

Professional Communication Seminar Syllabus

Instructors

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Time and Place

Term: Sunday August 18 through Saturday August 24, and Friday August 30, 2019

Sunday August 18

2:00–6:00: Orientation, Kresge cafeteria

Monday August 19 through Friday August 23, Kresge 200

8:30–12:00 and 1:00–4:00

Saturday August 24, Kresge 200

10:00–12:00 and 1:00–4:00

Friday August 30 TBA

Individual conferences throughout the day, a final group meeting 3:00–4:30, and a celebration

Canvas Site: TBD

Course Overview and Objectives

The goal of the Professional Communication Seminar (PCS) is to ensure you overcome the challenges you will encounter at Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health by providing you with a highly supportive network and requisite academic, communication, and critical thinking skills.

After completing PCS, you will be able to demonstrate skills and strategies to:

- Write a range of public health papers that present evidence-based arguments and recommendations
- Critically assess large amounts of evidence on a range of public health topics
- Participate fully in fast-paced classroom discussions
- Speak more clearly and confidently in public
- Manage time effectively, in order to balance the School's demanding workload with your personal interests and activities.

At the School, we view all forms of public health communications as critical arguments that seek to persuade others to a point of view through the use of logic, evidence, and other means. In PCS, you will develop your writing, critical thinking, and argumentation skills by learning to recognize the structure of arguments; to critically assess their claims, methods, and evidence; and to challenge illogical and poorly supported arguments. You will also learn to develop arguments using appropriate evidence and academic conventions. In addition, you will meet individually with the PCS faculty to review your classroom participation, as well as your speaking and writing skills.

PCS is based on collaborative learning, in which you will work in groups and teams to discuss issues, offer constructive feedback, and problem-solve with one another. We expect you to be an active member in this active teaching-learning environment and to participate fully in the small- and large-group discussions and activities.

We warmly welcome you and strongly encourage you to talk informally with your instructors and as many people at the School as possible, to learn more about Harvard and the extraordinary natural, cultural, artistic, and educational resources in Boston, Cambridge, and New England.

August 18–24, 2019

Sunday August 18—Day 1, Orientation, Kresge Building Cafeteria

2:00–6:00 Welcome, introductions, brief tour of School
Review syllabus and course goals
Dinner and conversation

Monday August 19—Day 2

8:30–12:00 Global Health Discussion
Kathy Brenner

1:00–4:00 Public Health Writing as Critical Argument
Donald Halstead

Tuesday August 20—Day 3

8:30–12:00 Structures and Genres of Public Health Writing; Writing Process and Document Mapping
Kathy Brenner

1:00–4:00 Writing Ethically and Summarizing Information
Donald Halstead

Wednesday August 21—Day 4

8:30–12:00 Oral Presentation Skills and Strategies
Kathy Brenner

12:30–1:30 Office for Student Affairs: Student Support and Programming
Leah Kane, Director, Office for Student Affairs

1:30–3:00 Classroom Skills and Strategies, and Time Management
Kathy Brenner

3:00–4:00 Questions and Answers with *Susanna Mitro*, PCS TA and Epi doctoral student

Thursday August 22—Day 5

8:30–12:00 Reading Critically and Managing Information
Donald Halstead

12:15–1:15 Being a Student at Harvard Chan and Choosing Courses
Anne Occhipinti, MPH Director

1:30–4:00 Writing Clearly and Concisely, part 1
Kathy Brenner

Friday August 23—Day 6

8:30–12:00 Peer Review of Writing
Donald Halstead, Kathy Brenner

1:00–4:00 Individual Conferences: Location TBA
Donald Halstead, Kathy Brenner

Saturday August 24—Day 7

10:00–12:00 Writing Clearly and Concisely, part 2
Donald Halstead

1:00–4:00 International Student Case Study Discussion
Donald Halstead, Kathy Brenner

August 26 & 30, 2019

Monday August 26

9:00 *Deadline for submitting final PCS writing assignments*

Friday August 30—Day 8

9:00–2:30 Individual PCS Writing Conferences scheduled throughout the day. Specific times will be determined after we have reviewed your course/Orientation schedule.
Donald Halstead, Kathy Brenner

3:00–4:30 PCS Evaluations and Wrap-up in Kresge 200

4:30–6:30 Celebration at The Squealing Pig pub, an important neighborhood institution

Note: This syllabus is subject to change, according to instructors' perception of student needs.