

COMM 4737

Health Communication in Mass Mediated Contexts

Spring 2026



General information

Instructor: Dominik Stecula, PhD

Classroom: Page Hall 060

Meeting times: Wednesdays and Fridays, 11.10am-12.30pm

Email: stecula.3@osu.edu

Office location: 3105 Derby Hall

Office hours: Wednesdays 2-4pm 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.

How this course meets Goal 1: Students engage in critical thinking about health communication through analysis of peer-reviewed research, evaluation of real-world health campaigns, and application of theoretical frameworks to contemporary health issues (GE ELO 1.1). The course requires advanced scholarly exploration through engagement with primary literature from communication science, public health, and psychology, and through the design of a theory-driven health campaign in the group project (GE ELO 1.2).

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.

How this course meets Goal 2: Students synthesize approaches from multiple disciplines—including psychology, public health, and political science—and connect academic theories to health issues they encounter in daily life, such as vaccine debates, social media health content, and public health campaigns (GE ELO 2.1). The group project requires students to take leadership roles in designing and presenting a health communication campaign, building on prior knowledge to address a real-world health challenge. In-class activities prompt students to assess their own health behaviors and communication practices (GE ELO 2.2).

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.

How this course meets Goal 3: Course content addresses multiple dimensions of well-being, including physical health (vaccination, disease prevention, health behaviors), mental and emotional health (fear appeals, health anxiety, crisis communication), and intellectual well-being (health literacy, navigating misinformation). Students explore these topics from theoretical, cultural, political, and technological perspectives through readings, lectures, and discussions (GE ELO 3.1). The group project requires students to design a health campaign that applies evidence-based strategies for promoting health and well-being in a target population (GE ELO 3.2).

Class schedule

Week 1.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Wednesday	January 14	Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- How to read an academic article- Re-reading is inefficient. Here are 8 tips for studying smarter.
Friday	January 16	Introduction to health communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 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 16, 2026 on CarmenCanvas

Week 2.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Wednesday	January 21	Media's role in shaping health perceptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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.](#)

Friday	January 23	The Health Belief Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>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.</u> - Watch: <u>Last Week Tonight segment on vaccines from 2017</u>
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Week 3.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Wednesday	January 28	Social Cognitive Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Bandura, A. (2004). "Health promotion by social cognitive means." <i>Health Education & Behavior</i>, 31(2), 143-164.</u> - Optional: <u>NPR podcast "How to start a new habit: think small"</u>
Friday	January 30	Theory of Planned Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Ajzen, I. (1991). <i>The theory of planned behavior</i>. <i>Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes</i>, 50(2), 179-211.</u> - Listen: <u>NPR podcast "Creatures Of Habit: How Habits Shape Who We Are — And Who We Become"</u>

Week 4.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Wednesday	February 4	Test #1	- Test in class, bring a pen.
Friday	February 6	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"

Week 5.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Wednesday	February 11	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"
Friday	February 13	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.](#)

Week 6.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Wednesday	February 18	Storytelling in health communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kreuter, M. W., et al. (2007). "Narrative communication in cancer prevention and control: A framework to guide research and application." <i>Annals of Behavioral Medicine</i>, 33(3), 221-235. - Listen: The Nocturnists podcast episode "Lost & Found"
Friday	February 20	Entertainment-Education framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moyer-Gusé, E. (2008). "Toward a theory of entertainment persuasion: Explaining the persuasive effects of entertainment-education messages." <i>Communication Theory</i>, 18(3), 407-425. - Is mental health still misconstrued on screen? Psychology goes to Hollywood to dispel stigma

Week 7.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Wednesday	February 25	Cultural influences on health communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kreuter, M. W., & McClure, S. M. (2004). "The role of culture in health communication." <i>Annual Review of Public Health</i>, 25, 439-455.

- [Fierce article “Lost in translation: When parents and pediatricians don’t speak the same language”](#)
- In person test. Bring a pen.

Week 8.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Friday	February 27	Test #2	
Wednesday	March 4	Group project introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Crosby, R., & Noar, S. M. (2011). What is a planning model? An introduction to PRECEDE-PROCEED. Journal of public Health Dentistry, 71, S7-S15. - 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.
Friday	March 6	Health disparities and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 9.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Wednesday	March 11	Politics of health communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vox article "Health shouldn't be contentious. But it's incredibly polarizing." - Listen: The New Republic podcast "The Fiery Gas Stove Wars" - Optional: Stecula, 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"
Friday	March 13	Mass media and health literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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"

Week 10. Spring break

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Wednesday	March 18	Spring break, no class	
Friday	March 20	Spring break, no class	

Week 11.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Wednesday	March 25	Social media and influencers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 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".
Friday	March 27	Test #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Test in class, bring a pen.- Group project proposals due by the end of the day on Friday, Mar 27, 2026 on CarmenCanvas

Week 12.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Wednesday	April 1	Health misinformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Spies, S. (2019, October 22). Defining "Disinformation" – MediaWell.- Listen: Science Friday podcast "The Basics Of How Health Misinformation Spreads"
Friday	April 3	Combating misinformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 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](#)

Week 13.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Wednesday	April 8	Vaccine communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How to Talk about Vaccines in an Era of Scientific Mistrust - Goldenberg, M. J. (2016). "Public misunderstanding of science? Reframing the problem of vaccine hesitancy." <i>Perspectives on Science</i>, 24(5), 552-581.
Friday	April 10	Digital technologies, AI and health communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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" - 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"](#)

Week 14.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Wednesday	April 15	Group project working session	- No new readings, catch up on any material we haven't covered
Friday	April 17	Group presentations	

Week 15.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Wednesday	April 22	Group presentations	
Friday	April 24	Test #4	

- Final projects due by the end of the day on Friday, Apr 24, 2026 on CarmenCanvas

Class schedule

Important dates

Day	Date	Time	Assignment or Exam
Friday	January 16	Due by 11.59pm	Complete a brief syllabus quiz on CarmenCanvas
Wednesday	February 4	In class	Test #1
Friday	February 27	In class	Test #2
Friday	March 27	In class	Test #3
Friday	March 27	Due by 11.59pm	Group project proposal due on CarmenCanvas
Friday	April 24	In class	Test #4

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. At the same time, I won't take attendance. You paid a lot of money to be here! Instead of taking attendance, some in-class activities that we will complete will be graded. There will be 10 activities for which you will get points, and they will take place during randomly selected classes over the duration of the semester. These will not be announced. If you miss one, you will miss on the points for that day.

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

There are no late submissions. Activities and tests happen in class. No late submissions on the group project will be accepted.

Missing tests

The tests are 48% of your grade. Do not miss them. **Rescheduled tests 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 are 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 please review the Code of Student Conduct and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

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

If students have questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, they should contact the instructor.

AI and Academic integrity

There has been a significant increase in the popularity and availability of a variety of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools, including ChatGPT, Sudowrite, and others. These tools will help shape the future of work, research and technology, but when used in the wrong way, they can stand in conflict with academic integrity at Ohio State.

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.

To maintain a culture of integrity and respect, these generative AI tools should not be used in the completion of course assignments unless an instructor for a given course specifically authorizes their use. Some instructors may approve of using generative AI tools in the academic setting for specific goals. However, these tools should be used only with the explicit and clear permission of each individual instructor, and then only in the ways allowed by the instructor.

More on AI

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 (10 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.

In-class Activities (aka Attendance and Participation - 100 pts)

As stated above, instead of taking attendance, some in-class activities that we will complete will be graded. There will be 10 activities for which you will get points, and they will take place during random classes over the duration of the semester. These will not be

announced. If you miss one, you will miss on the points for that day. In total, 100 points will be allocated that way (20% of your total grade in this course). Each will be worth 10 points (note that just because you are there, you don't automatically get all the points, you have to actively participate).

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

GE ELO Assessment: In-class assignments 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).

Tests (240 pts)

We will have four tests in this course. See above for more details about the date, time, and the location of the tests. They will be in person, on paper. They will feature multiple choice, true or false, and occasionally other forms of questions, like fill in the blank or matching. Nothing revolutionary, just questions testing your knowledge and application of course content, from both lectures and assigned readings, podcasts, and videos. They will not be cumulative. Each will be worth 60 points.

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

GE ELO Assessment: These four test 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).

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 (35 points)
3. Final submission (70 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.

Other relevant information

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.

Military-Connected Students

The [Military and Veterans Services](#) (MVS) Office offers a wide range of resources for military-connected students. Whether using educational benefits or not, all military-connected students are encouraged to learn more about how the university supports military-connected students (i.e., information about tutoring, transition services, access to the veteran's lounge, etc.). For service members, should you receive military orders during the semester or know of classes that will be missed due to service commitments, please speak with your instructor as soon as possible on possible accommodations. MVS contact information: milvets@osu.edu; 614-247-VETS; veterans.osu.edu/; 185 Student Academic Services Building, 281 W. Lane Avenue.

First-Generation Students

First-generation students are central to the land-grant mission established by the Morrill Act of 1862. If you are the first in your family to attend college, you belong here. I will make expectations clear, explain any jargon, and help you navigate the "hidden curriculum." Please come to office hours or email me if you need help.