

**INTERPERSONAL HEALTH COMMUNICATION  
COMMUNICATION STUDIES 416  
University of Tennessee  
Fall 2020**

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Laura Miller

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OFFICE HOURS: By Appointment via Zoom

**Course Description:**

This course introduces theory and research on communication in health and illness contexts, focusing on how messages from media, interpersonal, and organizational sources affect health beliefs and behaviors. Specifically, this course explores communication in health care delivery, health care organizations, health promotion and disease prevention, as well as in promoting personal and psychosocial well being. The course cuts across multiple levels of communication, different communication channels, and the use of diverse communication media and technologies. Upon course completion, students will have a solid understanding of the role communication plays in all aspects of health.

This course will be fully online for the Fall 2020 semester and will be conducted synchronously via Zoom. This means that the class will virtually meet during our regularly scheduled class time on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:10 PM – 2:25 PM. The course Zoom link will be available on our Canvas site. I am always available for a Zoom appointment, so please contact me at any point throughout the semester to organize a meeting.

**We are living in uncertain times and the Fall 2020 semester will be unprecedented in many ways. Despite such uncertainty, I remain committed to our classroom, passionate about the material, and excited to get to know my students. Going into the semester, my goal as an instructor is to create a space that fosters intellectual nourishment, but also provides social connection and support during the pandemic. Please reach out to me at any time during the semester if you need anything or want to chat. As Chancellor Plowman has said, we must work together to navigate this pandemic with compassion, creativity, and flexibility.**

**Required Text:**

du Pré, A. (2016). *Communicating about health: Current issues and perspectives* (5th Ed.). Oxford.

**Expectations:**

This course will be conducted as a fully online seminar/discussion. Some material will be presented in lecture format, but much of our time will be spent in discussion. For this course to be successful, and for students to get the most out of the material, the assigned readings need to be completed before class. I also expect that students will be prepared to make constructive contributions to class discussions. Participation and attendance are crucial in the online environment and my hope is that we can foster productive discussions and connections in this fully online course.

**Announcements:**

I will communicate with you frequently and keep you up-to-date on assignments, deadlines, and any course changes. I will make all announcements through the “Announcements” feature on Canvas. I will post regularly about classroom business (e.g., upcoming assignments) and any University policy changes. I will post grades on Canvas within a reasonable time (usually within two weeks of the due date). I will also post if something unexpected arises, such as my own illness.

**Late Assignments:**

Late assignments will generally not be accepted and make-up exams will not be given except under serious extenuating circumstances. If such a situation arises, please contact me as soon as possible. **If you are not feeling well, I will work with you.** I will modify assignment deadlines and/or requirements for anyone who is diagnosed with COVID-19 or required to quarantine. Requests for make-up opportunities or extensions in the absence of a COVID-19 diagnosis will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, but compassion will guide my decision-making.

**CCI Diversity Statement:**

CCI recognizes and values diversity. Exposing students to diverse people, ideas and cultures increases opportunities for intellectual inquiry, encourages critical thinking, and enhances communication and information competence. When all viewpoints are heard, thoughtfully considered, and respectfully responded to, everyone benefits. Diversity and fairness unite us with the wider professional and global community.

**Disability Accommodation Statement:**

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office of Disability Services at 865-974-6087 in 2227 Dunford Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

**Academic Integrity:**

Academic integrity is taken very seriously. If you violate academic standards of conduct, you risk failing this course or possible suspension from the university. Violations include (but are not limited to) cheating, plagiarism, use of a paper that has been turned in by you or someone else in another class, and unauthorized possession of exam materials. You are responsible for being familiar with university policies on such matters; including a thorough understanding of the university's Honor Statement:

*An essential feature of the University of Tennessee is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the university, I pledge that I will neither*

*knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity.*

### **Basis for Grade:**

1. There will be two exams worth 25% each.
2. There will be 2 short assignments throughout the semester totaling 20% of the final course grade. Examples of such assignments include reaction papers to readings, online and print articles, and guest speakers.
3. Students' willingness to share observations and experiences is crucial to the success of this class. When readings are assigned, students are expected to come to class not only having read the material, but also prepared to contribute to discussion in meaningful ways. Thus, participation in class discussion and activities will be worth 5% of the final course grade.
4. The final semester research project will be worth 25% of one's final grade. This project will be conducted individually and more details about this project will be posted to Canvas.

### **Key Dates:**

Tuesday, September 24 <sup>th</sup> :	1 <sup>st</sup> short writing assignment due via Canvas
Thursday, October 15 <sup>th</sup> :	Midterm exam administered via Canvas
Thursday, October 29 <sup>th</sup> :	2 <sup>nd</sup> short writing assignment due via Canvas
Tuesday, November 24 <sup>th</sup> :	Final project due/Last Day of Class
Monday, December 7 <sup>th</sup> :	Final exam administered via Canvas

Final grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

A = 100-93; A- = 92-90; B+ = 89-87; B = 86-83; B- = 82-80; C+ = 79-77; C = 76-73; C- = 72-70; D+ = 69-67; D = 66-63; D- = 62-60; F = 59 or below.

**The tentative reading list is as follows. Changes to this schedule may be made as deemed necessary or appropriate and in the best interest of the class as a whole. Additional readings may be distributed in class and posted to Blackboard.**

### **Tentative Reading List:**

#### **Introduction to Health Communication: What is Health Communication? Why is it Important?**

August 25<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>, September 1<sup>st</sup>

Read chapters 1 & 2

#### **Roles of Patients and Providers**

September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>

Read chapters 3, 4, & 5

### Social and Cultural Issues

September 17<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, October 1<sup>st</sup>

Read chapters 6 & 7

**\*\*During class on Tuesday, September 29<sup>th</sup>, we will be attending a virtual panel session as a part of the College of Communication and Information's Diversity and Inclusion Week. The panel session is entitled: "Reporting on Protests Ethically and Fairly: From the Classroom to the Newsroom." Zoom link information for the panel session will be posted prior to the event.**

### Coping and Social Support

October 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>

Read chapter 8 & 9

**\*\*\*October 13<sup>th</sup>: In-Class Midterm Exam Review**

**\*\*\*October 15<sup>th</sup>: Midterm Exam to be administered online via Canvas**

### Communication in Health Care Organizations

October 20<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>

Read chapter 10

### Mass Media Health and Technology

October 29<sup>th</sup>, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, November 5<sup>th</sup>

Read chapters 11, 12

### Health Campaigns

November 10<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>

Read chapters 13, 14

**\*\*\*November 17<sup>th</sup>: Final Project Workshop**

**\*\*\*November 19<sup>th</sup>: NO CLASS; Instructor will attend the National Communication Association Convention (virtually)**

**\*\*\*November 24<sup>th</sup>: Course Wrap-Up and Final Project Due**

**\*\*\*Final Exam: 3:30 PM – 5:30 PM, Monday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, to be administered online via Canvas**