ENG 207: Health Science Writing
Summer 2021
June 28, 2021 – July 24, 2021
Virtual, Asynchronous

instructor

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Because this is an online, asynchronous course, office hours are available by request and will be held over Microsoft Teams. Please email me to arrange a time to talk and do not be afraid to request a time to meet. I often have more time available than students think!

course catalog description

3 credit undergraduate course.
Instruction and practice in writing reports and research papers for health science professions. Particularly appropriate for students in health-related fields, including pre-medical, dental, etc.

course description

English 207 introduces the theory and practice of health science writing. While it will prove interesting and useful to students from many majors, its target audiences are students in the College of Health Sciences, the College of Nursing, Pre-Medicine, Dental, and other medical fields.

This past decade, the healthcare industry has undergone a transformation with *where*, *how*, and *why* writing happens. For example, what health and medical professions conceive of as "documentation" or "charting" IS writing, even though practitioners call it by another name. And the technologies by which such writing is happening is also changing – drastically. Additionally, most writing in healthcare settings is now also multimodal, incorporating textual, digital, visual, and aural content (telehealth, m- and e-health, etc.). Multimodal platforms of communication (Instagram, YouTube channels, and Facebook) are also contributing to how health information is circulated, consumed and experienced in the world. As such, this course

focuses on technical, professional, and popular communication in and about the health sciences. Its theme is professional identify formation – what does it mean to act, speak, and think like a professional? How does one manage the transition from layperson to professional? And how can writing and communication work to assist in this transition?

To answer this question, we start from the assumption that good communication is essential to positive outcomes for all stakeholders in the health science fields, and that good communication requires a comprehensive understanding of the contemporary health system. Students in the class will read, discuss, and consider the rhetorical situation of when, who, and how writing is used in healthcare. To achieve these goals, students will be exposed to research strategies, rhetorical theory, multimodal composition, and more. This comprehensive approach is designed to help you understand and enlarge all aspects of your professional identity.

course goals

- Understand health communication from an interdisciplinary/genre perspective
- Understand the rhetorical construction of health information
- Practice communicating health information to particular audiences
- Recognize how health information/decisions rely on writing and rhetoric practices
- Develop communication skills that support a professional identity in a health field

course texts

- Access to your UWM Canvas account
- Access to your UWM email
- Access to Microsoft Teams
- Any other texts will be made available via PDF and uploaded to Canvas

course modules

Health Communication Persona (Week 1: June 28th – July 3rd)
Health Communication Field Report (Week 2: July 5th – July 10th)
The Translation of Health Information (Week 3: July 12th – July 17th)
The Application of Health Communication (Week 4: July 19th – July 24th)

asynchronous online approach

This is an online, asynchronous course which means we will not meet all together as a class. Rather, the course will be structured each week with a series of tasks, objectives, and to-do's meant for you to complete.

To aid this approach, each Monday (when the new module begins), I will post a video overviewing the objectives and goals that we are working on during that week of the course. The weekly videos will be about 10-20 minutes in length but will provide context as to what to work on, how to use some of the course material available to you, and overview weekly course assignments.

If, at any time, you feel as if you are getting behind on this course or feel lost as to what we are discussing, please reach out sooner than later. Taking an online summer course has its inherent rewards but also can be challenging to prioritize. If you feel as if you are not able to best prioritize this class, we should talk and come up with a system to help you reorganize and succeed. Please remember that even though we are not meeting face-to-face, I am still accessible and can be contacted via email at (novotnmt@uwm.edu).

*That said, I do have a toddler and so I may not be able to reply immediately in the evening hours. I will try, however, to do my best to respond within a 48-hour time period.

course assignments

There are four major assignments that will ground our work in this course. Each of these build upon each other and as such are in a particular order. This means you shouldn't "skip" assignment 1 and begin with assignment 3 because you won't yet have the information available to you. What this means is that this course is "paced" by the week with due dates largely falling on "Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturdays". See the course schedule (further down) for more information.

Assignment 1: The Health Communication Persona (25 pts)

- This assignment invites students to research how they may use and/or encounter health communication. Many in this class are planning for a career in the health sciences or related field. The persona is a fictional document (based on credible research) that overviews how and why health communication matters to your field/area of study. More details will be explained on the assignment sheet.

- Due to Canvas by 11:59 pm CST on Saturday July 3rd.

Assignment 2: The Health Condition Field Report (25 pts)

- This assignment asks students to gather information about health conditions/decisions that relate to their field/area of study. As experts in the field, you may be expected to communicate to others (who have less knowledge/experience) about a particular health condition and/or related health decision. This is where "best practices" in health communication enter the related fields of health science. As such, this assignment asks you to investigate a particular health condition or decision and describe some of the

challenges in communicating about this condition/decision. (To be clear, this is **NOT** a research paper.) More details will be explained on the assignment sheet.

- Due to Canvas by 11:59 pm CST on Saturday July 10th.

Assignment 3: The Translation of Health Information (30 pts)

- This assignment builds off of assignment 2 (above) and calls upon students to incorporate visual design principles and layperson language to effectively and concisely communicate about the health condition/decision they researched in assignment 2. In essence, this assignment is an opportunity to translate the health condition/decision into a well-organized, information forward deliverable for a particular audience. The class will gain knowledge about visual design and effective health writing in this assignment. More details will be explained on the assignment sheet.

- Due to Canvas by 11:59 pm CST on Saturday July 17th.

Assignment 4: The Application of Health Communication (15 pts)

- Finally, this assignment concludes the course and asks students to "test" and evaluate how effective their health information deliverable was in communicating about a health condition/decision. Students will user test their deliverable (created in assignment 3), revise their deliverable based on their user test(s), and reflect on the revisions made and how those enhanced the deliverable's communication. More details will be explained on the assignment sheet.

- Due to Canvas by 11:59 pm CST on Saturday July 24thth.

Discussion & Virtual Engagement in the Course (5 pts)

- You will be expected to post every Thursday to the discussion board around a specific question/theme that Maria posts. You will be notified of these moments in Maria's weekly overview video.

- You also need to post to the discussion board by Monday, June 28th.

- Please see the course schedule for specific information.

grading scale

All assignments are graded on a point scale. Students can learn how many points they earned per assignment on Canvas. Additionally, each assignment will have an "assignment description sheet" and will contain specific information about the purpose and objective of the assignment. I will discuss specific evaluation criteria for each assignment on that sheet and during my weekly overview videos. As always, if you have questions about a grade or an assignment, please let me know.

In this class, you can earn up to 100 points. Your grade will be based on the number of points you earn in this course:

93-100 points = A
90-92 points = A-
87-89 points = B+
83-86 points = B
80-82 points = B-
77-79 points = C+
73-76 points = C
70-72 points = C-

67-69 points = D
63-66 points = D+
60-62 points = D-
59 and below = F

accommodations & accessibility statement

I strive to make my classes as accessible as possible. Not only will I work with you if you need accommodations, but I dedicate myself to learning all I can about inclusive teaching with the goal that all of your individual needs will be accommodate without asking prior. With that, please know that I am not perfect and may not be meeting your needs to my best ability. As such, if you have a disability/in in which you feel that you need additional accommodations, beyond what I can offer, please contact the Accessibility Resource Center at UWM.

tips to succeed in this course

- Keep up with the class on a <u>weekly</u> basis. There are several projects in this class and if you are not keeping up with the assignments, you will quickly get behind and feel overwhelmed. I suggest creating a schedule where you **devote 3-5 hours each week for this class**. Taking the time to predict how much time you need each week will help you succeed. Note, that each assignment will take different time depending upon your prior experience with research, visual design, and user testing. Plan according to your various skill sets.

- Watch the weekly videos. They may not be very engaging, but they are meant to give you the information you need to succeed and stay on track with the course

- Can't find something or are confused? Email me! Really! Sometimes I may describe something that is confusing or not clear. Please let me know that you are not grasping what I'm saying and I'll try to rephrase. My intention is to help you succeed and enjoy

this course! Please let me know if you can't find something on Canvas or need me to explain the assignment in a different way.

- Tap into what you want to get out of this course! Honestly! I purposefully designed this course to all you all to research health communication around your personal interests/professional goals. I encourage you to embrace this opportunity to dive a bit deeper and take advantage of the opportunity to think how health communication is important in your future (whether as a professional or future patient)!

course schedule

Please be advised that as the instructor, I reserve the right to revise the syllabus (including this schedule) to meet student/s or university needs. I try to act as a responsive and engaged instructor. As such, there may be moments during this semester where some readings may no longer appear applicable or useful. Therefore, the syllabus <u>may</u> change. If this happens, you will be notified with ample time so as not to impact the progress of your work.

All tasks should be completed by 11:00 pm CST on the date listed unless otherwise noted.

Wk	Topic	Tasks for the Week
Module 1: The Health Communication Persona		
Wk 1 June 28 – July 3	Getting Started with the Course, & Introducing the Persona	**By Monday June 28th:** • Post to the "Introductions" Discussion Board **By Tuesday June 29th:** • Watch Maria's Module 1 video overview • Download the "Persona Assignment Description Sheet" o Read the hyperlinked sources available on that sheet • Review the Sample Persona's Posted • Begin Your Persona Research **By Thursday July 1st:** • Post the "Persona Research" Discussion Board • Continue Working on Your Persona **** Persona Due to Canvas by 11:59 pm CST on Saturday July 3rd.**
Module 2: The Health Condition Field Report		
Wk 2 July 5 – July 10	Introduce the Health Condition Field Report, Discuss "How To" Research, Finding Credible Resources & Synthesizing Information	**Tuesday July 6th:** • Watch Maria's Module 2 video overview • Download the "Health Condition Field Report Assignment Description Sheet" o Read the hyperlinked sources available on that sheet • Begin Your Health Condition Research **Thursday July 8th:** • Post the "Health Condition Research" Discussion Board • Continue Working on Your Field Report ****Field Report Due to Canvas by 11:59 pm CST on Saturday July 10th.**

Module 3: The Translation of Health Information		
Wk 3 July 12 – July 17	Understanding an Audience's Needs, Sharing Health Information, & Application of Design Principles	**Tuesday:** • Watch Maria's Module 3 video overview • Download the "Translation of Health Information Assignment Description Sheet" o Read the hyperlinked sources available on that sheet • Begin Your Health Information Research **Thursday:** • Post the "Translation of Health Information" Discussion Board • Continue Working on Your Health Information Deliverable ****Health Information Deliverable due to Canvas by 11:59 pm CST on Saturday July 17th.**
Module 4: The Application of Health Communication		
Wk 4 July 19 – July 24	Assessing the Effectiveness of Your Health Information Deliverable & Reflecting on Its Application	**Tuesday:** • Watch Maria's Module 4 video overview • Download the "Application of Health Communication Assignment Description Sheet" o Read the hyperlinked sources available on that sheet • Develop Your Assessment Testing Criteria **Thursday:** • Post the "Application of Health Communciation" Discussion Board • Continue Working on Your Application Reports, Deliverable Revision, & Reflection ****Application Reports, Deliverable Revision, & Reflection due to Canvas by 11:59 pm CST on Saturday July 24th.**