

# **CMST 3700 - 001**

## **Introduction to Health Communication**

**Professor:** Lisa Guntzviller

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**Office Hours:** Tues & Thurs 12:30-1:30pm

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### **Course Readings:**

Mattson, M., & Hall, J. G. (2011). *Health as communication nexus*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt.

Additional readings and course materials will be posted on our Canvas course site

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### **Course Objectives:**

This course will serve as an introduction to the many ways that communication shapes health and health practices. Course content includes: (1) interpersonal health communication, (2) health behavior change, (3) technology and health communication, (4) media and health communication, and (5) social networks and health.

- Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classification, methods, trends)
  - Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories
  - Learning to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions)
    - Apply to your own life
    - Apply with intention of benefiting USU students
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### **Course Policies:**

#### **1) Attendance**

Due to the small size of our class, your attendance is crucial to the success of this course. Furthermore, regular attendance is essential for *your* success in this class.

#### What counts as an absence?

- If you miss more than 30 minutes of a class meeting, you will be counted as “absent” for the day. However, you can still earn participation points for in-class activities if you are present.
- There are no excused or unexcused absences for this class. Therefore, if you are going to miss class there is no need to let Lisa know in advance. You can miss two class periods without penalty (this does not include exam days).

### How does attendance count toward my final grade?

- A portion of your final grade is composed of your participation points during class. You cannot make up these participation points if you are absent from class, given that you were not participating if you are not present.
- You have two “free” absences; in other words, you can miss two class periods and still earn full participation points. You can assume that each class period counts as about 6.25 participation points (excluding exam days). Students who will need to miss more than two class periods for university activities (e.g., athletes) will need to discuss this with Lisa during the first two weeks of the semester.
- Physical presence in class does not guarantee full participation points for that day. Please see the section below on earning full marks in participation points.

### What happens if I miss an exam?

- Missed exams CANNOT be made up, except under documented excruciating circumstances (e.g., you were in a car accident). If you know that you have an unavoidable conflict with an exam (e.g., you are on a sports team and will be absent), you need to make arrangements with Lisa at the beginning of the semester or arrangements will not be made. Missing these important course components will result in a zero.

### What should I do if I miss class?

- You are responsible for collecting any missed materials or class notes from a classmate during days in which you are absent. You do not need to inform Lisa about why you were absent. Feel free to contact Lisa if you have specific questions about the notes you received from your classmate, but please do not contact Lisa and ask her what you missed or if you “missed anything important.”

## 2) Email through Canvas:

I will be sending out important class announcements through Canvas, which then sends an alert to your email. **You should make sure that you have Canvas set up to email you immediately so that you do not miss out on important class information.** I am expecting that everyone checks their email at least every other day. When I send out an email, it is because it contains important information that you need to know and that may not have been covered in class. If email is not a typical means of communication for you, please talk to me and we will work something out.

## 3) Late Work Policy

- **All assignments are due ONLINE before class starts on the assigned date.**
  - All assignments will be turned in through Canvas. Emailed or paper copies will not be accepted.
  - Late assignments will receive a ten percent deduction for each 24 hour period it is late.
- If you will be absent from class or away from your computer when something is due, you need to turn in your assignment **PRIOR** to your absence/lack of computer access.

## 4) Grades

- I will not discuss grades until 24 hours after you have received them and only after you have read all comments/feedback that I have given you (e.g., rubric, comments on the paper). Please stop by my office hours or schedule an appointment to discuss your grades.

- After you have received a graded assignment, you have two weeks to discuss them with me. **In general, grades are changed only due to a miscalculation.**
- Final grades are based on a point system (NOT a percentage system), so there is no “rounding up.” For example, an 899/1000 is a “B+” and *not* an “A-.”

### 5) I’m here to help YOU! ☺

- Please use my office hours or schedule an appointment with me. I want you to do well as you possibly can and am here to help you do so!
- Email is a great way to get in touch with me. I will always try to respond to your email messages within 24 hours. If you do not receive a response within 24 hours, please send your message again.

### 6) Academic Dishonesty

- Don’t do it. Plagiarism or cheating will result in a minimum of a ZERO on the assignment or exam and may result in consequences that are more serious.
- “Plagiarism includes knowingly representing by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one’s own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials” (*Student Code* page 10). If you have any questions about whether work you submit is plagiarized, contact your instructor *before* you hand it in. **In addition, in this course, you may not hand in the same paper for two classes. Please contact your other instructors; some instructors may have a different policy regarding what is sometimes called “self-plagiarism.”**

### 7) Equal Access and Disability Services

- Students who need special accommodations should talk to me at the beginning of the semester.
- The Americans with Disabilities Act states: "Reasonable accommodation will be provided for all persons with disabilities in order to ensure equal participation within the program. If a student has a disability that will likely require some accommodation by the instructor, the student must contact the instructor and document the disability through the Disability Resource Center (797-2444), preferably during the first week of the course. Any request for special consideration relating to attendance, pedagogy, taking of examinations, etc., must be discussed with and approved by the instructor. In cooperation with the Disability Resource Center, course materials can be provided in alternative format, large print, audio, diskette, or Braille."

## Course Requirements:

### Exams (410 points)

Three exams will be given throughout the semester and during finals week (the first exam is worth slightly less than the second two exams). The exams may be a mix of multiple choice, true/false, fill in the blank, matching, and short answer. All materials presented in the textbook, assigned readings, and class meetings are fair game for our exams. The exams in this class are NOT CUMULATIVE.

### Participation (150 points)

Your contributions in class are extremely important! Simply showing up to class will not suffice. Please come prepared to actively engage in our course material, pose questions, and make thoughtful contributions in discussion sessions. Your participation grade will reflect the overall **quality** of your class participation throughout the semester. If you are texting, talking during class, sleeping, or not paying attention, you will not earn your participation points for that day.

### **Assignments (425 points)**

All writing assignments must be typed and turned in via Canvas by the start of the class period that they are due. You do NOT need to turn in a paper copy. When considering all assignments, you will write approximately 15-18 pages for this class.

**A1: Health Information Presentation (80 points).** You will work with a partner to pick a health topic and will research its physical symptoms and its emotional, social, and psychological impact. Additionally, you will describe how communication is linked to the experience of this health topic. This information will be presented in a 6-8 minute oral presentation.

**A2: Patient-provider interaction (80 points).** Write an assessment of a less than desirable healthcare interaction that you've had with a healthcare provider. You will describe the interaction, then analyze the patient-provider communication through three perspectives that we have talked about in class: power, patient-centered communication, and interaction goals.

**A3: Health literacy project (120 total points).** Take a pamphlet or other health information source and improve its readability in terms of health literacy. You will be applying the health literacy concepts that we learn in class to actual health material. This paper has multiple iterations. For the first version, you will revise the document for two different levels of health literacy (60 points). You will then be assigned a group to get and give feedback to your classmates about your first draft. Additionally, you will use this group to conduct an informal needs assessment with your classmates. You will turn in a second version after incorporating classmate feedback and addressing the needs assessment (60 points).

**A4: Health campaign project (145 total points).** This is a group project. Your group will pick one of the health communication theories that we have discussed in class, and a health issue that is relevant to USU students. You will create a campaign slogan about the health issue that uses the principles of the theory. You will need to meet with Lisa to share your topic, theory, and proposed slogan in an informal presentation (35 points). You will incorporate the feedback from the meeting into your paper. In the paper you will describe each element and explain how your slogan exemplifies each aspect of the theory. The final paper will be worth 90 points, and your group mates' evaluation of your individual contribution will be worth 20 points.

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## Grading

<b>Exams (42.5%)</b>	
Exam 1	140
Exam 2	140
Exam 3	145
<b>Participation (15%)</b>	150
<b>Assignments (42.5%)</b>	
Presentation	80
Patient-Provider Paper	80
Health Literacy Project	120
Health Campaign Project	145
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<b>Total Points</b>	<b>1000*</b>

\* Grades will NOT be curved or rounded up.  
 In general, grade changes will only be made due to a calculation error.

### Grading Scale:

<b>A</b>	<b>930-1000</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>900-929</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>870-899</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>830-869</b>
<b>B-</b>	<b>800-829</b>
<b>C+</b>	<b>770-799</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>730-769</b>
<b>C-</b>	<b>700-729</b>
<b>D+</b>	<b>670-699</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>630-669</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>629 or lower</b>