

COMM 4737 Health Communication and Media

Instructor: Dr. Jingbo Meng

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Class time: TuTh 12:45 pm – 2:05 pm EST

Office hour: Th 11:00 am – 12:00 pm EST on Zoom

Instruction Mode: Hybrid

Classroom: Derby Hall 080 and Zoom

Course Description:

This course is designed to increase your knowledge and understanding of an important applied area of communication science: Health Communication. The course aims to provide a substantive foundation of relevant theories, research, practices and current issues related to various aspects of health communication. Three modules will be offered in this course. The first module of the course will introduce major health communication theories. The second module will focus on communication technologies for health promotion and education. The third module will discuss a few interesting and trendy topics in the field 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.

4737 Goal 1: By the end of this course, students will have an appreciation for the role of theory in explaining and influencing health 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 theory.

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 a physical or mental health message based on theory.

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 a physical or mental health message.

ELO 2.3: Design a health message that is clearly written and effectively designed.

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 Theme Goal: 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.).

THEME ELO 1.1: Explore and analyze health and wellbeing from theoretical, socio-economic and scientific, historical, cultural, technological, policy or personal perspectives.

THEME ELO 1.2: Identify, reflect on, or apply strategies for promoting health and well-being.

HYBRID COURSE DELIVERY

This is a 3-hour hybrid course. It is designed to be roughly 50% in-person instruction and 50% online instruction with a mixture of synchronous and asynchronous sessions. For the online component you will view additional lectures and/or other media (videos and podcasts) and complete reflection and assignments, which help you process readings and get prepared for class. All of the online activities are scheduled on Thursdays indicated by "Online" in the course schedule and in the carmen module for each week.

Textbook & Readings

There is no textbook required for this class. I recommend the following book if you are interested in reading more materials closely related to this class.

Cho, H. (Ed.). (2012). Health Communication Message Design: Theory and Practice. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Assigned readings (journal articles and popular press articles), films/videos are noted on the syllabus course schedule and included in the class module on carmen.

OFFICE HOURS

Weekly office hours will be held on Zoom on Thursday from 11-12 AM (zoom link on Carmen).

If that day/time doesn't work for you to attend office hours, please email me to set up an appointment. I will also stay after class to answer questions and chat about any concerns you have.

Course Requirements:

The following is a list of assignments for this course and the points that are allotted for each.

Comprehensive assignment and grade information is always available on Carmen. I will use the standard OSU grade scheme and will round up final grades (e.g. 92.5% would round up to 93%). Should you have any questions or concerns about assignments or your grade, please stop by office hours or make an appointment to talk with me.

A. Two Exams (90 points) - There will be a midterm (50 points) and non-cumulative exam 2 (40 points) in this course. You will be tested on information from all aspects of the course (course readings, lectures, and class discussions). I will provide a study guide and an in-class review to help you prepare. They will be open-book exams. The exams will include multiple choice, true/false questions, and short-answer questions that will ask you to recall information about course topics, concepts and theories, identify key concepts embedded in messages, compare and contrast theories and approaches. Both exams will be administered online.

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).

B. Online Learning Assignments (35 points, 5 points per assignment) – Because this is a hybrid course, you will be asked to complete online learning activities most weeks to help you process course material and prepare for assignments. Specifics about these assignments are on the course schedule and posted on Carmen, but they include such things as finding examples of messages that align with the theory or concepts in a given week and critiquing and reflecting on that message, finding and reflecting on a message that was ineffective and discussing ways to improve, and critiquing approaches for countering misinformation, etc.

Online Learning Assignments are designed to assess COMM 4737 ELOs: 1.2, 1.4, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6

- **GE Learning Outcomes:** Message share assignments allow for in-depth analysis and critique of messages, self-assessment and reflection on message design. Message shares are designed to build your skills and confidence as a health message designer, as they ask you to engage in critical and logical thinking (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 Theme ELO 1.1), as well as identify and reflect on for health promotion and well-being (GE Theme ELO 1.2).

C. Group Project and Presentation (20 points) – You will form 2-3 person groups to complete a group project and present your project at the end of the semester. In the project, you will identify two health communication messages/campaigns and use the theories/models learned in the class to explain why they are effective or not effective. You will compare the two messages/campaigns in terms of their strengths and weakness, and comment on the strategies of how the campaigns/messages were generated.

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.

D. Quiz (20 points)

There will be 5 quizzes in the form of graded survey posted on Carmen in relevant lectures. The purpose of the quiz is to familiarize you with the type of questions that will appear in your exams, and to test your understanding of the course materials. Quizzes will also be used to record class attendance. They may be administered at any time during the semester without prior notice.

Late and Make-up work:

Each test is to be taken on the designated exam date. Rescheduled exams are not allowed except in truly extraordinary circumstances beyond the student's control. In the rare event that an emergency arises, it is the student's complete responsibility to 1) inform the professor prior to the exam time, and 2) provide the professor with written documentation of the emergency (e.g., medical note from a certified physician). Autumn/Spring break trips, and family vacations do not constitute an emergency.

You are strongly encouraged to turn in your assignments on time. Late submission within the next 24 hours after the due time will receive half credits at the most. After a week, no late work will be accepted and you will receive 0 point on your assignment.

Other Course Policies

Academic Misconduct

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-48.7 (B)). For additional information, see the [Code of Student Conduct](#).

Disability Services

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 a 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.

Copyright Disclaimer

The materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection and are only for the use of students officially enrolled in the course for the educational purposes associated with the

course. Copyright law must be considered before copying, retaining, or disseminating materials outside of the course.

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.

Intellectual Diversity Statement

Ohio State is committed to fostering a culture of open inquiry and intellectual diversity within the classroom. This course will cover a range of information and may include discussions or debates about controversial issues, beliefs, or policies. Any such discussions and debates are intended to support understanding of the approved curriculum and relevant course objectives rather than promote any specific point of view. Students will be assessed on principles applicable to the field of study and the content covered in the course. Preparing students for citizenship includes helping them develop critical thinking skills that will allow them to reach their own conclusions regarding complex or controversial matters.

Mental Health

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 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:

1. Online reporting form at <http://civilrights.osu.edu/>,

2. Call 614-247-5838 or TTY 614-688-8605,
3. Or Email civilrights@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.

Other Related Resources

Academic integrity policy

Policies for this hybrid course

- Written assignments: Your written assignments, including discussion posts, should be your own original work. In formal assignments, you should follow APA style to cite the ideas and words of your research sources. You are encouraged to ask a trusted person to proofread your assignments before you turn them in--but no one else should revise or rewrite your work.
- Reusing past work: In general, you are prohibited in university courses from turning in work from a past class to your current class, even if you modify it. If you want to build on past research or revisit a topic you've explored in previous courses, please discuss the situation with me.
- Falsifying research or results: All research you will conduct in this course is intended to be a learning experience; you should never feel tempted to make your results or your library research look more successful than it was.

Ohio State Code of Student Conduct – AI Use

"All students have important obligations under the Code of Student Conduct to complete all academic and scholarly activities with fairness and honesty. Our professional students also have the responsibility to uphold the professional and ethical standards found in their respective academic honor codes. Specifically, students are not to use "unauthorized assistance in the laboratory, on field work, in scholarship or on a course assignment" unless such assistance has been authorized specifically by the course instructor. In addition, students are not to submit their work without acknowledging any word-for-word use and/or paraphrasing" of writing, ideas or other work that is not your own. These requirements apply to all students — undergraduate, graduate, and professional."

Tentative Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments	Reminder
Week 1			
8/26	Introductions, Course Policies & Schedule		
8/28	Online Asynchronous: View Video Benefits of Health Communication	Assignment 1: Find a memorable health message that you have ever encountered, and reflect on what made it effective	Assignment 1 Due: 11:59 pm 8/28

	and Marketing (Center for Disease Control and Prevention)		
Week 2			
9/2	Health Communication Planning Process - The PRECEDE/PROCEED Model	Reading: Crosby, R., & Noar, S. M. (2011). What is a planning model? An introduction to PRECEDE-PROCEED. <i>Journal of public Health Dentistry</i> , 71, S7-S15.	
9/4	Online Asynchronous: View Video: Women and Heart Disease Prevention: The Red Dress (National Institutes of Health)	Reading: Long, T., Taubenheim, A. M., Wayman, J., Temple, S., & Ruoff, B. A. (2008). The Heart Truth: Using the power of branding and social marketing to increase awareness of heart disease in women. <i>Social Marketing Quarterly</i> , 14(3), 3-29 Assignment 2: Based on the reading, please summarize what steps/elements are included in formative research.	Assignment 2 Due: 11:59 pm 9/4
Week 3			
9/9	Classic Theories of Behavior Change: Health Belief Model	Reading: 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. <i>Clinical epidemiology and global health</i> , 9, 41-46.	
9/11	Online: Theory of Planned Behavior Synchronous via zoom, Recording will be uploaded	Reading: Why public health messaging should emphasize vaccine acceptance, not hesitancy https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2021-02-23/vaccine-hesitancy-public-health-message	
Week 4			
9/16	Emotions and Fear Appeals in Health Messaging An examination of the Extended Parallel Process Model	Reading: Chou, W. Y. S., & Budenz, A. (2020). Considering emotion in COVID-19 vaccine communication: addressing vaccine hesitancy and fostering vaccine confidence. <i>Health Communication</i> , 35(14), 1718-1722.	
9/18	Online Asynchronous: View Sticky Frames/Why Negative Lodge in the Mind and What to Do About It (Lecture by Dr. Allison Ledgerwood)	Assignment 3: Find, evaluate and reflect on a fear appeal message	Assignment 3 Due: 11:59 pm 9/18

Week 5			
9/23	Psychological Reactance and Mixed Emotions	<p>Readings: Reynolds-Tylus, T. (2019). Psychological reactance and persuasive health communication: A review of the literature. <i>Frontiers in Communication</i>, 56. https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2019.00056</p> <p>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. <i>Health Communication</i>, 1-8.</p>	
9/25	Online Asynchronous: View Video: Transtheoretical Model of Behavior Change	Assignment 4: Use Transtheoretical Model to identify target audience for a health news story	Assignment 4 Due: 11:59 pm 9/25
Week 6			
9/30	Health (mis)information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helping the public access credible health information and detect misinformation 	<p>Readings: Macias, W., Lee, M., & Cunningham, N. (2018). Inside the mind of the online health information searcher using wording? think-aloud protocol. <i>Health Communication</i>, 33(12), 1482-1493.</p> <p>Walter, N., Brooks, J. J., Saucier, C. J., & Suresh, S. (2021). Evaluating the impact of attempts to correct health misinformation on social media: A meta-analysis. <i>Health Communication</i>, 36(13), 1776-1784.</p> <p>Peng, Lim, & Meng (2022). Persuasive strategies in online health misinformation: A systematic review. <i>Information, Communication & Society</i>.</p>	
10/2	Online Asynchronous: Watch Misinformation and Media Literacy (PBS)	Start reviewing materials for the mid-term exam	
Week 7			
10/7	Catch up lecture & Midterm Exam Review		
10/9	Online Asynchronous: Complete Mid-Term Exam		
Week 8			

10/14	Online Asynchronous: Writing Effective and Clear Health Messages for Print and Social Media	View Video: Effective Health Communication & Health Literacy (National Library of Medicine)	
10/16	Autumn Break – No Class		
Week 9			
10/21	Health Narratives & Entertainment-Education: The Persuasive Nature of Stories	<p>Read: Hursting, L. M., & Comello, M. L. G. (2021). Creating Narrative Entertainment for Health Communication: Perspectives from Practice. <i>Journal of Creative Communications</i>. Online First.</p> <p>Baezconde-Garbanati, L. A., Chatterjee, J. S., Frank, L. B., Murphy, S. T., Moran, M. B., Werth, L. N., ... & O'Brien, D. (2014). Tamale Lesson: A case study of a narrative health communication intervention. <i>Journal of Communication in Healthcare</i>, 7(2), 82-92.</p>	
10/23	Online Asynchronous: View Episode 1/Season 2 Trailer for New Amsterdam and Interview with Executive Produced about the episode on COVID-19 healthcare worker burnout.	Assignment 5: Complete New Amsterdam Reflection Exercise	Assignment 5 Due: 11:59 pm 10/21
Week 10			
10/28	Internet and Health Communication		
10/30	Online Synchronous: Group Project Meeting	Group project instructions and work on your project. Strongly encouraged to participate.	
Week 11			
11/4	Persuasive AI for Health Communication Messages	<p>Readings: Huang, G., & Sai, W. A. N. G. (2023). Is artificial intelligence more persuasive than humans? A meta-analysis.</p> <p>Karinshak, E., Liu, S. X., Park, J. S., & Hancock, J. T. (2023). Working With AI to Persuade: Examining a Large Language Model's Ability to Generate Pro-Vaccination Messages. <i>Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction</i>, 7(CSCW1), 1-29.</p>	

11/6	Online Asynchronous: Read the Article: Artificial Intelligence for Health Message Generation: An Empirical Study Using A Large Language Model and Prompt Engineering	Assignment 6: Write down your thoughts about using AI for generating health communication messages.	Assignment 6 Due: 11:59 pm 11/6
Week 12			
11/11	No Class	Veterans Day	
11/13	Online Asynchronous: Watch Video (1) Mobile-Based Health Approaches Contribute to Increase in Global Workplace Physical Activity; (2) Using Mobile Health Tools	Assignment 7: Discuss the advantage of mobile-health over the traditional mass-media health communication (e.g., TV, Billboards) in delivering health messages	Assignment 7 Due: 11:59 pm 11/13
Week 13			
11/18	Social Networks and The Two-Step Flow Hypothesis	Reading: Valente, T. W. & Lombardo, A. Mass and Interpersonal Communication: Buzz for Behavior Change.	
11/20	Online Asynchronous: Mobile health	Reading: Zhao, Freeman, & Li. (2016). Can Mobile Phone Apps Influence People's Health Behavior Change? An Evidence Review. JMIR, 18, 11. https://www.jmir.org/2016/11/e287/	Review slides on your own
Week 14			
11/25	Presentation I	Format TBD	
11/27	No Class	Thanksgiving Break	
Week 15			
12/2	Presentation II	Format TBD	
12/4	Online Synchronous: Review for Exam	Synchronous via zoom, Recoding will be uploaded	
Week 16			
12/9	Online: Exam 2		