

COMM 4737: Health Communication in Mass Mediated Contexts

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an overview of theory and research related to the role of mass media in promoting public health behavior change. We will review theories of health behavior change and message effects, and discuss applications of these theories to media-based health communication campaigns. We will also look at examples of health campaigns and the research evaluating their effectiveness. Throughout the course we will examine how theory informs practice and how research aids in theory construction and refinement.

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Describe the process for developing health communication campaigns
2. Define major theories used in health communication message design.
3. Apply a theory to the development of health communication messages
4. Summarize research findings regarding the effects of mass media effects on individual attitudes and behaviors.

COURSE MATERIALS

An online module will be created for each course meeting in Carmen that may include (a) required or optional readings or media viewings, (b) concept reflection activities or (c) other activities to be completed prior to class. These modules will be rolled out over the semester. Allow 1-2 hours to complete readings and activities prior to class. Any activities posted in the module are due by class time, unless noted.

Textbook & Reading

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

National Cancer Institute (2019). Making Health Communication Programs Work. U.S. Department Of Health And Human Services. Available Online: <https://www.cancer.gov/publications/health-communication/pink-book.pdf>

Additional readings (journal and popular press articles), films and podcasts will be included in the class modules.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

The following is a list of assignments for this course and points allotted for each. Comprehensive assignment and grade information is always available on Carmen. I will use the standard OSU grade percentages. 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.

Two Exams (100 points)

There will be a midterm and final exam in this course. You will be tested on information from all aspects of the course (course readings, lectures and class discussions) for each exam. To help you prepare, I will provide a

Instructor

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Office Hours

Wed. 3-4 PM
& by appointment

Class Time

12:40-2:30 PM Wed.
Journalism 360

**Be sure to review the
topic module in Carmen
before class!**

study guide and an in-class review to help you prepare. Exams will be worth 50 points and will include multiple choice and true/false questions.

Message Evaluation (50 points)

For this assignment you will pick an existing health communication campaign (print-based, social media, mass media, online campaign, etc.) and describe the campaign, as well as the theory it draws upon. You will also discuss how well the theory is utilized in the campaign and the overall effectiveness of the message/messages.

Message Redesign (MRD; 50 points)

The MRD project will ask you take the message you evaluated in message evaluation assignment and redesign the material for millennial audiences, in order to address the problems you identified in your message evaluation and/or better utilize an existing or new theory. For this assignment you will submit a redeveloped and redesigned set of communication messages, as well as a short description of your efforts and their alignment with the theory.

Message Redesign Presentation (10 points)

On our final day of class, I will ask you to informally share the materials that you redesigned for your MRD project. You will be graded on your presentation as well as your interactions with other classmates in your group.

Online Learning Activities (100 points)

Because this is a hybrid course, you will be asked to complete online learning activities most weeks (worth 2-10 points each) to help you process course material and prepare for assignments. These activities are posted in the class modules and are due by the class time for which they are assigned. Assignments turned in late will receive no credit. The activities will included timed, open-book quizzes over course readings and viewings, as well as short writing activities. I will also post a few pop-up extra credit reflection activities throughout.

Discussion Participation (40 points)

We will explore course concepts through discussion and active learning in my classroom. To help encourage and incentivize discussion participation among all students, I will assess your participation in class 8 times during the semester (5 points each), which will be scheduled in advance. Just because you aren't being evaluated on a given day doesn't mean you shouldn't participate, it just means you don't have to worry about being evaluated.

During the first week of classes I will ask you to identify days/times that you anticipate being absent (for any reason) and a schedule will be posted afterwards on Carmen. I will not modify the schedule or allow you to "make up" discussion participation, unless you have a university-excused absence, a personal/family emergency or sickness (with documentation) that you inform me about in advance of or within 48 hours of your absence. If you are absent for an excused reason, I will ask you to "make up" discussion participation on another day, otherwise you will receive a score a zero. However, please be aware that if you miss several classes towards the end of the semester it may be impossible to make them up if discussion participation is not being assessed. Below is a table describing how participation points will be assigned.

<p>High Participation (5 points)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant offers solid analysis, without prompting, that contributes to conversation. • Participant, through their comments, demonstrates knowledge of the text. • Participant has come to the class prepared. • Participant, through their comments, shows that they are actively listening to others. • Participant offers clarification and/or follow-up that extends the conversation.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology use is primarily for class purposes and not a distraction to others.
Some Participation (3 points)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant offers some analysis, but needs prompting from the instructor. • Participant some, but not extensive knowledge of the assigned readings/viewings • Participant is somewhat prepared and does not appear to have read materials. • Participant is actively listening to others, but does not follow-up on comments • Participant relies more upon their opinion, and less on the readings or materials. • Participant arrives late or leaves early. • Participant's technology use is distracting and/or not for class purposes.
Little to No Participation (≤ 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant is not present in class. • Participant misses most of class or leaves early. • Participant offers little or no commentary in class. • Participant comes to the class ill-prepared with little understanding of the topic. • Participant does not listen to others, offers no commentary in discussions. • Participant distracts the group by interrupting or offering off topic comments. • Participant is using technology and not engaging in the discussion.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance & Participation

I will record attendance for the purposes of assigning discussion points, but you will not receive attendance points in this course. However, if you are gone on a day you are assigned to be evaluated for discussion participation you will receive a score of zero unless it was an excused absence (noted below).

Make-up Exams, Presentations & Discussion Participation

Make-up exams, presentations and discussion participation will be arranged for university-excused or for unavoidable circumstances (e.g., deaths, personal/family illness and emergencies) with prior notification or within 48 hours of your absence. If you are not present in class during an exam or presentation, and you do not have the proper documentation regarding your absence, you will not be allowed to make it up. Make-up exams will be taken in the OSU testing center or online.

Late Work Policy

If you turn in assignments **more than a day late I will grade them for full credit only in situations where (1) the assignment was late due to an unavoidable circumstance or illness and/or (2) you let me know about your situation within 48 hours of missing the deadline.** If you do not turn something in, and you don't communicate with me within 48 hours of missing the deadline, you will receive zero points on the assignments.

Grade Disputes

I am happy to revisit grades and to discuss my evaluation of your work with you – just be ready to discuss where and why you believe you should have received additional points on assignment and how many points you should have received. I will also set aside class time to review exams with you.

Technology Use

Technology is allowed in this course. I understand the value of having computer access in the classroom, and may even ask you bring a computer on occasion, but I reserve the right to institute a technology policy if your usage becomes problematic or distracting to the class. *I also reserve the right to call on you in class in you are not participating because of technology and/or ask everyone to “unplug” or put away technology for the day if I see students using technology for non-class purposes* (i.e., texting, doing work for other classes, using social media or surfing the web). Furthermore, using technology inappropriately could also negatively affect your participation grade if you’re not engaged and/or participating in class.

Plagiarism

All work in this course is to be individually developed. When grading in Carmen I use Turnitin, which will alert me to potential plagiarism. 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 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 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info_for_students/csc.asp).

Disability Services

Students with disabilities will be appropriately accommodated. Please inform me as soon as possible of your needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

Statement on Diversity

The School of Communication at The Ohio State University embraces and maintains an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, experiences, and people. Our commitment to diversity moves beyond mere tolerance to recognizing, understanding, and welcoming the contributions of diverse groups and the value group members possess as individuals. In our School, the faculty, students, and staff are dedicated to building a tradition of diversity with principles of equal opportunity, personal respect, and the intellectual interests of those who comprise diverse cultures.

Please Take Care of Yourself (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 are or someone you know is 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.

If you are thinking of harming yourself or need a safe, non-judgmental place to talk, or if you are worried about someone else and need advice about what to do, 24 hour emergency help is also available through the Suicide Prevention Hotline (Columbus: 614-221-5445 / National: 800-273-8255); or text (4hope to 741741); or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

Stop by Anytime!

My office is in 3149 Derby Hall (3rd floor). My office hours are on Wednesday after class (I will also stick around after class for questions). In addition, I am generally in my office M/W/F. Please stop by anytime to chat about this course or anything else! Or, drop me an e-mail. I'm here to help, so please reach out if you need anything!

Tentative Semester Schedule

Day	Date	Topic	Readings & Assignments
Wed.	8/21	1. Introductions, Course Policies & Schedule	
Wed.	8/28 ^a	2. Effects of Mass Media on Health	Cho "Introduction" & Chapter 1 Readings/Viewings in Class Module
Wed.	9/4 ^a	3. Developing & Evaluating Media Messages	Readings/Viewings in Class Module
Wed.	9/11 ^a	4. Stages of Change	Cho Chapter 12
Wed.	9/18 ^a	5. Integrative Model of Behavioral Prediction	Cho Chapter 2
Wed.	9/25 ^a	6. Extended Parallel Process Model Exam Review Session	Cho Chapter 3
Wed.	10/2	7. Midterm Exam	
Wed.	10/9	8. Message Evaluation Workshop	Readings/Viewings in Class Module
Wed.	10/16 ^a	9. Culture & Health Literacy	Message Evaluation Due (10/18 12 PM) Cho Chapter 10
Wed.	10/23 ^a	10. Entertainment Education/Narratives	Cho Chapter 6
Wed.	10/30 ^a	11. Message Targeting & Tailoring	Cho Chapter 7
Wed.	11/6 ^a	12. Emotion & Message Inoculation	Cho Chapter 4 & 5
Wed.	11/13 ^a	13. Social Marketing	Readings/Viewings in Class Module
Wed.	11/20	14. Message Redesign Workshop	
Wed.	11/27	No Class – Thanksgiving Break	

Wed.	12/4	15. Message Redesign Presentation Session Final Exam Review	Message Redesign Due (12/5 5 PM)
FINAL	12/9	16. Final Exam (4 PM)	

^a days that discussion participation will be assessed