

Term Information

Effective Term Spring 2014

General Information

Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area Communication
Fiscal Unit/Academic Org School Of Communication - D0744
College/Academic Group Arts and Sciences
Level/Career Undergraduate
Course Number/Catalog 2596
Course Title An Introduction to Science, Risk, Environmental, and Health Communication
Transcript Abbreviation Sci, Rsk, Env Comm
Course Description This course provides a general introduction to the fields of science, risk, environmental and health communication from multiple perspectives including psychological, social, and cultural. Students will develop a prototype communication intervention or campaign to address a health, safety, or environmental issue drawing on theories and research covered in the course
Semester Credit Hours/Units Fixed: 3

Offering Information

Length Of Course 14 Week, 7 Week
Flexibly Scheduled Course Never
Does any section of this course have a distance education component? No
Grading Basis Letter Grade
Repeatable No
Course Components Lecture
Grade Roster Component Lecture
Credit Available by Exam No
Admission Condition Course No
Off Campus Never
Campus of Offering Columbus

Prerequisites and Exclusions

Prerequisites/Corequisites
Exclusions

Cross-Listings

Cross-Listings

Subject/CIP Code

Subject/CIP Code 09.0101
Subsidy Level Baccalaureate Course
Intended Rank Freshman, Sophomore

Quarters to Semesters

Quarters to Semesters

New course

Give a rationale statement explaining the purpose of the new course

The School of Communication is proposing a new minor and this course will serve as the required foundational course.

Sought concurrence from the following Fiscal Units or College

College of Public Health, School of Environment and Natural Resources

Requirement/Elective Designation

Required for this unit's degrees, majors, and/or minors

General Education course:

Cross-Disciplinary Seminar (597 successors and new)

The course is an elective (for this or other units) or is a service course for other units

Course Details

Course goals or learning objectives/outcomes

- 1. Know the range of contexts in which scholarship from communication, psychology, sociology, environmental studies, and health sciences can be applied to science, risk, environmental and health communication.
- 2. Understand and be able to explain how foundational and emerging theories and methods of communication, psychology, sociology, environmental studies, and health sciences can be used to improve health, safety, and environmental outcomes.
- 3. Effectively apply theory and research findings in science, risk and/or health communication to a practical health, safety, or environmental concern.

Content Topic List

- Risk perception & uncertainty (psychological & sociological approaches)
- Risk communication
- Development risk messages
- Approaches to science communication
- Public engagement and science
- Science and entertainment
- Science, health, and environmental literacy
- Environmental communication
- Media coverage of environmental issues
- Crisis communication
- Environmental advocacy
- Interpersonal and organizational health communication
- Diversity and cultural issues
- Media and health outcomes
- Health and environmental campaigns
- New communication technology and health, science, and environmental communication

Attachments

- GE Proposal for Comm 2596.docx: GE statement & assessment plan
(GEC Model Curriculum Compliance Stmt. Owner: Hughes, Sarah)
- Health Comm Survey syllabus - GE.docx: syllabus
(Syllabus. Owner: Hughes, Sarah)

Comments

- Please align the possible grade points with the grade assignment list. There is no grade of D- available at OSU.
Disability statement should be in a font larger than the rest of the text. *(by Haddad, Deborah Moore on 03/14/2013 02:39 PM)*

Workflow Information

Status	User(s)	Date/Time	Step
Submitted	Hughes, Sarah	03/14/2013 01:50 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	McDonald, Daniel Gary	03/14/2013 01:53 PM	Unit Approval
Revision Requested	Haddad, Deborah Moore	03/14/2013 02:39 PM	College Approval
Submitted	Hughes, Sarah	03/14/2013 03:03 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	McDonald, Daniel Gary	03/14/2013 03:05 PM	Unit Approval
Approved	Haddad, Deborah Moore	03/14/2013 06:28 PM	College Approval
Pending Approval	Nolen, Dawn Jenkins, Mary Ellen Bigler Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal Hogle, Danielle Nicole Hanlin, Deborah Kay	03/14/2013 06:28 PM	ASCCAO Approval

COMMUNICATION 2596

Introduction to Science, Risk, Environmental & Health Communication

Spring 2014

Time & Location: XXX
Instructor: XXX
Office hours: XXX
Credit Hours: 3

Course Description

This course provides a general introduction to the fields of science, risk, environmental and health communication from multiple perspectives – including psychological, social, and cultural. The course is designed to provide students with a general understanding of empirical research across a variety of contexts, including (but by no means limited to) cancer, infectious disease, recycling, climate change, and public safety. Over the course of the semester, students will complete a project in which they critically examine a health, safety, or environmental risk and develop a prototype communication intervention or campaign to address the issue drawing on theories and research covered in the course.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, engaged students can expect to:

1. Know the range of contexts in which scholarship from communication, psychology, sociology, environmental studies, and health sciences can be applied to science, risk, environmental and health communication.
2. Understand and be able to explain how foundational and emerging theories and methods of communication, psychology, sociology, environmental studies, and health sciences can be used to improve health, safety, and environmental outcomes.
3. Effectively apply theory and research findings in science, risk and/or health communication to a practical health, safety, or environmental concern.

General Education. Comm 2596 is a **GE Cross-Disciplinary Seminar** course.

Goals: Students demonstrate an understanding of the topic of interest through scholarly activities that draw upon multiple disciplines and through their interactions with students from different majors.

Cross-Disciplinary Seminar Expected Learning Outcomes

1. Students understand the benefits and limitations of different disciplinary perspectives.
2. Students understand the benefits of synthesizing multiple disciplinary perspectives.
3. Students synthesize and apply knowledge from diverse disciplines to a topic of interest.

Comm 2596 satisfies these learning outcomes through its coverage of multiple discipline's perspectives and theories on risk, science, environmental, and health including communication, psychology, sociology, environmental sciences, and the health sciences. Across the various topics covered in the course, students will synthesize the different perspectives on what constitutes risk, how to construct messages that effectively communicate risk, and the role of the media in shaping how people understand risk. The final project for the course involves students' synthesizing these various theoretical perspectives to development communication-based intervention that addresses a health, safety or environmental problem.

Readings

There is no textbook for this course. Readings for each class period are posted on Carmen.

Requirements

Grade Distributions. Grading will be calculated based on the following:

	Points
1. Attendance (only taken during final presentations)	40
2. In-class exams (200 total pts)	
Exam 1	100
Exam 2	100
3. Final Project (110 total pts)	
Paper topic	10
Paper outline	20
Final paper	80
4. Presentation of final project	50
Total	400

Grade Assignment

Currently, I anticipate that grades will be assigned using the following point system:

$\geq 372 = A$	$\geq 360 = A-$	
$\geq 348 = B+$	$\geq 332 = B$	$\geq 320 = B-$
$\geq 308 = C+$	$\geq 292 = C$	$\geq 280 = C-$
$\geq 268 = D+$	$\geq 252 = D$	$< 252 = E$

Course Requirements

1. This course is conducted as a lecture with discussion. As such, a critical portion of the learning occurs through the active discussion of the material in class meetings. Therefore, **attendance and participation** in class are strongly encouraged. It is also recognized that sometimes other commitments may take priority over this class. Students need to weigh their various responsibilities and make attendance decisions accordingly. To gain the most benefit from class time, it is strongly recommended that you read the assigned material prior to class.
2. Two closed book, **in-class exams** will be conducted during the semester. These will be a combination of multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions covering the readings most recently discussed in class. All material in the readings and lectures is covered in the exams, with more emphasis on material to which significant class time has been devoted. Exam dates are noted in the Course Calendar below. Make-up exams will only be offered to students with an excused absence on the date of the exam. Excused absences are serious circumstances beyond the student's control that are *appropriately documented*. These include university business, illnesses, death or illness of a close family member, and court appearances. Arrangements for the make-up and documentation of the absence must be provided to the instructor within one week of returning to class.
3. A **final writing project** will be due on the first day of project presentations. In this writing

project, the student will choose a health, safety, or environmental problem, conduct a review of the research literature related to communication approaches to that problem, and propose a communication-based intervention derived from research evidence. This could take the form of, for example, a public service campaign to increase cancer screenings, a training program for physicians in patient-centered communication, an effort to increase bicycle helmet usage, or an effort to reduce public littering. The type of intervention is limited only by the imagination of the individual student.

A. *Paper Topic*: This is a brief paper (1 page in length) that will introduce the topic of your final writing project. In this paper, you should define/explain the problem you've selected. Why is it an important topic to consider, particularly in the context of communication scholarship? Who does the problem affect? What are the goals of the campaign/intervention? This is due the 3rd week of class.

B. *Paper Outline*: You will submit a detailed outline of your paper (2-3 pages in length) that begins to construct the design of your campaign/intervention – theoretical/empirical justification, target audience, mode of delivery, message design, and so forth. Include 5 scholarly references from academic journals (*not* the popular press) to support your direction. This is due the 7th week of class.

C. *Final Paper*: The final paper (10 pages in length, plus references) will detail the design of your campaign/intervention and how it effectively addresses the problem in light of course readings, discussion and your own research outside of class. The final paper must cite at least 10 references, 6 of which must be from academic journals. This is due the 13th week of class.

All three writing assignments should adhere to the following guidelines:

- use Times New Roman font (12-point), be double-spaced, and have one inch margins
 - have a title page with the student's name, date, course number, and instructor name
 - have numbered and stapled pages
 - follow APA Style Guidelines for references and in-text citations
 - be proofread and spell-checked
 - be submitted as paper copies at the beginning of class
4. An *oral presentation* of the final project will be made during the last two weeks of class. Attendance is mandatory during the presentations. Each undocumented absence during the presentation of student projects will result in a loss of 10 attendance points.

Policies and Procedures

1. *Course readings and participation*. At a minimum, you should read assigned material prior to class, and be prepared to discuss what you have read. We will discuss material from the readings in class, but we will NOT cover *all* of the content from readings in class. You are responsible for learning and understanding all material from the readings and class presentations; thus, it is strongly recommended that you take notes while reading and bring questions to class and/or office hours.
3. *Technology in class*. All cell phones must be turned silenced during class time. Texting,

emailing and/or browsing the Internet during class will not be tolerated. Students will be asked to leave. If you have a personal emergency, you may of course use your phone. Please do the rest of the class the courtesy of leaving the class before initiating or answering any phone calls.

4. *Missed exams/late assignments.* Missed exams and late assignments will only be accommodated when the student provides an appropriate justification for missing the due date (i.e., sickness, family emergency, or university business). *All justifications must be documented by the appropriate authorities/offices.* Arrangements to make-up missed work must be made within *one week* of returning to class. Without a documented justification, papers submitted after the due date will be subject to a penalty of 10% per day.
5. *Grade disputes.* Students who have grade disputes should express those concerns to the instructor. A clear mistake or error in grading as a result of computation of scores (i.e. mathematical errors or clearly marked errors on multiple choice answers) will be quickly addressed. Any grade grievance based on substantive answers that may have been misinterpreted by the grader(s) will require a written letter to the instructor that describes the dispute and makes the case for the grade, which he or she considers most appropriate. This persuasive letter should include a description of why the grade that was given is considered inappropriate.
6. *Disabilities.* Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.
7. *Academic misconduct.* It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct http://studentlife.osu.edu/pdfs/csc_12-31-07.pdf.

Course Calendar

Week 1 Introduction Risk Perception (Psychological & Sociological Approaches)

Slovic, P. (1987). Perception of risk. *Science*, 236, 280-285.
A classic review article that provides an accessible and interesting introduction to risk perception research, the psychometric paradigm and risk characteristics from a psychological perspective.

Kasperson, J. X et al. (2005). The social amplification of risk: assessing fifteen years of research and theory. In J. X. Kasperson and R. E. Kasperson, *The social contours of risk—volume 1: Publics, risk communication and the social amplification of risk* (pp. 99-114). London: Earthscan.
Chapter reviews their fundamental work on how the communication of risk among different publics and stakeholders, including local communities, corporations and society-at-large, influences risk perception.

Week 2 Risk Communication

Fischhoff, B. (1995). Risk perception and communication unplugged: Twenty years of process. *Risk Analysis*, 15, 137-145.
This article nicely summarizes 7 developmental stages of risk communication from a psychological perspective.

Part I Selections. Lundgren & McMakin (2009). *Risk Communication: A Handbook for Communicating Environmental, Safety & Health Risks*.
First section of text presents multiple approaches to risk communication (e.g., mental models, crisis communication), basic principles and constraints from a communication and environmental science perspective.

Week 3 Basics of Developing Risk Messages

Gigerenzer, G. et al. (2007). Helping doctors and patients make sense of health statistics. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 8 (2), 53-92.

This article explains statistical illiteracy, reviews psychological research on numerical formats and offers recommendations for presenting basic risk information. This article summarizes research from psychology and health sciences.

Chapter 1: What Are Health Risk Messages? In K. Witte, G. Meyer & D. Martell (2001). *Effective Health Risk Messages* (pp. 1-10). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

This chapter defines fear appeals, implicit vs. explicit messages, types of threats, while offering interesting examples from popular culture. This chapter summarizes research from communication and health sciences

**Week 4 Basic Approaches to Science Communication
Public Engagement and Science**

Paper Topic

Bucchi, M. (2008). Of deficits, deviations, and dialogues: Theories of public communication of science. In M. Bucchi & B. Trench (Eds.), *Handbook of Public Communication of Science and Technology* (pp. 57-76). London: Routledge. The chapter takes a communication approach to the complexities of science communication.

Nisbet, M. C. & Scheufele, D. (2009). What's next for science communication? Promising directions and lingering distractions. *American Journal of Botany*, 96 (10), 1767-1778.

This article reviews research from the social sciences on how the public makes sense of and participates in societal decisions about science and technology. It also makes recommendations for improved public engagement. This paper takes a broad interdisciplinary approach to science communication.

Week 5 Science & Health Entertainment

Moyer-Gusé, E. & Nabi, R. (2010). Explaining the Effects of Narrative in an Entertainment Television Program: Overcoming Resistance to Persuasion. *Human Communication Research*, 36 (1), 26-52.

This article reviews narrative theory (i.e., EORM and E-ELM) and presents results from an experiment testing the persuasive effects of narrative on perceived vulnerability to unplanned pregnancy. This article takes a communication approach to the study of science and entertainment.

Dahlstrom, M. F. & Ho, S. S. (2012). Ethical considerations of using narrative to communicate science. *Science Communication*, 34(5), 592-617.

This article discusses three ethical considerations science communicators face when considering narrative as a communication technique for science policy contexts: (a) What is the underlying purpose of using narrative: comprehension or persuasion? (b) What are the appropriate levels of accuracy to maintain? (c) Should narrative be used at all?

EXAM 1*Exam 1*

Week 6 Science, Health, and Environmental literacy

Brossard, D. & Lewenstein, B. V. (2009). A Critical Appraisal of Models of Public Understanding of Science: Using Practice to Inform Theory. In L. Kahlor & P. Stout (Eds.), *Communicating Science: New Agendas in Communication* (pp. 11-39). New York: Routledge.

Chapter 7. 'Highlights.' Science and Technology: Public Attitudes and Understanding. In National Science Board (2012). *Science and Engineering Indicators 2012*. Arlington VA: National Science Foundation (NSB 12-01). *This reading takes an interdisciplinary approach to address how people understand science communication.*
<http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/seind12/c7/c7h.htm>

**Week 7 Environmental Communication – Values & Behavior
Media Coverage of Environmental Issues**

*Paper
Outline*

Cialdini, R. B. (2003). Crafting normative messages to protect the environment. *American Psychological Society*, 12(4), 105-109. *This brief article discusses the misguided tendency to try to mobilize action against a problem (e.g., health, environmental) by depicting it as regrettably frequent. The author defines descriptive and injunctive norms and presents experimental evidence in the context of littering, environmental theft and recycling. This article summarizes research from psychology.*

Feldman, L. et al. (2011). Climate on cable: The nature and impact of global warming coverage on Fox News, CNN, and MSNBC. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 17(1), 3-31. *This study examines climate change coverage on the three major cable news channels and assesses the relationship between viewership of these channels and beliefs about global warming. This article takes a communication perspective.*

Week 8 Crisis Communication – Health & Environmental Risks

Abkowitz M. Lessons learned the hard way: what catastrophes can teach us about planning, communication— and luck. *Vanderbilt Magazine* [online]. 2008. Available from URL: <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/magazines/vanderbilt-magazine/2008/10/lessons-learned-the-hard-way/>. *This article approaches risk communication from an interdisciplinary perspective.*

Rogers, E. M. (2004). Diffusion of news of the September 11 terrorist attacks. In A. M. Noll (Ed.), *Crisis communications: Lessons from September 11* (pp. 17-30). New York: Rowan & Littlefield. *This chapter focuses on diffusion of knowledge drawing from research in communication and psychology.*

Week 9 Environmental Advocacy

Cox, J. R. (2009). Chapter 7 - Environmental Advocacy Campaigns. In J. R. Cox *Environmental Communication and the Public Sphere* (2nd ed.) (pp. 225-254). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Bortee, D. et al. (2012). Framing environmental advocacy: a study of 30 years of advertising in *National Geographic Magazine*. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, 17 (2), 77-91.
Content analysis examines different frames across corporate and advocacy group advertisements. Findings suggest that advocacy groups may not be capitalizing on best practices in persuasive message design.

EXAM 2

Exam 2

Week 10 Interpersonal Health/Risk Communication Organizations & Health/Environmental Communication

Duggan, A. (2006). Understanding interpersonal communication processes across health contexts: Advances in the last decade and challenges for the next decade. *Journal of Health Communication*, 11, 93-108.
This article highlights findings from the previous decade of communication research and the ways previous findings serve as a theoretical and methodological foundation for more sophisticated analysis of interpersonal communication processes in health contexts.

Scherer, C., & Cho, H. (2003). A social network contagion theory of risk perception. *Risk Analysis*, 23, 261-267.
The central hypothesis of this study proposes the existence of risk perception networks--relational groupings of individuals who share, and perhaps create, similar risk perceptions. To test this idea, data were collected from individuals involved in a community environmental conflict over a hazardous waste site cleanup.

Week **Diversity & Cultural Issues****11**

Niederdeppe, J., Bigman, C. A., Gonzales, A. L. & Gollust, S. E. (2013). Communication about health disparities in the mass media. *Journal of Communication*. doi:10.1111/jcom.12003

This article summarizes the current state of knowledge about health disparities in the mass media by reviewing selected research on the content and effects of mass-mediated communication about health disparities, and identifying priorities for future research to better understand the role of communication in shaping public support and collective action to reduce health disparities.

Week **Media and Health Outcomes****12**

Holton et al. (2012). The Blame Frame: Media Attribution of Culpability About the MMR–Autism Vaccination Scare. *Health Communication*, 27(7), 690-701.

Findings from content analysis emphasize how news media may attribute blame in health risk communication and how that ascription plays a potentially vital role in shaping public behavior. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed. This paper draws heavily on research from communication and psychology. This article draws from public health and communication.

Niederdeppe, J. (2008). Beyond Knowledge Gaps: Examining Socioeconomic Differences in Response to Cancer News. *Human Communication Research*, 423-477.

Findings show news coverage about celebrity news events were more likely to promote information seeking among people with greater education than among those with less education - differences explained, at least in part, by greater health knowledge and community involvement. These factors may contribute to widening socioeconomic gaps in prevention behaviors. Strategies to address these gaps are discussed.

Maibach, E., Abrams, L., & Marosits, M. (2007). Communication and marketing as tools to cultivate the public's health: a proposed "people and places" framework. *BMC Public Health*, 7, 88–102.

The authors propose a framework – based on contemporary ecological models of health – to explain how communication and marketing can be used to advance public health objectives. This paper draws from health sciences and communication.

Week 13	Health and Environmental Campaigns	
	<p>Noar, S. M. (2006). A 10-Year Retrospective of Research in Health Mass Media Campaigns: Where Do We Go From Here? <i>Journal of Health Communication: International Perspectives</i>, 11(1), 21 - 42. <i>This article reviews the recent literature on health mass media campaigns and discusses their effectiveness in impacting public health.</i></p> <p>Chapter 5: Starting Out the Right Way: Formative Research. In K. Witte, G. Meyer & D. Martell (2001). <i>Effective Health Risk Messages</i> (pp. 1-10). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE. <i>This chapter provides instructions on how to turn theory into practice when developing a health risk media campaign and lays out the steps to formative research. This chapter draws from public health and communication.</i></p>	
Week 14	New Communication Technology & Health, Science & Environmental Communication	<i>Final Paper</i>
	<p>Cox, J. R. (2013). Chapter 7: Social Media and the Environment Online. In J. R. Cox <i>Environmental Communication and the Public Sphere</i> (3rd ed.) (pp. 177-206). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE. <i>This chapter draws from environmental science and communication.</i></p> <p>Signorini, A., Segre, A. M., Polgreen, P. M. (2011). The use of Twitter to track levels of disease activity and public concern in the U.S. during the influenza A H1N1 pandemic. <i>PLoS ONE</i> 6 (5), e19467. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0019467 <i>This article provides a unique perspective on the use of Twitter as a tool for tracking a pandemic as well as for assessing risk perceptions and information sharing through online social networks.</i></p>	
Finals Week	PRESENTATIONS	

GE Proposal for Comm 2596

Introduction to Science, Risk, Environmental & Health Communication

Introduction to Science, Risk, Environmental, and Health Communication (Comm 2596) is being proposed as a Cross-Disciplinary Seminar GE course. This course will be a required course for a new minor that the School of Communication is proposing on Science, Risk, Environmental, and Health Communication. There are no prerequisites for the course. How the course objectives, readings, topics, and assignments address the expected learning outcomes will be discussed for each of the three learning outcomes for Cross-Disciplinary Seminars.

1. Students understand the benefits and limitations of different disciplinary perspectives.

How do the course objectives meet this learning outcome? All three learning outcomes for the course address this learning outcome. The first outcome addresses students' need to understand the contributions of these various disciplines to the applied contexts of environmental, safety, and health. This will provide the foundation that students need in order to appreciate the benefits and limitations of each discipline's approach. The second outcome focuses on students' ability to comprehend how research across these disciplines can be used to improve health, safety, and environmental outcomes. This objective involves students' learning how to synthesize various perspectives in order to develop theoretical models to address various issues. The final outcome focuses on students being able to translate what they have learned into a proposed campaign for addressing a health, safety, or environmental issue. This assignment requires students to integrate what they have learned from the different perspectives into a coherent workable proposal which highlights the strengths and limitations of each of the various perspectives.

How do the readings assigned address this outcome? Currently, there is no textbook that provides the range of coverage that this course requires. Consequently, a series of readings has been put together to cover the various topics that are addressed. A narrative justifying the inclusion of each reading has been added to the syllabus.

How do the topics addressed meet this outcome? The early foundational topics such as risk perception (week 1), risk communication (week 2), public engagement and science (week 4), science, health, and environmental literacy (week 6), health and environmental risks (week 8), and diversity and cultural issues (week 11) involve the juxtaposition of the various disciplinary perspectives on these issues to highlight both the strengths and potential limitations of drawing from various perspectives to address the topics covered in the course.

How do the written assignments address this outcome? The major written assignment for this course is a campaign proposal that addresses a health, safety, or environmental issue. A major part of this assignment involves a review of the relevant literature to identify the strengths in the different approaches to campaign development. The goal of the literature review component of the paper is for students to explicitly identify how they have benefited from a consideration of the different disciplinary models.

2. Students understand the benefits of synthesizing multiple disciplinary perspectives.

How do the course objectives meet this learning outcome? The second and third learning objectives for the course explicitly address this learning objective. The second objective

involves explaining the different disciplinary perspectives on the topics addressed in the course. This is a necessary foundation if students are going to synthesize the knowledge they have acquired from the different perspectives covered in the course. The third objective specifically focuses on students being able to synthesize what they have learned across the different perspectives into a workable campaign proposal.

How do the readings assigned address this outcome? Currently, there is no textbook that provides the range of coverage that this course requires. Consequently, a series of readings has been put together to cover the various topics that are addressed. A narrative justifying the inclusion of each reading has been added to the syllabus.

How do the topics covered address this outcome? Many of the topics in the middle and later part of the course involve taking the knowledge that has been generated in psychology, environmental sciences, and health sciences and using it to better understand the issues faced by communication scholars and practitioners through the analysis of past campaigns or the development of new campaigns (Week 3, basics of developing risk messages; Week 7, media coverage of environmental issues; Week 9, environmental advocacy; Week 10, interpersonal and organizational health/risk communication; and Week 12, media and health outcomes).

How do the written assignments address this outcome? The campaign proposal necessitates students being able to synthesize what they have learned from the different disciplines to develop and justify what they propose to do in their campaign to address a health, safety, or environmental issue.

3. Students synthesize and apply knowledge from diverse disciplines to a topic of interest.

How do the course objectives meet this learning outcome? The application of knowledge from the different disciplines is addressed in the final learning objective for this course. Learning objective 3 focuses on the application of what students have learned across the semester to a practical problem involving a health, safety, or environmental concern.

How do the readings assigned address this outcome? Currently, there is no textbook that provides the range of coverage that this course requires. Consequently, a series of readings has been put together to cover the various topics that are addressed. A narrative justifying the inclusion of each reading has been added to the syllabus.

How do the topics covered address this outcome? The topics covered in the final weeks of the course focus on taking what has been learned from each of the different disciplines and fusing that knowledge into communication interventions aimed at addressing a health, safety, or environmental issue (Week 9, Environmental Advocacy; Week 13, health and environmental campaigns; Week 14, new communication technology and health, science, and environmental communication).

How do the written assignments address this outcome? The campaign proposal is specifically designed to address this learning object. To be successful, students must be able to integrate what they have learned across the course and proposal a communication campaign to address a

health, safety, or environmental issue of their choice. The goal of this paper is to get students to take the different perspectives and translate them into a potentially useful campaign.

A GE assessment plan, which explains how one will assess the effectiveness of the course in achieving the expected learning outcomes over time, rather than how individual student grades will be assessed.

Assessment of how well Comm 2596 is meeting the three learning goals outlined for GE Cross-Disciplinary Seminars will primarily be done via a set of questions on the midterms and the final, the final project, and the presentation of the final project. The midterms and the final will have a section of 10 multiple choice questions specifically aimed at testing students' comprehension of the three learning goals. The initial set of questions will be created by the course instructor in collaboration with the Director of Undergraduate Studies and the Undergraduate Committee (a standing committee). A score of 80% accuracy will be deemed a successful score.

In addition, a grading rubric for the written portion of the final assignment will involve criteria aimed at accessing the three learning outcomes. For example, students will be expected to identify the strengths and limitations of the disciplinary perspective they are drawing upon in developing their campaign (Learning Outcome 1). Additional criteria will focus on students' ability to synthesize what they have learned (Learning Outcome 2) as they develop a communication intervention (Learning Outcome 3). 80% of the students receiving a grade of C+ or higher on the final project and the presentation of the final project will be deemed a successful outcome. The instructor and Director of Undergraduate Studies will meet to discuss the results of the assessment and to discuss any shortcomings in students' performance.

In addition, students will be asked to complete a specialized evaluation of the course at the end of each semester. Included in that evaluation will be a series of six questions (two per goal) ascertaining students' perceptions of how well the course meets each of the three learning goals. A score of 4.0 (on a 1 to 5 scale) will be deemed a successful score. Students will also be asked an open ended question probing for ways to improve the course for each of the three goals. These responses will be used to identify potential ways to improve the course.

A copy of the multiple choice items, students' results for these items (de-individualized so that students cannot be identified), and the relevant student evaluations will be archived by the Undergraduate Committee. In addition, the grading rubrics that are used for the final project and the presentation of the final project will be kept on file. These materials will be made available to the instructor of this course as requested or deemed necessary by the Director of Undergraduate Studies.