

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism

**HEAL 372 – Health Communication (3)**  
Spring 2013

DAY/TIME:	MW 3:00 – 4:15 p.m.	LOCATION:	Planetary Hall 124
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Call or email for appt.

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Applies research-based models and theories of health assessment and promotion at individual, organizational, agency, and community levels. Uses communication approaches and skills in context of behavior change strategies, including policy and program development.

#### COURSE OBJECTIVES

By completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. Incorporate theories and models of health assessment, including health belief, stages of change, social learning, diffusion of innovations, and organization change and apply to health communication.
2. Define program planning strategies helpful for preparing organizational and communitywide initiatives.
3. Implement communication strategies of media relations, media advocacy, social marketing, and counteradvertising.
4. Utilize the health communications processes model to design a range of communication initiatives, including public service announcements, advertising, campaigns, promotions, and sponsorship.
5. Implement evaluation design strategies in the planning, implementation and review of components of communication strategy implementation.
6. Assist individuals and organizations in collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution and solution-finding as they prepare health assessment, health education, and health communications initiatives.
7. Design and implement a communications product with specific objective, resources, and evaluation.
8. Describe how policy and legislative processes are used, and can be used, to make determinations regarding health education and health communication.
9. Prepare and conduct selective in-service training programs for targeted groups.
10. Articulate clearly program needs, strategies, resources, and accomplishments for specific health initiatives.

#### COURSE OVERVIEW

This interactive course blends theoretical and applied approaches for communicating effectively about health issues. Classes will incorporate a variety of methodologies, including lecture, discussion, applied projects, reading reactions, and class interaction. The assignments and discussions are primarily applied in nature. Participation in all aspects of the course – attendance, active participation in class discussions, and completion of all assignments - is expected to gain the breadth of content and achieve course objectives. Readings and assignments are due on the specified date in the syllabus.

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY: Face to face

#### REQUIRED READINGS

Bensley, R. and Brookins-Fisher, J. Community Health Education Methods: A Practical Guide. 3rd Ed. Jones and Bartlett, 2009.

National Cancer Institute, Washington, D.C.

\*Making Health Communication Programs Work: A Planner's Guide (MHCPW)  
[www.cancer.gov/pinkbook](http://www.cancer.gov/pinkbook)

\*Theory at a Glance: A Guide for Health Promotion Practice  
<http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/cancerlibrary/theory.pdf>

\*Clear & Simple: Developing Effective Print Materials for Low-Literate Readers  
[www.cancer.gov/cancerinformation/clearandsimple](http://www.cancer.gov/cancerinformation/clearandsimple)

\* How To Evaluate Health Information on the Internet  
[www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/factsheet/Information/internet](http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/factsheet/Information/internet)

\*Anderson, David S. IMPACT Evaluation Resource George Mason University  
[www.caph.gmu.edu/evaluation.htm](http://www.caph.gmu.edu/evaluation.htm) - PDF: <http://tinyurl.com/c738rks>

\*U.S. Department of Health and Human Service Healthy People 2020  
[http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/healthy\\_people/hp2020.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/healthy_people/hp2020.htm)

\*Gateway to Health Communication and Social Marketing Practice (CDC) [www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/](http://www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/)

\*Office of National Drug Control Strategy - Media Campaign  
<http://www.mediacampaign.org>

**Evaluation:** This course will be graded on a point system, with a total of 400 possible points.

**Grading Scale**

A	= 375 – 400	B+	= 348 – 359	C+	= 308 - 319	D	= 240 - 279
A-	= 360 – 374	B	= 332 – 347	C	= 296 – 307	F	= 0 – 239
		B-	= 320 – 331	C-	= 280 – 295		

**Requirements:**

Communications Strategy Review	25 points
Individual Products (3 @ 25)	75 points
Topical Communications Campaign	50 points
Training / Seminar Presentation	50 points
Campus Health Awareness Events	25 points
Assignments	50 points
Final Examination	75 points
Participation	50 points

**Communications Strategy Review**

Examine at least 100 advertisements for products or services from one cluster of media communications (a cluster may include, but is not limited to: news media, print advertising, radio/TV advertising, placements, marketing approaches, internet and web). Prepare a 5-10 page paper that reviews (a) common and unique approaches and strategies; (b) hypotheses/assumptions used; (c) appropriateness for target audience(s); (d) your reactions and assessment; and (e) how these insights can be used with health and safety topics.

**Individual Products (3)**

Design three distinct health/safety products suitable for a communications initiative. The first item is a brochure; the second and third can be a poster series, newsletter, calendar, radio PSAs, a TV PSA, media presentation, newspaper series, billboard, or other strategy. Also submit a paper describing background work, underlying theory, rationale for decisions and preparation work. See grading rubric for further details.

**Topical Communications Campaign**

Design a communications campaign suitable for implementation, including at least eight varied materials and approaches. Campaign elements typically include print materials, public service announcements, fliers, fact sheets, brochures, news releases, and additional resources. If incorporating others' materials (e.g., fact sheets, resources), clearly identify with reference notation on the item and in the written description. Include a written description describing theory and background, needs assessments, strategy selection, pilot testing, and

evaluation. Prepare this as if it is being sent to a specific intermediary (e.g., community leader, agency head, school principal) for implementation. See grading rubric for content elements and grading details.

**Training / Seminar Presentation**

Working alone or in a small group, plan, design, and implement a segment of a training or seminar session to prepare a designated audience on a health or safety issue. This will incorporate communication strategies from the projects and campaign assignments, as well as other strategies as deemed appropriate. Grading is based on individual roles, participation, collaboration, and quality of final paper (documenting the background, preparation, and rationale for presentation content). Group presentations are 12-15 minutes; individual sessions are 5-7 minutes.

**Campus Health Awareness Events**

Please attend two of the health and safety events offered by Mason during the semester (such as Health Expo, Alcohol awareness, Breastival, HIV/AIDS awareness, violence prevention). Attend to the marketing, organization and program implementation, and prepare a 5 page paper which summarizes your observations and recommendations from a health communication perspective.

**Assignments**

Assignments will be incorporated throughout the semester. These will emerge from the reading assignments, class discussions, and current health communication efforts. These will be based on a review, synthesis and application of course content. Typically, these will be brief, with a 5-10 point score.

**Final Exam**

The final exam is a take-home exam with several essay questions. You will have one week to complete the exam and will bring in a printed final version on the scheduled date of our exam (May 13, 2013). There will be some questions you are required to answer, and some you will be allowed to choose.

**Participation**

The nature of this class makes attendance and active participation a necessity. The only way to learn and to improve skills that will help you to be an excellent health communicator is to practice. As a result, a substantial portion of your grade for this course is based on your participation in discussion, in-class activities and exercises, and in completing the work assigned for the course. At the end of the semester you will submit a short (1-page) rationale arguing for the participation score you have earned in the course. I will consider your arguments as I determine your participation score for the semester.

**Schedule of Readings and Assignments**

<i>Week</i>	<i>Date</i>	<b>Chapter Topics, Activities</b>	<b>DUE</b>	<b>Readings</b>
1	1/23	Get Syllabus, course overview, orientation to the class		
2	1/28	Foundations of Knowledge and Behavior Change The Health and Safety Focus	Sample Brochure	Ch. 1 & 3  Theory at a Glance
	1/30	Having an Impact/Desired Outcomes; Ethical Foundations; Paradigms and Models/Learning Processes; Risk and Resiliency		
3	2/4	Review of Materials and Resources	Communications Review	MHCPW: Pref/Overv./ App.B&E;  Stage1
	2/6	Foundations for Effective Communication		
4	2/11	Message Development/Content	Individual Project #1	Ch. 2
	2/13	Reaching Targeted Groups; A Multi-Cultural Perspective		
5	2/18	Product Development		Clear and Simple Ch. 5
	2/20	Social Marketing and Social Norms		

6	2/25 2/27	Product Development Persuasive Communication	Individual Project #2	Ch. 9 MHCPW: Stage 2
7	3/4 3/6	The Media; Media Relations/Advocacy; Preparation for In-Service Training Non-Profit Approaches		Ch. 10 MHCPW: Stage 3
8	3/11 3/13	<b>SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES</b>		
9	3/18 3/20	Public Service Announcements	Individual Project #3	Ch. 14 Ch. 4
10	3/25 3/27	Campaign Development Counteradvertising and Models of Design		Ch. 6 Ch. 7
11	4/1 4/3	Communicating with Others Presentations and In-Service Training	Communication Campaign	
12	4/8 4/10	Articulating Program Results and Needs Media Interviews	Training/Seminar Presentation	Ch. 8 Ch. 11
13	4/15 4/17	Evaluation: Process and Outcome Formative Evaluation and Focus Groups	Training/Seminar Presentation	MHCPW: St. 4 IMPACT
14	4/22 4/24	Practical Application Program Planning	Training/Seminar Presentation	Ch. 12
15	4/29 5/1	Organizational Change Diffusion of Innovation	Training/Seminar Presentation	Ch. 13 Rogers (Bb)
16	5/6	Organizational Solution-Seeking	Campus Health Event Paper	Theory at a Glance
17	5/13	<u>FINAL EXAM</u>	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>

---This schedule Subject to change at instructor's discretion---

#### ***Attendance and Late Work***

- Attendance will be taken every day. Students will not lose points for absences, but excessive absences will result in reduction of the student's participation grade.
- Students are expected to arrive to class on-time. Excessive tardiness will also result in reduction of the student's participation grade.
- Late work will be accepted up to one week past the due date.
- Assignments turned in late will be docked 10% per day.
- Late work turned in past one week will be worth no points, but can still benefit the student's participation grade.

#### ***Student Expectations***

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

### *Campus Resources*

- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism, please visit our website [See <http://rht.gmu.edu/>].

**CORE VALUES COMMITMENT:** The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles.

