

NUTR 0218: Communication Strategies in Nutrition and Health Promotion

Course Syllabus

Spring 2024

Table of Contents

Welcome to NUTR 0218	Page 2
Diversity Statement	
Wellness Statement	
Important Information	Page 3
Course Communications	
Students Hours (office hours)	
Course Summary	
Course Goals	
Text or Materials	
How to Be Successful in This Course	Page 5
Assignments and Grading	
Grading Range	
Instructions for Submission of Assignments	
Academic Conduct	
Statement on the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)	
Accommodation of Disabilities	
Tufts Zoom	Page 9
On-Campus and Remote Participation	
Course Overview	Page 10
Topics, Assignments, and Learning Objectives for Each Class Session	

Welcome to NUTR 0218!

Hello and welcome to NUTR 0218: Communication Strategies in Nutrition and Health Promotion! In this hands-on course, **we will develop effective communications that promote nutrition or health behaviors**. During this course, **you will work in small groups to build a communications campaign proposal**, and you will also get the chance to explore how to develop messages based on some of the theories of behavior change that you are familiar with. We look forward to working with you during the exciting semester ahead of us! 😊

Diversity Statement

We are committed to continuously work on making this an inclusive course, both in terms of its content and its delivery. **We welcome any suggestions you have about other ways to include the value of diversity, equity, and inclusion in NUTR 218.**

For content, we have worked to align the course project and assignments with the [equity-centered health communication framework](#), which places equity at the center of the communication process to create health messages that are clear, relatable, actionable, and inclusive. In terms of course delivery, we consider it part of our responsibility as instructors to address the learning needs of everyone in this course. The course includes a variety of learning activities and strategies that, we hope, will allow all of us to share and embrace the perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds that we all bring. We will present materials that are respectful of diversity: race, color, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, religious beliefs, political preference, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, citizenship, language, or national origin among other personal characteristics. If any assignment due date will present a conflict with your religious observances at any point, please let us know as soon as possible so that we can work together to make arrangements.

Ana's note: While diversity, equity, and inclusion are very important to me, applying them continues to be a learning process, in which I question my own biases, experiences, and actions. I am aware of the different roles that an individual has, depending on the setting or place in which we are, as those roles are not absolute. I am committed to continuously work on questioning myself, reflecting on the roles I play and how my actions impact those around me. In particular, for this class, I commit to actively listening to others, embracing the richness that comes from diversity, and actively promoting inclusion and equity.

Wellness Statement

We recognize that there are many challenges and experiences outside of class that can interfere with the learning process. We also acknowledge that we are living in stressful times. **If you experience any situation that affects your performance or engagement in class, don't hesitate to reach out. We want all students to be well and whole. If you are experiencing any mental health issues, the following resources are available to you at Tufts:**

- [Tufts' Counseling and Mental Health Services](#)
- TalkOne2One: 1-800-756-3124 (24/7 counselors)
- Wellness Advising: Email [Sharon Snaggs](#) or call 617-636-2700
- Tufts University Chaplaincy: 617-627-3427

Important Information:

Class Meetings:	Thursdays 9 AM – 12 PM, Jaharis 118
Instructor(s):	Ana G. Maafs-Rodríguez, MEd, MS, PhD Candidate Pronouns: she/her/ella ana.maafs@tufts.edu ; except in unforeseen circumstances, I will respond to emails within 24 hours.
Teaching Assistant:	Brooke Cohen Pronouns: she/her brooke.cohen@tufts.edu
Semester Hour Units:	3
Prerequisites:	NUT 211

Course Communications:

We encourage students to reach out by email **at any time**. We appreciate hearing from you and we welcome any question, comment, concern, request, or thought you want to share with us. You can cc both Brooke and me.

Student Hours (office hours):

Instructor: Fridays from 3 – 4 PM, in person or by [Zoom](#)
You can also send me an email and we can schedule a time to meet that works for both of us!

For the purposes of this course, Student Hours are times outside of class that you can meet with me. You can use office hours to follow up on concepts discussed in class, get extra help, clarify something from the course content or materials, say hello, or talk about anything else that may be helpful to you.

Note: Considering that the course is structured around developing a communications campaign through collaborative work within small groups, we strongly encourage each group to schedule a group meeting with the teaching team when crucial components of the campaign are being developed.

Course Summary:

The overall objective of this course is to provide you with the expertise to develop effective nutrition and health communications, either for stand-alone campaigns or as part of multicomponent interventions. The course is structured around the end-to-end process of building a communications campaign, including selecting a primary audience and appropriate theoretical framework, conducting formative research, developing creative concepts, crafting effective messages, choosing appropriate communication channels, evaluating both process and outcome variables, and facilitating the dissemination of effective approaches. **You will actively apply what you learn through a group-based and semester-long project: developing a communications campaign proposal for a real-world or hypothetical client.**

During the course, **class sessions and assignments are designed around the different components of a communication campaign, which will be developed in small groups (3 or 4 people)**. The corresponding reading materials were selected to provide you with guidance and examples on how to develop each component. Groups will submit components of the proposal over the semester. You will receive comments and feedback on these components. **At the end of the semester, you will combine all these campaign components, along with campaign materials (i.e. sample messaging), in a final proposal, which should incorporate the feedback provided on the individual submissions.** This final proposal will be sent to the client at the end of the semester. Examples of proposals from previous semesters are available on the [Canvas site](#).

From weeks 3 to 12, class will begin with student-led discussions (either individually or in pairs), during which you will present on different nutrition communication topics. The final class will consist of students' presentations when each team presents their campaign proposal to the rest of the class. This will also be a good opportunity to receive peer feedback before the final deliverable.

During class sessions, we will include different learning strategies relevant to the components we are covering each week. Usually, each class will include:

- Student-led discussions: These will be short presentations about different nutrition communication topics.
- Mini-lectures, guest speakers, and/or different activities. These will be opportunities to enhance our learning about the communication process and the components of a communication campaign. An example of this is working in pairs to analyze focus group transcripts to develop effective messages based on behavior change constructs.
- Work-shop time: Each week we will have class time for each team to work on their proposal.

Consider this syllabus our guide for the course, but please know that there might be some slight changes as the semester progresses.

Course Goals:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Describe how and when to use communication strategies to influence behavior.
- Use an appropriate theoretical framework to inform nutrition and health communications.
- Define a focused and appropriate primary population.
- Apply formative research methodologies to better understand a primary population.
- Select communication channels that are appropriate and feasible.
- Tailor behavior-change messages based on attributes of the target population, including factors like health literacy and numeracy.
- Create an evaluation plan that tests process and outcome variables and is both rigorous and feasible.
- Explain how communications can be used to facilitate the dissemination and implementation of effective intervention models.
- Write a comprehensive proposal for a nutrition communication campaign, working collaboratively with a team.

Texts or Materials:

The course website, on [Canvas](#) lists all course materials.

How to be Successful in this Course:

Two central aspects of NUTR 218 are collaboration and action.

- For this course, collaboration is essential: we encourage you to have clear communication with your teammates, actively listening to each other and embracing the innovation and creativity that comes from different perspectives. Identify and leverage your strengths to define team roles, and consider implementing strategies for supportive accountability (i.e. regular team check-ins, celebrating achievements, peer-feedback sessions).
- The action aspect relates to the development of the campaign components, which require time and work. For this, we encourage you to complete the readings and reflect on how to translate them into your proposal, and to the best of your ability prioritize meeting deadlines, as these break down the work into manageable deliverables.

We believe consistency will ensure a smooth workflow and a positive learning experience as you work on your campaigns. We encourage you to attend student hours (individually or as a group) to discuss any questions or challenges you encounter. 😊

Typically, a 3.0 SHU course at Friedman requires around 9 hours of student time per week. This includes 3 hours of class time and 6 hours of reading, studying, and developing your campaign proposal. Exact hours might vary by week and student. However, if you find yourself consistently spending more than 10 hours per week on work related to this course, please reach out to me so we can figure out a work plan together.

Class time

A major part of your learning will take place within the classroom, and this is why we expect you to attend every class, to the best of your ability barring unanticipated circumstances. If you do need to miss a class, please schedule a tutorial session with me or Brooke, and communicate with your team.

Reading, study, and developing the campaign proposal

For this course, you can expect to spend 1-2 hours reviewing each week's readings and learning resources, found on [Canvas](#); and around 4-5 hours working on the different components of the proposal. Please contact us if you need time extensions or need to do make-up work. These will be granted for personal situations that have impacted your ability to do your work as usual. Requests for an Incomplete in the course must be made in advance, in writing, to the Dean for Educational Affairs and must have prior approval, in writing, from the academic advisor and the instructor.

Assignments and Grading:

The course grade will be based on three main components:

Component	Grade Percentage
A) <u>Components of the Communication Campaign Proposal</u> (Group grade)*	
1. Literature Review	15%
2. Instrument for Formative Research	10%
3. Results from Formative Research	15%
4. Campaign Design and Implementation Plan	15%
5. Evaluation Plan	15%
B) <u>Engagement in Class Activities and Student-led Discussions</u> (Individual grade)	
Contribution to ongoing dialogue and collective learning (for example by thoughtful comments, active listening, or asking follow-up	10%

questions), engagement in learning activities, and completion of student-led discussion.	
C) <u>Full Written Proposal and Presentation</u> (Group grade)	
1. Full proposal with sample campaign materials: Resubmission of all campaign components, with incorporation of the feedback provided on previous submissions.	10%
2. Final presentation: Students present their campaign proposal.	10%

*These components will be co-graded (grade is determined by group, along with a list of strengths and areas of opportunity to improve)

A) Components of the Communication Campaign Proposal

As a group, you will submit components of the proposal over the semester; those components will be graded and returned with comments and feedback. At the end of the semester, groups will have the opportunity to combine all these campaign components, along with campaign materials (i.e. sample messaging), in a final proposal, which incorporates feedback provided on the individual components. We will provide detailed guidance for each component in class.

1. Literature review
You will develop a literature review related to the topic of interest for your client, emphasizing peer-reviewed scientific publications. The review should include (1) a brief background section that contextualizes the challenge that the project addresses; (2) a methods section that succinctly describes the approach used for searching the research literature to identify studies that inform the campaign; (3) a tabular grid that extracts key findings from included studies, including both intervention and observational research; (4) a results section that synthesizes findings from the studies included in the grid; and (5) a brief conclusion/implications section that distills out the main takeaways for the campaign. Reviews will be assessed based on the extent to which they reflect a thorough review of the research and critical appraisal of the evidence, as well as clarity and precision of writing and appropriate use of references.
2. Instrument for Formative Research
To inform your campaign design, you will conduct original formative research (i.e. focus groups, key informant interviews), using methods discussed in Weeks 3, 4, and 5. The formative research guide should be informed by behavioral theory and probe areas like beliefs, attitudes, or perceptions around the behavior at hand and the types of messaging and communication channels to which individuals in the primary population might be responsive.
3. Results from Formative Research
After the formative research is completed, you will produce a summary report synthesizing key themes that emerged and their implications for the campaign design, including messaging strategy, communication channels, campaign activities, etc. The formative research report will be evaluated based on whether the team recruited a representative sample of individuals from the primary population or a related group (to the extent feasible); alignment of the research approach with relevant behavioral theory; evidence of effective probing to achieve deep insights; quality of critical thinking represented in the synthesis of findings; and effective organization and clarity of the writeup.
4. Campaign Design and Implementation Plan
The campaign design/implementation plan will describe the “nuts and bolts” of the campaign itself. The plan should include a clearly articulated aim; an explicit theoretical framework and/or theory-informed logic model guiding the campaign design (generally represented as a figure); clear description of the components of the

intervention, with sufficient detail for the reader to visualize what is being proposed; explanation of when, where, and how those elements will be implemented (a timeline graphic may be helpful); and, as appropriate, succinct linkages to evidence (i.e. behavioral theory, relevant research, formative research findings) to justify elements of the design. The assignment will be assessed based on strength of underlying evidence and linkages to theory; clarity, creativity, and feasibility of the approach; likelihood of advancing the target behavior change; and quality and precision of writing.

5. Evaluation Plan

The evaluation plan will describe how the campaign will be assessed. It should include both process and outcome variables (including, as appropriate, factors like awareness of the campaign and/or changes in relevant health outcomes, health behaviors, theoretical constructs, etc.) and draw on validated instruments/methodologies where possible. The evaluation plan will be assessed based on the extent to which it captures priority outcomes and process variables, utilizes valid and reliable instruments, and appears feasible to execute.

B) Engagement in Class Activities and Student-led Discussions

We believe that group discussion is helpful to understand and integrate the concepts covered in this course. Because of this, we are hoping you contribute to the different learning activities that will take place during the semester, including the workshop time with your group, and the student-led discussions (see below). We know this can sound stressful to some, so we want to emphasize how much we value everyone's voice, and the different ways in which you can engage during class: actively listening to whoever is talking, asking respectful questions, using blank cards to share your thoughts, among others.

Most classes will begin with a discussion of real-world nutrition and health communication examples—i.e. public health communications or food and nutrition-related marketing communications. Keep an eye out for things that seem interesting! You will be responsible for identifying an example of communication and facilitating class discussion at the beginning of one class session; you will have 12 minutes for your discussion. In a typical week, two students will share examples and facilitate discussion; you can facilitate the discussion individually in pairs (in which case you would have 25 minutes). These sessions will not be independently evaluated but will be considered as part of the participation grade. Additional details will be provided in class.

C) Full Written Proposal and Presentation

The final proposal will combine all the prior individual submissions, along with sample campaign materials. These will be assessed based on the extent to which they are creative, engaging, evidence- and theory-based, responsive to the needs and preferences of the primary audience, and likely to move the dial on the targeted health behavior. Full proposals will be evaluated for the extent to which they integrate different components and incorporate revisions based on earlier feedback. Remember that this full proposal will be given to your clients.

During the last day of the class, each group will present their campaign proposal to the rest of the class, summarizing its main components. This will be an opportunity to give and receive additional feedback before the final full proposal is due. Details about the full proposal and presentation will be provided in class.

Grading Range:

A **passing grade in the course is B- or better**. Course grades will be based on the below (subject to revision during the course):

A	> 94%
A-	90 - <94%
B+	87 - <90%
B	84 - <87%
B-	80 - <84%

Instructions for Submission of Assignments:

Please see the [Course Schedule below](#) and the [course website](#) for a list of assignments and due dates. We will grant extensions in exceptional circumstances, but we encourage you to meet the deadlines as this allows us sufficient time to revise and comment on your work. Adhering to due dates will also make the workload manageable throughout the semester.

Academic Conduct:

You are responsible for upholding the highest standards of academic integrity, as specified in the Friedman School's Policies and Procedures Handbook located on [this web page](#), as well as Tufts University's policies, which you can find on [this web page](#). This includes understanding and avoiding plagiarism, which is defined as the unacknowledged use of someone else's published or unpublished work. It is the responsibility of each student to understand and comply with academic integrity standards, as violations will be sanctioned by penalties ranging from failure on an assignment and the course to dismissal from the school.

Statement on the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI):

In this course, the use of AI is encouraged to enhance your learning. **You should feel free to use AI tools to deepen your understanding of learning materials**, brainstorm, get feedback, synthesize, revise and/or edit your work. However, it is important to emphasize that **AI is a supporting tool rather than a replacement for human creativity and critical thinking. Hence, emphasis should be placed on integrating AI-generated outputs thoughtfully into your work, particularly for course assignments and deliverables**. Submitting any work generated by an AI program as your own is a violation of [Tufts Academic Integrity](#) policies.

There are specific recommendations on how to use or not use AI on each assignment. In addition, please consider the following guidelines when using AI:

- Familiarize yourself with how AI works and its limitations, including bias and production of false or inaccurate information.
- Identify and cite the AI tools you use. If the AI tool you use allows you to generate and/or share a link to the conversation, you should include it in the reference. Here is an example without the conversation link:
 - Reference: OpenAI. (2024). *ChatGPT* (Mar 14 version) [Large language model] <http://chat.openai.com/chat>
- Be transparent about how you used it, and include an acknowledgment section and/or as footnotes. Here is an example:
 - AI Acknowledgment: We collectively authored this text and used Bard to 'review for cohesion, grammar and spelling, and suggest 3 revision recommendations.' The AI's review corrected our grammar and

spelling, and it provided us with a few ideas on how to structure our introduction and conclusion sections. We didn't agree with one suggestion, but incorporated the other two into our writing, as it made the content clearer.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions or comments 😊

Accommodation of Disabilities:

We will do our best to ensure each of you has the resources you need to succeed. Tufts University is committed to providing equal access and support to all students through the provision of reasonable accommodations so that each student may access their curricula and achieve their personal and academic potential. If you have a disability that requires reasonable accommodations, please contact the Friedman School Assistant Dean of Student Affairs at 617-636-6719 to make arrangements for the determination of appropriate accommodations. Please be aware that accommodations cannot be enacted retroactively, making timeliness a critical aspect for their provision.

Tufts Zoom:

The Friedman School's on-campus courses may be offered by [Tufts Zoom](#) on days when the Boston campus is closed due to the pandemic, weather, or a temporary cancellation issue. Students should expect to be notified by email by **Thursday at 7:00 AM** in the event that class is canceled. The course's Canvas site has the [recurring Zoom link](#) for students to attend any remote class sessions during the normally scheduled class period. The Zoom meeting video and audio will be recorded and posted on the course's Canvas site when completed, under the corresponding Module. Also, any relevant course slides or materials will be made available on Canvas. If an on-campus Examination, Presentation, etc. was scheduled on a day when the Boston campus is closed due to weather or a temporary cancellation issue and cannot be conducted by Zoom, the exam/presentation will be rescheduled for an alternate on-campus class session date.

On-Campus and Remote Participation:

- This course will be delivered in the classroom. Only students who have received approval from the Friedman School's Dean of Educational Affairs will be permitted to participate remotely by Zoom on a regular basis.
- If you are ill, please do **NOT** come to campus. Contact me or Brooke to let us know you would like to participate by Zoom.
- If you will need to participate remotely for a particular class session, please contact us in advance.
- In the event of inclement weather leading to campus closure I may choose to conduct the class remotely by Zoom.
- Some class sessions may be recorded. All students in the course will have access to these recordings. Massachusetts law states that students have the right to not have their voices recorded in the classroom; if this is your wish you may refrain from participating verbally in class when the session is being recorded.

Course Overview:

The course's Canvas site is organized by weekly modules. Each module contains the week's main page (which includes the learning objectives and all the learning materials that you will need for each class and campaign component). If the week requires it, there might be an additional page for in-class learning activities and for assignments. The following schedule is subject to modification. Please refer to the [Canvas site](#) for the very latest information on the course.

Date	Topic and Class Notes	Assignments Due
Week 1 January 18, 2024	Course Overview The Communications Challenge Intro to Communications Campaigns	--
Week 2 January 25, 2024	Identifying the Target Audience Applying Behavioral Theory	Ungraded: Define small groups to work during the semester (by start of class)
Week 3 February 1, 2024	Formative Research Conducting Literature Reviews	Ungraded: Confirm client, behavior and audience(s) (by start of class)
Week 4 February 8, 2024	Conducting a Focus Group	--
Week 5 February 15, 2024	Analyzing Qualitative Research Results	Literature review (due Feb 16, 5:00 pm)
February 22, 2024	No Class, Monday schedule on Thursday	
Week 6 February 29, 2024	Translating Formative Research Results	Instrument for Formative Research (due March 1, 5:00 pm)
Week 7 March 7, 2024	Tailoring Messages for Priority Populations	Mid-semester evaluation (in class)
Week 8 March 14, 2024	Choosing Communication Channels and Developing Campaign Material	--
March 21, 2024	No Class, Spring recess	
Week 9 March 28, 2024	Developing Evaluation Plans and Tools	Results from Formative Research (due March 29, 5:00 pm)
Week 10 April 4, 2024	Health Literacy and Promoting Equity through Communications	Campaign Design and Implementation Plan (due April 5, 5:00 pm)
Week 11 April 11, 2024	Social Media	--
Week 12 April 18, 2024	Dissemination and Implementation	Evaluation Plan (due April 19, 5:00 pm)
Week 13 April 25, 2024	Final presentations	--
Reading period May 2, 2024	No Class, Reading Period	Final campaign proposal (due May 3, 5:00 pm)

Topics, Assignments, and Learning Objectives for Each Class Session:

This section includes a detailed, week-by-week description of Class Topics, Learning Objectives, required readings, and Assignments due. This schedule is subject to modification at the instructor's discretion.

Week 1

- **Date of Class:** January 1, 2024
- **Course Topic(s):**
 - Course Overview
 - The Communications Challenge
 - Introduction to Communications Campaigns
- **Learning Objectives:** Upon completion of this class, students will be able to:
 - Describe the overall objectives of this course, its major assignments, and expectations for students.
 - Discuss different sources through which nutrition information is transmitted to consumers and advantages/challenges associated with each.
 - Explain ways in which research evidence can be misrepresented in mainstream media and factors contributing to that evidence-to-public-perception breakdown.
 - Critique communications that do not accurately or completely communicate research evidence.
 - Describe how messaging environments can synergistically interact with other types of environments to influence health behavior.
 - Define a communications campaign.
 - Describe the elements of an effective health communications campaign and the overall steps for developing and implementing a campaign.
- **Readings:** No Required Readings.
- **Assignments Due:** No assignments due.

Week 2

- **Date of Class:** January 25, 2024
- **Course Topic(s):**
 - Identifying the Target Audience
 - Applying Behavioral Theory
- **Learning Objectives:** Upon completion of this class, students will be able to:
 - Identify key considerations in selecting a specific target audience.
 - Describe how and why health communications can be tailored at the individual and/or group levels.
 - Identify common theories of behavior change commonly applied to health communications campaigns and the constructs comprising each.
 - Describe the rationale for using behavioral theory to guide the design of health communications.
 - Apply behavioral theory in developing actionable health communication messages.
- **Readings:**

Required Readings (all students must read these):

 - Glanz K, Bishop DB. The role of behavioral science theory in development and implementation of public health interventions. Annual review of public health 31 (2010): 399-418.
 - Goldberg JP, Sliwa S. Communicating actionable nutrition messages: Challenges and opportunities. Proceedings of the Nutrition Society 2010;70:1-12.

Recommended Readings:

 - Rowe SB, Alexander N. Food and nutrition science communications: behind the curtain. Nutrition Today. 2017 May 1;52(3):151-4.
 - Viswanath K, Bond K. Social determinants and nutrition: reflections on the role of communication. Journal of nutrition education and behavior. 2007 Mar 1;39(2):S20-4.
 - Parvanta S, Parvanta C. Persuasive health communications: the role of theory. In Essentials of Public Health Communication. 2011:147-58.
 - Glanz, Rimer, Viswanath, eds. Health Behavior: Theory, Research, and Practice (5th edition). San Francisco CA: Jossey-Bass 2015.
- **Assignments Due:** Ungraded: Define small groups to work during the semester (by start of class)

Week 3

- **Date of Class:** February 1, 2024
- **Course Topic(s):**
 - Formative Research
 - Conducting Literature Reviews
- **Learning Objectives:** Upon completion of this class, students will be able to:
 - Define formative research.
 - Explain the importance of conducting formative research to inform the design of communications.
 - Compare and contrast different formative research approaches and their advantages/disadvantages.
 - Identify commonly used research tools for finding literature to inform the design of a communications campaign.
 - Explain the key steps in conducting a literature review, including developing a plan, searching high-quality databases, reviewing and organizing the evidence, and synthesizing findings.
- **Readings:**

Required Readings (all students must read these):

 - Parvanta C. Formative research for strategy development. In *Essentials of Public Health Communication*. 2011:159-80.
 - Dix CF, Brennan L, Reid M, McCaffrey TA, Molenaar A, Barklamb A, Chin S, Truby H. Nutrition meets social marketing: Targeting health promotion campaigns to young adults using the living and eating for health segments. *Nutrients*. 2021 Sep;13(9):3151.
 - Bailey CP, Sharma S, Economos CD, Hennessy E, Simon C, Hatfield DP. College campuses' influence on student weight and related behaviours: A review of observational and intervention research. *Obesity Science & Practice*. 2020 Dec;6(6):694-707.

Recommended Readings:

 - Rogers A, Wilkinson S, Truby H, Downie O. Communication of Nutrition Information by Influencers on Social Media: A Scoping Review. *Health Promotion Journal of Australia*. 2021 Dec 6.
 - Pivonka E, Seymour J, McKenna J, Baxter SD, Williams S. Development of the behaviorally focused Fruits & Veggies—More Matters public health initiative. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*. 2011 Oct 1;111(10):1570-7.
 - Librarians at the Hirsch Health Sciences Library have compiled resources to help students develop quality literature reviews on this web page: https://researchguides.library.tufts.edu/lit_review. You may wish to review these resources and use them as your group develops the literature review for your project.
- **Assignments Due:** Ungraded: Confirm client, behavior and audience(s) (by start of class)

Week 4

- **Date of Class:** February 8, 2024
- **Course Topic(s):** Conducting a Focus Group
- **Learning Objectives:** Upon completion of this class, students will be able to:
 - Describe reasons to conduct focus groups and when they should (and should not) be used.
 - Explain overarching steps in planning focus groups.
 - Describe key roles for conducting focus groups.
 - Identify the characteristics of effective (and ineffective) focus group questions.
 - Identify strategies for effective focus group moderation.
- **Readings:** Required Readings (all students must read these):
 - Selected chapters from Krueger RA and Casey MA. Focus Groups (5th edition). 2015.
 - Chapter 1: Overview of Focus Groups
 - Chapter 2: Planning the Focus Group Study
 - Chapter 5: Moderating Skills
 - Chapter 9: Focus Group Interviewing with Young People
- **Assignments Due:** No assignments due.

Week 5

- **Date of Class:** February 15, 2024
- **Course Topic(s):** Analyzing Qualitative Research Results
- **Learning Objectives:** Upon completion of this class, students will be able to:
 - Compare different approaches to analyzing focus groups and explain their advantages/disadvantages.
 - Describe the steps for developing a communications campaign in nutrition-focused commercial settings.
 - Provide examples of effective commercial nutrition campaigns.
- **Readings:** Required Readings (all students must read these):
 - Krueger RA and Casey MA. Focus Groups (5th edition). 2015.
 - Chapter 6: Analyzing Focus Group Results
- **Assignments Due:** Literature review (due Feb 16, 5:00 pm)

Week 6

- **Date of Class:** February 29, 2024
- **Course Topic(s):** Translating Formative Research Results
- **Learning Objectives:** Upon completion of this class, students will be able to:
 - Explain how formative research results can inform the design of tailored health messaging.
 - Describe how formative research findings were translated into tailored health-promotion messages in several evidence-based communications campaigns.
- **Readings:** Required Readings (all students must read these):
 - Hatfield D, Sliwa S, Folta S, Economos C, Goldberg J. The critical role of communications in a multilevel obesity-prevention intervention: Lessons learned for alcohol educators. *Patient Education and Counseling* (2016).
 - Tovar A, Must A, Metayer N, Gute DM, Pirie A, Hyatt RR, Economos CD. Immigrating to the US: what Brazilian, Latin American and Haitian women have to say about changes to their lifestyle that may be associated with obesity. *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health*. 2013 Apr 1;15(2):357-64.
- **Assignments Due:** Instrument for Formative Research (due March 1, 5:00 pm)

Week 7

- **Date of Class:** March , 2024
- **Course Topic(s):** Tailoring Messages for Priority Populations
- **Learning Objectives:** Upon completion of this class, students will be able to:
 - Explain why message tailoring and cultural relevance is important to communications efforts.
 - Describe approaches that nutrition and health communicators can take to ensure their messages are culturally relevant for the target audience.
- **Readings:** Required Readings (all students must read these):
 - Huhman M, Berkowitz JM, Wong FL, Prosper E, Gray M, Prince D, Yuen J. The VERB™ campaign's strategy for reaching African-American, Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian children and parents. American Journal of Preventive Medicine. 2008 Jun 1;34(6):S194-209
- **Assignments Due:** No assignment due. Mid-semester evaluation (in class).

Week 8

- **Date of Class:** March 14, 2024
- **Course Topic(s):** Choosing Communication Channels and Developing Campaign Material
- **Learning Objectives:** Upon completion of this class, students will be able to:
 - Describe the processes of crafting a creative brief, developing concepts, and pre-testing messages and why those processes are valuable.
 - Identify different communication channels through which campaign messages can be disseminated.
- **Readings:**

Required Readings (all students must read these):

 - Goldberg JP, Folta SC, Eliasziw M, Koch-Weser S, Economos CD, Hubbard KL, Tanskey LA, Wright CM, Must A. Great Taste, Less Waste: A cluster-randomized trial using a communications campaign to improve the quality of foods brought from home to school by elementary school children. Preventive medicine. 2015 May 1;74:103-10.
 - Folta SC, Koch-Weser S, Tanskey LA, Economos CD, Must A, Whitney C, Wright CM, Goldberg JP. Branding a school-based campaign combining healthy eating and eco-friendliness. Journal of nutrition education and behavior. 2018 Feb 1;50(2):180-9.

Recommended Readings:

 - National Cancer Institute. Stage 2: Developing and Pretesting Concepts, Messages, and Materials. In Making Health Communication Programs Work. 2008: pp 62-86.
 - DeBar LL, Schneider M, Ford EG, Hernandez AE, Showell B, Drews KL, Moe EL et al. Social marketing-based communications to integrate and support the HEALTHY study intervention. International Journal of Obesity 2009; 33:S52-S59.
- **Assignments Due:** No assignment due.

Week 9

- **Date of Class:** March 28, 2024
- **Course Topic(s):** Developing Evaluation Plans and Tools
- **Learning Objectives:** Upon completion of this class, students will be able to:
 - Explain the importance of evaluating health communications and other types of health interventions.
 - Describe the process for designing and executing an evaluation plan including both process and outcome variables.
 - Define a “validated instrument”.
 - Explain how to find validated instruments using research literature, online repositories, and other tools.
 - Compare different evaluation tools, accounting for factors like rigor and feasibility.
- **Readings:**

Required Readings (all students must read these):

 - Huhman M, Heitzler C, Wong F. The VERB™ campaign logic model: a tool for planning and evaluation. *Preventing Chronic Disease* 2004;3(1).
 - National Cancer Institute. Stage 4: Assessing effectiveness and making refinements. In *Making Health Communication Programs Work*. 2008: pp 107-121.
 - Lee H, Contento I, Koch P. Using a systematic conceptual model for a process evaluation of a middle school obesity risk-reduction nutrition curriculum intervention: Choice, control & change. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* 2013;45(2):126-136.
 - Caldwell JI, Robles B, Tyree R, Fraser RW, Dumke KA, Kuo T. Does Exposure to the Choose Water Campaign Increase Parental Intentions to Promote More Water and Less Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Consumption?. *American Journal of Health Promotion*. 2020 Jun;34(5):555-8.

Recommended Readings:

 - Morris DS, Rooney MP, Wray RJ, Kreutler MW. Measuring exposure to health messages in community based intervention studies: a systematic review of current practices. *Health Ed and Behav* 2009;36:979-998.
- **Assignments Due:** Results from Formative Research (due March 29, 5:00 pm)

Week 10

- **Date of Class:** April 4, 2024
- **Course Topic(s):** Health Literacy and Promoting Equity through Communications
- **Learning Objectives:** Upon completion of this class, students will be able to:
 - Define health literacy and plain language.
 - Identify ways in which health communication materials can be modified to improve accessibility and usability.
 - Explain how communications can perpetuate health disparities and describe the role health communicators can play in advancing health equity.
- **Readings:**

Required Readings (all students must read these):

 - Paasche-Orlow MK, Schillinger D, Weiss BD, Bickmore T, Cabral H, Chang P, Bailey SC, Dewalt DA, Fernandez A, Fransen M, Leung A. Health literacy and power. HLRP: Health Literacy Research and Practice. 2018 Aug 1;2(3):e132-3.
 - HHS Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Health Literacy and Health Equity: Connecting the Dots. 2021.

Recommended Readings:

 - Carbone ET, Zoellner JM. Nutrition and health literacy: A systematic review to inform nutrition research and practice. Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics 2012;112(2):254-265.
 - Zarcadoolas C, The simplicity complex: exploring simplified health messages in a complex world. Health Promot Int. 2011;26(3):338-350.
 - Velardo, S. The Nuances of Health Literacy, Nutrition Literacy and Food Literacy. J Nutr Educ Behav. 2015;47:385-389
- **Assignments Due:** Campaign Design and Implementation Plan (due April 5, 5:00 pm)

Week 11

- **Date of Class:** April 11, 2024
- **Course Topic(s):** Social Media
- **Learning Objectives:** Upon completion of this class, students will be able to:
 - Define social media.
 - Compare different social media channels and their advantages/disadvantages in communicating health and nutrition information.
 - Describe the tension in developing messages that are both evidence-based and engaging.
- **Readings:** Required Readings (all students must read these):
 - Helm J, Jones RM. Practice Paper of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: Social Media and the Dietetics Practitioner: Opportunities, Challenges, and Best Practices. *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*. 2016. pp. 1825–1835.
 - Schiro JL, Shan LC, Tatlow-Golden M, Li C, Wall P. # Healthy: smart digital food safety and nutrition communication strategies—a critical commentary. *NPJ Science of Food*. 2020 Oct 1;4(1):1-1.
 - Kietzmann, JH, Hermkens, K, McCarthy, I, Silvestre, B. Social media? Get serious! Understanding the functional building blocks of social media. *Business Horizons*. 2011. (54):241-251.
 - Luo Y, Maafs-Rodríguez A, Hatfield DP. The Individual-Level Effects of Social Media Campaigns Related to Healthy Eating, Physical Activity, and Healthy Weight: A Narrative Review. *Obesity Science and Practice*, 2024.
- **Assignments Due:** No assignment due.

Week 12

- **Date of Class:** April 18, 2024
- **Course Topic(s):** Dissemination and Implementation
- **Learning Objectives:** Upon completion of this class, students will be able to:
 - Describe frameworks to inform dissemination and implementation of effective health communications campaigns and other types of interventions.
 - Discuss how effective communications campaigns can be adapted for replication.
 - Identify attributes of innovations (including health-promotion interventions) that increase their propensity to diffuse.
 - Explain how communication efforts can help facilitate diffusion of evidence-based interventions.
- **Readings:** Required Readings:
 - Kreuter MW, Casey CM, Bernhardt JM. Chapter 11: Enhancing dissemination through marketing and distribution systems: a vision for public health. In Dissemination and implementation research in health: Translating science to practice. 2012, pp. 213-22.
 - Glanz, Rimer and Lewis (2015). Health Behavior: Theory, Research and Practice, 5th Edition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Chapter 16: Implementation, Dissemination, and Diffusion of Innovations. Note: this reading will be familiar to those of you who have completed N211. If you've already read it, please at least skim it again to refresh your memory.
 - Hatfield DP, Lynskey VM, Economos CD, Nichols E, Whitman N, Nelson ME. Crowdsourcing innovative physical activity programs: Active Schools Acceleration Project case study. Transl J Am College Sports Med. 2016;1(1):1-9.
- **Assignments Due:** Evaluation Plan (due April 19, 5:00 pm)

Week 13

- **Date of Class:** April 25, 2024
- **Course Topic(s):** Final Presentations
- **Learning Objectives:** Upon completion of this class, students will be able to:
 - Synthesize what has been learned and present their campaign proposal.
- **Readings:**
 - Required Readings:
 - No readings required.
 - Recommended Readings (choose one of the following):
 - Rowe S, Alexander N. Risk Communication in the Time of COVID: Early Lessons for Nutrition, Food, and Health Communicators. *Nutrition Today*. 2020 Jul 1;55(4):182-5.
 - Rowe SB, Alexander N. Communicating Nutrition and Other Science: It's a Management Issue. *Nutrition Today*. 2018 Mar 1;53(2):85-8.
- **Assignments Due:** Presentation, during class, Thursday April 13, 9 am to 12 pm EST
Final campaign proposal (due May 3, 5:00 pm)