Health and Strategic Communication is the study and use of communication strategies to inform and influence individual, institutional, community and public audiences about important health issues. Our mission is to help improve policy and decision-making through evidence-based research, analysis, and application.

Role of the Health Communicator

Health and Strategic Communication is one of the fastest growing areas in communication and medical-related fields. Health communicators create shared meaning about health care and conditions in important applied contexts via:

• Crafting culturally competent messages to change health behaviors
• Educating the public and the healthcare industry about relevant health information
• Working to develop, implement, and evaluate widespread community health-based programs
• Improving relationships between patients, family members, and health-care providers
• Working one-on-one with community groups to achieve community health-care goals
• Helping with emergency and crisis communications and related decision-making

Academic Program and Research

This program examines health and strategic communication from perspectives grounded in interpersonal, family, organizational, media, and health behavior theories and related evidence-based messages and decision-making.

Courses are designed to educate students in:

• Health communication theory
• Quantitative and qualitative research methodologies
• Patient and provider interactions
• Health care organizations
• Health care reform issues
• Strategic and crisis communication from multiple perspectives
• Informed health-related decision-making and behavior change
• Health campaign design, strategies, implementation, and evaluation
• Health literacy
• Delivering upsetting news
• Family and professional caregiving
• Health-related uncertainty and information management
• Media and health
• Intercultural sensitivity and/or cultural competence
• Quality of interpersonal relationships

Careers

Graduates of Health and Strategic Communication can seek jobs in:

• Local, state, and federal agencies
• Hospitals
• Non-profit organizations
• Public health departments
• Community organizations
• Insurance companies
• Foundations
• Publishing firms
• Biotech companies
• Universities

Graduates of our program have been employed as:

• Health communication strategists
• Government health information specialists
• Patient account specialists
• Communications directors
• Account coordinators
• Health care assistants
• Public health associates
• Research associates
• Program managers
• Intervention support specialists

How to Learn More

FOR ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS or to RSVP for an upcoming information session, contact the Office of Graduate Admission at (888) CU-APPLY, or visit us online at chapman.edu/gradadmission.

FOR ACADEMIC PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS, contact the Health and Strategic Communication program manager at (714) 744-7837 or visit us online at chapman.edu/ms-health-comm.
Core Faculty
Lisa Sparks, Ph.D.
(University of Oklahoma, 1998)
Foster and Mary McGaw Professor in Behavioral Sciences
Founding Director, Health and Strategic Communication M.S. Program
Chair, Department of Communication Studies
Cancer communication science, health communication and aging, public health campaigns, intergroup communication (intercultural/intergenerational)

Jennifer Bevan, Ph.D.
(University of Georgia, 2003)
Associate Professor
Director, Health and Strategic Communication M.S. Program
Interpersonal communication, jealousy, health communication, caregiving communication, health information-seeking and uncertainty

Sam Dorros, Ph.D.
(University of Arizona, 2010)
Assistant Professor
Health communication, interpersonal and family communication, mental health interactions, cancer communication

Veronica Hefner, Ph.D.
(University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, 2011)
Assistant Professor
Media and interpersonal relationships, social media, social cognitive effects of mass media, body image

Claudine Jaenichen, M.A.
(University of Reading)
Associate Professor
Information design, instructional design, crisis/emergency communication

Kerk Kee, Ph.D.
(University of Texas, Austin, 2010)
Assistant Professor
Organizational communication, health communication, research methods, diffusion of innovations

Sara LaBelle, Ph.D.
(West Virginia University, 2014)
Assistant Professor
Strategic communication, health communication, instructional communication, health information and campaigns

Jake Liang, Ph.D.
(Michigan State University, 2014)
Assistant Professor
Strategic communication, persuasion, communication technologies

Michelle Miller-Day, Ph.D.
(Arizona State University, 1995)
Professor
Director of Communication Studies
Health communication, interpersonal and family communication, health campaigns, and qualitative research methodologies

Riva Tukachinsky, Ph.D.
(University of Arizona, 2012)
Assistant Professor
Media effects, research methods, intergroup communication

Jennifer Waldeck, Ph.D.
(University of California, Santa Barbara, 2005)
Associate Professor
Director of Graduate Teaching Assistants
Instructional communication, organizational communication, training and consulting, new and emerging technologies

Affiliated Faculty
Nick Leighton, M.B.A.
(De Montfort University)
Adjunct Instructor
International PR, strategic and crisis communication

Graduate teaching assistantships and graduate research assistantships are available for qualified students.