz.

Missing exams

The midterm and the final are 40% of your grade. Do not miss them. **Rescheduled exams are not allowed except in truly extraordinary circumstances beyond the student's control**. Your friend is visiting Columbus? That's not a reason to miss an exam. Family trip? Cryptocurrency seminar at the Ramada Inn? LeBron James signing jerseys at the Easton Town Center? These situations do not constitute an emergency. If you have a true emergency, please notify me as soon as possible, and provide the necessary documentation, such as a doctor's note.

Plagiarism

All work in this course is to be individually developed. Plagiarism includes using another person's writing without giving them credit, using large verbatim sections of the work of another person or online source (even a public source) or submitting something you have written for another class. If you unsure, please give credit to your source or talk to me about it. Students who plagiarize will be penalized and reported to university officials. You will also receive a grade of zero for the assignment where plagiarism occurred.

Academic integrity

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Thus, The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the University's Code of Student Conduct, and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University's Code of Student Conduct and this syllabus may constitute Academic Misconduct.

The Ohio State University's Code of Student Conduct (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University or subvert the educational process. Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University's Code of Student Conduct is never considered an excuse for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review the Code of Student Conduct and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that you have violated the University's Code of Student Conduct (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University.

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

AI

All students have important obligations under the **Code of Student Conduct** to complete all academic and scholarly activities with fairness and honesty. Large Language Model tools like ChatGPT exist and will continue to exist. Banning it now is like banning the internet in 2002 or the printing press in 1450s as far as I'm concerned. But blindly using these tools without attribution constitutes plagiarism. If you put in a question or a prompt, and then just copy and paste the generated response, that is cheating. If you use these technologies in this class, I expect you to harness these tools in a way that makes your work better, I expect you to double check things to ensure the content you submit is accurate (ChatGPT makes stuff up! A LOT!) and that you cite the exact tool you have used and provide a statement on how you used it. Using these tools appropriately takes time and effort, and it needs to be double checked and edited. If you want to use these tools, I expect you to do all these things.

In sum, if you use LLMs like ChatGPT to assist you with any assignment in the class, you have to submit an **AI statement**, outlining what tool you used, and how you used it. You will not be penalized simply for using ChatGPT, though, so please be honest.

Assignments and Assessment

There are a total of **500 points** to earn in this class.

Syllabus quiz (5 pts)

Read the syllabus and answer a few questions about it. It's that simple. You have to complete it on CarmenCanvas by the due data indicated above. The goal of this assignment is to ensure you know and understand course policies before we delve into substantive content. You take the quiz online, on CarmenCanvas. It is five questions. You have 10 minutes to answer them.

Attendance and Participation (70 pts)

You can't participate if you don't attend the class. And if you don't participate, the class will simply not be as good. I need all of you to come prepared and ask questions and engage with me and your fellow students. Learning is a social endeavor, after all. I will take attendance on most days using Top Hat. You can have **two unexcused absences** that won't count against your attendance. Anything beyond that will hurt your grade.

60 points will be allocated based purely on attendance. For example, if you only come to half of the classes, you will get 50% of 60 points, or 30 points when the grading is compiled at the end of the semester.

10 points will be allocated based on the quantity and quality of your individual participation in class.

Exams (200 pts)

We will have two classic exams in this course. See above for more details about the date, time, and the location of the exams. A **midterm** worth 100 points, and a **final** worth 100 points. Both will be in person, on paper. The final will be cumulative, though will mostly focus on the second half of the course, post midterm. The exams will feature multiple choice, true or false, and short answer questions. Nothing revolutionary, just questions testing your knowledge and application of course content, from both lectures and assigned readings, podcasts, and videos.

This assignment is designed to assess COMM 4737 ELOs: 1.1-1.3, 2.1, 2.4-2.6.

GE ELO Assessment: These two exams move beyond simple recall of information by asking you to compare and contrast theories, identify course concepts embedded in sample messages, and demonstrate your ability to apply theories and concepts to message design. Therefore, the two exams allow for an advanced, in-depth scholarly exploration on a topic (GE ELO 1.2).

Short assignments (75 pts)

You will be asked to complete five (5) brief assignments throughout the semester. Each is worth 15 points. Most assignments will be memes. Others will be brief reflections.

Memes are units of culture. That sounds weird, right? What we mean by that is memes are entities such as "tunes, ideas, catch-phrases, clothes fashions, ways of making pots or building arches." Although we associate that term with social media these days, it was actually coined by Richard Dawkins in his 1976 book "The Selfish Gene." In modern (circa 2025) internet culture, memes typically take the form of:

1. Images or photos with superimposed text (for example ones circulating on Instagram)

2. Short video clips that get remixed or repurposed (like those on TikTok)

3. Phrases or catchphrases that become widely repeated (such as "Sir, this is a Wendy's" which is used to respond when someone goes on an inappropriate or overly serious rant)

4. Specific formats or templates that people adapt for different situations (like the "Woman Yelling at Cat" or "Galaxy Brain" formats

Memes can be consumed quickly, have the potential to spread virally on social media, are adaptable so that people can easily modify it for different contexts, and rest on cultural relevance, so that it resonates with others. I will ask you to make me memes related to course content. These need to be your original creations that apply course content to the real world in a creative way.

Reflections will be more traditional responses to a specific prompt, usually capped at 300 words.

These assignments are designed to assess COMM 4737 ELOs: 1.2, 1.4, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6

GE ELO Assessment: Memes and Reflections are designed to build your critical and logical thinking skills and confidence in applying health communication theories into practice. (GE ELO 1.1), conduct in-depth scholarly exploration of a course topic (GE ELO 1.2), describe and synthesize approaches and experiences (GE ELO 2.1), and engage in reflection and self-assessment to build skills and leadership in health communication (GE ELO 2.2). The assignments also require you explore health and well-being from a variety of perspectives (GE ELO 3.1), as well as identify and reflect on for health promotion and well-being (GE ELO 3.2).

Group project (150 pts)

This is the most important assignment of the course and constitutes a full 30% of your grade this semester. I will randomly assign you to a group of 4-6 students. As a team, you will design a health communication campaign and present your project at the end of the semester. I will provide you with a detailed description of the assignment later in the semester, but it will include several elements:

1. Proposal (20 points)
2. Presentation (30 points)
3. Final submission (75 points)
4. Your individual contribution to the project (25 points)

This assignment is designed to assess COMM 4737 ELOs: 1.1-1.4, 2.4-2.6.

GE ELO Assessment: The group project demonstrates your ability to apply theories and concepts to real-world health campaigns and message design. It requires a holistic understanding of the course materials. Therefore, the completion of the project will help students to meet the following learning goals: GE ELO 1.1, 1,2, 2.1, 2.2.

Grading scale

Letter grade	%	Description
A	93-100	The student met the learning objectives of the course in an excellent manner.
A-	90-92	The student met the learning objectives of the course in an excellent manner.
B+	87-89	The student met the learning objectives of the course in an above-average manner.
B	83-86	The student met the learning objectives of the course in an above-average manner.
B-	80-82	The student met the learning objectives of the course in an above-average manner.
C+	77-79	The student met the learning objectives of the course in an average manner.
C	73-76	The student met the learning objectives of the course in an average manner.
C-	70-72	The student met the learning objectives of the course in an average manner.
D+	67-69	The student met the learning objectives of the course in a low but acceptable manner.
D	60-66	The student met the learning objectives of the course in a low but acceptable manner.
F	Below 60	The student failed to meet the learning objectives of the course.

Mental Health Statement

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing.

If you or someone you know are suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting ccs.osu.edu or calling 614-292-5766. CCS is located on the 4th floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766 and 24-hour emergency help is also available through the 24/7 by dialing 988 to reach the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

Creating an Environment Free from Harassment, Discrimination, and Sexual Misconduct

The Ohio State University is committed to building and maintaining a community to reflect diversity and to improve opportunities for all. All Buckeyes have the right to be free from harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct. Ohio State does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, pregnancy (childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery therefrom), race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or protected veteran status, or any other bases under the law, in its activities, academic programs, admission, and employment. Members of the university community also have the right to be free from all forms of sexual misconduct: sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, and sexual exploitation.

To report harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct, or retaliation and/or seek confidential and non-confidential resources and supportive measures, contact the Office of Institutional Equity:

Online reporting form at equity.osu.edu,

Call 614-247-5838 or TTY 614-688-8605,

Or Email equity@osu.edu

The university is committed to stopping sexual misconduct, preventing its recurrence, eliminating any hostile environment, and remedying its discriminatory effects. All university employees have reporting responsibilities to the Office of Institutional Equity to ensure the university can take appropriate action:

- All university employees, except those exempted by legal privilege of confidentiality or expressly identified as a confidential reporter, have an obligation to report incidents of sexual assault immediately.

- The following employees have an obligation to report all other forms of sexual misconduct as soon as practicable but at most within five workdays of becoming aware of such information: 1. Any human resource professional (HRP); 2. Anyone who supervises faculty, staff, students, or volunteers; 3. Chair/director; and 4. Faculty member.

Disability statement

The university strives to maintain a healthy and accessible environment to support student learning in and out of the classroom. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic, or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion.

If you are ill and need to miss class, including if you are staying home and away from others while experiencing symptoms of viral infection or fever, please let me know immediately. In cases where illness interacts with an underlying medical condition, please consult with Student Life Disability Services to request reasonable accommodations. You can connect with them at slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; or slds.osu.edu.

Food Security

The Ohio State University is committed to ensuring that all students have access to adequate and healthy food. Any undergraduate or graduate student with a BuckID may confidentially use the Buckeye Food Alliance food pantries. No proof of need is required. The pantry is located in Lincoln Tower, Suite 150 (1800 Cannon Dr., Columbus, OH 43210). Check the website or call for current hours. https://www.buckeyefoodalliance.org, 614-688-2508.

Religious Accommodations

Ohio State has had a longstanding practice of making reasonable academic accommodations for students' religious beliefs and practices in accordance with applicable law. In 2023, Ohio State updated its practice to align with new state legislation. Under this new provision, students must be in early communication with their instructors regarding any known accommodation requests for religious beliefs and practices, providing notice of specific dates for which they request alternative accommodations within 14 days after the first instructional day of the course. Instructors in turn shall not question the sincerity of a student's religious or spiritual belief system in reviewing such requests and shall keep requests for accommodations confidential.

With sufficient notice, instructors will provide students with reasonable alternative accommodations with regard to examinations and other academic requirements with respect to students' sincerely held religious beliefs and practices by allowing up to three absences each semester for the student to attend or participate in religious activities. Examples of religious accommodations can include, but are not limited to, rescheduling an exam, altering the time of a student's presentation, allowing make-up assignments to substitute for missed class work, or flexibility in due dates or research responsibilities. If concerns arise about a requested accommodation, instructors are to consult their tenure initiating unit head for assistance.

A student's request for time off shall be provided if the student's sincerely held religious belief or practice severely affects the student's ability to take an exam or meet an academic requirement **and** the student has notified their instructor, in writing during the first 14 days after the course begins, of the date of each absence. Although students are required to provide notice within the first 14 days after a course begins, instructors are strongly encouraged to work with the student to provide a reasonable accommodation if a request is made outside the notice period. A student may not be penalized for an absence approved under this policy.

If students have questions or disputes related to academic accommodations, they should contact their course instructor, and then their department or college office. For questions or to report discrimination or harassment based on religion, individuals should contact the **Office of Institutional Equity**.

Policy: Religious Holidays, Holy Days and Observances

Sexual misconduct and relationship violence

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at http://titleix.osu.edu or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator at titleix@osu.edu.