

Translational Communication Science

Thurs. 1:55 p.m. – 4:55 p.m

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Office Hours: By Appointment

Course Description & Goals

This interdisciplinary seminar is designed for graduate students with an interest in learning how to use communication principles to translate knowledge in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Medicine) disciplines for various stakeholder groups. We will specifically focus on how principles of communication science can inform the development of strategies that enhance the accessibility, understandability and usability of science in the public sphere. Course evaluation will be based on contributions to class discussion, assignments, and a term paper.

Required Reading

Readings are available through the course website.

Suggested Reading

Galvan, J. (2006). *Writing literature reviews: a guide for students of the behavioral sciences* (3rd ed.). Glendale, CA: Pyrczak Publishing.

American Psychological Association. (2011). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington DC: Author.

Course Requirements

Attendance and participation (30%): Students are expected to attend class regularly and engage actively and thoughtfully in discussion and activities. Since it is a graduate seminar, I expect that you will have done a careful, critical reading of all assigned articles for each week and will be ready to participate in class discussion. Participation also involves identifying at least two important questions or discussion points from across the readings each week. You must email your questions to the discussion leader for the week and me by noon on the Wednesday before class so that the discussion leaders will have enough time to put the questions together and prepare for class. You do not need to submit questions the week you are assigned as discussion leader. Discussion points can include a link and description of an article, TV show, blog, website, etc. that helps illustrate the concept under discussion during a given week. Because active participation is vital to the success of the class, students are permitted one excused absence for professional (e.g., conference presentation) or personal (e.g., illness) reasons. Additional absences will only be excused for documented emergencies (e. g., hospitalization).

Discussion Facilitator (10%): Each student will facilitate one half of a class discussion. As the facilitator, you are expected to help maintain the flow and focus of the seminar discussion on a specific course topic. On your assigned day, you should prepare a facilitator guide that describes your plan for the session. The guide should list open-ended questions based on the readings (some or all of these questions should be informed by the questions submitted by the class). Facilitators are encouraged to incorporate creative means of engaging the class in dialogue on the course topic (e.g., exercises, quizzes, videos). Your grade for this assignment will be based on both your preparation and your ability to cultivate a meaningful class discussion.

Collaborative Research Paper (30%): Balancing individual and collective effort is an important academic skill and vital to most translational research endeavors. For this assignment, students will identify a topic for a group research study. Each team member will work independently to collect data on a particular stakeholder group and write a brief report (15%). Students will then work collaboratively to analyze the data and produce a scholarly report of the findings (15%).

Grant Proposal (30%): Many translational communication efforts require a funding source. In this assignment, you will apply the skills you have learned in the course to develop a translational communication intervention to address a topic of personal interest. Especially rigorous projects may be done in pairs or groups (with prior approval). More detailed instructions will be provided in class.

Note: Course requirements, due dates, and activities are subject to change per announcements in class. You are responsible for being aware of any such changes announced in class.

Course Policies

Missed or late assignments: Extensions for missed assignments will *not* be given (i.e., if you are late on an assignment, you will receive a zero on that exam or assignment). The only exceptions to this policy will be documented emergencies (e. g., hospitalization). If, at any point, you are confused about assignments, expectations, or are getting lost in the course material, please set up a time to meet with me.

Class participation: Efforts to participate must help facilitate an environment that is comfortable for all. For this reason, it is expected that all students (1) display respect for all members of the classroom – including the instructor and other students, (2) pay attention to and participate in all class sessions and activities; (3) avoid unnecessary disruption during class time (e.g., having private conversations, texting and/or chatting on the computer, doing work for other classes, visiting websites unrelated to the course); and (4) avoid racist, sexist, homophobic or other negative language that may unnecessarily exclude members of our campus and classroom. This is not an exhaustive list of behaviors; rather, they represent the minimal standards that help make the classroom a productive place for all concerned. Final course grades may be reduced by 2% each class in which you engage in these sorts of behaviors.

Electronic devices: All cellphones and other electronic devices (including laptops and tablets) need to be turned off during class. Students who violate the policy without permission of the instructor will be asked to leave class and will be considered absent for that day.

Academic integrity: Academic honesty is important at the University of Florida. All students are expected to practice the University of Florida Honor Code: "We the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity." For all work submitted for credit, including homework, in-class assignments and examinations, the following pledge is implied, "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor. Please see the plagiarism document in the Graduate Division, and be sure that you have signed it and it is on file.

Written Work: There are expectations that will be applied across all graded work. All written work should demonstrate your familiarity with the issues or concepts under discussion. Criteria for evaluation include: (a) scope and focus of your work, (b) conciseness and clarity, (c) organization, (d) knowledge of the topic, (e) depth of the investigation, (f) writing style, and (g) utilization of outside sources. **All written assignments must be typewritten and conform to APA style guidelines** (unless otherwise indicated). Please use double spacing, one inch margins, and a font that is reasonable size (e.g., Helvetica or Times New Roman 12 point font).

Grading: Graduate coursework should generally be at the B or better level, especially for doctoral candidates; please see me if it appears your work is dropping below that level. A C or lower suggests a serious problem. Final grades will be based on the following 100-point scale: 90-100=A, 80-89=B, 70-79=C, 60-69=D, and 0-59=E. Please note that pluses or minuses are not used.

Academic support: Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/). Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter. Please schedule a time to present the letter and discuss specific needs with me privately.

Evaluations: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

Resources

National Graduate Student Crisis Line A recent article in the Chronicle of Higher Education highlighted the stresses of graduate study and resources for grad students. There is a 24-hour

National Graduate Student Crisis Line staffed by counselors who also operate the BoysTown National Hotline. The National Graduate Student Crisis Line was started in 1999 as a resource to help grad students adjust to the demands and stresses of grad school. They also have various resources on their website at <http://www.gradresources.org/>. The 24-hour toll-free number is 1-800-GRAD-HLP ([1-800-472-3457](tel:1-800-472-3457)).

UF Counseling and Wellness Center: The UF Counseling and Wellness center offers individual counseling. Students are eligible for counseling services if registered for classes in the current semester. Individual sessions are offered on a short-term basis (usually 1-12 appointments), often weekly or every other week. Fee for services is covered by the tuition that registered students pay for that semester. <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575.

Tentative Course Schedule

This schedule represents a tentative outline of the course readings and assignment due dates. I reserve the right to modify the schedule as needed. Any changes to the course schedule will be announced during class.

Week 1: Introduction to the seminar (Jan. 5)

Introductions and overview of the course. No assigned reading.

Week 2: Introduction to translational sciences (Jan. 12)

Week 3: The role of communication in translational science (Jan. 19)

Week 4: Models of knowledge translation (Jan. 26)

Week 5: Scientific experts as stakeholders: Perspectives on the public and media (Feb. 2)

Week 6: Citizens as stakeholders: Public engagement and citizen science (Feb. 9)

Week 7: Individual Meetings (Feb. 16)

Week 8: Designing interventions: Content and linguistic considerations (Feb. 23)

Week 9: Designing interventions: Visual and design strategies (March 2)

Week 10: Designing interventions: Interactive and informal strategies (March 9)

SPRING BREAK!! (March 16)

Week 11: Participant recruitment as translational communication (March 23)

Week 12: Dissemination and implementation as translational communication (March 30)

Week 13: Pulling it all together: What does translational scholarship look like in practice? (April 6)

Week 14: Addressing health disparities using translational communication strategies (April 13)

Week 15: Course wrap-up (April 20)

Final Exam

There will be no final exam in this seminar. *Grant proposals must be submitted by 5:00 pm on Friday, April 21st.* Papers received after 5:00 pm will be considered one day late. Final paper grades will be reduced by one letter grade for each day they are late, including weekends.