

**Armstrong Atlantic State University
Department of Health Sciences**

**PUBH 7760
Health Communication
Spring 2006**

Texts	<i>Communicating Health</i> , Geist-Martin, Ray & Sharf (2003) <i>The Age of Missing Information</i> , McKibben (1993) Materials on Reserve or E-Res: www.library.armstrong.edu/eres.html		
Optional	<i>Health Communication: Theory & Practice</i> , Kreps & Thornton (1992) InfoTrac College Edition (free 4-month subscription)		
Instructor	L.E. Rich, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Public Health Office: Solms Hall, Room 201A Phone: (912) 921-7341 E-mail: richleig@mail.armstrong.edu Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.		
Course Description	A study of selected issues in health.		
Course Details	Health communication is an emerging specialty in the field of communication. This interdisciplinary course is designed to provide a broad introduction to human communication in a health care context. We will examine basic communication theories as well as health communication issues across the lifespan, between provider and patient, from an intercultural perspective, from an ethical standpoint, in policy and the law, and as portrayed in mass media.		
Evaluation	1.	45 points	22.5% <i>Attendance & Participation</i>
	2.	50 points	25.0% <i>Quizzes</i>
	3.	12 points	6.0% <i>Report: TV Viewing Analysis</i>
	4.	4 points	2.0% <i>Essay: Defining Health</i>
	5.	12 points	6.0% <i>Newspaper Article</i>
	6.	12 points	6.0% <i>Editorial or Amicus Brief</i>
	7.	20 points	10.0% <i>Media Analysis</i>
	8.	45 points	22.5% <i>Final Exam</i>
		200 points total	100.0%
Grading Criteria	A	90 - 100 %	179 - 200 points
	B	80 - 89 %	159 - 178 points
	C	70 - 79 %	139 - 158 points
	D	60 - 69 %	119 - 138 points
	F	0 - 59 %	0 - 118 points

Academic Policies

Type, Edit & Spell-Check Work ~ All work in this course (with the exception of in-class assignments, quizzes, and exams) must be typed, edited, and spell-checked. Please check your assignments for spelling and grammatical errors! Egregious errors will receive points off.

Format Work Appropriately ~ Format your work according to this syllabus and any instructor directions and handouts. Papers and reports may be space-and-a-half or double-spaced; however, please note that a “two-page, single-spaced” paper is a “three-page, space-and-a-half paper” or a “four-page, double-spaced paper.” Work also should be turned in as a “hard copy” at the beginning of class.

Do Not Miss Deadlines ~ All assignments must be completed by the scheduled time. Assignments handed in late will be penalized five (5) points per day. Missed deadlines will be allowed only in the case of death or serious illness. Excuses of this nature must be accompanied by a signed, written statement explaining the absence. If written verification is not submitted to the instructor, you will receive a mark of zero (0) for the missed assignment(s). Makeup points will be available for missed attendance in the form of a two-page, single-spaced response paper; however, more than three absences will result in a grade of “WF” for the course. Makeup points will not be allowed for missed quizzes or exams. There will be no exceptions.

Abide by the Honor Code ~ You are to abide by Armstrong Atlantic State University’s Academic Honor Code and Code of Conduct (www.sa.armstrong.edu/Activities/hccoc.htm). In particular, this includes:

1. Exercising honesty in all matters;
2. Being fair, courteous, respectful, and accepting of diversity;
3. Refraining from engaging in discriminatory or harassing behavior; and
4. Avoiding plagiarism in both spirit and deed.

If you are caught **plagiarizing** or **cheating**, you will receive a grade of zero (0) for that assignment — no exceptions! It is your responsibility to know and understand what plagiarism is. For a helpful tutorial, please visit <http://www.library.armstrong.edu/plagiarismtutorial.html>.

Course Objectives

- Primary**
1. Gain knowledge of theories from the fields of communication, medical anthropology, philosophy, and social psychology.
 2. Understand the cultural and political complexities of health, health care, and health communication.
 3. Understand the ethical and legal issues related to health, health care, and health communication.
 4. Be able to analyze health communication in the media.
 5. Be able to appropriately use effective communication methods for specific audiences and specific health issues.
 6. Gain knowledge of the changing financial and technological aspects of health care.

- Secondary**
1. Understand, synthesize, and critique academic and popular literature.
 2. Effectively research public health topics.
 3. Effectively present written work.
 4. Effectively engage in class discussions.
 5. Effectively work with others in groups.

Course Outline

#	Date	Topic	Readings	Due
1	01-11	Syllabus & Introduction	None	<i>In class: Citing sources</i>
2	01-18	Information Explosion or Invisible Ink?	Pp 001–120: The Age of Missing Information	<i>Bring TV Viewing Data</i>
3	01-25	Marketing “Feeling Good”	Pp 120–252: The Age of Missing Information	<i>In class: Review TV ads</i>
4	02-01	Introduction to Communication Theory	Reader: Talk About Communication Reader: The Meaning of Meaning	Report: TV Viewing <i>In class: Ethics exercise</i>
5	02-08	What, Exactly, Is Health?	Chapter 01: Communicating Health Chapter 11: Empowering Citizens (skim)	Essay: Defining Health
6	02-15	Narrative and Embodiment	Chapter 02: Personal Complexities Reader: Shakespeare in the Bush	<i>In class: Narrative exercises</i>
7	02-22	Cultural Diversity in Health Communication	Chapter 03: Health in Cultural Communities Reader: Issues in Latino Women’s Health	Bring in example; In class: Diversity exercises
8	03-01	Politics of Health	Chapter 04: Political Complexities Reader: Evolution of Osteopathic/Chiropractic	<i>In class: Political exercises; also, form groups</i>
9	03-08	Ethical Communication and Informed Consent	Reader: Communication Ethics Reader: UPRC v Botsford, Schloendorff v NY Hosp.	<i>In class: Work in groups</i>
	03-15	NO CLASS!	<i>Spring Break Holiday</i>	
10	03-22	Communicating About Life and Death	Chapter 05: Beginning Life Passages Chapter 08: Ending Life Passages	Newspaper Article <i>In class: Work in groups</i>
11	03-29	Risk and Risky Subjects	Chapter 06: Formative Life Passages Reader: Conversation Style: Talking on the Job	<i>In class: Sitcom exercise</i>
12	04-05	Self and Identity	Chapter 07: Sustaining/Enduring Life Passages Reader: The Sounds of Silence	Bring in examples <i>In class: Image exercise</i>
13	04-12	Evaluating Health Information	Chapter 09: Using/Evaluating Health Information	Editorial/Amicus Brief
14	04-19	Health as a Corporate Entity	Chapter 10: Navigating Health Care Organizations	
15	04-26	Telemedicine and the Media Equation	Reader: The Media Equation Reader: Asynchronous Health Care Communication	Media Analysis
16	05-03	Final Exam		

Detailed Descriptions of Course Assignments

1. Attendance & Participation (45 points)

Participation points may be gained by attending class, participating in discussions and group exercises, sharing practical applications of the theories to your work or other experiences, etc.

3 points each for 15 sessions (*grading scale is below*)

- 3 Attend class prepared to discuss readings and/or assignments
- 2 Attend class prepared for discussion but arriving late or leaving early
- 1 Attend class but refrain from participation
- 0 Miss class, refrain from participation

More than three (3) absences will result in a grade of “WF” for the course.

2. Quizzes (50 points)

Five unscheduled, 10-point quizzes will be administered at the beginning of class. Quiz material will come from the assigned readings.

3. Report: TV Viewing Analysis (12 points)

On your own, you will select and watch a group of television shows or advertisements. You will present your observations and findings in a report.

12 points total for the assignment (*point breakdown is below*)

- 4 points for a log of the shows or advertisements (with synopses)
- 4 points for the content of a two-page, single-spaced written analysis and report
- 4 points for the grammar, spelling, etc., of the report

Due: February 1, 2006

4. Essay: “Defining Health” (4 points)

In a one-page, single-spaced paper, you will critically discuss how you define health. Make sure to explain why you define health as you do. What influences your beliefs and thoughts?

4 points total (*grading scale is below*)

- 4 “A” level of work
- 3 “B” level of work
- 2 “C” level of work
- 1 “D” level of work
- 0 “F” level of work

Due: February 8, 2006

5. Newspaper Article (12 points)

In a 500- to 600-word newspaper article, explain a health-related topic for the public. Make sure to write for a general audience, refrain from editorializing, and properly credit your sources.

12 points total for the assignment (*point breakdown is below*)

- 4 points for the accuracy of the information in the article
- 4 points for the delivery of the information (factual news for a general audience)
- 4 points for the grammar, spelling, etc.

Due: March 22, 2006

6. Newspaper Editorial or Amicus Brief (12 points)

In a 600- to 800-word newspaper editorial or amicus brief, take a stance on a health-related topic and effectively make your case. Make sure to write for your audience, be persuasive, and, if applicable, properly credit your sources.

12 points total for the assignment (*point breakdown is below*)

- 4 points for the content of the information in the article or brief
- 4 points for the delivery and persuasiveness of the article or brief
- 4 points for the grammar, spelling, etc.

Due: April 12, 2006

7. Group Media Analysis (20 points)

With colleagues from the class, you will analyze the content of a set of television shows, television advertisements, newspaper or magazine articles or advertisements, or Web pages. You also, as a group, will prepare a report analyzing this set of media examples.

20 points total for the assignment (*point breakdown is below*)

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| <i>Group</i> | 4 points for a log of your media (including synopses and/or copies) |
| | 4 points for a table of themes identified in your media |
| | 4 points for a two-page, single-spaced written report analyzing your media |
| | 4 points for the grammar, spelling, etc. |
| <i>Individual</i> | 4 points for group participation (assigned by group members) |

Final Report Due: April 26, 2006

8. Final Exam (45 points)

One scheduled, 45-point exam will be administered during finals week. Exam questions will include material covered in the readings and in class throughout the semester.

Exam Date: May 3, 2006