

**UMBC UGC New Course Request: HAPP 340 Health Communication**

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Proposed Effective Date: fall 2016

	Name	Email	Phone	Dept
Dept Chair or UPD	J. Kevin Eckert	eckert@umbc.edu	5-5698	ANTH/HAPP/SOCY
Other Contact	Katie Birger	cbirge1@umbc.edu	5-2080	ANTH/HAPP/SOCY

**COURSE INFORMATION:**

Course Number(s)	HAPP 340
Formal Title	Health Communication
Transcript Title (≤30c)	Health Communication
Recommended Course Preparation	none
Prerequisite <b>NOTE:</b> Unless otherwise indicated, a prerequisite is assumed to be passed with a "D" or better.	ENGL 100
Credits	3
Repeatable?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Max. Total Credits	3 <small>This should be equal to the number of credits for courses that cannot be repeated for credit. For courses that may be repeated for credit, enter the maximum total number of credits a student can receive from this course. E.g., enter 6 credits for a 3 credit course that may be taken a second time for credit, but not for a third time. Please note that this does NOT refer to how many times a class may be retaken for a higher grade.</small>
Grading Method(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reg (A-F) <input type="checkbox"/> Audit <input type="checkbox"/> Pass-Fail

**PROPOSED CATALOG DESCRIPTION (no longer than 75 words):**

Understanding how we communicate about health, and evidence based methods and theories around effective health communication, is a relatively new field of study. This class will expose students to the field of health communication. Students will develop an understanding of the evolution of health communication, and applications in promoting health. Students will also build skills in a variety of media to enhance their ability to effectively communicate about health.

**RATIONALE FOR NEW COURSE:**

Health Communications is a standard course in most universities' health related curriculum, and has been identified as a core competency that is lacking in the Health Administration and Policy Program at UMBC. This class has been proposed as one of two options for a required core communication class for HAPP students. While this class will be one option for a required communications class, there are likely other students across campus that would enjoy and benefit from the material. Because of this there will not be any prerequisites besides ENGL 100. ENGL 100 is an acceptable prerequisite because successful completion of ENGL 100 will ensure that students have a modicum of foundational written and communication ability prior to enrolling on HAPP 340. While we expect that the primary audience will be HAPP majors, there could also be a number of INDS and pre-professional students who are interested in health education and provider-patient communication. MCS students may also be interested in the broader topic of communication.

Health Communication will be listed as a 300 level course to fit alongside the other mid-career courses in HAPP. An upper level understanding of student expectations and maturity is required. There are significant group projects

that require time and coordination with peers in order to produce deliverables at a fairly sophisticated level for undergraduates. However, the material will be presented in such a manner to include students that do not already have a broad knowledge base in health administration or policy. In addition, this course will not be a prerequisite for other classes, so there is no need for students to take it early in their career. Providing upper level credits will also encourage students from other disciplines who would benefit from the material to take the course, even if it is not a component of their major. This class has been taught once as a special topics class (HAPP 398) in fall of 2015. Enrollment was strong (27 seats filled of 35 available), and student satisfaction with the course and the material was high.

**ATTACH COURSE OUTLINE (mandatory):**

# Health Communications

## Instructor

Katie Birger  
cbirge1@umbc.edu

## Office Hours

3-4pm, Tuesdays  
Public Policy 220  
By online appointment

## Classroom

Mon, Wed 1-2:15pm  
Sondheim 107

## Text

*Essentials of Public Health  
Communication*  
by Claudia Parvanta et. al

## Final Grade

Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	15%
Individual Assignments	25%
Group Assignment	25%
Presentation	10%
Participation	10%

## Course Overview

Humans are social animals by nature, and are constantly sending and receiving communication between each other and their environment. Whether we realize it or not, the messages we receive and send can have a significant impact on our behavior, and our understanding of our self and society. Understanding how we communicate about health, and evidence based methods and theories around effective health communication, is a relatively new field of study. As our society continues to embrace new media, it is important to understand the impact that this can have on health communications as well.

This class will expose the student to the field of health communication. Students will develop an understanding of the evolution of health communication, and applications in promoting health. Students will also build skills in a variety of media to enhance their ability to effectively communicate about health.

## Course Objectives

Through this course, students will have the opportunity to:

- Understand the theory and research that informs the field of health communication.
- Develop competencies in a variety of areas of health communication, including written, verbal, and multimedia.
- Apply foundational knowledge in the development of individual and group health communication campaigns.
- Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of their own and others' communication about health

## Course Format

This class is presented as an in person, regular (graded A-F) format. You will also be **required to present** the projects you undertake for this class to the broader campus community at the end of the semester. While everyone will be required to present, there will be a variety of presentation methods to choose from. If you are not comfortable speaking in the spotlight to strangers, you will not be required to do so. On the other hand, if that sounds fun and exciting to you, it can happen!

## Course Expectations

In order for the course to run smoothly, everyone involved must understand and meet the expectations outlined below.

### Student expectations

**Preparation:** Individual students will come to class prepared to discuss the required readings for each class. In addition, students will have completed and submitted all required assignments through Blackboard

before the deadline to do so. It is recommended that you have updated browser software, and check the Blackboard help section to resolve technical issues. Apple products have typically been more difficult with Blackboard than Windows, so if you do have trouble with your Mac or iPad, try using the computers in the library instead.

**Technology:** This class will require you to make heavy use of technology, for both learning and production of assignments. I do not expect you to be a programmer, graphic designer, video producer, or tech support! I do, however, expect you to try your hand at each of these activities in order to enhance your communication skills. This will be more successful with access to technology and the willingness to experiment with hardware and software.

UMBC can provide you with everything you need as long as you are willing to learn how to use it and adhere to their policies for checking out material and using the computer labs. Remember, your message is much more important than your skills with the technology, and your message will be the basis for your grade.

**Group Work:** Students will be working in groups to produce a multi-faceted health campaign over the course of the semester. I am aware that everyone hates group work. I hated it as well when I was a student. The reality is that group work is how things get done in both large and small scale campaigns. Another reality though is that group members that are more productive and on point are rewarded over those who don't produce. In this spirit, grades will be assigned individually as well as to the group. If a group has difficult dynamics they will be expected to resolve those issues on their own. If they are not successful, they may come to the "supervisor" (me) and ask for a conference to resolve the issue.

### Students will:

- Read the assigned readings
- Submit electronically and on time
- Be adventurous with technology
- Make group work "work"
- Present their work! It's all about communication!

### Instructors will:

- Be prepared
- Provide clear guidelines for expectations
- Provide feedback in a timely manner
- Communicate! It's all about communication!

In addition to working in groups, students will be required to work across groups in order to provide feedback and evaluations. Groups and members are expected to take this seriously. Not only will your feedback be very valuable to the other group, but this will help you build critical skills that you can use in the workplace. Evaluation is a form of communication as well!

**Presentation:** Students will be expected to present their work several times during the semester. This will include online and virtual presentations, in class presentations to peers and the instructor, and participation in a campus wide event. All students will be required to present at the UMBC Wellness Initiative's Wellness Wednesday event from **noon until 1 on Wednesday, April 27**. They have reserved this time just for you, and are looking forward to your participation! There will be a number of UMBC officials attending. If you have a conflict with the event, please let me know as soon as possible.

### Instructor Expectations

**Preparation:** I know how important strong preparation and familiarity with the material are to the quality of the class, and your satisfaction with the material. In that light, you can expect me to be prepared for each class. I will work to make Blackboard an effective environment for your learning as well. If you ever find that my preparation, organization, or use of technology is not providing you with the quality of learning that you expect, I welcome your feedback!

**Expectations:** I will provide you with clear expectations for your participation on both an individual and group level for the class. This will be true of the knowledge content presented in the class (and evaluated through exams), and the assignments and presentations that are required. Remember, while this class will require you to try your hand at a variety of media to deliver your health message, the message is much more important than your skill with the media.

**Feedback:** Lack of timely instructor feedback is a common complaint among students. I (and the teaching assistant) will make timely feedback a real priority. You have a number of deliverables in this class, and without timely feedback you will not be able to continue to move forward with your work. You can expect to receive feedback on submissions one week after they are turned in, at most. If this schedule is in any way restricting you from progressing, be sure to let me know. In addition you can count on productive and useful feedback that is delivered thoughtfully and constructively. We will not tell you what to do and we will not correct your work. We will, however, provide you with thoughtful critiques that are designed to empower you to think critically and improve your work. Accepting all in track changes does nothing to build your skill as a health communicator!

**Communication:** You can count on strong, timely, and clear communication from us. We will strive to answer emails, update Blackboard, stay organized, and keep grades as current as possible. You can expect to receive a response to an email within 24 hours (maybe longer on the weekend). If you do not hear back, be sure to email again! Sometimes things get lost in email, and once they fall off the front page they can be forgotten. I have a terrible memory, and a very full email inbox, so never feel like you are bothering me by emailing more than once. We are always willing to discuss student work or clarify feedback in person. Please make an appointment to do this. The classroom is not the right time or place. To make an appointment with the instructor, follow the link on Blackboard.

There may be times when email is not appropriate. Before emailing make sure to go through this checklist: Is this information I can find on my own? Is this something a classmate can help me with? Am I sending an attachment as a submission instead of submitting through Blackboard? Am I trying to schedule an appointment? If the answer is yes, you shouldn't be emailing me! If the answer is no, email is more than welcome.

If you ever feel that my communication style or timeliness are not adding to your learning experience please let me know.

## Course Policies

### Attendance

Regular attendance is expected and recommended for student success in this course. Our hybrid format means that we will already be meeting less frequently than many classes, so every minute of in class time will be valuable. I will work diligently to make our in class time rewarding and impactful to you as the student, and I will expect you to attend, participate, and help create a collaborative environment in class.

If you must miss class I would appreciate a quick email letting me know ahead of time. This is not a requirement, but a courtesy to me. If you miss class on the day of an exam or presentation I must have documentation in order to allow you any kind of make-up opportunity. I must also have prior notice; let me know no later than noon of that day if possible. If for some reason I must miss class I will let you know in advance as well.

### Lateness

On time attendance and submission of work is expected of all students. **Late submissions will receive a 10% deduction per day, with a maximum of 30%.** If you have a documented emergency that prevents you from submitting on time, please see me about making arrangements. As most of your work will be turned in as part of your group, I do not anticipate this being much of an issue. Make sure you have taken the time to do your part ahead of time, gone over everything as group, and submitted a cohesive project before the deadline!

If you must be late to class or leave early from class, please let me know ahead of time. I understand that life happens regardless of your school schedule (it happens to me as well).

If I must be late to class for any reason I will make sure that I contact you either through email or through the TA before the start of class.

### In class engagement and electronic device policy

We will be using electronic devices as part of the class environment. You are welcome to bring your laptops, tablets, smartphones, etc. to class. We will be using these devices as part of the in class discussions and workshops, not as distractions to what's happening in class. Please keep this in mind during every class. Not only does texting, facebooking, online shopping, etc. distract you from what's going on in class, it distracts everyone around you. Believe me, the reason I know about this is because your peers will let it slip!

If you have a legitimate emergency and must be available for a phone call or text, please let me know ahead of time, and please step outside the room to answer the phone or to text.

## Evaluation and Grades

Grades will be assigned for group and individual work. I understand that everyone is suspicious of group work and group grades. No one wants to receive a bad grade or do all the work because their group mates aren't pulling their weight. I will be grading individuals on both their individual work, and on their contributions to the group. I will also be grading the group itself on their cohesion and ability to work successfully as a group.

Each student's grades will be determined by the following:

Exams	30%	Presentation	10%
Individual assignments	25%	Attendance/Participation	10%
Group Assignments	25%		

### Exams

Students will be tested in class on the course material. The midterm and final exam grade together will comprise 30% of the total grade.

### Individual Assignments

Students will complete several individual assignments over the course of the semester. The bulk of this grade will come from the White Paper (10%) and the SMART Communication Plan (10%). Additional small and low value assignments will be presented throughout the semester. These small, formative assignments will comprise the remaining 5%.

**Please refer to the assignment documents on Blackboard for full instructions and rubrics!**

### Group Assignments

Students will be working in groups to produce several health communication products over the course of the semester. While these will be produced by the group, individual grades will be assigned for the products. Students will have a choice of which product they are responsible for, and the group will decide how to divide and delegate work for each product.

**Please refer to the assignment documents on Blackboard for full instructions and rubrics!**

### Presentation

Students will be presenting their communication program to the class, and in a campus wide event. The presentation grade is a separate grade from the assignment grade. While the assignment grade is evaluating the content of the communication, the presentation grade is evaluating the presentation (of both the material and the student) of the communication. All students must present, but not all presentations have to be verbal, in person presentations!

### Participation

Participation and attendance will be an important factor in each student's success in this class. I will quickly learn your names, notice when you are missing, remember who participated in class, etc... **If I send you an email about your improper use of electronics during class, you can assume that points are being deducted from this!** Participation will also be evaluated on your participation in your group. This grade will evaluate the group's effectiveness as a cohesive unit. Students will be graded on their ability to work together to solve problems, delegate work, meet deadlines, and communicate between each other. Just like in a real workplace, problematic employees may be fined or fired if they do not contribute to the group's success!

## University Policies

### Academic Integrity

*"By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UMBC's scholarly community in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest standards of honesty. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and helping others to commit these acts are all forms of academic dishonesty, and they are wrong. Academic misconduct could result in disciplinary action that may include, but is not limited to, suspension or dismissal. To read the full Student Academic Conduct Policy, consult the [UMBC Student Handbook](#) (page. 7), the Faculty Handbook (Section 14.4), or for graduate courses, the Graduate School website."*

Of particular concern is plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined as "taking and passing off as one's own ideas, writings, etc., of another" (Webster, 1983). In other words, plagiarism is theft of another's words and ideas. It constitutes serious academic dishonesty. Plagiarism can result from a student's failures to cite a source (e.g., of the ideas, writings, etc., of another that the student uses in his or her paper) or failure to appropriately block or use quotation marks (and an appropriate source citation) around directly quoted material.

This policy does not distinguish between **intentional and inadvertent plagiarism**. Nor does it distinguish between **drafts and final submissions**. Clearly, intentional plagiarism is a serious offense. Some students feel that inadvertent plagiarism is not a serious offense. It is, for at least two reasons. First, it is difficult (some may say impossible) to distinguish between intentional and inadvertent plagiarism. Second, inadvertent plagiarism suggests that students either have not paid attention to this policy or are willing to submit work that is carelessly and sloppily completed. In either event, plagiarism will be appropriately punished if it is found in any work for this course.

All students in the Health Administration & Policy Program are required to read and be familiar with the following UMBC Policies and procedures:

Statement of Values for Student Academic Integrity at UMBC [http://www.umbc.edu/undergrad\\_ed/ai/](http://www.umbc.edu/undergrad_ed/ai/)  
Policy and procedures for student academic misconduct  
[http://www.umbc.edu/undergrad\\_ed/ai/documents/ACC2011.pdf](http://www.umbc.edu/undergrad_ed/ai/documents/ACC2011.pdf)

Any case where academic misconduct has been identified will be subject to the policies and procedures for academic misconduct including course penalties (e.g., warning, counseling and grading penalties) and institutional penalties (e.g., probation, suspension or expulsion). All cases of academic misconduct, whether minor or major, will be reported to the Academic Misconduct Reporting Database and the Undergraduate Academic Conduct Committee (ACC).

### Student Support Services

UMBC is committed to eliminating discriminatory obstacles that disadvantage students based on disability. Student Support Services (SSS) is the UMBC department designated to receive and maintain confidential files of disability-related documentation, certify eligibility for services, determine reasonable accommodations, develop with each student plans for the provision of such accommodations, and serve as a liaison between faculty members and students regarding disability-related issues. If you have a disability and want to request accommodations, contact SSS in the Math/Psych Bldg., room 213 or at 410-455-2459. SSS will require you to provide appropriate documentation of disability. If you require accommodations for this class, make an appointment to meet with me to discuss your SSS-approved accommodations.



**Health Communications HAPP 398**  
**Weekly Outline, Spring 2016**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading Due</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
1	1-25	Introduction		
	1-27	What is Health Communication?	Ch 1, Essentials	
<b>Section A: Preparation</b>				
2	2-1	Theory	Ch 2,3,8, Essentials	Health video
	2-3	Theory		*CITI Training
3	2-8	Methods	Ch 4, Essentials	Behavior theory
	2-10	Research, Wrap up <i>Preparation</i>	Ch 9, Essentials	
<b>Section B: Planning</b>				
4	2-15	What to Communicate	Ch 5, Essentials	SOCO assignment
	2-17	Making a Plan	Ch 10, Essentials	
5	2-22	Making a Plan		
	2-24	Wrap up <i>Planning</i>		<b>2 page white paper</b>
<b>Section C: Message</b>				
6	2-29	Policy and Advocacy	Ch 6, Essentials	
	3-2	Review for Midterm		
7	3-7	<b>~~~Midterm Exam~~~</b>		<b>~~~Midterm Exam~~~</b>
	3-9	Health Literacy	Ch 7, Essentials	
<i>Spring Break</i>				
8	3-21	Patient Provider Communication	Ch 15, Essentials	<b>SMART plan</b>
	3-23	Emergency	Ch 16, Essentials	
9	3-28	Wrap up <i>Message</i>		
<b>Section D: Media</b>				
9	3-30	Multimedia	Ch 11, Essentials	
10	4-4	Media Strategies	Ch 12, Essentials	3 item project outline
	4-6	In class work day		
11	4-11	In class work day		
<b>Section E: Development</b>				
11	4-13	Development	Ch 13, Essentials	Projects: rough draft
12	4-18	Development		Daily outline, interview
	4-20	Work on projects: Peer feedback in class		Projects: peer
13	4-25	Work on projects: Instructor feedback in class		<b>Projects: instructor</b>
	4-27	<b>Presentation Day, 12-1 pm in the Public Policy Atrium, this is a WEDNESDAY!</b>		
	4-27	In class debriefing, regular class time		
<b>Section F: Evaluation</b>				
14	5-2	Evaluation	Ch 14, Essentials	
	5-4	Wrap up <i>Evaluation</i>		<b>Peer &amp; group evaluations</b>
15	5-9	Review for final		
16	5-18	<b>~~~Final Exam~~~</b>	1-3pm, regular classroom	

\*You cannot move forward unless CITI training is completed. In addition, we can only move forward as a class. Don't be late!