

Communication 311: Health Communication

Spring 2014
Course Syllabus

Tues. & Thurs. 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m.
SOC 100

Instructor

Prof. Marjorie Kruvand
211 School of Communication
mkruvand@luc.edu
312-915-7229

Office Hours: Tues. and Thurs. 10 a.m.-11:15 a.m. or by appointment

Course Description

This course focuses on the growing field of health communication. Building on students' knowledge of communication – public relations, advertising, journalism and marketing – this class aims to help students develop an area of specialization that offers career opportunities in many settings. Through readings, case studies, guest speakers and field trips, the class is designed to provide an overview of what health communicators do and where they work. The class will also provide a broad introduction to physician-patient communication, mass communication, health journalism, corporate communication, communication by non-profit health organizations and government health agencies, and public health education campaigns. In addition, the course will examine a variety of theories used in health communication and explore such national health issues as health disparities, health literacy, patient safety and healthcare reform.

Course Objectives

- Provide a foundation of knowledge about the U.S. healthcare system.
- Enable students to synthesize and apply that knowledge through written communication.
- Understand the roles of interpersonal communication, mass communication and new/social media in health communication.
- Provide examples of real-world health communication challenges and discuss how they were addressed by health communicators.
- Explore how communication can play a vital role in achieving personal and public health objectives.
- Engage students in how health messages are developed and delivered and how health communication campaigns are designed, implemented and evaluated.
- Give students practical, hands-on experience developing a public health education campaign.

Prerequisite

COMM 205 Reporting and Writing or COMM 210 Principles of Public Relations or permission of instructor

Textbook

Health Communication in the 21st Century (2nd ed.), by Wright, Sparks & O'Hair. Wiley-Blackwell, 2103. ISBN: 978-0-470-67272-3.

Other required readings will be available on Sakai or handed out in class.

Course Website

Slide lectures and required readings (other than the textbook) will be posted in advance on Sakai. This is designed to enable students to avoid having to take extensive notes in class and as an aid for studying for exams; it is not meant as a substitute for class attendance.

Expectations

Students are expected to be prepared for, attend, and participate actively in all class sessions. Class participation counts for 15 percent of a student's grade in the course, and if you don't attend, you can't participate. Class will begin promptly at 11:30 a.m. and students who arrive after attendance has been taken will be marked absent. Please inform me in advance if you believe you have a legitimate reason for an absence.

Assignments

There will be two individual assignments involving research and writing. Working with the instructor, students will choose projects relevant to their majors and interests.

Client Project

We will partner with a non-profit health organization to develop a public health education campaign. This will involve being briefed by the pro bono client about a public health problem or opportunity, analyzing the situation, conducting additional research, and developing a communication plan and materials.

Exams

The mid-term will cover material up to the mid-term; the final will cover material from after the mid-term to the end of the semester. Both exams will cover materials from lectures, assigned readings, handouts, field trips, guest speakers, and film/videos. Neither exam may be made up at another time. The final exam will be **Tues. April 29 at 9 a.m.**

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+	66-69
D	62-65
F	60 or below

Course Grading

Two writing assignments	15 percent
Mid-term	20 percent
Client project	30 percent
Final exam	20 percent
Class participation	15 percent

Academic Integrity

Each student is expected to do his or her own work in the course. Allegations of academic misconduct will be forwarded immediately to the office of the Dean of the School of Communication for possible disciplinary action. Loyola regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter with consequences ranging from failure of the course to probation to expulsion.

Academic misconduct includes:

- Cheating on exams or aiding other students to cheat. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful.
- Stealing the intellectual property of others and passing it off as your own work (this includes material found on the Internet). Software will be used to identify plagiarism.
- Failing to quote directly if you use someone else's words and to cite that particular work and author. If you paraphrase the ideas of another, credit the source with your citation. Please ask me if you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism and/or how to cite sources.
- For closed-book exams, academic misconduct includes conferring with other class members, copying or reading someone else's test, and using notes and materials without prior permission of the instructor.
- Turning in the same work for two classes, whether in the same semester or not.

Classroom Behavior

To help create a positive learning community, turn off all phones and keep them in your bag, backpack, or pocket. Laptops and tablets should be used only to take notes. Be respectful of fellow students and be in your seat when class begins.

Accommodations

Any student with a learning disability who needs accommodation during class sessions or exams should provide documentation from Services for Students with Disabilities to the instructor during the first week of class; this information will be treated in complete confidence. The instructor will accommodate students' needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of course content and processes. It is the responsibility of each student to plan in advance to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.

Students are excused for recognized religious holidays. Please let me know in advance.

Course Schedule

(Reading assignments are to be completed before class on the date shown)

Week 1

Jan. 14

Course Overview and Introductions

Jan. 16

Snapshot: Healthcare in America

Reading: Wright, Sparks & O'Hair, Ch. 1
Fox, "America Scores Dead Last Again in Healthcare Study"
Gozner, "High-Tech Medicine Contributes to High-Cost Healthcare"
Howard, "Lawmakers Push to End Drug Ads Targeting Consumers"
Leonhardt, "Why Doctors so Often get it Wrong"
Park, "America's Health Checkup"
Pear & Goodnough, "Millions Gaining Health Coverage Under Law"
Varney, "Obamacare Comes to Skid Row"
Zuger, "Healthy Right up to the Day You're Not"

Week 2

Jan. 21

We'll watch and discuss part of Michael Moore's film, "Sicko"

Reading: Jacques, "Former CIGNA PR Exec Speaks out Against PR's Influence in Health Care Industry"
Schoen, Osborn, Squires & Doty, "Access, Affordability and Insurance Complexity Often Worse in U.S. Compared to 10 Other Countries"

Jan. 23

Traditions, Trends, Success Stories and Alarm Bells

Reading: Belluck, "Children's Life Expectancy Being Cut Short by Obesity"
Johnson, "Why Everyone Seems to Have Cancer"
Knox, "50 Years after Landmark Warning, 8 Million Fewer Smoking Deaths"
Parker-Pope, "The Cancer Divide: Tackling a Racial Gap in Breast Cancer Survival"
Sack, "Research Finds Wide Disparities in Health Care by Race and Region"
Sataline, "Cash-Poor Governments Ditching Public Hospitals"
Wilson, "Tobacco Funds Dwindle as Obesity Fight Intensifies"
Watch video, "The War on Cancer: From Nixon until Now,"
<http://www.nytimes.com/video/us/100000002530506/the-war-on-cancer-from-nixon-until-now.html>

Week 3

Jan. 28

Promoting Health Education, Changing Health Behavior

Reading: Wright, Sparks & O'Hair, Ch. 10 (p. 259-269 only)

Jan. 30

Planning and Evaluating Public Health Education Campaigns

Reading: Wright, Sparks & O'Hair, Ch. 10 (p. 270-282 only)

Elliott, "Steal This Idea, a Campaign Urges"

Review examples of "best in class" creative from 27 international public health campaigns mentioned in the Elliott article:

<http://www.weforum.org/best-practices/creative-good/search?issues=Health>

Week 4

Feb. 4

Guest speaker from pro bono client: Philicia Deckard, executive director, Brain Injury Association of Illinois (BIA)

Reading: Review BIA website, <http://www.biail.org/>

Feb. 6

Initial planning session for client project

Week 5

Feb. 11

Provider-Patient Communication

Reading: Wright, Sparks & O'Hair, Ch. 2

Gardner, "For Some Doctors, Empathy is in Short Supply"

Chen, "How Much can a Patient Learn in a 15-Minute Doctor Visit?"

Landro, "What the Doctor is Really Thinking"

Lowrey & Pear, "Doctor Shortage Likely to Worsen With Health Law"

Parker-Pope, "When Doctors become Patients"

HHS News Release: HHS Releases National Plan to Improve Health Literacy

Feb. 13

In-class work on client project

Week 6

Feb. 18

Communication by Hospitals and Healthcare Systems

Field trip to Northwestern Memorial Hospital. We will see some highlights of the hospital, which is the largest in Chicago. We'll also learn what, how and why the media relations team communicates proactively and reactively. Our host will be Kris Lathan, director of media relations.

Reading: Wright, Sparks & O'Hair, Ch. 6

Landen, "Telling Their Stories"

Feb. 20

In-class work on client project

Week 7

Feb. 25

Mid-term exam

Feb. 27

Health Communication at Public Relations Agencies

Field trip to health practice at GolinHarris. We'll see the offices of the agency's health practice and listen to several practice members talk about the work they do. Our host will be Farah Speer, executive director, North American health practice leader.

Reading: Bruell, "Finding the Right Target"
Herskovits, "Medical Advancement"

Week 8

Spring break, no classes

Week 9

March 11

In-class work on client project

March 13

Communication by Non-Profit Health Organizations

Guest speaker: Edward Wagner, chief officer of external relations, AIDS Foundation of Chicago

Reading: Perry, "How Much Must Health Charities Disclose About Donors?"
Review AIDS Foundation of Chicago website: <http://www.aidschicago.org/>

Week 10

March 18

Communication by Health Insurers

Guest speaker: Mary Ann Schultz, senior manager, media relations and public affairs, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois

Reading: Abelson, "Health Insurers Making Record Profits as Many Postpone Care"
Review Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois website:
<http://www.bcbsil.com/index.html>

March 20

Healthcare Journalism

Reading: Wright, Sparks & O’Hair, Ch. 8 (“Health News Stories in the Media,” pp. 222-226 only)
Bernhard, “TV-Hospital News Coverage Raises Questions about Ethics”
Brainard, “Mixed Grades for Medical Coverage”
Rabin, “Conflicts of Interest May Ensnare Journalists, Too”
Shaw, “Medical Miracles or Misguided Media?”

Week 11

March 25

Guest speaker: Richelle Rogers, instructor in the School of Communication and former producer, writer and director for network television news. She was a producer of “Hopkins 24/7,” an ABC documentary series that followed caregivers and patients at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. We’ll also watch part of the series.

Reading: McDaniel, “The Medical Drama Is Real In ABC’s “Hopkins 24/7”
Zurawik, “ABC’s Crews Staked out Key Units at Hopkins Hospital “24/7,” Experiencing their own Dramas as they Raced to Get the Whole Story”

March 27

In-class work on client project

Week 12

April 1

Communicating about Drugs and Medical Devices (Part I)

Reading: Kolata, “Searching for Clarity: A Primer on Medical Studies”
Harmon, “New Drugs Stir Debate on Basic Rules of Clinical Trials”
Marcus, “Trials.” (Read or download ebook at:
http://projects.wsj.com/trials_ebooks/TRIALS.pdf)
New York Times, “The Mechanisms of a Controlled Trial”

April 3

Communicating about Drugs and Medical Devices (Part II)

Reading: Wright, Sparks & O’Hair,
Arnold, “Prescription Project: VNRs on YouTube are Ads, Must Include Warnings”
Crotty, “Drug Giant Pfizer to Pay Record \$2.3B Fine”
Girth & Miller, “Use Only as Directed.” Read at:
<http://www.propublica.org/article/tylenol-mcneil-fda-use-only-as-directed>
Harris, “What’s Behind an FDA Stamp?”
Ruiz, “Ten Misleading Drug Ads”
Singer, “In Recall, a Role Model Stumbles”

Week 13

April 8

Guest speaker from pharmaceutical company: TBA

April 10

Communicating about Food and Supplements

Reading: Associated Press, “‘Food Police’ go after Happy Meal Toys”
Begley, “Food, Beverage Companies Slash Calories in Obesity Fight”
Fletcher, Frisvold & Teft, “Taxing Soft Drinks and Restricting Access to Vending Machines to Curb Child Obesity”
Hartocollis, “Calorie Postings Don’t Change Habits, Study Finds”
Ritchel, “In Online Games, a Path to Young Consumers”
Rosenberg, “To Fight Obesity, a Carrot and a Stick”
Severson, “Told to Eat its Vegetables, America Orders Fries”
Singer, “Food with Benefits, or So They Say”
Strom, “Lawyers from Suits against Big Tobacco Target Food Makers”

Week 14

April 15

In-class work on client project

April 17

Food Safety

Reading: Banerjee & Semuels, “FDA Proposes Sweeping New Food Safety Rules”
Grady, “When Bad Things Come from ‘Good’ Food”
Martin, “Egg Recall Exposes Flaws in Nation’s Food Safety System”
Moss, “The Burger that Shattered her Life”
Revkin, “Managing Risk in Booming ‘Global Bazaar’ of Food and Drugs”
Schlosser, “Unsafe at any Meal”

Week 15

April 22

Predicting and Managing Health Risks, Issues and Crises

Reading: Wright, Sparks, & O’Hair, Ch. 9
Fink, “The Deadly Choices at Memorial”
McCoppin & Dizikes, “Superbug Found at Suburban Hospital”
McKenna, “Imagining the Post-Antibiotic Future.” Read at:
<https://medium.com/p/892b57499e77>
Thomas, “The Price of Poor Pandemic Communication”
USA Today, “A Year Later, 5 Lessons from Swine Flu Outbreak”

April 24

Presentations to client (two hard copies of campaign communication plan and materials and one electronic copy – on a jump drive or CD – are due in class)

