Health Communication
(Course Outline)

J XP 5807H 2010
Fall Semester

Jointly offered by Exercise Science & Dalla Lana School of Public Health

Instructors:
Margaret MacNeill, B.PHE., M.A., Ph.D.
Larry Hershfield, M.A. (Psych)

Time:     Fridays 9 a.m. to 12 noon

Location of classes:
Athletic Centre, Benson Wing, Room 304: 55 Harbord Street
Note: Student card is required for swipe access to building.

Contact information:

Margaret MacNeill

Graduate Department of Exercise Sciences, Faculty of PEH, U. Toronto
Executive Committee, Collaborative Graduate Program in Women’s Health
Cross Appointed, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, Faculty of Medicine

Phone: 416-978-0598
Office Location: 40 Sussex St., Room 201 (appointments)
Office Hours: T.B.A.
Mailing Address: 55 Harbord Street, Toronto, ON, M5S 2W6
Email: margaret.macneill@utoronto.ca

Larry Hershfield:

Director, The Health Communication Unit, Centre for Health Promotion

Phone: 416-978-0585
Office: 155 College St., 5th Floor, Room 500
Course Overview

1. COURSE OBJECTIVES

After participation in lectures, professional networking, group discussions, critique of scientific and professional literature, and health campaign analysis, students will:

i. Acquire a broad understanding of health communication theory, methods, and professional practice;

ii. Be able to critically assess any health communication initiative with respect to:
   a) underlying health communication and media studies theory,
   b) best practices, approaches, values and ethics of health promotion, and
   c) questions of scientific accuracy and discourse.

iii. Develop the skills to identify and plan health communication actions, including campaigns.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This interdisciplinary course will examine a variety of approaches and actions that inform health communication initiatives, including behavioural, sociological and critical cultural studies approaches. The course will be structured around the objectives, channels, messages, visions of the audience, and components of health communication types such as:

- social marketing of health
- media advocacy
- Web 2.0, eHealth, on-line health communication
- risk communication
- entertainment education
- communication for social change.

3. COURSE ORGANIZATION

JXS 5807 is organized into three sections:

i. The first section is devoted to exploring a wide range of health communication theories, methods and related tools required for assessing health communication initiatives;

ii. The second section is comprised of a series of lectures and case studies devoted to a variety of health communication types, and

iii. The third section of the course is devoted to student presentations of their analyses of health communication campaigns.
Generally, each week may consist of:

- Interactive lecture by co-instructors
- Review of student blogosphere regarding assigned communication piece
- Guest lecture from a professional in the field
- Discussion and application of assigned readings
- Identification of useful health communication tools and resources, and
- Discussion of assignments.

4. **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Students will be expected to complete the following written assignments and presentations:

- 20% Health News Analysis (written critique and presentation): Oct. 8, 2010
- 30% Written analysis of major health communication campaign: Dec. 3, 2010
- 15% Presentation of health campaign analysis: Nov. 26 or Dec. 3, 2010
- 15% Class participation in discussions and debate about topics and readings
- 20% Blog (minimum 4 contributions x 5% each before last class of the semester)

5. **REQUIRED READINGS**

A reading list containing links to online articles available at UT libraries is posted on the course Blackboard. These readings are also listed later in this course outline.

6. **JXP 5807 WEEKLY TOPICS**

- **Sept. 17**  Week 1:  Introduction to Health Communication
- **Sept. 24**  Week 2:  Behavioral and Critical Approaches to Health Communication
- **Oct. 1**  Week 3:  Risk Communication
- **Oct. 8**  Week 4:  Health News Framing and Analysis: Presentations
- **Oct. 15**  Week 5:  Media Advocacy: Part 1
- **Oct. 22**  Week 6:  Media Advocacy: Part 1I
- **Oct. 29**  Week 7:  Communication for Social Change
- **Nov. 5**  Week 8:  Social Marketing of Health I
- **Nov. 12**  Week 9:  E-Health and Cybermedicalization
- **Nov. 19**  Week 10:  Social Marketing of Health II
- **Nov. 26**  Week 11:  Health Campaign Analysis: Student Presentations
- **Dec. 3**  Week 12:  Health Campaign Analysis: Student Presentations
7. **ASSIGNMENT OVERVIEW**

**20% Health News Analysis (written critique and presentation)**

**Due:** Oct. 8, 2010

**Assignment:**
Analyze the social construction and framing of any health news story published by a news organization on any date after September 15, 2010. Deploy a communication theory and concept of news framing/representation to conduct your analysis. The news format may be print-based or broadcast format. Include a hard copy of your news article as an appendix. Sources may be online, broadsheet or tabloid newspaper, magazine, radio or television. Include a transcript of the verbal commentary as an appendix if your news item is broadcast.

**Written Format:** 5-6 pages, double spaced (not including cover page, references and copy of news clipping, broadcast or web transcript.

**Suggested Organization:**
- Cover page
- Introduction to social construction and framing
- Brief review of peer reviewed research on the health news topic
- Analysis & discussion of health news article
- Conclusion (could include recommendations for journalistic practice, editorial policy, health advocacy, and/or audience media literacy)
- References
- Appendix containing article, web, transcript or submit tape/disk of broadcast

**Class Presentation:** 10-15 minutes (bring copies of article for entire class).

**30% Written analysis of a health communication campaign**

**Due:** 3 December 2010. This may be a group project.

**Assignment:** Critically analyze a local and current public health campaign promoting health. Your detailed analysis of the health communication campaign will include an examination of the campaign’s theoretical and evidence foundation, planning and execution by the organization.
updated Sept. 16, 2010

Format: Academic essay (suggested organization: introduction, thesis or purpose, review of literature, method of analysis, results, discussion, conclusion and recommendations, references, appendix with campaign copy). See end of outline for further information.

Length: 12-15 double spaced pages, plus references, endnotes, & appendix. Group projects will negotiate a longer assignment with MacNeill.

Option: Write a 10 page analysis of a campaign (20%) plus produce a PSA that redresses the limitations of the campaign you critique (10%).

See pages 19-20 for further details

15% Presentation of health campaign analysis

Presentation dates: Nov. 26 or Dec. 3, 2010.

Length: 20 minute presentation plus 10 minutes of discussion with class.

20% Blog Contribution (4 comments x 5%)

A blog (short form for “web log”) will be open to our class on the JXP 5807 Blackboard site.

Due: Ongoing submissions to be posted by Dec 3, 2010

Assignment:
The course instructors will start five threads on the blog linked to a specific health communication piece. Students will contribute a minimum of four “comments” about any of the 5 threads on the class blog this semester. To be included in our blogosphere discussion in class, blogs should be posted by Thursday morning for the Friday class.

Format:
A wide array of writing styles is acceptable on blogs (including poetic).

Each response should
1. Assess the communication piece presented
2. Use at least one health communication concept as a “lens” to do so
3. On the basis of this assessment, recommend what practitioners ought do in response to the piece appearing in the mediascape
4. Students cannot use the same “lens” twice, that is, not use the same theoretical framework/model more than once
5. Students are encouraged to use material from the weekly readings.
6. Can add links to other related texts, images, graphs to illustrate.

Length:
Each of the four comments should be at least 250 words and be posted at least 24 hours before the class in which the featured media piece will be discussed.

15% Class participation (informed participation)

Students are expected to arrive at class ready to discuss, debate and apply new knowledge from assigned readings, course content, and your ongoing research. Students are encouraged to infuse current media and professional issues, experiences and knowledge into class discussions and into dialogue with guests. Students are welcome to extend class discussions by blogging about readings on the JXP 5807 Blackboard discussion board.

Assignment Late Penalty:
Late written assignments will be deducted one half of a mark per weekday of lateness (no penalties will apply to late assignments caused by medical or other unavoidable documented emergencies). Missed presentations and late assignments will require petition for rescheduling.

J XP 5807 Weekly Topics and Readings

Week 1: September 17, 2010
Introduction to Health Communication & Literacy

Required Reading: Review the full course outline.
There are no required e-journal articles in this first week.

The “required” readings can be downloaded from UT library website (links will be posted on our Blackboard portal site for each J XP 5807 module). Each weekly module also has a list of supplementary readings suggested for those wanting to explore the topic further.

Suggested Surfing:
- J XP 5807 Blackboard site on the UT Portal.
- Health Communication Wiki: http://healthcomm.wetpaint.com/
Campaigns:  www.thcu.ca

Supplementary Readings:


Rootman, I., & Ronson, B. Literacy in health research in Canada: Where have we been and where should we go?. (2005). Canadian Journal of Public Health, 96(Sup 2), S62-S97.


Week 2: September 24, 2010

**Behavioural and Critical Approaches to Health Communication**

**Required Readings:**


**Supplementary Readings:**


Seedhouse, D. (1997). The political taproots of health promotion, Health Promotion: Philosophy,
Week 3: October 1, 2010

Risk Communication

Required Readings:


Supplementary Readings:


Week 4: Oct. 8, 2010
Health News Analysis: Student Presentations & Written Assignment

Required Readings:

Supplementary Readings:

Cybercollege: www.cybercollege.com/newscrit.htm


Week 5 October 15, 2010
Media Advocacy - Part I
Required Readings:


Supplementary Readings: See part II below

Week 6 Oct. 22, 2010

Media Advocacy - Part II

Required Readings:


Supplementary Readings:


Week 7: Oct. 19, 2010
Communication for Social Change
(Development Communication Revisited and Decolonized)

Required Readings:


Communication Theory, 15(4), 341-364.

**Supplementary Readings: Social Change and Development Communication**


**Week 8: Nov. 5, 2010**

**Social Marketing - Part I**

**Required Readings:**


**Supplementary Readings:**


**Week 9: Nov. 12, 2010**

**E-Health and CyberMedicalization**

**Required Readings:**

Add Keelan
updated Sept. 16, 2010


Supplementary Readings


Week 10: Nov. 19, 2010

Social Marketing of Health - Part II: Immunization Campaigns and/or Active Living and Obesity Campaigns

Required Readings:

Immunization and Social Marketing:


Active Living and Obesity Campaigns:


Supplementary Readings:


Weeks 11, 12: Nov. 26, Dec. 3, 2010

Health Campaign Analysis: Student Presentations

Students will sign-up for a specific date and time to present: you must first decide if you wish to work alone or in a group. If class size is large, an extra date may need to be tacked onto the schedule at the end of term during the examination period.
Health Communication Campaign Analysis Assignment

Due: Dec. 3, 2010

Worth: Written campaign analysis is worth 30% of final grade.

Class presentation of your campaign analysis is worth an additional 15% of final grade.

Format: A.P.A. style of formatting (Typed, double-spaced, 12 font, one inch page margins).

Length: 12-15 pages plus title page, references and, if appropriate, endnotes and appendices.

Assignment:
Critically analyze a current public health campaign promoting health. Your detailed analysis of the health communication campaign will include an examination of the campaign’s theoretical and evidence foundation, planning and execution by the organization.

Investigative Tasks:

• Confirm choice of health communication campaign with course professors.

• If you plan to interview people, submit an ethics protocol to Margaret MacNeill who will take it to the EXS Research Committee for expedited review and approval.

• Review health communication lens/theory and topic-related literature to form a framework to evaluate your chosen campaign.

• Contact key informants and obtain information associated with (1) the selected community-based group/agency and, (2) the "consumers" of the group/agency's programs or services (where possible) to request documents and/or interviews.

• Gather documents and materials related to campaign research, design, audience/consumer/client/patient analysis, etc.

• Employ key findings of the review of the literature to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the campaign.

• Consider addressing: the value of the model of health communication they deploy; ethical and professional practices in the design, production and delivery of the message; the conception of the audience; the deployment of audience members in the formative stage of planning; mode(s) of campaign evaluation by agency/group; overall effectiveness of health message content conveyed or advocated;
recommendations to improve campaign design, content, channels of communication, knowledge of the target audience, participation of audience, and evaluation.

- Students have the option of also drafting a new public service announcement (draft of an original poster, webpage, radio or Utube spot, television PSA, health tweets on Twitter, kid’s colouring book, etc.) as an appendix and applied conclusion. This original PSA will infuse the current health information your review of literature uncovered, and/or address the intended audience in a more appropriate format or lay language than the campaign analyzed in your paper, and/or offer the important health advice to an audience ignored by the campaign analyzed. The original PSA production should logically be related to your conclusions and recommendations. If you choose this option, the written assignment length could be renegotiated to a shorter length. The written assignment would be worth 20% and the PSA production would be worth 10%.

Evaluation

The University of Toronto Policy on Grading Practices will be employed to evaluate this assignment. See attached criteria and grading scales.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Health Communication Unit
All students are encouraged to visit The Health Communication Unit’s website at www.thcu.ca for links to additional resources.

Scholarly Skills Development: Health Sciences Writing Centre

It is strongly recommended that you write a draft all assignments early in the semester and make at least one appointment at the Health Sciences Writing Centre in the Benson Building (Room 317). This will help you finely tune your writing and analysis abilities. The Centre and related website offer a number of resources to facilitate graduate studies at the University of Toronto. To make an appointment, book online at www.hswriting.ca. Also see: www.library.utoronto.ca/writing/

Academic Success Centre (www.asc.utoronto.ca)

Accessibility Services (http://disability.ca/atrc)

All students are expected to be familiar with and abide by:
• University of Toronto Code of Student Conduct
  http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/studentc.htm

• University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters
  http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+
  Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppjun011995.pdf
Health Communication & Promotion Journals

- Health Communication
- International Journal of Health Communication
- Internet Health
- Journal of Consumer Health on the Internet
- Journal of Health and Mass Communication

Critical Health Studies Journals

- Health and Place
- Journal of Epidemiology and Public Health
- Journal of Health and Social Behavior

Media Studies & Marketing Journals

- Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies
- Communication, Culture and Critique
- Communication Education
- Communication Quarterly
- Communication and Social Change
- Communication Studies
- Communication Theory
- Media
- Media Education
- Media and Marketing Online Magazine
- Media and Methods
- Media and Values
- Media Psychology
- Media, Society and Cultural
- Media Tropes
- Social Marketing Quarterly
Communication and Health Studies Resource Texts


Also see books listed in supplementary readings during each weekly topic.

Media and Communication Studies Resource Texts


---

**University of Toronto Grading Standards**

**Evaluation of Written Work**

**A+ 90-100%  A 85-89%  A- 80-84%**

Excellent performance, strong evidence of original thinking, good organization, capacity to analyze and synthesize, a superior grasp of the subject matter with sound critical evaluations, evidence of an extensive knowledge base.

**B+ 77-79%  B 73-76%  B- 70-72%**

Good performance, evidence of grasp of subject matter, some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability, and reasonable understanding of the relevant issues under examination; evidence of familiarity with the literature.

**FZ 0-69%**

Inadequate performance.

**Evaluation of Presentations: Criteria for JXS 5807**

In addition to the criteria listed above, presentations will be evaluated for the student’s ability to engage the audience in discussions and/or debate, ability to field questions, use
of audio-visual materials and/or health communication props, and the ability to communicate in a clear and concise manner. Content and critique are most important.
Critical Thinking & Analysis Skills Required To Achieve Scholarly Excellence

The following overview suggests categories of critical analysis for sharpening scholarly skills required in writing and verbal presentation assignments. Critical thinking refers to intellectual abilities and skills that allow one to rationally decide what to believe, accept, reject, adapt, act upon and/or change. Critical thinking and analysis involves questioning all scientific frames of reference (i.e., questioning the assumptions of research, experimental methods, ways of thinking, and positioning in the social order).

Critical thinking involves:

- Evaluating ideas
- Examining both strengths and weaknesses of claims
- Identifying theoretical alignment of arguments and data
- Detecting political position and frames of representation
- Recognizing logical inconsistencies
- Determining the accuracy of statements and claims
- Identifying stated assumptions
- Identifying unstated assumptions
- Determining the reliability of a claim and the source of a claim
- Distinguishing between warranted and unwarranted claims
- Distinguishing between verifiable facts and value claims
