

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism

**HEAL 372.001 – Health Communication (3)**  
Fall, 2013

DAY/TIME:	MW 3:00 – 4:15 p.m.	LOCATION:	West Hall 1004
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**PREREQUISITES:** None

**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](http://www.caph.gmu.edu)

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 = 360 - 400	B+ = 340 - 349	C+ = 290 - 299	D = 200 - 239
A- = 350 - 359	B = 310 - 339	C = 250 - 289	F = 0 - 199
	B- = 300 - 309	C- = 230 - 249	

### **Requirements:**

Participation and Attendance	50 points
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 and Attendance:** Class attendance is critical for a thorough understanding of course material. Grading is based on engagement in discussions, preparation with readings and assignments, and questions.

### **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 product 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. For each product, submit a brief paper describing background work, underlying theory, rationale for decisions and preparation work. When developing these products, it may prove helpful to consider how they may be incorporated into the Communications Campaign, as revised versions of these three products may be used. See grading rubric for further details.

### **Topical Communications Campaign**

Design a communications campaign suitable for implementation, including at least ten varied materials and approaches, the vast majority of which were developed by you. 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. Consider developing a campaign using insights from Mason's WAVES office or the local health departments. See grading rubric for content elements and grading details.

### **Training / Seminar / Workshop Presentation**

Working alone or in a small group of up to three people, 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); see grading rubric for details. Group presentations are 12-15 minutes; individual sessions are 5-7 minutes.

### **Campus Health Awareness Events**

Please attend two health / safety awareness or skill-building events offered by Mason during the semester (such as Health Expo, Alcohol Awareness Week, 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 made throughout the semester, as appropriate with the schedule of topics. 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 Examination**

The final exam will encompass readings, assignments, and discussions. This exam will be take-home, due on the final examination date of the course. Content will include several essays, be open-book/notes, and will demonstrate a thorough understanding and integration of the course content and applications.

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

**WEEK OF:**

August 26	Overview and Introduction Foundations of Knowledge and Behavior Change The Health and Safety Focus	Chapters 1, 3
September 2*	Having an Impact / Desired Outcomes Ethical Foundations Paradigms and Models / Learning Processes Risk and Resiliency Factors	<u>Theory at a Glance</u> MHCPW: Pref/Overv./App.B, E <i>Sample Brochure</i>
September 9	Review of Materials and Resources Foundations for Effective Communication	MHCPW: Stage 1 Chapter 2 <i>Communications Review</i>
September 16	Message Development and Content Reaching Targeted Groups A Multi-Cultural Perspective	<u>Clear and Simple</u> <i>Individual Project #1</i>
September 23	Product Development Social Marketing and Social Norms	Chapter 5
September 30	Product Development Persuasive Communication	Chapter 9 <i>Individual Project #2</i> MHCPW: Stage 2
October 7	The Media: Print, Radio, TV, Emerging Media Relations and Media Advocacy Preparation for In-Service Training	Chapter 10 MHCPW: Stage 3
October 14*	Non-Profit Approaches Public Service Announcements	Chapter 14 <i>Individual Project #3</i>
October 21	Campaign Development Counteradvertising and Models of Design	Chapter 4
October 28	Communicating with Others Presentations and In-Service Training	Chapters 6, 7, 8
November 4	Articulating Program Results and Needs Media Interviews	Chapter 11 <i>Communications Campaign</i>
November 11	Evaluation: Process and Outcome Formative Evaluation and Focus Groups	MHCPW: Stage 4 <u>IMPACT Evaluation Resource</u> <i>Campus Health Event Paper</i>
November 18	Program Planning, Organizational Change	Chapters 12, 13 <i>Training/Seminar Presentation</i>
November 25*	Diffusion of Innovation	<u>Theory at a Glance</u> <i>Training/Seminar Presentation</i>
December 2	Organizational Solution-Seeking	<i>Training/Seminar Presentation</i>

\* Indicates modified schedule for the week (one class day or changed class day)

## GMU POLICIES AND RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

### *Student Expectations*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/>].
- 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/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>].
- 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.

### *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>].

**PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR:** Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

**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.