Professor: Merissa Ferrara
Office: 7 College Way
Email: please use WEBCT!
Phone: 843-425-2781 (cell phone)

Class times:
- MWF COM 320 11-11:50
- COM 220 12-12:50
- North Chas campus: COM 521 W 6-8:45

Office hours:
- Main Campus: W 1:30-3:30
- North Chas campus: W 5-6
- Or by appointment

OBJECTIVES

Students taking this course are expected to:

1. Become familiar with research and theories comprising contemporary literature in health communication.

2. Conduct independent reading/research on a topic of interest.

3. Engage in class discussions about various topics relevant to health communication.

COURSE FORMAT

This course will be conducted in a lecture/discussion format. Each class session will involve the presentation of material designed to supplement the required readings and in-depth class discussions covering the assigned reading for that particular session. Students are encouraged to share their experiences and relate them to the class.

REQUIRED TEXTS


**available for free online with our campus library

REQUIREMENTS

**Grade Distribution.** The Department of Communication supports College policies of academic excellence (all grades given in percentages): A = Superior (100-96); B+ = Very Good (95-90); B= Good (89-85); C+ = Slightly Above Average (84-80); C = Average (79-75); F = Failing (74-0). Final Grades in this course will be based on the following:

- Health Narrative: 20
- Final exam: 30
- Grant proposal: 25
- Panel presentation: 10
- Class participation: 10
- Discussion leader: 5

**SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS**
*(Tentative to change as semester progresses)*

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<td>Introduction to Health Comm Meaning and Medicine</td>
<td>NHH: Forward W: Taking out the worms, Black Monday</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Health Communication Theories</td>
<td>EHRM ch 3-4 Breast cancer article</td>
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<td>Specific areas of HC research 1- Practitioner/patient</td>
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<td>2- Entertainment education</td>
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<td>Final exam (take home)</td>
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<td>like presentation of either your narrative or</td>
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<td>your grant proposal</td>
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**FINAL EXAM:**
We will have one formal exam in this course. Exams are composed of a combination of true/false, multiple choice, application, and short-answer questions. Exams test your synthesis and application of concepts covered in class, as well as those covered in your text and outside readings. Students who are successful on exams are those who have carefully read and understood the assigned readings, taken integrative course notes, and are able to synthesize and provide examples for concepts covered in class.

**DISCUSSION LEADER:**
Students will be responsible for leading a structured class discussion based on an assigned reading. You must provide the class with 3-4 thought-provoking questions for your reading at least one class period before your leadership date. These questions should be provided as handouts or e-mailed and should integrate our readings and class discussions, not ask something that is readily found in the reading. Leader will also bring in something additional (research, tv clip, internet site, etc.).

**CLASS PARTICIPATION:**
Students are expected to complete assigned readings before class and verbally participate in seminar discussions in an enthusiastic and informed manner. To do so, students should make notes as they read about questions and issues they may pursue in the seminar discussion. To participate, students can offer (among other things):
The failure to participate orally OR (even more so) dominating the conversation are both cause for a loss of participation points. It is vitally important that ALL students have the opportunity to participate; therefore, it is incumbent upon those of us who tend to talk sooner, faster and more to withhold comment and create space for students who need more time and space to formulate their comments. Finally, respect for others and their ideas is of paramount importance to me. I am a strong believer in the practice of civility and professionalism in the classroom. Thus, I do not tolerate condescending verbal or nonverbal behavior directed toward others in the classroom. Such behavior will result in a loss of participation points, at a minimum, or removal from the class, at a maximum.

HEALTH NARRATIVE:

GRANT PROPOSAL ASSIGNMENT:

Rationale

Graduate students and even junior faculty typically do not have experience in writing grant proposals. One objective of this assignment is to provide you with the opportunity to complete a NIH grant application. A second, and more important, objective of this assignment is to provide you with the opportunity to present the results of your reading/research on the health communication topic of interested you selected to study this semester.

The Task

You are to complete the following sections of the standard PHS 398 grant application form:

1. Description, performance sites, and personnel.

2. Research Plan (25 pages max.):

   a. Specific aims

   b. Background and significance

   c. Preliminary Studies (optional)

   d. Research design and methods

3. Protection of human subjects
4. Literature cited

Evaluative Criteria

Your proposal will be graded on the extent to which all components have been included and the thoroughness with which they are addressed.

Panel Presentation

This assignment has two main purposes. First, it is important for everyone in class to have an idea about others' research projects. This allows all of us to learn about research topics and literature in health communication that may be outside our particular focus of interest. Second, making oral presentations of research projects is part of being a professional in academia, and elsewhere. You will make such presentations during job interviews, at professional meetings, and/or other settings.

You are to present an oral report based on the topic of your grant proposal. The oral report:

1. Should be 10 minutes.

2. Should include the following components:
   a. A statement of the problem and background literature.
   b. A description of the proposed intervention & hypotheses.
   c. A description of the proposed research design and procedures.

3. Effectively answer questions regarding your proposal