

**University of Florida**  
**College of Public Health & Health Professions Syllabus**  
**PHC 6XXX: Scientific Communication Techniques in Public Health**  
 Summer 2019 – 3 credit hours  
 Delivery Format: On-campus; Tuesdays 9:30am-1:45pm (Periods 2-4)  
 Course Website: Canvas

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**Instructor Name:** Andrew S. Kane, MS, PhD  
**Room Number:** CGRC Rooms 101 and 103—Auditorium and “Overflow Room”  
**Phone Number:** 352-213-8407  
**Email Address:** kane@ufl.edu  
**Office Hours:** After class or by appointment  
**Teaching Assistants:** None  
**Course Communications:** Email the instructor ([KANE@UFL.EDU](mailto:KANE@UFL.EDU)) directly for course-related correspondence.

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**Prerequisites:** Current good standing in public health graduate program or permission of instructor.

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## **PURPOSE AND OUTCOME**

### **Course Overview**

Scientific communication skills are critical to public health researchers and allied professionals. Multiple outreach approaches will be used to develop and deliver meaningful content targeted for different audience perspectives. The course consists of lectures, student presentation opportunities, and intensive constructive critique.

### **Relation to Program Outcomes**

Novel science, new medical therapies, and technology are dependent on rigorous science. Excellent science in a vacuum, however, is meaningless. It is important for graduate and professional students to be able to communicate their science to a variety of audiences as an integral part of their professional education and training. Although communication techniques are incorporated into many courses taught at the graduate level, this class uniquely provides opportunities to develop scientific presentations using multiple formats, including oral, poster, written, and media, with content targeted toward specific audiences. The course also examines techniques to strengthen content delivery for different audiences, explicitly and tactically. The need to communicate science is paramount in a range of professional arenas including academia, environmental and public health, human and veterinary medicine, and in-state and federal management. Excellence in communication has direct application at scientific meetings, developing manuscripts for professional journals, submitting successful grant applications, drafting resumes, interviewing, and sharing techniques with peers and the public. This course is designed to build communication proficiency by focusing on organizational skills, confidence building, application of appropriate techniques and technology, and providing presentation “flight time” with focus on public health and related topics.

Students are expected to be on time for all classes, and engage in all sessions and course activities. Each student is required to develop an oral and poster presentation on an assigned/approved topic. The approved topic will focus on some aspect of their own thesis or dissertation research, or another topic as agreed upon with the instructor. Additional in-class presentation assignments and critiques will also be included.

### Course Objectives and/or Goals

*Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:*

1. Critically review scientific literature pertinent to public health and related fields;
2. Recognize the needs of different target audiences with focus on communicating what needs to be perceived, rather than what needs to be shared;
3. Integrate different graphical presentation styles that reveal data trends, and appropriately show cause and effect;
4. Organize and optimize presentation elements including the use of software tools (e.g., PowerPoint, Word, Photoshop, Spark, QuickTime);
5. Optimize delivery of presentations using technology and hardware;
6. Develop and deliver effective oral and poster scientific presentations;
7. Constructively critique oral scientific presentations;
8. Dialogue with reporters and the media;
9. Organize and deliver well-synthesized scientific presentations, using oral, written and visual techniques on topics relevant to public health and related fields.

### Instructional Methods

1. Lectures: Students are responsible for all the material presented in the course and assigned readings. This will be the main source of content in this course.
2. Readings and Resources. There is no required text, however supplementary readings and resources will be posted in the Canvas course shell. The reading list may be supplemented during the course.
3. Assessments: The primary assessments will be based on course attendance and engagement, and written, oral and visual presentation assignments developed and presented throughout the course.

### What is expected of you?

You are expected to actively engage in the course throughout the semester. You must come to class prepared by completing all out-of-class assignments. This preparation gives you the knowledge or practice needed to engage in higher levels of learning during the live class sessions. If you are not prepared for the face-to-face sessions, you may struggle to keep pace with the activities occurring in the live sessions, and it is unlikely that you will reach the higher learning goals of the course. Similarly, you are expected to actively participate in the live class. Your participation fosters a rich course experience for you and your peers that facilitates overall mastery of the course objectives.

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### DESCRIPTION OF COURSE CONTENT: COURSE SCHEDULE

This course is taught as a series of modules, covering different aspects of communication styles and approaches. Each set of modules may contain lectures, external links, videos, discussions and required readings, as well as assignments. You are responsible for all course content regardless of the format. The topical Outline/Course Schedule below details the dates of content modules and assignments. This schedule is tentative based on guest lecturers and field class opportunities that may alter the dates/timing of some content delivery throughout the course.

Class No.	Lecture Title	Date 2019	Assignments / Class Preparation
1	Introductions, Course overview; Assignments: Tailgate Talks, Structured Interview Projects; Environmental Journalism Projects; Poster Projects; and Platform Presentation Projects.	Week of May 13 <sup>th</sup>	Assigned materials in Canvas.
2	Why we present; Presentation formats, support hardware, software, multimedia; Visualizing relationships with data	Week of May 20 <sup>th</sup>	Assigned materials in Canvas. Upload Poster and Platform project titles and rationale in Canvas 24h before class.
3	Interviewing and working with the media; Tailgate Talks; Show us your data! <i>(Guest communicator)</i>	Week of May 27 <sup>th</sup>	Assigned materials on Canvas. Final poster and platform project titles and rationale due 2 days before class. Upload graphs/articles for "necropsy" 24h before class.
4	Message targeting; Abstracting; Environmental Journalism; Tailgate talks <i>(Guest Communicator)</i>	Week of June 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Assigned materials on Canvas. Interview Project subject and rationale due 24h before class.
5	Environmental Journalism field class <i>(location TBA)</i>	Week of June 10 <sup>th</sup>	Assigned materials on Canvas. Env Journalism Project subject and rationale due 24h before class.
6	Interview Project presentations and critiques	Week of June 17 <sup>th</sup>	Assigned materials on Canvas. Upload Final Interview Project in Canvas 24h before class.
Summer Break		Week of June 24 <sup>th</sup>	
7	Env Journalism Project reviews Tailgate talks Show us your data!	Week of July 1 <sup>st</sup>	Assigned materials on Canvas. Upload draft Env Journalism Project due 2 days before class. Upload graphs/articles for "necropsy" 24h before class.
8	Poster Project reviews Platform Presentation Project reviews Poster and Platform abstracts	Week of July 8 <sup>th</sup>	Assigned materials on Canvas. Upload draft posters and platform presentations for review in Canvas 24h prior to class. Upload posters and platform abstracts in Canvas 2d before class.
9	Environmental Journalism Project presentations and critiques Tailgate talks	Week of July 15 <sup>th</sup>	Assigned materials on Canvas. Upload Final Env Journalism Projects in Canvas 24h before class. Upload constructive critique forms from outside seminars/lectures.
10	Environmental Journalism Project presentations and critique Tailgate talks	Week of July 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Assigned materials on Canvas.
11	Poster presentations and critiques	Week of July 29 <sup>th</sup>	Upload Final Poster PPT in Canvas 24h before class. Bring critique forms to class. Instructor evals.
12	Platform presentations and critiques	Week of August 5 <sup>th</sup>	Upload Final Platform PPT in Canvas 24h before class. Bring critique forms to class.

### Course Materials and Technology

Handouts for lectures and other reading materials will be distributed in class, via email and the course Canvas shell. Students must have the ability to capture photographs (from their personal digital camera or cell phone) to support their presentation projects throughout the course. Students without a functional digital camera or camera-capable phone can request a digital camera loan from the instructor during the first week of class. Students are expected to have regular access to a computer with internet access and MS Office applications installed.

For technical support for this class, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- [Learning-support@ufl.edu](mailto:Learning-support@ufl.edu)
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2
- <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

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## ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

### General information

Assignments are to be turned in as Word, PowerPoint, Acrobat pdf files, jpeg, or movie files as directed, unless otherwise indicated. Assignments must be uploaded into Canvas two days prior to class (or as otherwise indicated in writing), and be concisely labeled with the student's name, project, and date submitted (e.g., **joshua\_interview\_052217.mov** or **maryk\_posterabstract\_070717.docx**). Feedback on assignments will be provided in class, and sometimes by email. Students are encouraged to meet with the instructor for individual feedback outside the classroom. If you have unexpected issues with Canvas, you should email the assignment to the instructor directly. Assignments are individual projects and shared work may be treated as a form of plagiarism. Assignments may be required to be submitted via Turnitin in this course (this will be done automatically in the Canvas Assignment). This tool will pick up any passages in students' work that come from another source, and the Turnitin system will provide a report back to the student. Some similarity is expected and unavoidable, however if large portions are copied from other sources, this will be considered plagiarism.

The Canvas assignment tool will notify you confirming the submission of your assignment. Check your UF email daily for these and other email notices from the course site. If you do not receive an email confirmation within 2 hours of submission, please return to the site and resubmit your assignment. It is a student's responsibility to verify that they turn in assignments on time and that they turn in the CORRECT assignment attachment. Take a few moments to open your submitted attachment and verify that you have submitted the correct file.

### Course Requirements/Evaluation/Grading

Students will be evaluated based on class attendance and participation (15%), Interview Project submissions and presentations (15%), Environmental Journalism Project submissions and presentations (20%), Poster Project submissions and presentation (15%), Platform Project submissions and presentation (20%), and other presentations (i.e., Tailgate Talks, Poster and Platform Abstracts, and other course assignments (15%)).

### Attendance and Participation, and Class Preparation (15%, 150 points)

Class attendance and participation amounts to students being prepared to full participation and attendance at every session. Unexcused absences or lack of participation in any class session reduces 25 points out of 150 points assigned to this 15% of your grade. In addition to attendance and participation, students must demonstrate that they prepared for each class beforehand (through submitting assignments completely and on time, and through the quality of interactions and contributions with the class and the instructor).

Class participation is important for several reasons. Your level of participation in this discussion-based course is the best gauge of subject matter preparation and thoughtfulness. Moreover, as a graduate-level course, students are encouraged to actively think through challenges, and it is important to hear viewpoints from colleagues with different academic backgrounds and life-experiences. Class participation is based on each student contributing at least one constructive commentary, and/or providing relevant input that supports subject matter being discussed that day. The instructor will maintain a tally (yes/no) and moderate the discussion so each student is given ample opportunity to participate in each lecture. If you cannot attend a class for medical or other excused reasons (see UF Attendance Policies), you must contact the instructor prior to class. You will be responsible for getting missed materials through the course Canvas shell, and any notes or recordings taken by another registered student in the class. Classes cannot be made up. During class, use of cell phones or engagement with social media that is unrelated to in-class activities is not allowed, and may result in a minimum 10 point reduction in participation points.

#### **Interview Project (15%, 150 points)**

Students produce a scientific interview, like a news interview report, that is recorded and presented videographically. Grading is based on choosing a good subject with a clear and meaningful rationale for the interview (25 points), depth of research done to bring out best scientific information and keep it interesting (25 points), well-thought out interview questions (25 points), storyline logic and flow (25 points), videography (25 points) and classroom presentation of the interview vignette, along with proper file name for assignment uploads to Canvas (25 points).

#### **Environmental Journalism Project (20%, 200 points)**

Students produce a stand-alone, graphically-driven, compelling environmental journalism story focusing on an environmental health issue (or other issue as approved by instructor) using Adobe Spark or other approved development/presentation software. Grading is based on development and timely submission of a clear and meaningful topic and draft presentation (30 points), with content reflecting depth of research effort that supports an interesting, focused storyline, accuracy and credibility (50 points). Use of appropriate photographs to capture storyline (30 points), quality of photographs to make the story compelling (30 points), evidence of good storyboarding based on logical flow and placement of graphic elements (30 points), and classroom presentation of the environmental journalism product, along with proper file name for assignment uploads to Canvas (30 points).

#### **Poster Presentation Project (15%, 150 points)**

Students develop a stand-alone scientific poster on an approved topic using PowerPoint. Topics can be related to the student's thesis or dissertation, but cannot be a reiteration of a previously-developed or an existing poster presentation (i.e., must be novelly developed for this class). Grading is based on development and timely submission of an approved project topic, title and draft presentation (20 points), descriptive/attractive/concise title (25 points), clear, singular content focus (20%), visually attractive and appropriate graphs/graphics/ photographs to support the story (50 points), mechanical art treatment (appropriate text/fonts, color scheme, layout and use of space (50 points), along with proper file name for assignment uploads to Canvas (10 points).

#### **Platform Presentation Project (20%, 200 points)**

Students develop an oral, platform scientific talk that is 12-15 minutes long (pending on class size), on an approved topic, and present it to the class using PowerPoint and other media elements as appropriate. Topics can be related to the student's thesis or dissertation, but cannot be a reiteration of a previously-developed oral presentation (i.e., must be novelly developed for this class). Grading is based on development of an approved project topic, title and draft presentation (15 points), on submission of the final PPT presentation file that is properly named for upload into Canvas (15 points), descriptive/attractive/concise title (20 points), clear, singular focus with no more than three supporting elements (20%), use of visually attractive and appropriate graphs/graphics (30 points), effective use of the "slide canvas" (appropriate text/fonts, color scheme, layout and use of space, 50 points), presenter style (dress, use of body, hands, voice quality and projection, use of room space/podium, use of microphone(s) and other room technology (50 points).

### Other Presentations (15%, 150 points)

Students will have several opportunities to gain additional presentation “flight time” by giving two or more brief Tailgate Talks (planned, sometimes impromptu) based on connecting and relating content to an audience, following the flow rubric provided, and sharing something meaningful and memorable (50 points), submit timely, concise written abstracts with logical flow and content for their poster and platform presentations (50 points), submit graphics and journal articles “for class necropsy” as assigned and contribute to in-class critique and discussion (25 points), on-time submission of constructive critique forms for external seminars/lectures, in-class presentations, as well as any other course assignments (25 points).

### Exams and Quizzes

There are no exams in this course.

### Course Grading

Requirement	Points	Percentage of Total Points	Due date
Attendance, Class Participation	150	15%	See Course Schedule
Interview Project	150	15%	See Course Schedule
Environmental Journalism Project	200	20%	See Course Schedule
Tailgate Talks, Abstracts, Other	150	15%	See Course Schedule
Poster Presentation Project	150	15%	See Course Schedule
Platform Presentation Project	200	20%	See Course Schedule

### Point system used (i.e., how do course points translate into letter grades). Example:

<b>Percentage of Points Earned</b>	93-100%	90-92%	87-89%	83-86%	80-82%	77-79%	73-76%	70-72%	67-69%	63-66%	60-62%	Below 62%
<b>Points Earned</b>	1000-930	929-900	899-870	869-830	829-800	799-770	769-730	729-700	699-670	669-630	629-600	Below 600
<b>Letter Grade</b>	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E

Please be aware that a C- is not an acceptable grade for graduate students. The GPA for graduate students must be 3.0. in all 5000 level courses and above to graduate. A grade of C counts toward a graduate degree only if a sufficient number of credits in courses numbered 5000 or higher have been earned with a B+ or higher.

<b>Letter Grade</b>	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E	WF	I
<b>Grade Points</b>	4.0	3.67	3.33	3.0	2.67	2.33	2.0	1.67	1.33	1.0	0.67	0.0	0.0	0.0

More information on UF grading policy may be found at:

<http://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=2020#grades>

**Exam Policy:** *Not applicable.*

### **Policy Related to Make up Work**

Any requests for make-ups or late submittal due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem.

### **Policy Related to Required Class Attendance**

Attendance is required for all classes since the course uses a heuristic approach to appreciating multiple forms of interpersonal communication dynamics for various audiences. Students are expected to attend all classes on time, and be prepared to participate in all class activities. ***NB: Since this three-credit course meets only once per week during Summer C, one missed class day is equivalent to missing three classes.*** Unexcused absences without prior communication with the instructor, and late assignment submissions, will affect a portion of your grade. Students who cannot attend a class are expected to access missed class content from another student in the class and turn in assignments by posted due dates. Personal issues with respect to class attendance or fulfillment of course requirements will be handled on an individual basis. Note that all faculty are bound by the UF policy for excused absences.

Excused absences must be consistent with university policies in the Graduate Catalog (<http://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=2020#attendance>) and require appropriate documentation. Additional information can be found here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

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## **STUDENT EXPECTATIONS, ROLES, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT**

### **Expectations Regarding Course Behavior**

You are expected to maintain a civil tone and respect the opinions of other posters. While commenting on others' posts is encouraged, aggressive or patronizing tone and language are unacceptable and may result in the loss of your posting and discussion privileges.

### **Communication Guidelines**

You are required to contact the professor by email using the instructor's UF email address (KANE@UFL.EDU) for clarification and assistance with the course material and the assignments, and for special issues that may arise. Weekday morning/daytime (US Eastern Time) emails have the best chances of being answered quickly (i.e., within 24-48 hours).

### **Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to act in accordance with the University of Florida policy on academic integrity. As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge: **"We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity."**

You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

**“On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”**

It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For additional information regarding Academic Integrity, please see Student Conduct and Honor Code or the Graduate Student Website for additional details:

<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>  
<http://gradschool.ufl.edu/students/introduction.html>

Please remember cheating, lying, misrepresentation, or plagiarism in any form is unacceptable and inexcusable behavior.

#### **Online Faculty Course Evaluation Process**

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/>.

#### **Policy Related to Guests Attending Class:**

Only registered students are permitted to attend class. However, we recognize that students who are caretakers may face occasional unexpected challenges creating attendance barriers. Therefore, by exception, a department chair or his or her designee (e.g., instructors) may grant a student permission to bring a guest(s) for a total of two class sessions per semester. This is two sessions total across all courses. No further extensions will be granted. Please note that guests are **not** permitted to attend either cadaver or wet labs. Students are responsible for course material regardless of attendance. For additional information, please review the Classroom Guests of Students policy in its entirety. Link to full policy: <http://facstaff.php.ufl.edu/services/resourceguide/getstarted.htm>

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## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

If you require classroom accommodation because of a disability, it is strongly recommended you register with the Dean of Students Office <http://www.dso.ufl.edu> within the first week of class or as soon as you believe you might be eligible for accommodations. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation of accommodations to you, which you must then give to me as the instructor of the course to receive accommodations. Please do this as soon as possible after you receive the letter. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester. The College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to assist students in their coursework.



### **Counseling and Student Health**

Students sometimes experience stress from academic expectations and/or personal and interpersonal issues that may interfere with their academic performance. If you find yourself facing issues that have the potential to or are already negatively affecting your coursework, you are encouraged to talk with an instructor and/or seek help through University resources available to you.

- The Counseling and Wellness Center 352-392-1575 offers a variety of support services such as psychological assessment and intervention and assistance for math and test anxiety. Visit their web site for more information: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu>. On line and in person assistance is available.
- You Matter We Care website: <http://www.umatter.ufl.edu/>. If you are feeling overwhelmed or stressed, you can reach out for help through the You Matter We Care website, which is staffed by Dean of Students and Counseling Center personnel.
- The Student Health Care Center at Shands is a satellite clinic of the main Student Health Care Center located on Fletcher Drive on campus. Student Health at Shands offers a variety of clinical services. The clinic is located on the second floor of the Dental Tower in the Health Science Center. For more information, contact the clinic at 392-0627 or check out the web site at: <https://shcc.ufl.edu/>
- Crisis intervention is always available 24/7 from:  
Alachua County Crisis Center:  
(352) 264-6789  
<http://www.alachuacounty.us/DEPTS/CSS/CRISISCENTER/Pages/CrisisCenter.aspx>

Do not wait until you reach a crisis to come in and talk with us. We have helped many students through stressful situations impacting their academic performance. You are not alone so do not be afraid to ask for assistance.

### **Inclusive Learning Environment**

Public health and health professions are based on the belief in human dignity and on respect for the individual. As we share our personal beliefs inside or outside of the classroom, it is always with the understanding that we value and respect diversity of background, experience, and opinion, where every individual feels valued. We believe in, and promote, openness and tolerance of differences in ethnicity and culture, and we respect differing personal, spiritual, religious and political values. We further believe that celebrating such diversity enriches the quality of the educational experiences we provide our students and enhances our own personal and professional relationships. We embrace The University of Florida's Non-Discrimination Policy, which reads, "The University shall actively promote equal opportunity policies and practices conforming to laws against discrimination. The University is committed to non-discrimination with respect to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations, genetic information and veteran status as protected under the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act." If you have questions or concerns about your rights and responsibilities for inclusive learning environment, please see your instructor or refer to the Office of Multicultural & Diversity Affairs website: [www.multicultural.ufl.edu](http://www.multicultural.ufl.edu)