

## Public Health 103: Health Communication

Fall 2021, TR 1:30-2:45 PM

GRAN 135

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**Instructor:** Professor Susana Ramírez (*she/her/ella*)

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**Office Hours:**

- Wednesday 12:00 pm-1:00 pm Zoom [link](#)
- Fridays 9am-11am by appointment only; Book in advance via [https://calendly.com/susana\\_ramirez/ph103studentofficehours](https://calendly.com/susana_ramirez/ph103studentofficehours)

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### Course Description (4 units)

The purpose of this advanced survey course is to provide students with an introduction to the science and practice of health communication. Using examples of communication campaigns in the United States and around the globe, this course provides a starting point to consider what does and does not work in health communication. The overarching educational objective is to use strategic communication to enhance population health outcomes and reduce health disparities. The course will consider: the essentials for effective health communication and social marketing, reaching target audiences, developing and testing effective messages, and evaluating the impact of communication campaigns. *This is a writing intensive course and students are encouraged to utilize campus resources for assistance with grammar and style issues.*

### Pre-requisites

PH102 Health Promotion (strongly recommended) *or* PH100 Epidemiology

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### Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. **Explain** and **apply** health communication theories to public health problems.
2. **Understand** how health messages are developed and delivered and how communication campaigns are designed, implemented, and evaluated.
3. **Describe** structural factors that foster and inhibit effective communication about health in community and clinical contexts.
4. **Formulate** a specific communication strategy to address a public health concern.
5. Critically **evaluate** health-related messaging.
6. **Articulate** the ethical dilemmas inherent in the use of strategic communications to achieve public health objectives.

**To support student success coherently across Public Health coursework, these CLOs help students to reach the Public Health Program Learning Outcomes 2-6:**

2. Use the theories and principles of public health to explain a public health problem.
3. Apply public health research methods to conduct rigorous research on a public health issue.
4. Describe causes and risk factors in the major areas of focus in Public Health including but not limited to determinants of mortality and morbidity; leading causes of health disparities among regional, national, and global populations; and transmission for infectious and chronic diseases.

## SYLLABUS UPDATED AUG 4, 2021

5. Identify and analyze scientific data and other information to assess complex public health challenges, with special consideration of strategies for health promotion at the individual, community, and policy levels, as appropriate.
6. Communicate effectively and persuasively, orally and in writing, particularly to convey complex concepts and information in a clear and concise manner.

### **Course Structure: In-person synchronous**

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This course will be conducted entirely in-person during live, synchronous scheduled sessions. This may change depending on UC policy and public health guidance as the COVID19 pandemic rages on.

### **Course Navigation**

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This Canvas course is structured in weekly modules; each module contains materials and activities to help guide you through the course content and assess your learning.

To navigate through the course modules, please select "Next" at the bottom right of the page or select [Modules](#) on the course navigation menu to the left. On each Module page you will find a brief overview, learning objectives, readings, resources, and activities.

### **Getting Started Resources**

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The class will follow a weekly schedule including a lecture and supplemental resources, reading assignment, Discussion Forum assignments, and quiz.

- Course Syllabus
- Required Materials and Library Resources
- Discussion Forum Guidelines
- Communication And Netiquette Expectations
- Student Guide to Getting Started in Canvas
- Zoom Guide for Students

### **Learning During a Pandemic**

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*As of August 2021, the coronavirus pandemic continues. Thus, I recognize that these are not normal times, and this class will not be school as usual. We may have to be flexible if the pandemic evolves and forces our campus back to at-home learning.* Many of us are trying to balance caring for children or other loved ones with work and school responsibilities, on top of the uncertainty and anxiety that is part of living during a pandemic. **My goal as an instructor is to foster an inclusive, supportive environment.** Here are some resources to help you succeed this semester:

- One-stop site featuring **student resources**: <https://success.ucmerced.edu/>
- **Tutoring services** continue! Virtual sessions: <https://learning.ucmerced.edu/programs/tutoring>
- **Academic advisors** play a key role in supporting students' academic progress, with guidance on policies, petitions, and campus resources: <https://ssha-advising.ucmerced.edu/>
- **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)**: Continuity of care with psychological services is available with online sessions (individual and group, scheduled and drop-in).

## Required Materials & Books

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Use the campus Virtual Private Network (VPN) to access Library electronic resources from off-campus. You can find instructions on how to set it up here: [https://it.ucmerced.edu/VPN\\_Changeover](https://it.ucmerced.edu/VPN_Changeover).

- Academic journal articles, book chapters, and popular press articles to be accessed through course website.
- “The Pink Book” U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. (2001). *Making health communication programs work*. Washington, DC. Available at: <http://www.cancer.gov/pinkbook> [Free ebook]
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2003). *Designing and Implementing an Effective Tobacco Counter-Marketing Campaign*. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Available online at: <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/stateandcommunity/counter-marketing/index.htm> [Free ebook]

## Course Policies

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- **Attendance.** Live attendance is strongly encouraged and will count toward your participation grade. For more details, refer to “Participation” under “Assignments & Grading Policy”.
- **Academic Integrity.** [Academic integrity](#) is the foundation of an academic community. In this class, the Professor and Students agree to abide by the University’s [Code of Student Conduct](#) and [Academic Honesty Policy](#).
- **Accessibility.** Student Accessibility Services’ mission is to ensure students with disabilities have equal access and full participation in the rich academic and campus life at UC Merced. Requests for accommodation and support for students with disabilities can be made here: <https://access.ucmerced.edu/student-resources>.
- **Academic Assistance.** The Professor can help you understand the relevant course material and what is required of you in this course. Stop by during office hours to get help. If you need help more generally with your academic skills and approach to learning, please turn to the [Calvin E. Bright Success Center](#), which has numerous resources that can be helpful to you, including [peer tutoring](#). The [University Writing Center](#) offers writing assistance including [tutoring](#).
- **Extra Credit.** There will be multiple opportunities to earn extra credit in this class. All of these are optional and will be announced via "Announcements". Extra credit tends to be clustered at the start of the semester, so if you have time now, I strongly recommend completing the extra credit even if you don't know you will benefit from the extra credit points.
- **FERPA and Course Recordings.** *When possible*, the course lectures will be recorded for students in the class to refer back. You may access the recordings via CatCourses. Other course materials such as slides used during the lectures will be posted to the CatCourses as a courtesy to students. Reviewing these materials is recommended for all students but does not replace taking good notes, participating in the class, or attending in person.
- **Workload.** This course is worth 4 credits and meets for 2.5 hours per week. The standard for college-level work is 2-3 hours of outside of class time for each hour of class time. Thus, for this class, you should expect to spend an *additional* 5-7.5 hours per week (averaged across the semester) completing work for this course. Outside of class work includes time spent reading/viewing/listening to assigned materials, completing quizzes and other assignments, and conducting and writing up your project.

## Library Resources

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- **24/7 Chat** Need help accessing library resources, knowing where to look for something, figuring out what database is the best for your research, or anything else? Librarians rock! [Chat](#) with a librarian any time.
- **Research Appointments** Students can easily [make an appointment](#) to meet with a librarian. These appointments take place via Zoom. Librarian availability appears two weeks out.

## Assignments & Grading Policy

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Grades will be earned based on performance on the following assignments:

Message Analyses.....	150 points
Quizzes (13 total).....	325 points
Policy Brief.....	315 points
Research Participation.....	50 points
Participation.....	160 points
<i>TOTAL.....</i>	<i>1000 points</i>

**Message Analyses (ePortfolio):** You will be responsible for identifying and critically analyzing a unique public health-related message. This assignment satisfies the *UC Merced General Education Badge of Media & Visual Analysis*.

**Quizzes:** A total of **13** quizzes will be administered during the semester. Quizzes will involve a response to a short set of questions about the lectures, readings, videos, or podcasts.

**Policy Brief (ePortfolio):** Your term paper will be a policy brief, which will be produced individually and due in four stages. The purpose of the paper is to produce a policy brief that will distill the most critical scientific information relevant to a public health problem into a document that is accessible to relevant policy makers. The first assignment is a description of the public health problem. For the second assignment, you will identify and describe the target audience for your brief and their information needs (2-3 pages). For Part 3, you will produce an annotated bibliography of 7-10 academic and gray literature sources (3-7 pages). Part 4 will be the final brief, no more than 3 pages long, with references cited in the text using numbered endnotes in the AMA style. Assignments build on each other so it is imperative that you stay on track to complete each component on time. Additionally, you will earn points for the quality of the feedback you provide to a peer. This will be described in more detail later. This assignment satisfies the *UC Merced General Education Badge of Practical & Applied Knowledge*.

**Research Participation.** You have the option to earn 1 credit (1 hour) of participation on the SONA human subjects research platform or to write a 500-word essay on what learning at a research university means to you.

**Participation:** You will earn participation points by attending the class meetings and completing activities such as polls, quizzes based on the class meetings (distinct from quizzes graded under "quizzes"), and other activities. If you are unable to attend any specific class session, you may make up the participation points by reviewing the class materials from the session, obtaining notes from a classmate, and completing the activities from that session.

**Grading Policy:** Your final grade will be determined by the number of accumulated points including extra credit points, divided by the total number of possible points (**1000**). *Note that the denominator does not include the extra credit points.* Your letter grade will be assigned according to the following percentage scale:

97-100%=A+	87-89=B+	77-79=C+	67-69=D+	0-59=F
94-96%=A	84-86=B	74-76=C	64-66=D	
90-93%=A-	80-83=B-	70-73=C-	60-63=D-	

**Grading Dispute Policy:** You have the right to appeal any grade you feel was unfair. If you wish to appeal your grade, you must do so by submitting an **email of appeal** to the Professor **within 72 hours** from distribution of the grade. The email should describe the reason for the dispute, justification, and proposed course of action. The Professor will review the appeal and respond by email, either with a revised grade or a request that you come to office hours to further discuss. Please note that a review could result in the lowering *or* improvement of the grade.