



UT PERMIAN BASIN

COMM 4351 783
Health Communication
Fall 2025 Session 8W1
Delivery Method: Online

Instructor Information



Name: Dr. Elizabeth Stephens
Email: stephens_e@utpb.edu
Phone: 901-654-8923
Office Location: Online Only
Office Hours: Monday - Thursday, 1 pm - 3 pm

Web Conference Hours

By Teams and/or phone appointment Monday-Thursday.

Please email Dr. Stephens to schedule a time if you would like to discuss course overview, assignments, or grades. Allow 24 hours (after a grade has been placed) to set up a meeting regarding a grade; this will allow me adequate time to review the completed grading rubric and provide in-depth feedback during our meeting.

All meetings to discuss an upcoming assignment need to be set up at least 24 hours before the assignment deadline (or by the Friday before the deadline if the assignment is due on a Sunday night). This means that you will need to email me at least 48 hours before the assignment deadline to ensure that our phone and/or Skype meeting is set up well before the deadline.

My email and Canvas Messenger are both linked to my cellphone to ensure that I can receive student communication as quickly as possible.

Always reach out to me with any questions. I am a resource and guide for you in this course.

Dr. Stephens

Course Description

Surveys theory research and current issues in the field of health communication. Topics of discussion include communication between patients and providers cultural and rhetorical concepts of illness and health; media messages and health campaigns; and communication in health care organizations.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

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Course Information

Class Location: Online

Student Learning Outcomes

- Identify the stakeholders in specific health care situations, along with their needs and values.
- Compare and contrast definitions of illness, health, and health care in various cultural models.
- Discuss ethical concerns in the practice of health communication, particularly with respect to power differences between communicators.
- Explain how the context of health communication affects interpersonal interaction among stakeholders.
- Determine appropriate research methods to use in basic and applied health communication studies.
- Evaluate a health promotion campaign for its rhetorical effectiveness and ethicality.
- Apply one or more theories of communication, sociology, psychology, or related discipline to an analysis of a current issue in health care.

- Describe how the structure and communication patterns of health care organizations affect care providers, patients, and other stakeholders.

UTPB Bookstore

[Bookstore link](#)

This link will take you directly to the official UTPB bookstore page for this course. Please note, you are welcome to make purchases from any supplier of your choice.

Important Academic Dates

UTPB [Academic Calendar](#)

Graded Material

Course Activity	Points	Percentage of Grade
Syllabus Quiz	10	1%
Module 1 Quiz	80	6.20%
Module 2 Quiz	80	6.20%
Module 3 Quiz	80	6.20%
Module 4 Quiz	80	6.20%
Module 5 Quiz	80	6.20%
Module 6 Quiz	80	6.20%
Week 1 Discussion Board	100	7.70%
Week 2 Discussion Board	100	7.70%
Week 4 Discussion Board	100	7.70%
Week 5 Discussion Board	100	7.70%
Position Paper #1	200	15.50%
Position Paper #2	200	15.50%
	1290	100%

Grading Scale

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Letter Grade	Description
A (93-100)	Excellence in the above categories. Far exceeds the requirements of the assignment.
A- (90-92)	Excellence in nearly all the above categories. Exceeds the requirements of the assignment.
B+ (87-89)	Excellence in most of the above categories. Meets all assignment requirements and exceeds some of them.
B (83-86)	Excellence in some, but not all of the above categories. More than an adequate response to the assignment.
B- (80-82)	Demonstrates a moderately high level of competence in the above categories. Response to the assignment is slightly more than adequate.
C+ (77-79)	Satisfactory completion of the content, structure, and originality of the assignment. Response is adequate; meets minimal requirements with minor errors.
C (73-76)	Satisfactory completion of the content and structure of the assignment. Adequate response; meets minimal requirements but with noticeable errors.
C- (70-72)	Satisfactory completion of the content of the assignment, but may demonstrate a lack of understanding of some elements. Adequate response; meets minimal requirements but with distracting errors.
D (60-69)	A passing grade with significant errors. Poorly thought out or poorly supported concepts and response to the assignment.
F (50)	Does not adequately meet major requirements of the assignment. Substantially missed major objectives or parts of the assignment. Contains significant errors.
No credit (0)	Assignment was not submitted by the due date or was determine to violate academic integrity policies.

**Unless otherwise stated, all materials, activities, and assessments are required and are not optional. Student work is not graded on a curve. Your work will be evaluated on its content, organization, writing and presentation, originality, analysis, and understanding, as described in the following table.*

University Policies

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Students with Disabilities: The University of Texas Permian Basin in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provides “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities. Only those students, who an Instructor has received an official Letter of Accommodation (LOA) sent by the Office of ADA for Students, will be provided ADA academic accommodations.

ADA Officer for Students: Amber Lucero, Director of Student Emergency and Accessibility Services

Address: 4901 E. University, Odessa, TX 79762

Student Activity Center (SAC) Room #200D

Voice Telephone: 432-552-4602

Email: ada@utpb.edu

For the accessibility and privacy statements of external tools used within courses, go to [Accessibility and Privacy Statements](#).

Sexual Harassment/Sexual Misconduct Policy

The University of Texas Permian Basin (the University) is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act), Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), and Clery Act. Sexual Misconduct, Retaliation, and other conduct prohibited under this Policy will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action.

The University will promptly discipline any individuals or organizations within its control who violate this Policy. The University encourages you to promptly report incidents that could constitute violations of this Policy to the Title IX Coordinator. The complete Sexual Harassment/Sexual Misconduct Policy can be found [here](#).

You may report incidents of sexual misconduct to any University employee. They are obligated to report any incident to the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Coordinator.

You may also contact:

- The UTPB Police Department at 432-552-2786
- The Title IX Coordinator at 432-552-2697 or TitleIXCoordinator@UTPB.edu.
- The Dean of Students at 432-552-2600
- Reports can also be made via the University Complaint Portal: [UTPB Complaint Management](#)

A **confidential reporting option is available**. Please contact UTPB's Counseling Center at 432-552-3365 or 432-552-2367 or stop by MB 1150.

Scholastic Dishonesty

“Scholastic Dishonesty” is any form of cheating or plagiarism that violates the Student Code of Conduct. Scholastic dishonesty or academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to give unfair advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two [2] courses without the prior permission of the instructor, and providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment), or the attempt to commit such an act. The Student Code of Conduct provides students fair notice of conduct considered unacceptable at The University of Texas Permian Basin and which may be the basis for disciplinary action. This policy provides the procedures to be following when student disciplinary action may need to be implemented and outlines the appeals process. The Student Code of Conduct is available online at: <https://www.utpb.edu/life-at-utpb/student-services/dean-of-students/student-code-of-conduct>

Student Success at UTPB

UT Permian Basin offers numerous services to help you reach your academic goals. Available both in the Success Center on the 2nd Floor of the Mesa Building (<https://www.utpb.edu/academics/advising-and-support/student-success-center/index>), and online, UTPB Student Success offers the following services to all students:

- O.W.L. (Online Writing Lab) - Submit essays that need to be revised by one of our tutors to owl@utpb.edu.
- Tutoring – For both online and in person tutoring, please use EAB to create an appointment. (Utpb.campus.eab.com) Sign in using UTPB credentials.
- SI/PLTL Sessions - If available for your class, will be communicated to you by the mentor assigned to your class section and students can communicate to their SI or PL through Canvas.
- Peer Mentoring - Incoming freshmen can be paired with a peer mentor who will help you navigate your first year on campus.

- SSC Computer Lab - Come take advantage of the state-of-the-art computers available at the Student Success Center.

Please email success@utpb.edu for more information.

Student Support Services

For more information on academic, technical, and support services for UTPB students, please see the [Online Student Services](#).

Course Modalities

Both the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) provide standard definitions for basic course types/modalities that have informed the following adopted course definitions.

Online Courses are those in which more than 85 percent of the planned instruction occurs online/virtually (asynchronously) when students and faculty are not in the same place. A fully online course is one in which mandatory in-person meetings occur no more than 15% of the planned instructional time.

Remote Courses are ones in which students, while not required to physically come to campus to attend in-person classes, are required to “attend” virtually/remotely (synchronously) during scheduled days and times, with students expected to log in and participate in the lecture via video conferences.

Hybrid Courses are courses in which the majority (more than 50% but less than 85%) of the planned instruction occurs when students and instructor(s) are not in the same place. This form of instruction offers a mix of on-campus/in-person and remote/online/electronic learning.

HyFlex Courses are those which, like hybrid courses, offer a mix of on-campus/in-person and remote/online/electronic learning. These courses, however, do not require student authentication since at least 50% of the planned instruction occurs when students and instructor(s) are in the same place.

Face-to-Face/In-Person Courses are those in which more than 85 percent of the planned instruction occurs when students are in the same place with an instructor(s).

End-of-Course Evaluation & Instructor Evaluation

Every student is encouraged to complete an end of course evaluation survey provided by UTPB. During the last two weeks of class, there will be an announcement in Canvas, an email, and a button in your course navigation that will take you to any available surveys.

The survey is anonymous and your responses are confidential. Your feedback is critical to us and to your instructor as we strive to improve our offerings, and our support of you, the students.

Disclaimer & Rights

Information contained in this syllabus was to the best knowledge of the instructor considered correct and complete when distributed for use in the beginning of the semester. However, the instructor reserves the right, acting within the policies and procedures of UTPB to make changes in the course content or instructional techniques without notice or obligation. The students will be informed about the changes, if any.

Distance Education Policy

Preparation for Emergencies

Computer Crash

Not having a working computer or a crashed computer during the semester will NOT be considered an acceptable reason for not completing course activities at a scheduled time. NOTE: Identify a second computer before the semester begins, that you can use when or if your personal computer crashes. Limited Loaner Laptops are available through the J. Conrad Dunagan Library.

Complete Loss of Contact

If you lose contact with course connectivity completely (i.e. you cannot contact me via Canvas or email), you need to call the instructor, and leave a message regarding connectivity loss and your contact information.

Lost/Corrupt/Missing Files

You must keep/save a copy of every project/assignment on an external drive, UTPB Outlook 365 OneDrive, or personal computer. In the event of any kind of failure (e.g. virus infection, student's own computer crashes, loss of files in cyberspace, etc.) or any contradictions or problems, you may be required to resubmit the files.

Distance Education Courses and Student Identity Authentication Requirements and Policy

SACSCOC defines a distance education course as one in which more than 50 percent of the planned instruction occurs when students and instructor(s) are not in the same physical place. Distance

education courses, therefore, include online, remote, and hybrid courses as defined above. Per SACSCOC and University policy, all distance education courses are required to follow our Distance Education Student Authentication Policy procedures (please see below), and these requirements and policies must be stated in the course syllabus. Further, any projected additional student charges associated with verification of student identity must be indicated on the courses schedule and course syllabus.

The Distance Education Student Authentication Policy does not apply to Hyflex Courses--those in which at least 50% of the planned instruction occurs when students and instructor(s) are in the same place--and Face-to-Face/In-Person Courses--those in which more than 85 percent of the planned instruction occurs when students and instructor(s) are in the same place. Student authentication and identity verification in these courses may be accomplished by in-person attendance monitoring as well as through in-class instructor proctored examinations and other assessments. These same "in-class" authentication procedures also may be employed in hybrid courses, but in the case of these defined distance education courses, they must be documented on the course syllabus as described below.

Distance Education Student Authentication Policy and Syllabus Requirements

UT Permian Basin's Distance Education Student Authentication Policy requires the University to employ processes (documented in each distance education syllabus) to verify that each student who registers for a distance education course is the same student who participates in, completes, and receives credit for the course.

The policy requires faculty members teaching distance education courses to employ at least two methods of verification to ensure student identities. The first method of verification is accomplished by the student logging into Canvas, our learning management system. To access all UTPB courses, students must login to Canvas uniqueness personal identifying username and secure password. This is the primary method of student identity verification. The Distance Education Student Authentication Policy requires at least one additional student identification method within the distance learning course that has been determined and approved by the faculty or academic program. The second method of authentication must be explicitly stated in the syllabus. The second method of student authentication maybe:

- Proctored exams using an approved photo ID*.
- Presentation of approved photo ID through a webcam and optional levels of proctoring during assessment.
- Field or clinical experiences using an approved photo ID.
- Synchronous or asynchronous video activities using an approved photo ID.
- In hybrid distance education courses, which have an in-person meeting component, the secondary method of student authentication may be accomplished (as is it may be done in

hyflex and face-to face-courses) by in-person attendance monitoring as well as through required in-class instructor proctored examinations and other assessments.

- Other Technologies or procedures, etc. (which must be detailed in the syllabus).

If faculty require secondary method of verification for which students are charged a fee(e.g. face-to-face proctoring at an off-campus site that charges a fee), this notification must be stated on the course schedule and in the course syllabus as well.

*Approved photo identifications include passports, government issued identification, driver's licenses, military ID from DoD; dual credit and early college high school students use school district identifications.

Generative AI Content Policy

UT Permian Basin Faculty recognize the innovative potential of generative AI. We also recognize that generative AI can be used as a substitute for critical thinking and plagiarism, and that its use may be more appropriate in some learning experiences than in others.

Use of generative AI in this course is allowed within the guidelines listed here:

When a generative AI is used, include the direct link to the ChatGPT with the assignment for the instructor to view the AI's input.

If the use of generative AI is discovered in student work that is out of compliance with the policy of this course, the submitted work will be subject to penalty under the plagiarism policy.

Class Schedule

Date	Name	Event Type	Points
	Cafe/Just for Fun	Discussion	0
	Extra Credit Points	Assignment	0
	General Questions and Comments	Discussion	0

Date	Name	Event Type	Points
8/31/25	Introductions	Discussion	0
8/31/25	Required ID Authentication	Assignment	0
9/7/25	Module 1 Discussion Board: Establishing a Context for Health Communication	Discussion	100
9/8/25	Syllabus Quiz	Quiz	10
9/21/25	Module 2 Quiz: The Roles of Patients and Professional Caregivers	Quiz	80
9/28/25	Module 3 Quiz: Sociocultural Issues	Quiz	80
9/28/25	Position Paper #1: Sociocultural Issues	Assignment	200
10/5/25	Module 4 Discussion Board: Coping and Health Resources	Discussion	100
10/5/25	Module 4 Quiz: Coping and Health Resources	Quiz	80
10/12/25	Module 5 Discussion Board: Communication in Health Organizations	Discussion	100
10/12/25	Module 5 Quiz: Communication in Health Organizations	Quiz	80

Date	Name	Event Type	Points
10/17/25	I Completed My Course Evaluation (Extra Credit Opportunity).	Discussion	0
10/17/25	Module 6 Quiz: Media, Public Policy, and Health Promotion	Quiz	80
10/17/25	Position Paper #2: Media, Public Health & Crisis Communication	Assignment	200

Course Policies

Discussion Board

Discussion Board is primarily for discussing course related topics and issues.

Best practices are:

- Read all message postings in online discussion.
- Respond to the question directly
- Reply to minimum of two other student posts.
- Use a person's name in the body of your message when you reply to their message.
- Avoid postings that are limited to 'I agree' or 'great idea', etc.
- Ensure responses to questions are meaningful, reflective.
- Support statements with concepts from course readings, refer to personal experience, examples.
- Follow **Rules of Behavior (below)**.

Rules of Behavior

Discussion areas are public to every student in this class (including your instructor) who will see what you write. Please pay attention to the language you use and adhere to the following guidelines:

- Do not post anything too personal.
- Do not use language that is inappropriate for a classroom setting or prejudicial in gender, race, or ethnicity.
- Do not use all caps in the message box unless you are emphasizing (it is considered shouting).
- Be courteous and respectful to other people on the list
- Do not overuse acronyms like you would use in text messaging. Some of the list participants may not be familiar with acronyms.
- Use line breaks and paragraphs in long responses.
- Write your full name at the end of the posting.
- Be careful with sarcasm and subtle humor; one person's joke is another person's insult.

Make-Up/Late Submission Policy

Timeliness is one component of professionalism, and because this is an accelerated course, your learning and your classmates' learning depends on your timely participation. Assignments submitted after the deadline delay your progress in the course and can diminish your classmates' learning opportunities.

I will accept late papers only up to days past their due dates. Once a discussion board closes, it cannot be made up for credit.

You are welcome to submit work early; however, any work submitted early will be graded with the other submissions for that assignment. If the assignment allows for multiple submissions, I will grade the submission with the latest date unless you request otherwise in writing.