



Welcome to Health Communication: COM 412

Professor: Dr. Christopher Bond

Office: Murphy Hall 207-L

Office hours: M/W: 11 to 12 PM, & 2 to 3 PM
TH: 1 to 2 PM & by appt.

Office/Cell/Text: 816.261.5993

Email: cbond3@missouriwestern.edu

The best way to contact the professor is via Email through Canvas.

Required Texts:

Parvanta, C. & Bass, S. (2018) Health Communication: Strategies and Skills for a New Era. Jones & Bartlett Learning.

Cahalan, S. (2012). Brain on Fire: My Month of Madness. Simon & Schuster. **(Provided by professor)**

Please Note: This online course will use Canvas for all assignments. Canvas can be accessed at: <http://griff.vn/canvas> OR found at the bottom right at the Missouri Western homepage.

Why take a course in Health Communication?

The fields of communication, public health and public relations are increasingly recognized as powerful tools in addressing the world's most imperative public health challenges. Knowing how to effectively frame communication, select media, and construct health campaigns, can assist you in informing, empowering, or persuading individuals to adopt healthier lifestyles as well as foster public debate and governmental policy change.

COM 412 provides a great opportunity for population health, communication, nursing, public relations, health information and public health students. The course will prepare these students to enter a local health department, community organization or government agency, and contribute to health communication research, patient counseling, materials design, and program management.

The textbooks for this class was carefully selected. Unlike other similar health communication textbooks, your textbooks provide students the competencies in health communication, health psychology and health informatics recommended by the Association of Schools of Public Health (ASPH). These competencies will assist and prepare all students in their future communication or health careers. You will find contributions in your textbook from leading experts in health informatics, health psychology, epidemiology, health policy and literacy, and health communication and evaluation.

Course Description:

Health communication is an emerging specialty within the field of communication and health disciplines. While providing both theoretical and applied foundations, this course is designed to provide students the knowledge of how to effectively frame communication, select media, and construct public health campaigns. Specifically, students will be provided the knowledge and skills sets of how to inform, empower, or persuade individuals to adopt healthier lifestyles as well as foster public debate and health policy change. Through the following **course objectives**, students will specifically be able to:

- Describe health communication as used by several local, governmental, and international organizations.
- Understand the role and component of health psychology as it relates to health communication and our personal lives and health outcomes.
- Understand the role of communication and its affect in promoting and maintaining health and wellness for all individuals
- Understand the correlation of theory and practice in health communication settings and campaigns.
- Understand the challenges in communicating and assessing the social determinants of health within various populations
- Describe and assess the many factors that affect health literacy.
- Identify the strategies to target various audiences and health communities for health communication campaigns
- Develop written, oral, and graphical communication skills necessary in medical and public health contexts.
- Develop effective health messages for individuals and publics by understanding how the media, literacy and policy affect the perceptions of health
- Identify key tools for patients and providers to communicate and listen effectively by recognizing the barriers and modes of communication between patients and providers.

Student Expectations

Attendance: Since this is an online class, expectations from students are different than a typical classroom setting. Students should check into Canvas several times a week to make sure you are keeping up-to-date on assignments and readings. Deadlines and upcoming assignments will be posted on the Calendar inside Canvas and on the landing page when you log into the course.



Assignment Submissions: All assignments in this class will be turned-in on Canvas. Your midterm and final exams will be administered online in Canvas. Students will always know the submission process before an assignment is due.

Late Assignments: All assignments should be turned in on time in Canvas. Prepare now for the unexpected (e.g., Internet problems, bad weather, computer issues, etc.) **In some VERY RARE cases, I may accept assignments late.** I reserve the right to refuse acceptance of late assignments or at the very least deduct significant points. All arrangements for missing an exam or other major assignment must be **made prior to the scheduled date at a minimum of 72 hours (3 days) in advance.** If a student misses a quiz, exam,

presentation or other assignment without prior notification to the professor, a grade of zero will be incurred. If the professor allows a late submission after a deadline, points may be deducted. A late assignment may be submitted in person or on Canvas.

Athletes/University Trips/Holiday Policy: Missing an assignment for planned school holidays/closures cannot be used as an excuse to not turn-in assignments after the due date since this class uses Canvas. **Also, if a documented school trip occurs (athletic games, other class outings, etc.), students will be allowed to make-up assignments.** The professor will need to see the official MWSU letter for excused absences. The key is to always communicate with the professor two weeks ahead of any longer planned trips.

Writing Standards: In this class, I will expect that all written work should be typed, use standard English, are double-spaced, well-organized, free from spelling and grammatical errors, and uploaded as ONE FILE within the Canvas assignment area. Remember that most computer programs have spell-checking options that will help you find many, **but not all**, spelling and typographical errors—it's important to proofread your own work. In addition, you are expected to keep a copy of written assignments for your records.

Course Grading

Grades are what we, in academia, use to measure learning. It's important to remember trying your best, while important, does not earn you an A. Rather, meeting and exceeding assignment criterion is the best way to demonstrate your understanding of the material and to ensure you earn the grade you desire. The following are general explanations for the expectations associated with each letter grade in this course:

- A. Earned when work far exceeds above average expectations, not only doing all that is required, but doing it with superior skill and thoroughness (providing examples, complete analysis, etc.).

- B. Earned when work is clearly above average, not only doing what is required, but also doing it well and demonstrating substantial competence.
- C. Earned when work is average; **it meets the minimum requirements** but does not demonstrate a grasp of the material beyond the obvious (defining words directly from the text).
- D. Earned when work is passing, but is missing a significant amount of work, shows little effort, and/or has many errors.
- F. Earned when work does not meet the minimum requirements, demonstrates a general lack of understanding or effort, and/or is found to meet the criteria for academic dishonesty.

Class Structure & Unit Breakdown:

The course will be divided into **six** units/modules over the semester allowing students approximately two weeks to complete assignments within each unit. Each unit will contain unique unit activities, HICAs (see below), discussion posts, and other activities. **SEE DUE DATES FOR EACH UNIT ON CANVAS.**

NOTE: Due to class size, weather delays and other factors, some assignments may be shortened or eliminated. You will be notified if this is the case and assignments will be adjusted accordingly.

When a Unit/Module is activated on Canvas, the corresponding assignments with their respective due dates will be populated and made available.

Assignment Breakdown

Note: Points may vary based on assignment distributions, time delays, the number of students or professor discretion:

- **Exams (150 points each, Midterm & Final, 300 points total)**
- **Health Interaction & Communication Activity-HICA (200 points total):**
Specific details on each module activities can be found under module on Canvas. Unit. HICAs activities may consist of video analyses, assessing health documents, analyzing real-life health communication activities, or other related activities.
- **Discussion Posts (8 @ 20 points each; 160 points total).** Since this class is online, interaction and discussion must be facilitated by other means. To facilitate this, each student is required to post and interact with other students within each discussion post. **Do not wait until the last day of each module to complete your discussion post. Post frequently and respond to your classmates!**

- **Mini Health Campaign (120 points).** Students will create a mini-campaign on a health, population health or public health issue. A brief analysis will be provided along with a five-minute presentation uploaded on Canvas. More information will be provided by the professor and on Canvas.
- **Brain on Fire Book Analysis (120 points):** Students will check-out the book, Brain on Fire, from the professor and will write a paper based on the health interactions, health theories and health outcomes from the book using APA style. Specific instructions will be provided on Canvas.
- **Extra Credit:** If time permits, extra credit will included into the course schedule.

Total Points: 900

SCHEDULE OF READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS*

**Date and assignments are subject to change at the discretion of the professor*

Please see the following site for your class schedule of topics and assignments:

<http://griff.vn/HealthCom>

You can also find this link on Canvas

UNIVERSITY POLICIES REGARDING THIS CLASS

Please see the following site for a list of the most up-to-date university policies. Please review this document. You will be quizzed on these on a later date.

<http://griff.vn/Policies>

You can also find this link on Canvas

Other Class Policies

Inclement Weather Policy

During the winter and spring months, our university is prone for severe weather. Please check the MWSU main website at <http://www.missouriwestern.edu/> for closings or changes in university schedules due to inclement weather. Local television stations will also provide university closing information. The professor may, on occasion, EXTEND DEADLINES due to severe weather. Since this is an online class, weather delays for assignments are very rare.

Social Media use and connections

Since this is a communication class that will discuss and analyze social media during the semester, you may connect with the professor and other students on the various social media platforms. This is optional and not required. **The Hashtag used for this class for Twitter and Instagram is: #HealthCom and #HCSM**

Email Etiquette

NOTE: THE BEST WAY TO CONTACT THE PROFESSOR IS IN PERSON. Students are expected to check their MWSU Email frequently (two-three times a week) for class related announcements and other university information. Grades cannot be discussed via Email.

Since this is an online communication class, professional communication is expected. Here are some basic rules for sending emails to the professor in this class:

- **ALWAYS use Canvas mailbox (left side column on Canvas) to email the professor regarding this class.**
- Email Subjects: Please Put In Email Subject: "COM 104 MW Class: Your Name and brief description of issue: Example: "COM 104 Online, John Smith – Speech Due Date?"
- Always use your MWSU email when communicating with the professor
- Always address the professor (or anyone) in your email and sign your name at the end. For example: "Dear Dr. Bond," or even just "Dr. Bond" Then at end, please just say "Thanks, John Smith" or something similar.
- Example of an email formatted unprofessionally:
Hey, I was wondering what is due next week because I may have to miss class. I need to know to plan my weekend. TTFN

Personal Accountability

Our personal character is our most prized possession as communicators. How we present ourselves to others through our words and actions determines our success personally, professionally, and academically. *The following information is important for helping you understand what is expected of you.*

Professionalism

Students are expected to conduct themselves professionally in the classroom and electronically in online environments, with classmates and with the instructor. Professionalism for the course is explained as follows:

- Professionals see problems as challenges and opportunities, not burdensome "hassles" to be avoided. They have a long-term habit of approaching problems confidently and optimistically. Your attitude about this class is a direct reflection of your level of professionalism. **Although this class is required or an elective for many majors, how you shape this experience is ENTIRELY up to you. Be positive, don't make assumptions, and ask for help. The professor is here to help you!**
- Professionals make efficient use of resources, especially time. They know how to concentrate and be mindful of the tasks before them. In our class, this means that you are

looking ahead on the daily schedule and **managing your time** accordingly to make sure you are always able to do your best work before the deadlines. Remember, Canvas automatically alerts you to what is due when you log into the classroom. (from the Website of James B. Stenson, educational consultant: ParentLeadership.com.)

Professor expectations:

Like the students in this class, the professor is expected to demonstrate personal accountability throughout the course. Students can expect the following from their professor:

- The professor will challenge students with rigorous yet fair expectations and criteria. The professor will do his best to provide students with the necessary tools to meet this expectation.
- The professor will communicate respectfully with students. The instructor will do his best to ensure that students feel valued both in and outside of classroom by listening mindfully to student comments/concerns and paraphrasing both meaning and intent to the student.
- The professor will be knowledgeable about assigned readings and upcoming assignments.
- The professor will organize and plan the assignments clearly and efficiently to make sure students gain the proper knowledge and skills within the online environment.
- The professor will provide clear instructions and criteria for all assignments and will grade and return work within a reasonable time frame. He will provide ethical feedback for your future improvement.