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## SEMINAR IN HEALTH COMMUNICATION

Communication Studies 7910

Wednesdays 3:30-6:20

103 Coates Hall

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Instructor: Dr. Loretta L. Pecchioni  
Office: 124 Coates Hall  
Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 9:00 – 9:30 a.m. and 10:30 – 11:00 a.m. and by appointment  
Phone: 578-6724 or call the department office at 578-2172  
as graduate students, feel free (within reason) to call me at home, 768-9965 (yes, that's an old-fashioned land line)  
E-mail: lpecch1@lsu.edu

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Selected chapters from:

Thompson, T. L., Parrott, R., & Nussbaum, J. F. (Eds.) (2011). *The Routledge Handbook of Health Communication* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Routledge.

[probably less than half of the chapters will be assigned, so unless you plan to make health communication a primary interest, you might want to share the purchase with others in class]

Additional selected readings will be posted on Moodle – see course schedule for topics

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### Course Objectives

1. To expose students to theory and research regarding health communication broadly and with depth in selected areas.
  2. To enhance students' ability to critically analyze bodies of research, especially in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of lines of research.
  3. To provide students with the opportunity to actively participate in research about health communication.
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### Course Grading

Course grades will be based on individual performance during class discussions, leading class sessions on your research interest, your research project, and the final exam.

Class participation	100 points	25%
Class leadership on research topic	50 points	12.5%
Research project	150 points	37.5%
Final exam	100 points	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>400 points</b>	

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### Course Schedule (Tentative)

Topic areas are proposed, however, events in class may dictate that the schedule be adjusted to meet the needs and interests of class members. Reading assignment details will be posted on Moodle. Any changes from the proposed schedule will be announced in class and on Moodle.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic(s)</i>
Aug. 27	Introduction to this seminar and health communication with a focus on interpersonal aspects//select dates for discussion leadership
Sept. 3	Theory in interpersonal and health communication//IRB//discuss project ideas
Sept. 10	Methods in interpersonal health communication//discuss projects
Sept. 17	Interpersonal health communication in the clinic <i>Turn in project proposal for feedback</i>
<i>Sept. 19 Friday</i>	<i>special session with Gary Kreps 2:30-4:30 p.m. or 3:00-5:00 p.m.</i>
Sept. 24	Interpersonal health communication outside the clinic
Oct. 1	Dr. Pecchioni will share her research on caregiving, social support and decision making//project updates
Oct. 8	student topic//Barbara Cook Overton will discuss her project on emergency rooms and electronic medical records
Oct. 15	Dr. Melissa Thompson will discuss her research on physician and patient interactions//student topic
Oct. 22	Drs. Shaffer and Terry will discuss their projects on hospice care//more on theory and methods in health communication

Oct. 29	student topic//project updates
Nov. 5	student topic//student topic
Nov. 12	student topic//student topic
Nov. 19	student topic//student topic
Nov. 26	<i>Thanksgiving holiday – no class</i>
Dec. 3	Research project presentations
<b>Dec. 10</b>	<b><i>Wednesday @ 5 p.m. deadline for turning in research project papers and final exam materials</i></b>

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### ***Course Assignments***

### **Class Participation**

One of the great joys of a good graduate seminar is learning from your colleagues, therefore, each class member is expected to contribute to scholarly discussions about the content area(s) assigned for each week. As you are reading the assigned materials, you should identify questions or issues that will help to generate discussion that assists each class member in developing an understanding of the content area as well as larger issues regarding research and theory in the field of communication. Please feel free to ask questions for clarification. Asking for clarification points out areas where we might not have shared understanding and can be very fruitful areas of discussion. Contribution to these discussions will not be graded solely on the number of times an individual speaks, but on the quality of his/her comments and the value such comments provide to further the discussion.

As graduate students, you are expected to attend each and every class meeting. Missing class will adversely affect your class discussion grade. If you know that you will be missing class because of a conference, interview, or other scheduled reason, just let me know. If an emergency should arise that precludes you from attending class, try to let me know. I do not need the details, just the notification. I understand that when emergencies arise it may be difficult to notify me before class.

### **Class Leadership on Research Topic**

A major goal that I have for you is to end the semester with a research paper that is ready for submission to a conference (see the details below). In addition to completing your research project, you will be sharing key readings that inform your project. Each of you will have about one hour in class to talk about your project and the supporting literature. For your class period, you will want to identify those key articles and get me a copy at

least one week before your assigned day so that I can post files for everyone to read before you present in class. Your job is to not only talk about these specific readings, but also to provide the larger context and issues being addressed in your project. The rest of the class should read the articles and come prepared to talk about the issues raised and identify connections to the broader context of health communication.

### **Research Project**

Each student is expected to participate in a research project related to the content area of the class. The goal is for each student to have a convention-quality paper (about 25 pages) ready by the end of the semester. This project *must* be related to health communication in some meaningful way, and, therefore, must be approved by me. Feel free to talk with me about your project at any time (well, not in the middle of the night!).

For an individual project, each student will be responsible for developing a proposal for approval; conducting a literature review; collecting and analyzing data (using all those terms broadly); and, writing up a final, convention-quality (not defined broadly!) paper. Groups of students may decide to work together on the research project. For group projects, the group may decide to divide the work up among its members in any manner found appropriate by the group members, but a synopsis of the division of labor should be provided to me. The project proposal should be 3-5 pages outlining the questions that will be addressed and how you will go about answering those questions (methodology) as well as identifying relevant literature. I recommend that you include a proposed project timeline as well to help you stay on track to meet course deadlines.

### **Final Exam**

The final exam will consist of a variety of essay questions testing your knowledge on several levels. Questions will be designed to tap into basic knowledge about the content area as well as your ability to analyze and synthesize various aspects of research within the area. Questions will draw on the assigned readings, the class discussions, and the research project(s) conducted for the class. I will post the final questions on-line at least two weeks before your responses are due. Turn in your responses any time before the final deadline noted in the course schedule. You may submit them electronically or as a hard copy.

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### **Reasonable Accommodation**

Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him/her from fully demonstrating his/her abilities should contact me as soon as possible so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate your educational opportunities.

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