

Health Campaign Design and Analysis September 2008
University of Lugano, Switzerland

Instructor:

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Course Description This course examines the strategies and effects of communication campaigns aimed at informing and persuading the public. Because most campaigns are targeted toward large audiences, the primary emphasis will be on communication via media channels. The course focuses on health campaigns principles and examples from the US that may be applicable in the European setting. The first part of the course gives an overview of campaign design theory and concepts. The second series of lectures provides detailed case studies of notable health topics.

Objectives: The course is intended to provide:

- Theoretical understanding of how campaigns influence audiences.
- Familiarity with the impact of significant campaigns in recent years and analysis of current campaign strategies being employed, with special emphasis on preventing alcohol problems.
- Practical guidance and experience in devising and constructing campaign plans and messages in applied settings.

In Class Exercises: Four in-class exercises are scheduled, where groups of two or three students will spend 15 minutes preparing responses to a series campaign strategy questions and then participate in brief class discussion.

Readings: Students should read in advance the assigned chapters posted on the website:

- Atkin, C., & Silk, K. (2008). *Health communication*. In D. Stacks and M. Salwen (Eds.), *An integrated approach to communication theory and research, 2nd ed.* Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Rice, R., & Atkin, C. (2008). Public communication campaigns: Theoretical principles and practical applications. In J. Bryant and M. Oliver (Eds.), *Media effects: Advances in theory and research, 3rd ed.* Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. <note updated material pp 26-42!>
- Atkin, C. & Freimuth, V. (2001). "Formative evaluation research in campaign design," in R. Rice and C. Atkin (Eds.), *Public Communication Campaigns*, pp. 125-145. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Atkin, C, Smith, S., Ferguson, V. & McFeters, C. (2008). A comprehensive analysis of breast cancer news coverage in leading media outlets. *Journal of Health Communication*. 13: 3-19
- Smith, S.W., Atkin, C.K., & Roznowski, J. (2006). "Are 'drink responsibly' alcohol campaigns strategically ambiguous?" *Health Communication*, 20: 1-11.

- Hembroff, L., Atkin, C., Martell, D., McCue, C., & Greenamyre, J. (2007). "Evaluation results of 21st birthday card program targeting high-risk drinking," *Journal of American College Health*, 56:3:325-333.
- Smith, S.W., Atkin, C.K., Martell, D., Allen, R., & Hembroff, L. (2006). A social judgment theory approach to conducting formative research in a social norms campaign," *Communication Theory*, 16: 141-152.
- Also, examine material on social norms alcohol prevention campaigns on the website <http://www.socialnorms.msu.edu>

Topic Schedule

1. Course introduction, Definition of campaigns
2. General framework and social marketing concepts
3. Assessment of communication audiences
4. Formative research in campaign design
5. Persuasive message strategies, Communication sources
6. Selecting channels of dissemination
7. Health campaign overview, trends, and generalizations
8. Health cases:
 - Alcohol & Drunk driving
 - Tobacco
 - Drugs
 - Safety belt buckling
 - Breast cancer
 - Heart disease & Stroke
 - Diet & Exercise