

COMM 5117: Health Campaigns and Media

Section 301

Mondays - Fridays (9:00 am - 12:00 pm)

Location: TBD

Professor: Dr. Sara K. Yeo

Email: sara.yeo@utah.edu

Course Outline

This three-credit course provides an introduction to the application and integration of media effects theories in health and risk communication. We will examine social and cognitive models relevant to the context of health and risk communication campaigns and address theoretical perspectives that inform campaign messaging, including social determinants of health, individual behavior change, information processing, and message effects. Through this course, students will gain an understanding of theories relevant to the study of health and risk communication messages and an appreciation of the importance of integrating theory in understanding persuasive message effects.

Note

You are expected to log into the course Canvas website regularly (**at least 3-5 times per week**), complete and submit work on time, and ask questions if you need help. **It is your responsibility as a student to ask questions in a timely manner during scheduled labs and office hours, if you need help.**

Required Text and Readings

There is no single textbook or edited volume that adequately captures the breadth and depth of this evolving area of research. Therefore, I have compiled readings for each week that will be available as PDF files unless they are directly available online. There are several books that are relevant to this topic area. They are not required for this course, but may serve as good references.

- Rice, R. E., & Atkin, C. K. (2013). Public Communication Campaigns (R. E. Rice, Ed.; 4th ed.). Sage.
- du Pré, A. (2013). Communicating About Health: Current Issues and Perspectives (4th ed.). Oxford University Press.

Technology Requirements

To ensure that you have full access to the course, you will need:

- Reliable access to a laptop or desktop computer. A mobile device (tablet, phone) is not sufficient to complete this course. Please bring a laptop to lab.
- An Internet browser compatible with [Canvas](#). For more information, see this [page](#). Announcements, assignments, readings, etc., will be posted there. You should be familiar with Canvas. If you need help with Canvas, visit the [Canvas Getting Started Guide for Students](#).

Note

You are expected to know how to take a screenshot with your computer. A photo of your laptop or computer screen taken with your mobile device is *not* a screenshot.

Course Requirements

Course grades will be based on the following:

- Attendance and participation (20%)
- Discussion leadership (20%)
- Response papers (20%)
- Project (20%)
- Peer reviewing and grading (20%)

Attendance and Participation (20%)

Much of the learning that occurs in this course will be in a seminar-style, discussion setting. To make this work—and make this fun—you will need to be prepared to vigorously debate and discuss the material. It is not enough that you just come to class. You are expected to actively discuss the readings and critically analyze their contents. More information on the University attendance policy can be found [here](#).

Our goal is **knowledge integration**—connecting seemingly disparate ideas and fitting them together in a larger picture—to provide a broad context for advancing our understanding. The best way to integrate knowledge from this class with what you already know is to:

- Make sure you **complete the readings before class**, actively drawing out the implications of the readings and connecting them to other concepts and ideas that you have learned.
- **Participate actively** in the class discussion, challenging the evidence provided by the studies, by me, or by other students.
- **Ask questions** if there is something you do not understand. Other students are likely to have the same question.

Note

Respectful disagreement and healthy debate is good and encouraged in all my courses.

Discussion Leadership (20%)

You are required to serve as a discussant for three (3) classes. Discussion leadership comes with two responsibilities:

- 1) Leading a discussion among your peers that critically engage with the assigned readings for that class.
- 2) Writing a 1-2 page (single-spaced, 12-point font, 1-in margins) response paper (see next section). Your response paper should help you prepare to lead the discussion.

Response Papers (20%)

You will write 3 response papers during the semester. Response papers should be 1-2 pages (single-spaced, 12-point font, 1-in margins). A good response paper will summarize and critique the set of readings for the class. Your response should identify common threads between the readings and critically engage with the ideas and concepts in the assigned readings.

Important

Response papers should be submitted electronically via Canvas 24-hours before class.

Project (20%)

Your project will be a case study of a single health campaign. You will present the results of your case study in class at the end of the semester.

More information about the project will be provided during the first class and as the semester progresses.

Peer Reviewing and Grading (20%)

You will be responsible for reviewing grading three (3) response papers from your peers. Your grading of your peers will be to critically assess their synthesis of the readings. You will share your feedback with Prof. Yeo and the student whose response paper you graded. Because advancing research and scholarship relies on the process of peer review, this will prepare you to offer feedback, positive and critical, in a respectful manner to your peers.

Course Grading

Grades in this course will be based on the following scale.

Grade	Score (%)
A	93 to 100
A-	90 to < 93
B+	87 to < 90
B	83 to < 87
B-	80 to < 83
C+	77 to < 80
C	73 to < 77
C-	70 to < 73
D+	67 to < 70
D	63 to < 67
D-	60 to < 63
E	< 60

You can and should check your grade regularly on Canvas. Information on the grade points assigned to letter grades and how to calculate your GPA can be found [here](#).

! Important

If you wish to dispute your grade on any assignment, you must put your concerns in writing (please adhere to the [course email policy](#)) via email to [Prof. Yeo](#), clearly outlining your rationale. These concerns must be presented within one week of receiving your grade.

Course Policies

By enrolling in this course, you agree to:

1. respect the instructor and all members of the course;
2. engage with the content meaningfully;
3. meet the requirements of this course; and
4. abide by the course policies outlined in the syllabus.

This list represents the **minimal standards** to make the course a productive learning space. **Your final grade may be reduced by 1% each time you engage in disruptive and/or disrespectful behaviors.**

Email Policy

Note

It is critical that you check your University email account frequently and that you use your University email account to contact your instructors.

I will not respond to emails originating from a non-University account (e.g., Google, Yahoo, etc.). Using a non-University account runs the risk of your message being diverted to Spam/Junks and your message may not reach me in a timely fashion, if at all. Emails should be written clearly and professionally with correct spelling and grammar. **Emails that do not conform to these rules will not receive a response.** When you contact your instructors, you are expected to be professional in your communication. This includes:

- Providing a relevant description or statement in the email subject line. Do not leave the subject line blank or simply write, “Hi.”
- Providing your full name, uNID, and class section in the message.
- Using appropriate salutations (e.g., Dr. or Prof. Yeo; recipient’s name, if appropriate).
- Using paragraphs, not just long blocks of text.
- Proofreading your writing.
- Providing a clear description of your problem and all relevant information.
- Being polite in your emails. For example, you should end your messages with a signature, such as “sincerely,” “regards,” or “thank you.”

Course Civility

Communication allows us to engage with others and broaden our perspectives. How concepts are discussed, in the physical or virtual classroom, is part of that process. Diverse perspectives and experiences will inform and enhance our discussions. Each member of the class is expected to foster a respectful, generous, and supportive environment that makes room for productive difference and reasoned debate. Spirited discussion is encouraged. However, incivility is a different story entirely. Here is the basic etiquette that will be expected in the course:

- Please address your classmates by name. There is a human being on the other side of the screen/room who also has struggles, doubts, and bad days.
- **Civil** disagreement is encouraged! Approach differences in a manner that seeks clarity and better understanding by asking productive questions and by providing counterarguments that are supported with evidence.
- Anytime you have a strong emotional reaction to something, pause before responding. Always seek to provide an argument that is supported by credible evidence based on the concepts discussed in this course.

Academic Misconduct

Warning

Academic misconduct will be punished to the fullest extent possible. Anyone found guilty of academic misconduct should expect to fail this course.

It is expected that students comply with University of Utah policies regarding academic honesty, including but not limited to refraining from cheating, plagiarizing, misrepresenting one’s work, and/or inappropriately collaborating. This includes the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools without citation, documentation, or authorization. Students are expected to adhere to the prescribed professional and ethical standards of the profession/discipline for which they are preparing. Any student who engages in academic dishonesty or who violates the professional and ethical standards for their profession/discipline may be subject to academic sanctions as per the University of Utah’s Student Code: Policy 6-410: Student Academic Performance, Academic Conduct, and Professional and Ethical Conduct.

Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses and may be punished by failure on an individual assignment, and/or failure in the course. Academic misconduct, according to the University of Utah Student Code:

“... includes, but is not limited to, cheating, misrepresenting one’s work, inappropriately collaborating, plagiarism, and fabrication or falsification of information...It also includes facilitating academic misconduct by intentionally helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic misconduct.”

For details on plagiarism and other important course conduct issues, see the U’s [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#).

Curriculum Accommodations

Curriculum accommodations take two forms—scheduling and content accommodations. On a case-by-case basis, if you submit the appropriate documentation in advance of the conflict (when possible), scheduling accommodations for assignments may be considered.

If you anticipate a scheduling conflict, please speak with me as soon as possible. Without exception, it is your responsibility to plan for any scheduling conflict.

There will be no content accommodations in this course. The material has been selected for its pedagogical value in relation to the concepts we are engaging. It is your responsibility to review the course materials to be sure that this is a course you wish to take. More information on the University’s accommodation policy can be found in [Policy 6-100](#).

Emergency Plan

In the event of a University-wide emergency which prevents face-to-face meetings, students should continue to stay current with our schedule as posted in this syllabus and to attend to the course website on Canvas. Information about the status of assignments and other course work due during this period will be addressed on Canvas and, if necessary, by way of email.

University Policies

ADA

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. All written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability & Access (CDA). CDA will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. Prior notice is appreciated. To read the full accommodations policy for the University of Utah, please see Section Q of the Instruction & Evaluation regulations. In compliance with ADA requirements, some students may need to record course content. Any recordings of course content are for personal use only, should not be shared, and should never be made publicly available. In addition, recordings **must** be destroyed at the conclusion of the course. If you will need accommodations in this class, or for more information about what support they provide, contact the [Center for Disability & Access](#).

Safety

Safety at the U. The University of Utah values the safety of all campus community members. You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus safety via text message. For more safety information and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit safeu.utah.edu. To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort, contact Campus Police at 801-585-COPS (801-585-2677) or go to dps.utah.edu.

Addressing Sexual Misconduct. Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran’s status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the [Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action](#) or the [Office of the Dean of Students](#). To report to the police, contact [Campus Police](#). If you do not feel comfortable reporting to authorities, the U’s Victim-Survivor Advocates provide free, confidential, and trauma-informed support services to students, faculty, and staff who have

experienced interpersonal violence. To privately explore options and resources available to you with an advocate, contact the [Center for Student Wellness](#).

Course Schedule

The schedule is tentative. Any changes will be announced on Canvas. Your continued enrollment in this course constitutes an agreement to abide by the policies and procedures in this syllabus.

Friday (20-Jun): Paradigms/Some Early Communication Models

Readings:

- Course syllabus
 - Schwartz, M. A. (2008). The importance of stupidity in scientific research. *Journal of Cell Science*, 121(11), 1771–1771. <https://doi.org/10.1242/jcs.033340>
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Monday (23-Jun): The Nature of Theory

Readings:

- Fishbein, M., & Cappella, J. N. (2006). The role of theory in developing effective health communications. *Journal of Communication*, 56, S1–S17. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00280.x>
- Hornik, R., & Yanovitzky, I. (2003). Using theory to design evaluations of communication campaigns: The case of the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign. *Communication Theory*, 13(2), 204–224. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2885.2003.tb00289.x>

Discussants:

- [sign up here](#)
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Tuesday (24-Jun): Perceptions of Risk

Readings:

- Slovic, P., Fischhoff, B., & Lichtenstein, S. (1982). Why study risk perception? *Risk Analysis*, 2(2), 83–93. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1539-6924.1982.tb01369.x>
- Freudenburg, W. R. (1988). Perceived risk, real risk: Social science and the art of probabilistic risk assessment. *Science*, 242(4875), 44–49. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.3175635>
- Hansson, S. O. (2010). Risk: Objective or subjective, facts or values. *Journal of Risk Research*, 13(2), 231–238. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13669870903126226>

Discussants:

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Wednesday (25-Jun): Knowledge and Risk Perceptions

Readings:

- Johnson, B. B. (1993). Advancing understanding of knowledge's role in lay risk perception. *Risk: Issues in Health & Safety*, 4, 189–212.

- Simis, M. J., Madden, H., Cacciatore, M. A., & Yeo, S. K. (2016). The lure of rationality: Why does the deficit model persist in science communication? *Public Understanding of Science*, 25(4), 400–414. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963662516629749>

Discussants:

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Thursday (26-Jun): Media Coverage of Risks

Readings:

- Hubner, A. (2021). How did we get here? A framing and source analysis of early COVID-19 media coverage. *Communication Research Reports*, 38(2), 112–120. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08824096.2021.1894112>
- Mayeda, A. M., Boyd, A. D., Paveglio, T. B., & Flint, C. G. (2018). Media representations of water issues as health risks. *Environmental Communication*, 13(7), 926–942. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17524032.2018.1513054>

Discussants:

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Friday (27-Jun): Framing

Readings:

- Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. (1981). The framing of decisions and the psychology of choice. *Science*, 211(4481), 453. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.7455683>
- Scheufele, D. A. (1999). Framing as a theory of media effects. *Journal of Communication*, 49(1), 103–122. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1999.tb02784.x>

Discussants:

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Monday (30-Jun): Models of Information Processing (ELM, HSM)

Readings:

- Cacioppo, J. T., Kao, C. F., Petty, R. E., & Rodriguez, R. (1986). Central and peripheral routes to persuasion: An individual difference perspective. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51(5), 1032–1043. <https://doi.org/10.1037//0022-3514.51.5.1032>
- Chaiken, S., Liberman, A., & Eagly, A. H. (1989). Heuristic and systematic information processing within and beyond the persuasion context. In *Unintended Thought* (pp. 212–252). Guilford Press.

Discussants:

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Tuesday (1-Jul): Priming

Readings:

- Scheufele, D. A., & Tewksbury, D. (2007). Framing, agenda setting, and priming: The evolution of three media effects models. *Journal of Communication*, 57(1), 9–20. <https://doi.org/10.1111/J.1460-2466.2006.00326.X>
- Kim, J., & Cappella, J. N. (2023). Beliefs as causal mediators in the design of communication interventions: Exploring semantic and affective priming in parallel encouragement designs. *Human Communication Research*, 49(4), 372–382. <https://doi.org/10.1093/hcr/hqad020>

Discussants:

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Wednesday (2-Jul): Tailoring and Targeting

Readings:

- Rimer, B. K., & Kreuter, M. W. (2006). Advancing tailored health communication: A persuasion and message effects perspective. *Journal of Communication*, 56(suppl_1), S184–S201. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00289.x>
- Griffith, D. M., Efrid, C. R., Baskin, M. L., Hooper, M. W., Davis, R. E., & Resnicow, K. (2024). Cultural sensitivity and cultural tailoring: Lessons learned and refinements after two decades of incorporating culture in health communication research. *Annual Review of Public Health*, 45(Volume 45, 2024), 195–212. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-publhealth-060722-031158>

Discussants:

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Thursday (3-Jul): Health Belief Model

Readings:

- Carpenter, C. J. (2010). A meta-analysis of the effectiveness of Health Belief Model variables in predicting behavior. *Health Communication*, 25(8), 661–669. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2010.521906>
- Janz, N. K., & Becker, M. H. (1984). The Health Belief Model: A decade later. *Health Education Quarterly*, 11(1), 1–47. <https://doi.org/10.1177/109019818401100101>

Discussants:

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Friday (4-Jul): Social Amplification of Risk

Readings:

- Kasperson, R. E., Webler, T., Ram, B., & Sutton, J. (2022). The social amplification of risk framework: New perspectives. *Risk Analysis*, 42(7), 1367–1380. <https://doi.org/10.1111/risa.13926>
- Bearth, A., & Siegrist, M. (2022). The social amplification of risk framework: A normative perspective on trust? *Risk Analysis*, 42(7), 1381–1392. <https://doi.org/10.1111/risa.13757>

Discussants:

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Monday (7-Jul): Health Communication Campaigns & Social Media

Readings:

- Kite, J., Chan, L., MacKay, K., Corbett, L., Reyes-Marcelino, G., Nguyen, B., Bellew, W., & Freeman, B. (2023). A model of social media effects in public health communication campaigns: Systematic review. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 25(1), e46345. <https://doi.org/10.2196/46345>
- McGurk, M. D., Ogawa, G., Inoue, K., Wills, C., Ching, L. K., Shalaby, A. K., Kong, N., Hansen Smith, H., Lee, J., Irvin, L., & Keliikoa, L. B. (2025). Sweet Lies! Lessons learned from Hawai'i's sweetened fruit drink countermarketing campaign. *Journal of Health Communication*, 30(sup1), 14–27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10810730.2025.2461588>

Discussants:

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Tuesday (8-Jul): Integrating Media Effects, Information Processing, Behavior Change

Readings:

- Cappella, J. N. (2006). Integrating message effects and behavior change theories: Organizing comments and unanswered questions. *Journal of Communication*, 56, S265–S278. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00293.x>
- Slater, M. D. (1999). Integrating application of media effects, persuasion, and behavior change theories to communication campaigns: A stages-of-change framework. *Health Communication*, 11(4), 335–354. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327027hc1104_2

Discussants:

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Wednesday (9-Jul) & Thursday (10-Jul): Presentations