

communication is extraordinary, but so are the challenges. Just look over your shoulder at the recent COVID pandemic.

People who understand communication are in an important place to help, and their services are increasingly in demand. Communication skills are important for professional caregivers, but that is not all. Health communication specialists work (a) in hospital education departments, teaching medical professionals to communicate more effectively; (b) in public relations, marketing, and human resource departments; (c) in patient satisfaction and patient advocacy programs; (d) in health care administration; (e) in media organizations covering health issues; (f) in nonprofit organizations; and (g) in organizations that educate the public and support public policy and research.

Course Objectives: This seminar will prepare students to:

- Describe the role of communication in health and health care situations.
- Identify, describe, and apply communication theories (interpersonal, organizational, group, mass media, CMC) and health communication theories to help explain the delivery of health care and health care messages.
- Identify relevant elements of health literacy and advocacy issues.
- Analyze, describe, and critically evaluate positive and negative effects/consequences of messages in health communication campaigns, promotions, and social media.
- Research, analyze, and write about health communication issues.
- Identify and analyze issues (i.e., culture, technology, social norms, ethics) that influence caregiving interactions.
- Critically evaluate communication behaviors in health care relationships, health care groups, and health care organizations.
- Articulate how public health issues and health communication affect various populations in our local and global communities.

In other words, after taking this course, we will better understand how the health industry operates and what role we might play in it. The accomplish this we will develop the ability to:

- Describe the current landscape of health care.
- Describe societal and cultural viewpoints about health care and determine how this affects access (social justice).
- Research about issues in personal and public health care communication contexts.
- Knowledgeably discuss current issues in health care.
- Differentiate among health, wellness, and illness.
- Comprehend the dynamic between mental and physical health.
- Analyze patient–caregiver communication.
- Engage in informed dialogue about ethical issues in health communication.
- Describe patients’ and caregivers’ perspectives.
- Identify and discuss the types of diversity among patients and caregivers.
- Define the role of social support in maintaining health, wellness, and coping with illness.
- Analyze the advantages and challenges of communicating about health via social media, mobile devices, computers, and other technology.
- Analyze and describe organizational issues in health communication (leadership, public relations, marketing, human resources, crisis management, and so on).

- Identify media images about health and their influence on communication.
- Comment knowledgeably on health crisis communication and health care reform options.
- Identify the key steps in planning, implementing, and assessing health promotion campaigns.

Course Requirements: Your grade for this course will depend on how many points you earn from each of the following:

Short Papers (100 points):

- Reflection Paper (25 pts.). Topics require a thoughtful analysis of the assigned issues. The papers are meant to be reflective of personal interest, knowledge, beliefs, relationships, and personal experiences. I am looking for clear and concise writing, sound analysis, and effective integration of course material and theory into the writings, and reasoned conclusions. The paper (3-5 pages) will be a personal health narrative describing an experience, observation, or health care situation. Reflect on and write about a recent experience with health as a patient, customer, caregiver, friend, family member, loved-one, provider, or consumer. Tell a story that includes the situation, the participants, and outcomes. Only share what you feel comfortable sharing.
- Interview Paper (25 pts.). The interview paper is just that: A paper summarizing and analyzing an interview (conversation) with a health professional. What role does communication play in the health situation? You will be given more specific instructions later in the semester, but in the meantime, be thinking about this project while doing the readings and during our class discussion. The questions you will ask this person will be derived from the readings and class discussions. You may interview someone in your social network or may contact someone else. You'll turn in a 3-5 page synopsis and partial transcript of the interview. Interview papers will be discussed in class the day they are due.
- Praxis (theory/practice) Paper (50 pts.). This short paper should relate to your area of interest. Apply your understanding of at least one prominent communication theory to application within a specific health context. We will talk about this in class. (3-5 pages).

Instructional Conversations (100 points): Class sessions will incorporate discussions about the assigned readings. **I will expect you to bring to every class, discussion questions with talking prompts and/or key take ways for each assigned reading. Please hand in a typed paper with your material.** You are responsible for reading the assigned material prior to class. You are expected to discuss the readings and your ideas informally each session. Because this course is a seminar, not a lecture class, your own involvement and active engagement are imperative. In order for our class conversations to be productive and appropriately rigorous you will need to (1) show knowledge of readings and have given thought to what you have read, (2) provide discussion points from each of the readings, (3) articulate your ideas clearly and argue effectively for your position, (4) contribute to a lively interchange of ideas, (5) synthesize ideas across various readings, (6) refer to relevant current events and related articles when appropriate, and (7) respond thoughtfully to the comments of others. Failure to contribute to class discussion, in a meaningful way, will negatively affect your participation grade. Physical presence is necessary, but not enough for participation.

Semester Paper & IRB if necessary (200 points): The semester project dealing with some aspect of health communication needs to be determined within the first three weeks of the semester. You will need to propose a project topic and choose an option. The goal is to produce a product acceptable for convention presentation. Most journal and convention guidelines specify that papers should be no longer than 25 pages (excluding references, tables, etc.). On average, a 20-page paper is a reasonable length. Papers should be written using APA (*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 8th Ed.; <http://www.stylewizard.com/>) guidelines as this is the style accepted by our

discipline. Writing in a clear and concise manner is an ongoing, learning process that all of us constantly work to perfect. Hopeful this course will challenge us to become better writers and provide an opportunity to improve our writing styles. Feel free to consult with me on your papers prior to grading. You may select one of following options for the format of your final paper:

- A **research summary** is an essay, incorporating an original way of summarizing, analyzing, and interpreting a body or topic area of research literature. Rather than being a mere descriptive survey, it goes beyond to develop insights and provide specific evaluations, which can be the basis for subsequent research. Research summaries for purposes of this class should contain a) a review of literature, b) evaluation of literature, c) issues for further inquiry and research directions, and d) practical and/or theoretical implications. Rubric forthcoming.
- A **research proposal** is the first step in the research process in which you (a) identify an idea, problem, question, or hypothesis, (b) describe the purpose of the study, (c) provide a rationale for the study question(s), (d) define all key concepts/terms in the research question(s), (e) review previous research directly relevant to your study question, and (f) describe proposed methods, including participants, measurement instruments or procedures, location(s), time frame, and a rationale for your choices. Rubric forthcoming.

Professional Points (100 points): Regular attendance and class participation is very important. PPs will incorporate out-of-class and in-class participation discussions and some structured activities. Class sessions will often move beyond the assigned readings to ethics analysis, theory application, self-reflection, and communication skill development including - **Scholar/Guest Chats, Chat GPT (AI) activity, Case Studies Analysis, Current Event, Social Media Listening Activity, Primetime Analysis (your favorite medical show), PSA Writing, Chapter Activities, and other fun stuff!**

Summary of Grading:

Short Papers	100 points
Semester Paper, topic paragraph, & presentation	200 points
Professional Points	100 points
Total	400 points

The final letter grade for the course (and grades for the other assignments) will be based on a standard scale (90-100%=A; 80-89%=B; 70-79%=C; 60-69%=D; 0-59%=F)

NOTE: Failure to turn in any of the course requirements may result in failure of the course.

Course Policies and Requirements:

Preparation & Participation. By definition, a graduate seminar requires extensive preparation and participation from all participants. You are obligated to be prepared for intelligent class discussion. The quality of this seminar depends ultimately upon the willingness of each participant to constructively and creatively engage the materials, issues, and discussions. Do the assigned readings. Take time prior to class to reflect upon your assignments and your participation. If something is unclear, particularly interesting, or you have some insight, contact me or make a note of it and you're your question during class.

Professional Courtesy. As this is a graduate seminar and during a unique time of remote learning, I feel it is unnecessary to emphasize issues such as respect for the class (attendance, turning assignments in on time, etc.) and the members of the seminar (respecting others' opinions, being respectful to those who are speaking, and working together in a spirit of cooperation rather than competition). I do, however, want to be clear about my expectations. I believe graduate school is an experience designed to bring professional individuals together to increase and expand knowledge. Thus, I will expect your

behaviors and attitudes towards this course to reflect professional courtesy. If I believe a student is not meeting my expectations (e.g., excessive absences, inadequate work, disrespect for others, etc.), I will notify you immediately and a decision will be made concerning your need to drop the course.

Deadlines. All assignments must be completed on schedule and must be handed in when due. No make-ups or extensions will be permitted unless the student contacts the instructor **prior** to the due date and has a verifiable excuse. One letter grade will be deducted for each day that any assignment is late.

Attendance Policy: Please be prepared to discuss the daily readings. Be engaged. Perfect attendance is expected, because by enrolling in this course you have made a commitment to being present during all class meetings. Being absent deprives you of valuable discussions and information. Historically, there has been a strong correlation between absences and grades; the more class time that students miss, the lower the grades they tend to earn. Missing more than 2 class periods will result in a 5% deduction from your overall course grade for each additional unexcused absence.

Late Work and Incomplete Grade Policy:

All assignments are expected at the beginning of class on the due date. An automatic 10% of the points possible will be deducted from late assignments, with an additional 10% deducted for each 24 hours the assignment is late. If these penalties seem steep, please consider that in eight more weeks you will likely be in a position where late work is not accepted at all. In the case of documented university excused absences, assignments should be completed *prior* to the absence. As a rule, incomplete grades will not be given.

Academic Development: There is a great place on campus if you need some assistance with study skills and writing. For workshops, tutoring, or coaching, check out <http://ucollege.illinoisstate.edu>.

Academic Misconduct: Academic dishonesty involves cheating or plagiarizing. All University Policies concerning academic misconduct will be upheld in this course. Refer to the I.S.U. Code of Conduct at Community Rights and Responsibilities

(<http://www.deanofstudents.ilstu.edu/downloads/crr/code-of-student-conduct.pdf>). Of particular concern in a course with written assignments is the issue of plagiarism. **Webster (1989) defines plagiarism as "the appropriations or imitation of the language, ideas, and thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work" (p. 1100). In other words, plagiarism is stealing.** You must cite your sources accurately and consistently in both your oral and written assignments. I will not tolerate such misconduct, and it may result in a failing grade. Please remember 1) You cannot simply copy material from a source (including classmates) and present it as your own original material, 2) You cannot download a paper from any sort of online outlet and present it as original work, and 3) You cannot hand in a paper for my class that you wrote for another class.

Mental Health Resources: Life at college can get very complicated. Students sometimes feel overwhelmed, lost, experience anxiety or depression, struggle with relationship difficulties or diminished self-esteem. However, many of these issues can be effectively addressed with a little help. [Student Counseling Services \(SCS\)](#) helps students cope with difficult emotions and life stressors. Student Counseling Services is staffed by experienced, professional psychologists and counselors, who are attuned to the needs of college students. The services are FREE and completely confidential. Find out more at counseling.illinoisstate.edu or by calling (309) 438-3655.

Student Access and Accommodation Services: Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability and/or medical/mental health condition should contact Student Access and Accommodation Services at 350 Fell Hall, (309) 438-5853, or visit the website at StudentAccess.IllinoisState.edu.

Tentative Class Schedule spring 2024

Week	Class Content	Readings (additional readings and case studies will be added)
Week #1	Dr. MLK Day. No Class.	
Week #2	Slip-Sliding Away Day. No Class.	
Week #3 Jan. 29	Welcome & Syllabus Chapter 1-Introduction. What is HC? Chapter 2-Landscape for HC. Activity-pair & share health experiences. <u>ASSIGN</u> -Reflection Paper-Health Experience.	
Week #4 Feb. 5	Chapter 3-Patient-Caregiver Com. Activity-Find a news item that shows a current issue relevant to health communication to share.	1) Haverfield 2) Carmei
Week #5 Feb.12	Chapter 4-Patient Perspective. Activity-Motivational Interviewing.	TBA
Week #6 Feb. 19	Chapter 5- Care Provider Perspective. <u>ASSIGN</u> -Interview Paper DUE: Reflection Paper-Health Care Experience.	TBA
Week #7 Feb. 26	Chapter 6-Diversity in Health Care. DUE: Project Paragraph.	TBA
Week #8 March 4	Chapter 7-Cultural Conceptions of Health & Illness <i>GUEST</i> -Wellness Coach. Activity-Self Assessment.	TBA READING Mental Health/Wellness.
Week #9	Spring Break March 9, 2024 – March 17, 2024	
Week #10 March 18	Chapter 8-Social Support, Family Caregiving, & End of Life. <i>GUEST</i> -COMFORT Coach. DUE: Interview Paper.	TBA
Week #11 March 25	Chapter 9-Technology & Health. Activity-SMACC Listening.	TBA

Week #12 April 1	Chapter 10-Health Care Admin, HR, Mark, & PR. Chapter 11-Media & Health. <u>ASSIGN</u> -Praxis Paper OR Annotated Bib. Activity-Media/Prime Time Analysis.	TBA
Week #13 April 8	Activity-Health Debate-flu shots. Activity-Reaction and Reflection Conversation.	TBA
Week #14 April 15	Chapter 12-Public Health & Crisis Com. <i>GUEST</i> -Public Health Trainer	TBA
Week #15 April 22	Chapter 13-Planng Health Campaigns. Chapter 14-Designing & Imp. Health Campaigns. <i>GUEST</i> -Campaign Coach	TBA
Week #16 April 29	Work Time. DUE: Praxis Paper OR Annotated Bib.	
Finals Week	Final Period -TBA DUE: Paper & Informal presentation.	

READINGS

WEEK #4

- 1) Haverfield, M. C. Carrillo, Y., Itliong, J. N., Ahmed, A., Nash, Singer, A., & Lorenz, K. A. (2023): Cultivating Relationship-Centered Care: Patient, Caregiver, and Provider Communication Preferences for and Experiences with Prognostic Conversations, Health Communication, DOI: 10.1080/10410236.2023.2210383
- 2) Carmei, S. A., Singer, Y., Yosef-Sela, N., & Bachner, Y. G. (2020). Open communication between caregivers' and terminally ill cancer patients about illness and death: The role of gender - A correlational study. *European Journal of Oncology Nursing*, 1-6, 49. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejon.2020.101828>

WEEK #5