

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
HEAL

HEAL 372 DL1 Health Communication
3 credit hours, Fall 2023
August 21, 2023 – December 13, 2023
Distance Learning

Faculty

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Prerequisites/Corequisites

None.

University Catalog 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 Overview

This interactive course blends theoretical and applied approaches for communicating effectively about health issues. Learning sessions will incorporate a variety of methodologies, including lecture and applied projects. The assignments are primarily applied in nature. Participation in all aspects of the course is expected to gain the breadth of content and achieve course objectives. Readings and assignments are due by specified dates in the syllabus.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered online using a format via the Blackboard learning management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on **August 20, 2023**.

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers
- To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-andoperating-systems
- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students will need a headset microphone for use with the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
 - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
 - Windows Media Player: <https://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/downloads/windows-media-player/>
 - Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

Expectations

- Course Week: Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will start on Monday, and finish on Sunday at 11:59pm.
- Log-in Frequency: Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least once per week.
- Participation: Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- Technical Competence: Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- Technical Issues: Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. ***Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.***
- Workload: Please be aware that this course is not self-paced. ***Students are expected to meet specific deadlines and due dates listed in the Class Schedule section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due. ***No late work will be accepted, no exceptions. It is your responsibility to keep up in this course and to use the syllabus provided.***
- Instructor Support: Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Meetings with the instructor will take place via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.

- Netiquette: The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words*. Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.
- Accommodations: Online learners who require effective accommodations to insure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

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 counter-advertising.
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.

Professional Standards

Not Applicable.

Required Texts

Anderson, D.S. and Miller, R.E. (2017). *Health and Safety Communication: A Practical Guide Forward*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2017.

Any other required reading will be available to you through Blackboard.

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time through Blackboard. All assignments are performance-based assessments.

Assignments

****Keep a copy of all submission confirmations you get from Blackboard for assignments. This is needed in case there is a problem with Blackboard. Without it, I will be unable to help you if there is an issue with your submission.****

- Weekly Blogging Project (20 points per entry, 260 points possible) - This assignment will allow you to take your health communication knowledge and put it into practice. You may choose your blogging platform. You will write **one post per week** (posted before 11:59pm on Sunday at the end of the class week), which should be 200-250 words each. Posts should explain a health topic to the general public in a way that is easy to understand. Include the risks, signs, and any ways to prevent health problems related to it, as applicable. I will check for these weekly and will be actively following your blog. Your posts will be graded based on the thoughtfulness of your work, the ability to communicate the health topic to a general audience, and for the assigned length (200-250 words). Don't forget to credit any sources of information or images you use.
- Blog set up/link submitted (10 points) - Create your blog using the platform of your choice. I find Blogger to be simple to use if you are looking for an option. Be sure that it is named. Submit the link on Blackboard through the "quiz" – the URL is the only question.
- Semester health topic submitted (10 points) – Select a health topic you will use throughout the semester for your assignments (not the blog) and final project. Make sure it's something you're interested in! Submit the topic on Blackboard through the "quiz" – the topic description is the only question.
- Assignments (9 short assignments, 50 points each) - You will have multiple **short** assignments throughout the semester that comprise your final project. The assignment details and grading criteria for each assignment will be included in the full assignment description on Blackboard for each.
- Discussion Posts (9 posts, 25 points each) – Feedback is critical for the health communication process. For each assignment, you'll also post your assignment to a discussion board to receive peer feedback. All students are responsible for providing feedback to at least one other student for each discussion board. This feedback must be thoughtful and helpful.
- Final Project (300 points) – **Your final project submission should be a paper in a Word document.** Create a clear, cohesive narrative of your semester work that includes:
 - A clear description of your topic and why it is important to inform people about it
 - A description of your audience and why you've chosen this target population
 - Identification of your specific aims and goals of your campaign(s) and why you have chosen them
 - A description of your know-feel-do strategies and why you have chosen them
 - A detailed description of your approach to communicating this information through your campaign - identify anything novel about your approach
 - A description of your campaign plan, including the resources you'd need (staff, funds, materials, other)

- Your print materials
- A description of your media plan and how you would execute it
- A description of workshops you could hold and an outline of the topics
- A description of your social media plan
- Your timeline for the campaign and estimated total costs

Your project should be a scholarly study and should be written in a formal tone using APA style throughout. You must include all of your sources as references in the References section **AND CITE THEM IN-TEXT**. Use *quality* sources, such as textbooks, academic articles, and reputable online sources like the CDC, NIH, FDA, Mayo Clinic, Cleveland Clinic, etc. If you need help with where to find sources or whether a source is of acceptable quality, do not hesitate to ask me.

You will be graded on your thoughtfulness, your clarity, how well the paper is written, and inclusion of all project elements. Please do not turn in a project that you have not proofread. There will be absolutely no late projects accepted.

NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED.

This course will be graded on a point system, with a total of 1255 possible points.

- Weekly Blogging Project – 260 points total (20 points each)
- Blog Set Up – 10 points
- Semester Health Topic Submission – 10 points
- Assignments—450 points total (50 points each)
- Discussion Posts – 225 points total (25 points each)
- Final Project – 300 points

Grading - Your grades will be listed in the Grade Center on Blackboard. Often, when I grade your assignments, I will include comments that you can find in the Grade Center as well. Your current letter grade will always be available to you.

Course performance evaluation by percentage

A	94-100	B+	88-89	C+	78-79	D	60-69
A-	90-93	B	84-87	C	74-77	F	0-59
		B-	80-83	C-	70-73		

Professional Dispositions

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>

Class Schedule

Faculty reserves the right to alter the course schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

WEEK	TOPICS	THINGS THAT ARE DUE
1 – 8/21-8/27	Introduction to Health Communication	<p>Due Sunday, 8/27 at 11:59pm:</p> <p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Health Communications? (CDC) • Why Health Communication is Important in Public Health (WHO) • 15 Terms to Know in Health Communication (GW) <p>**You can find all of these in the Readings folder</p> <p>Lecture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 1 videos <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blog link submitted on Blackboard (through a “quiz” – found under Assignments in Bb) • Semester health topic on Blackboard (through a “quiz” – found under Assignments in Bb)
2 – 8/28-9/3	Health and Safety Communication	<p>Due Sunday, 9/3 at 11:59pm:</p> <p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 1 <p>Lecture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 2 videos <p>Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blog post
3 – 9/4-9/10	The Audience	<p>Due Sunday, 9/10 at 11:59pm:</p> <p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 2 <p>Lecture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 3 videos <p>Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blog post • Audience Analysis submission • Audience Analysis discussion submission
4 – 9/11-9/17	Aims and Goals	<p>Due Sunday, 9/17 at 11:59pm:</p> <p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 3 <p>Lecture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 4 videos <p>Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blog post • Audience Analysis feedback discussion post • Aims and Goals Identification submission • Aims and Goals Identification discussion submission

WEEK	TOPICS	THINGS THAT ARE DUE
5 – 9/18-9/24	Know-Feel-Do Strategies	<p>Due Sunday, 9/24 at 11:59pm:</p> <p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 4 <p>Lecture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 5 videos <p>Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims and Goals feedback discussion post • Blog post • Know-Feel-Do Strategies submission • Know-Feel-Do Strategies discussion submission
6 – 9/25-10/1	Approaches	<p>Due Sunday, 10/1 at 11:59pm:</p> <p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 5 <p>Lecture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 6 videos <p>Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blog post • Know-Feel-Do Strategies feedback discussion post • Approach Brainstorm submission • Approach Brainstorm discussion submission
7 - 10/2-10/8	Review, Revise, Refine	<p>Due Sunday, 10/8 at 11:59pm:</p> <p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 6 <p>Lecture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 7 videos <p>Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach Brainstorm feedback discussion post • Blog post
8 - 10/9-10/15	Campaigns	<p>Due Sunday, 10/15 at 11:59pm:</p> <p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 7 • CDC’s health campaigns (in Readings folder) <p>Lecture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 8 videos <p>Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blog post • Campaign Plan submission • Campaign Plan discussion submission
9–10/16-10/22	Print Materials	<p>Due Sunday, 10/22 at 11:59pm:</p> <p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 8

WEEK	TOPICS	THINGS THAT ARE DUE
		Lecture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 9 videos Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blog post • Campaign Plan feedback discussion post • Draft of Print Materials submission • Draft of Print Materials discussion submission
10 – 10/23- 10/29	Working with the Media	Due Sunday, 10/29 at 11:59pm: Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 9 Lecture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 10 videos Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blog post • Draft of Print Materials feedback discussion post • Media Plan submission • Media Plan discussion submission
11 – 10/30- 11/5	A Public Presence	Due Sunday, 11/5 at 11:59pm: Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 10 Lecture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 11 videos Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blog post • Media Plan feedback discussion post
12 – 11/6- 11/12	Workshops	Due Sunday, 11/12 at 11:59pm: Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 11 • How to Run a Good Workshop (in Readings folder) Lecture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 12 videos Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blog post • Workshop Description and Outline submission • Workshop Description and Outline discussion submission
13 – 11/13- 11/19	Social Media	Due Sunday, 11/19 at 11:59pm: Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 12 • 5 Best Health Social Media Campaigns Lecture:

WEEK	TOPICS	THINGS THAT ARE DUE
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 13 videos Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blog post • Workshop Description and Outline feedback discussion post • Social Media Plan submission • Social Media Plan discussion submission
11/20-11/26	THANKSGIVING BREAK	Have a wonderful time!
14 – 11/27-12/3	Pulling it All Together	Due Sunday, 12/3 at 11:59pm: Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 13 Lecture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 14 videos Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blog post • Social Media Plan feedback discussion post
15 – 12/4-12/10	Final Work and Submission	Due Sunday, 5/10 at 11:59pm: Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Project • NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED

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: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

1. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
2. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
3. Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason 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.
4. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <https://ds.gmu.edu>).
5. Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>
- Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking: As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per [University Policy 1202](#). If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as [Student Support and Advocacy Center](#) (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/> .

Mason students now have FREE access to [TimelyCare](#) – a virtual mental health and well-being platform crafted specifically for college students!

With TimelyCare, Mason students will have access to a multitude of virtual mental health and well-being resources that are free and available 24/7. Find out more about the resources available online at [Timelycare.com/gmu](https://timelycare.com/gmu) or [Download the app](#).

<https://ulife.gmu.edu/timely-care/>