

**Comm 443: Communicating Health Messages and Medical Issues
Fall, 2016**

Monday and Wednesday, 10 a.m.-11:50 a.m.
Professors Susan H. Evans and Peter Clarke
Room ASC G34

Overview of the course.

The quality of people's physical and emotional well being and the delivery of health care depend on efficient and effective communication. This course will help you understand how communication--interpersonal, mass media, telecommunication, and built spaces--shapes the exchange of information, the formation of attitudes and beliefs, and people's health behavior.

We welcome students from all majors.

We have designed readings, class sessions, and assignments to help you learn about:

I. The Social Context of Health Care: flaws in healthcare that doom many people to sub-optimal treatment; how doctor-patient communication influences the quality of care and patients' well being; ways people can mobilize family, friends, and the healthcare system more effectively to meet their medical needs.

II. Images of Health and Medicine in the Public Media: ways that news media cover health and medicine; the development and impact of dramatic entertainment series and movies that incorporate health issues; the roles of drama as a public educator; how health interests lobby the mass media to influence entertainment and news content.

III. Psychological Theories of Health Behavior: research about communication campaigns and applications to public health; some health campaigns aim to reduce risks of illness and avoidable accidents, while others help people cope with chronic conditions; health literacy; health campaigns in the Developing World.

IV. Case Studies of Health Interventions and Methods of Evaluation: examples will illustrate principles drawn from throughout the course by concentrating on two applications: a) reducing hunger and malnutrition in the U.S. while combating the epidemic of obesity and diabetes; and b) helping seniors (and others) plan the kind of critical care they want, if they lose the ability to communicate with medical providers.

V. Impact of the Internet and other Information Technologies on the Quality of Health Care: the strengths and liabilities of health websites; uses of social media and other information technologies (ITs) in health care.

VI. How Built Spaces Shape Communication and People's Health: we will explore two facets of this topic: a) ways that poor interior design of health facilities constrains communication and undermines health; and b) how your personal environment--rooms, buildings, and urban landscapes--affects your health and well being.

Course objectives.

These are skills you will have acquired by the end of the course. All are abilities that improve your chances of leading a rewarding life, or are valued by future, potential employers, or both. By the end of Comm 443, you will be able:

- To analyze doctor-patient communication, verbal and non-verbal, and use the course's inventory of questions about medical concerns in order to prepare yourself, family, or friends for effective consultations with physicians.
- To recognize the presence or absence of different kinds of social support for personal health, and know how to seek essential support when it fails to spontaneously appear.
- To analyze health-related stories in the news and health themes incorporated in dramatic entertainments (whatever the media--print, TV, internet-based, etc.), in order to identify distortions or omissions that mislead the public.
- To apply psychological theories about the effectiveness of persuasive strategies, including fear appeals and the use of humor, to understand why some advertisements and public campaigns on behalf of better health work and others fall flat.
- To analyze the strengths and weaknesses of health web-sites, both their content and their architecture.
- To observe and analyze a focus group discussing a health-related topic, and apply the insights gained to design media and messages about that topic.
- To visually document and explain features of the built environment (exterior and interior spaces) that convey implicit messages that have consequences for improved or for impaired health.

Course materials.

You should purchase one paperback book and two COURSE PACKS. The COURSE PACKS are available from the instructors at cost. The book is available at the bookstore or from Internet vendors:

Cialdini, Robert B. Influence: Science and Practice, 5th Edition. Allyn and Bacon. 2009.

Study questions.

We will distribute a list of study questions that will help guide you through the reading material for each class session. These questions will be posted on Blackboard, which you access via the following website: **<http://blackboard.usc.edu>**. These questions will not cover all of the lecture material, however. The study questions will be very helpful in preparing for the in-class quizzes. You can find the study questions under the heading "Content."

Assignments.

You will submit eight short papers (2-3 pages), take part in an in-class group project, complete two in-class quizzes and a final. We will distribute detailed instructions for each assignment. Assignments will be posted on Blackboard under the heading “Assignments.”

Submitted assignments will be graded, and the grade will be available in the online Blackboard grade center. Normally, papers are graded and returned within a week of submission.

E-mail communication.

You should check your USC e-mail regularly, because that is the e-mail address that Blackboard and your instructors use when distributing messages about the class. The general Blackboard website is: <http://blackboard.usc.edu>. The HELP link on Blackboard is: http://help.blackboard.com/en-us/Learn/9.1_2014_04/Student.

Office hours and on-line communication.

Contact with faculty:

Susan Evans: 323-442-2613 or shevens@usc.edu; office hours: Monday: noon-1 pm; ASC 324G.
Peter Clarke: 213-740-0940 or chmc@usc.edu; office hours: Monday: noon-1 pm; ASC 324G.

The instructors will be available via email, and will respond as soon as possible, normally within 24 hours. The only exception to this is the day before Quiz 1 and Quiz 2. We will not accept questions in the 24 hours leading up to a quiz. So, if you have questions, get them to us early.

Evaluation of your work.

Work is due on the indicated dates. Late assignments will be eligible for half credit only. In-class quizzes will only be administered on the dates shown in the syllabus. You will need a documented medical situation in order to petition to make alternative arrangements for taking a quiz. In addition, you must communicate with instructors prior to a scheduled quiz that medical circumstances make it impossible for you to attend class that day.

Attendance policy.

Class attendance is vital, providing exposure to lecture materials, videos, and discussions prompted by students’ interests. Attendance will be taken. Each student is allowed two absences. After two absences, each missed class will result in the reduction of one point.

Components of your grade are as follows:

Date	Task	Point value
September 7	Assignment #1: Analysis of a medical consultation	10
September 12	In-class quiz #1	15
September 21	Assignment #2: "Nurse Jackie" analysis	6
October 3	Assignment #3: Journalism analysis	6
October 10	In-class project	4
October 17	Assignment #4: Advertising analysis	10
October 24	In-class quiz #2	15
November 9	Assignment #5: Focus group analysis	10
November 16	Assignment #6: Nutrition and message-tailoring study questions	6
November 21	Assignment #7: Web-site analysis	6
November 30	Assignment #8: Design of my environment and health	7
	Final Exam	5
Total		100 pts.

We do not grade on a curve, so you are not competing with your classmates. Instead, you will gain by working together and sharing ideas and readings. Nonetheless, we expect papers and exams to be your own work. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and will be referred to the University's processes for hearings and discipline. Here is how we will assign grades:

<u>Points</u>	<u>Grade</u>
90-100	A
78-89	B
66-77	C
54-65	D
0-53	F

The instructors may assign a plus or a minus based on class participation as determined by how much students speak in class. You can become eligible for a plus by asking questions and by expressing observations about readings, in-class materials, lectures, and topics of the course.

Other Student Services and Helpful Resources.

The USC Writing Center is available to help students improve their critical thinking and writing skills. It offers free materials and online resources at <https://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter/>

The USC Kortschak Center for Learning and Creativity offers free online resources for time management, note taking, paper writing, and goal setting, which can be accessed at <http://kortschakcenter.usc.edu/>

The USC Library offers free research guides on 22 subjects at <http://libguides.usc.edu/>

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the Department of Public Safety <http://capsnet.usc.edu/departments/departments-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential

support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. The Office of Disability Services and Programs

http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information <http://emergency.usc.edu/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

Week-by-Week Topics, Readings, and Assignments

August 22: Introduction: What is health communication and why does it matter? Flaws in U.S. health care that prompt needs for improved communication.

Readings: Browse videos at: <http://www.unnaturalcauses.org/>

I. The Social Context of Healthcare

August 24: Doctor-patient consultations and the quality of care

Readings: Surviving Modern Medicine: Introduction and Chapter 1. COURSE PACK.

Groopman, J. 2007. How Doctors Think. Introduction and Epilogue. COURSE PACK.

Gawande, A. 2007. Better: A Surgeon's Notes on Performance. Afterword. COURSE PACK.

August 29: Doctor-patient consultations and the quality of care (continued)

Readings: Groopman, J. 1997. "Kirk" from The Measure of Our Days: A Spiritual Exploration of Illness. COURSE PACK.

Schulman, K.A., et. al. 1999. "The effect of race and sex on physicians' recommendation for cardiac catheterization." *Journal of the American Medical Association*. COURSE PACK.

August 31: Social relations and people's well being

Readings: Surviving Modern Medicine: Chapter 3. COURSE PACK.

September 5: Labor Day; no class

September 7: Social relations and people's well being, continued

Readings: Surviving Modern Medicine: Chapter 4. COURSE PACK.

September 12: In-class, Quiz #1

II. Images of Health and Medicine in the Public Media

September 14: Depictions of medicine on dramatic television.

Readings: Diem, S. J., et. al. 1996. "Cardiopulmonary resuscitation on television: Miracles and misinformation." New England Journal of Medicine. COURSE PACK

Brink, S. 2006. "Prime time to learn." Los Angeles Times. COURSE PACK

Re-read: Groopman, J. 1997. "Kirk" from The Measure of our Days: A Spiritual Exploration of Illness. COURSE PACK.

September 19: Research about audiences and outcomes from entertainment; lobbying for access to dramatic TV

Readings: Baer, N. 2015. "The circus comes to the emergency department." JAMA Internal Medicine. COURSE PACK

Wrong, T. and Baumgart, E. "Not a 'reality' show." Journal of Clinical Ethics. 2013. COURSE PACK

Go online to read:

Ornstein, C. "When a patient's death is broadcast without permission." ProPublica. 2015.

<https://www.propublica.org/article/when-a-patients-death-is-broadcast-without-permission>

Brodie, M. et. al. 2001. "Communicating health information through the entertainment media." Health Affairs. COURSE PACK

The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation. 2002. "The impact of TV's health content: A case study of ER viewers." COURSE PACK

Safe Surgery Checklist. COURSE PACK

September 21: Analysis of selected episodes of "Nurse Jackie."

Readings: You will view selected episodes of "Nurse Jackie" before the class session.

September 26: The press, health-hype, and public understanding about medical issues.

Readings. Korownyk, C. et al. 2014. "Televised medical talk shows-what they recommend and the evidence to support their recommendations: a prospective observational study." BMJ. COURSE PACK

Schwitzer, G. 2014. "A guide to reading health care stories." JAMA Internal Medicine. COURSE PACK

III. Psychological Theories of Health Behavior

September 28: Theories of persuasion applied to health behavior

Readings: Influence: Introduction, Chapters 1, 2, and 3

October 3: Theories of persuasion applied to health behavior, continued

Readings: Influence: Chapters 4 and 5

October 5: Theories of persuasion applied to health behavior, continued

Readings: Influence: Chapters 6, 7, and 8

Redelmeier, D. and Cialdini, R. 2002. "Problems for clinical judgement: Principles of influence in medical practice." Canadian Medical Association Journal. COURSE PACK

October 10: In-class project**October 12:** Health Literacy and Fear Appeals

Readings: Tannenbaum, M.B., et. al. 2015. "Appealing to fear: A meta-analysis of fear appeal effectiveness and theories." Psychological Bulletin. COURSE PACK

Rogers, E., Ratzen, S.C., and Payne, J.C. 2001. "Health literacy." American Behavioral Scientist. COURSE PACK

October 17: Social Learning Theory and Message Design

Readings: Kinzie, M. 2005. "Instructional design strategies for health behavior change." Patient Education and Counseling. COURSE PACK

Bandura, A. 2004. "Health promotion and social cognitive means." Health Education and Behavior. COURSE PACK

October 19: Infotainment: Health promotion in the Third World

Readings: Singhal, A., et. al. 1999. Entertainment-education: A communication strategy for social change. Pages 1-23. COURSE PACK

Rosin, H. 2006. "Life Lessons: How soap operas can change the world." The New Yorker: June 5. COURSE PACK

Smith, D. 2002. "The theory heard 'round the world." Monitor on Psychology. COURSE PACK

October 24: In-class, Quiz #2**IV. Case Studies of Health Interventions and Methods of Evaluation****October 26:** Reducing hunger and malnutrition; preventing and managing obesity and diabetes

Readings: Robinson, T.N. 2007. "Effects of fast food branding on young children's taste preferences." Archives of Pediatric Adolescent Medicine. COURSE PACK

Sloane, D, et. al. 2003. "Improving the nutritional resource environment for healthy living through community-based participatory research." Journal of

General Internal Medicine. COURSE PACK

Evans, S. and Clarke, P. 2010. “Disseminating Orphan Innovations.” Stanford Social Innovation Review. COURSE PACK

October 31: Focus group research

Readings: Stewart, D. et. al. 1990. Focus Group: Theory and Practice. COURSE PACK

Evans, S. Clarke, P. and Koprowski, C. 2010. “Information Design to Promote Better Nutrition among Pantry Clients: Four Methods of Formative Evaluation.” Public Health Nutrition. COURSE PACK

November 2: Observation and analysis of a focus group

Readings: None

November 7: Message Tailoring

Readings: Kreuter, M., et.al. 2000. Tailoring Health Messages: Customizing Communication with Computer Technology. Chapters 2 and 3. COURSE PACK

Clarke, P., Evans, S., and Hovy, E. 2011. “Indigenous Message Tailoring Increases Consumption of Fresh Vegetables by Low-Income Households.” Health Communication. COURSE PACK

November 9: Message Tailoring (continued) and helping people make choices about critical care

Readings: Surviving Modern Medicine, Chapter 5. COURSE PACK.

November 14: Helping people make choices about critical care (continued)

Readings: None.

V. Impact of the Internet and Other Information Technologies on the Quality of Health Care

November 16: Telecommunication interventions: Web-sites, social media, and telemedicine

Readings: Berland, G. et. al. 2001. “Health information on the Internet: Accessibility, quality, and readability in English and Spanish.” Journal of the American Medical Association. COURSE PACK

Korda, H. and Itani, Z. 2013. “Harnessing social media for health promotion and behavior change.” Health Promotion Practice. COURSE PACK

Spurgeon, J. and Wright, J. 2010 “Computer-Assisted Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy.” Current Psychiatry Reports. COURSE PACK

Li, Z. et. al. 2012. “Telemedicine-based digital retinal imaging vs. standard ophthalmologic evaluation for the assessment of diabetic retinopathy.” Connecticut Medicine. (Abstract only) COURSE PACK

VI. How Built Spaces Shape Communication and People’s Health

November 21: Your personal environment and health

Readings: Anthes, E. 2009. “Building around the mind.” Scientific American. COURSE PACK

Jarrett, C. 2006. “Is there a psychologist in the building?” The Psychologist. COURSE PACK

November 23: No class. Happy Thanksgiving.

November 28: The interior design of health facilities

Readings: Ulrich, R.S. 1984. “View through a window may influence recovery from surgery.” Science. COURSE PACK

Salonen, H., et. al. 2013. “Design approaches for promoting beneficial indoor environments in healthcare facilities: A review.” Intelligent Buildings International. COURSE PACK

Campbell, C. 2009. “Health outcomes driving new hospital design.” New York Times. COURSE PACK

Access the websites for the Society for Environmental Graphic Design (segd.org) and The Center for Health Design (healthdesign.org). Study award winners for recent years to learn how interior amenities and wayfinding cues affect people’s experiences with buildings.

November 30: Examples of successful community-based interventions.

Readings: None

