

# **COMM 3332 Risk Communication: Hybrid**

Spring 2020

Class hours: Thursdays 9:10-11:00am

Classroom: Journalism 360

Professor: Hyunyi Cho, PhD

Office: Derby 3026

Email: [cho.919@osu.edu](mailto:cho.919@osu.edu)

Office hours: Thursdays 11:00am-12:00pm and by appointment

## **Course Description**

This course is designed to provide students with theory-based knowledge about risk perceptions and theory-based principles of designing effective risk communication messages. Students will learn theories of risk perception and risk communication, how to apply the theory and principles into the design of communication and action for preventing and controlling risk, and how to evaluate and improve the efficacy of risk communication.

### **Hybrid course format**

This is a hybrid course which is comprised of both in-class components and online activities. By blending face to face and online modalities, this course is designed to foster active learning experience. Prior to a class meeting, students will read assigned materials, complete an online preview quiz, and prepare discussion questions. After classroom meetings, students will be provided with assignments to apply theories and concepts to risk communication problem solving, which will be reviewed at the beginning of the next classroom meeting.

## **Course Objectives**

By actively participating and completing course requirements, students should be able to do the following by the end of the semester:

1. Analyze cognitive, affective, and social aspects of risk perception;
2. Ascertain the theory and principles of effective risk communication;
3. Apply risk communication theory and practice to developing and evaluating risk communication messages and programs.

## **Course Reading Materials**

Journal articles: Will be available on Canvas

## Grading Components

Component	Point	Unit
Preview quizzes	30	Individual
5 pts x 6 (out of 8 quizzes)		
Application exercises	75	Group
15 pts x 5 (out of 6 exercises)		
Discussion questions	20	Individual
5 pts x 4 (out of 5 questions)		
Exam 1	100	Individual
Exam 2	125	Individual
Risk message project		
Teamwork report	5	Group
Presentation	25	Group
Peer evaluation	10	Individual
Full report	50	Group
Reflection paper	10	Individual
In-class participation	25	Individual
<i>Total</i>	<i>475</i>	

## Grading Scale

A = 93-100%	A- = 90-92%	
B+ = 87-89%	B = 83-86%	B- = 80-82%
C+ = 77-79%	C = 73-76%	C- = 70-72%
D+ = 67-69%	D = 60-66%	E = 0-59%

## Course Requirements

\*\*\*By enrolling in this course students are fully responsible for accessing and acting upon course information that the instructor communicates on Canvas throughout the course of this semester.\*\*\*

### Preview quizzes

The goal of the quizzes is to help students engage with reading materials prior to class meeting and be prepared for in-class discussion. Unless indicated otherwise, the quizzes will be activated on Canvas by 8am Friday and will close at 5pm Wednesday the day before the next class in which the topic will be discussed. There will be a total of eight online quizzes and two lowest scores will be dropped in the computation of the scores for the final grade.

### **Application exercises**

The goal of the application exercises is to provide students with opportunities to apply risk communication theory and concepts to problem solving. Unless noted otherwise, the application exercises will be activated on Canvas by 8am Friday the day after the class in which the topic was discussed and will close at 8am Wednesday a day before the next class in which the application exercises will be reviewed and reflected on.

Instructor will randomly assign students to groups. Students will work in groups to analyze given risk communication situations using theories and concepts and to develop creative solutions. Reports will be evaluated in terms of conceptual accuracy, clarity in reporting, and creativity in solutions. There will be a total of six application exercises and one lowest score will be dropped.

### **Discussion questions**

Risk communication situations are frequently complex and challenging, requiring critical and informed debate and deliberation. During the course of the semester, there will be five topics for which discussion questions will be activated on Canvas: see Course Calendar for the due dates. Discussion questions should be based on accurate grasp of the readings and demonstrate critical reflection on their applicability to diverse risk communication situations. Each question should be about 100 words in length. Out of the total five discussion questions, one lowest score will be dropped.

### **Exams**

Two exams are scheduled for the semester. Exam 1 will cover all content covered prior to the exam. Exam 2 will be comprehensive, covering all topics of the course. Exams can cover any course materials including lectures, assigned reading materials, class discussion, and information from classroom review of assignments including preview quizzes, application exercises, and discussion questions. Each exam can be any combination of true/false, multiple choice, and short answer questions. Prior to each exam a study guide and review session will be provided.

### **Risk message project**

#### Overview

The goal of this project is to provide students with experience in theory-based design and evaluation of risk communication messages. Students will select a risk communication issue with the instructor's approval. For the risk issue, students will first conduct secondary research for comprehensive understanding of the issue. Next, students will collect and evaluate existing risk communication messages using a set of theory-based criteria. On the basis of the evaluation, students will design their own risk communication messages, guided by theory. Central to the success in this project is sound application of theory to the design and evaluation of the risk messages. The instructor will provide a detailed guideline for the project on Canvas.

**Team work report**

Groups will submit a work report. The report will include task allocations among members, task scheduling, tasks planned, and tasks completed. A team work report form will be available later this semester on Canvas.

**Presentation**

Guidelines for the time, content, and delivery of the presentation will be provided later this semester on Canvas.

**Peer evaluation**

Students will evaluate other team members' work on and contributions to the risk message project. A peer evaluation form to be completed by each student for other team members will be available later this semester on Canvas. Not submitting the peer evaluation form will result in a zero point for that portion of your grade.

**Reflection paper**

The goal of this assignment is to help students analyze what they have learned and how they learned it, and plan on how they will use the knowledge in future research and/or action. Each student will submit a 450-word reflection paper at the end of the semester. The specificity of the description of what and how one learned, the accuracy of the conceptual references, and the depth of self-reflection will be evaluated.

**In-class participation**

Students are expected to come to class after having read the assigned reading materials and being prepared for discussion. The instructor will evaluate the quality and quantity of participation. Quality of participation is defined as the degree to which it demonstrates the student's understanding of the readings, is relevant to the theory and practice presented in the readings and stimulates interests in the topic presented in the readings. Quality is more important than quantity of class participation. Asking questions for clarification, elaboration, and discussion and providing constructive suggestions for classmates' presentations are important forms of class participation.

**Course Policies****Attendance**

For students taking this hybrid format class, attendance is of paramount importance to completing this course with credit. Failure to attend the project presentation will result in a zero point for the part of your final grade. Attendance will be taken every class.

Missing three or more classes without a documentation of a valid reason will result in lowering of your final grade for this course by a half letter grade (e.g., B→B-). Students missing a class should submit a written documentation to the instructor via email. Verbal communication to the instructor is not required.

Three or more late arrivals in class, early departures from class, or a combination of the two, without documentations of valid reasons will result in a 5 point deduction from your final score for this course.

Students are responsible for information missed during an absence. This may include modifications in class schedule or information on an assignment or exam. Students should make arrangements with other students in class to obtain missed information.

### **Classroom conduct**

Respect for everyone in classroom, including other students and instructor, is essential. Rude remarks or behavior negatively affect the classroom experience of not only the recipient but the rest of class and disrupt learning and teaching. For each occurrence of the following, 5 points will be subtracted from your final total for this class: phone ringing, texting, looking at phone, walking in and out of classroom when class activities are going on, and any other activities that disrupt teaching and learning.

### **Notetaking**

Student should take notes by hand. Use of laptop, tablet, or phone is not allowed. Research indicates that students learn better when they are actively engaged in class through note-taking by hand (Mueller & Oppenheimer, 2014). Moreover, use of these devices can distract from your and other students' learning experience and the instructor's teaching.

Mueller, P.A. & Oppenheimer, D.A. (2014). The pen is mightier than the keyboard: Advantages of longhand over laptop note taking. *Psychological Sciences*, 25, 1159-1168.

### **Lecture materials**

Instructor's full PowerPoint file used during class lecture will not be provided to students. As stated elsewhere in this syllabus, students are expected to take active notes. This policy is also to prevent misuse or distribution of the lecture materials.

### **Assignment submission**

Late assignments will be graded down 10% per 12 hours. A late penalty begins immediately after the instructor has collected the assignments. Keep in mind that for group assignments all members are penalized for late work even if it is one member's neglect of responsibility. Note that the preview quiz, application exercise, and discussion question assignments cannot be made up. Students are given an abundant time window to complete and submit these assignments on Canvas; upon submission, students will be given answer keys on the same day. Moreover, the results of these assignments are reviewed and discussed on the next day in class starting at 9:10am. Therefore, for the progress of course and fairness in grading, a make-up of these assignments is not feasible. As indicated elsewhere in this syllabus, lowest scores of these assignments, including a zero from a missed one, will be dropped.

### **Makeup exam**

A missed exam cannot be made up unless the following three conditions are met: (1) The excuse is valid; (2) the excuse is made in advance; and (3) the excuse is documented. Under these conditions, authenticated written documents must be provided to the instructor for an arrangement is to be made.

## **School, College, and University Policies, Statements, and Resource Information**

### **Accessibility accommodations for students with disabilities**

#### **Requesting accommodations**

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know via email immediately so that we can privately discuss options. You are also welcome to register with Student Life Disability Services to establish reasonable accommodations. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: [slds@osu.edu](mailto:slds@osu.edu) ; 614-292-3307; [slds.osu.edu](http://slds.osu.edu) ; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

#### **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://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>

#### **Student academic services**

Arts and Sciences Advising and Academic Services’ website provides support for student academic success. Information on advising issues such as tutoring, transfer credits, academic standing, and contact information for Arts and Sciences advisors can be obtained through this website. The site is: <http://advising.osu.edu/welcome.shtml>

#### **Student services**

The Student Service Center assists with financial aid matters, tuition and fee payments. Please see their site at: <http://ssc.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.

### **Title IX**

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, Kellie Brennan, at [titleix@osu.edu](mailto:titleix@osu.edu)

### **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](http://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](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

### Course Calendar

This schedule and its components below are subject to revision at instructor's discretion. Students will be notified of such modifications on Canvas and are responsible for timely access to the information and any necessary adjustments in the work for this course.

Wk	Date	Topic	Online assignments	In-class activities	Readings
1	1/9	<i>First class</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed student survey due on Canvas @5pm 1/9</li> </ul>	Introduction to the course; Overview of the study of risk communication	<i>Cho et al., 2015</i>
2	1/16	Theoretical bases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quiz #1 due @5pm 1/15</li> </ul>	Review of quiz #1; Lecture & discussion	Cho & Witte, 2003
3	1/23	Risk perceptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Application #1 due @8am 1/22</li> <li>Quiz #2 due @5pm 1/22</li> <li>Risk msg proj topic due @5pm 1/22</li> </ul>	Review of application #1; Review of Quiz #2; Lecture & discussion; Presentation of project topic ideas	Slovic, 1987; Sandman, 1988
4	1/30	Affective & emotional aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Application #2 due @8am 1/29</li> <li>Quiz #3 due @5pm 1/29</li> <li>Discussion Q #1 due @5pm 1/29</li> </ul>	Review of application #2; Review of quiz #3; Lecture; Discussion questions #1	Lerner et al., 2003; Sinaceur et al., 2005
5	2/6	Social & process aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Application #3 due @8am 2/5</li> <li>Quiz #4 due @5pm 2/5</li> <li>Discussion Q #2 due @5pm 2/5</li> </ul>	Review of application #3; Review of quiz #4; Lecture; Discussion questions #2	Cho, 2006; Prochaska, 1997
6	2/13	Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Application #4 due @8am 2/12</li> <li>Review of online study guide</li> </ul>	Review of application #4 Q&A re exam 1	Exam 1 study guide
7	2/20	Exam 1 in class 9:10-10:10 Group work on risk message project afterwards			



8	2/27	Media effects on risk perceptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quiz #5 due @5pm 2/26</li> <li>Team work report due @5pm 2/26</li> </ul>	Review of quiz #5; Presentation of team work progress; Lecture & discussion	Snyder & Rouse, 1995; So et al., 2011
9	3/5	Societal risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quiz #6 due @5pm 3/4</li> <li>Discussion Q #3 due @5pm 3/4</li> </ul>	Review of quiz #6; Lecture; Discussion questions #3	Cho & Kuang, 2015
10	3/12	Spring break: No class			
11	3/19	Risk and trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Application #5 due @8am 3/18</li> <li>Quiz #7 due @5pm 3/18</li> <li>Discussion Q #4 due @5pm 3/18</li> </ul>	Reflection on application #5; Review of quiz #7; Lecture Discussion questions #4	Siegrist et al., 2000
12	3/26	Risk and stigma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Application #6 due @8am 3/25</li> <li>Quiz #8 due @5pm 3/25</li> <li>Discussion Q #5 due @5pm 3/25</li> </ul>	Reflection on application #6; Review of quiz #8; Lecture Discussion questions #5	Smith, 2007
13	4/2	Group work on risk message project			
14	4/9	Risk msg project presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PowerPoint file due @9am 4/9</li> </ul>	Student presentations & Q&A	
15	4/16	<i>Last class</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of online study guide</li> <li>Full report of risk message project due @11:59pm 4/16</li> <li>Peer evaluation due @11:59pm 4/16</li> </ul>	Course wrap up; Q&A re exam 2	Exam 2 study guide
		Reflection paper due @noon on 4/20 Exam 2 during finals week on the day and time to be given by the university			