

# COM2120: HEALTH COMMUNICATION

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**Effective Term**

Semester A 2023/24

## Part I Course Overview

**Course Title**

Health Communication

**Subject Code**

COM - Media and Communication

**Course Number**

2120

**Academic Unit**

Media and Communication (COM)

**College/School**

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

**Course Duration**

One Semester

**Credit Units**

3

**Level**

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

**Medium of Instruction**

English

**Medium of Assessment**

English

**Prerequisites**

Nil

**Precursors**

Nil

**Equivalent Courses**

Nil

**Exclusive Courses**

GE1223 Public Health Communication

GE2266 Health Communication

## Part II Course Details

### Abstract

This course introduces the theories and practices behind the communication of health-related behaviors. Topics will include history and scope of health communication, health communication processes and theories, interpersonal and organizational communication involved in public health care, media campaign design and evaluation, health situation analysis, e-health and mobile technologies, and cultural and ethical concerns in health communication. This course is designed for students with varying interests: those who wish to work in public or non-profit health organizations that strive to enhance healthcare, media institutions that report and disseminate health and medical information, or other organizations related to disease control, health management, public recreations and fitness programs, and etc. The teaching and learning will pay particular attention to significant health issues and application examples in Hong Kong, such as infectious diseases, food safety, smoking, nutrition, obesity, and drug use. At the course's completion, students will have clear ideas about principles and practices for delivering health information through various communication means.

### Course Aims

The overall goal for the course is to help students discover how health and illness affects and is affected by communication. It has been consistently shown in research that public health outcomes can be improved through effective communication of timely, accurate health information. Clear communication is essential to successful public health practices at intrapersonal, interpersonal, group, organizational, and societal levels. Contemporary health care has demonstrated a strong need for communicating accurate and reliable information and promoting behavioral changes for the enhancement of the quality of life and individuals' well-beings within the community. Such need is highlighted within a global context where infectious diseases, food safety, nutrition and physical activities have become world-wide common concerns. In the contexts of Hong Kong and Greater China, population density and close proximity for interpersonal contact lead to aggressive spread of diseases. Low health literacy, environmental risks, limited resources, and poor governance and intervention also pose serious health threats to public health practices. Developing tailored health messages and communicating them with strategic media planning are particularly acute, given that there is an increased competition for attention in our information age. It is therefore theoretically critical and practically important for the students to develop a basic understanding of health communication.

### Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

	CILOs	Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Describe the processes and effects of health communication and identify key issues on health beliefs and behaviors				x
2	Discuss how communication theories and models can explain, predict and change health-related beliefs and behaviors			x	x
3	Critically evaluate the effectiveness of real-life health campaigns or case studies		x	x	x
4	Apply theories into practice by developing innovative health campaigns or designing tailored messages		x	x	x

#### A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

#### A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

#### A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

### Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

	TLAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures	Key concepts, theories, perspectives, and case studies	1, 2, 3	1.5 hours for 12 weeks
2	Class participation	Discussions, presentations, and use of Internet to search for materials and real-world cases related to health beliefs and behaviors	1, 2, 3	1.5 hours for 12 weeks
3	Group projects	In-depth case studies of health communication; develop health campaigns with a range of media applications	2, 3, 4	

### Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks (e.g. Parameter for GenAI use)
1	Class participation	1, 2, 3, 4	10	Assessment will be based on participation in small group discussion and in-class activities
2	Two individual assignments (health behavior/message analysis; theory application; 1,000-1,500 words each)	1, 2, 3	30	Assessment will be based on critiques and comments about lecture notes, readings and other class materials  (15% for each assignment)
3	One In-class quiz	1, 2, 3	30	Assessment will be based on students' knowledge of key concepts, theories, examples and perspectives

4	Group project (presentation + final report)	2, 3, 4	30	Assessment will be based on how students can work together to a) identify a real life health issue, b) apply relevant concepts and principles to analyze the target, c) propose effective educational or communication solutions, and d) present the results to class.
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**Continuous Assessment (%)**

100

**Examination (%)**

0

**Assessment Rubrics (AR)****Assessment Task**

1. One In-class Quiz

**Criterion**

KNOWLEDGE of health theories and communication theories

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Comprehensive understandings of knowledge and theories

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Sufficient understandings of knowledge and theories

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Moderate understandings of knowledge and theories

**Marginal (D)**

Basic understandings of knowledge and theories

**Failure (F)**

Not even reaching marginal levels

**Assessment Task**

2. Two Individual assignments

**Criterion**

CAPACITY for analyzing health behaviors/messages

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

High capacity in analyzing health behaviors/messages

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Significant capacity in analyzing health behaviors/messages

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Moderate capacity in analyzing health behaviors/messages

**Marginal (D)**

Basic capacity in analyzing health behaviors/messages

**Failure (F)**

Not even reaching marginal levels

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**Assessment Task**

3. Group project (presentation + final report)

**Criterion**

CAPACITY for SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING to understand health communication and identify key health issues

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

High capacity in self-directed learning

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Significant capacity in self-directed learning

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Moderate capacity in self-directed learning

**Marginal (D)**

Basic capacity in self-directed learning

**Failure (F)**

Not even reaching marginal levels

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**Assessment Task**

4. Class participation

**Criterion**

ATTITUDE for active learning and participation

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

High engagement in active learning and participation

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Significant engagement in active learning and participation

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Moderate engagement in active learning and participation

**Marginal (D)**

Basic engagement in active learning and participation

**Failure (F)**

Not even reaching marginal levels

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## Part III Other Information

### Keyword Syllabus

Public health, health campaign design, health behavioural intervention, persuasion, cognitive and social models, behavior change theory, health belief system, e-health/m-health, tailored message design, situation analysis, health communication planning, health narratives, disease prevention, risk assessment, infotainment, infodemic, community-based intervention, infectious diseases, food safety, smoking, nutrition, obesity, drug use, recreations and fitness programs

### Reading List

#### Compulsory Readings

	Title
1	Schiavo, R. (2013). Health communication: From theory to practice (2nd). New York, NY: Jossey-Bass.
2	Thompson, T. L. & Schulz, P. J. (2021). Health Communication Theory. Wiley-Blackwell

#### Additional Readings

	Title
1	National Cancer Institute. (2005). Theory at a glance: A guide for health promotion practice (2nd ed.). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute
2	Making health communication programs work : a planner's guide. (2002). [Bethesda, Md.] :U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, National Institutes of Health, [Office of Cancer Communications, National Cancer Institute]