

**The Ohio State University
Health Sciences Professions
Fall Quarter 2008**

- Course Title:** Health Literacy
- Course Number:** Number depends on Colleges offering the course
- Credit Hours:** 3 credit hours
- Quarter Offered:** Fall Quarter
- Pre-requisites:** Senior UG or Graduate level in Health Professions; Graduate level in Literacy Studies
- Meeting Time & Place:** TBA
- Course Coordinator:** Sandra Cornett, Ph.D., RN.
Director, AHEC Clear Health Communication Program
Office of Outreach & Engagement – College of Medicine
052 Meiling Hall
688-3327 (Tuesday / Thursday)
- Participating Faculty:** Taught by a team of faculty in the health professions
Names and contact information will be specified later
- Course Description:** Examine and analyze the issues and challenges of low health literacy. Includes an examination of the data for national and international literacy levels and populations at risk for low literacy; research on health literacy; measurement tools; development of health information in plain language; effective health communication techniques; and organizational approaches to meet the challenges of low health literacy.
- Course Objectives:** At the conclusion of this course, the students will be able to:
1. Examine the definitions and implications of literacy / health literacy, the national / international statistics on literacy, and populations at risk for low health literacy.
 2. Describe the forces for change and the national plain language agenda.
 3. Examine factors that affect health literacy: communication skills, culture, context, health system demands, etc.
 4. Explore research findings linking literacy and its impact on health knowledge, health promoting behaviors, health outcomes/status, and health utilization / costs.
 5. Analyze the methods and measures used in health literacy research.
 6. Compare and contrast the characteristics, behaviors, and coping techniques of those with limited literacy skills.
 7. Assess the reading and comprehension levels of a client using the Rapid Estimate of Adult Literacy in Medicine (REALM) and Short Test of Functional Health Literacy in Adults (STOFHLA).

8. Analyze the reading level and degree of difficulty of a piece of health material using the Fry Index, SMOG Formula, and Suitability Assessment of Materials (SAM) tool.
9. Explore the usability of health information on the Internet.
10. Incorporate key elements of writing style, organization, and graphic design to develop a piece of health material that is easy-to-read.
11. Field- test the student-developed piece of health material using audience reaction techniques.
12. Apply guiding principles for effective health communication to case-studies.
13. Explore interdisciplinary strategies to improve health outcomes in clients with low literacy skills
14. Explore ways to initiate organizational change for plain language efforts.

Teaching / Learning Opportunities:

Multiple teaching / learning strategies will be used for the course experience:

- Lecture with class discussion
- Student presentation on paper or developed piece of health information material
- Group activities focusing on interdisciplinary approaches to improving health outcomes in clients with low literacy
- Clinical or field experiences with clients and in facilities
- Case studies
- Videotapes

Required Text:

Schwartzberg JC, VanGeest JB, Wang CC, editors. (2005). Understanding Health Literacy: Implications for Medicine and Public Health. Chicago: AMA Press. www.amapress.com

Additional Readings From Texts;

Nielsen-Bohlman L, Panzer AM, Kindig DA, editors. (2004). Health Literacy: A Prescription to End Confusion. Washington DC: The National Academies Press. www.iom.edu

Doak CC, Doak LC, Root JH. (2nd edition, 1996) Teaching Patients with Low Literacy Skills. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company. Out of print. Chapters available at: <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/healthliteracy/doak.html>

Assigned Readings:

Required readings for each week will be from the text, an assembled package of selected articles, articles or book chapters on electronic reserve at Prior HSL, and website downloads

Selected Handouts:

Distributed by speakers at class

Evaluation of Learning:

Activities	% of Grade / Points
<p><u>Assignments</u> Students will be given individual assignments or interdisciplinary group assignments consisting of activities to do and summarize in writing. The assignments will facilitate the students' understanding and perspective of topics discussed in class</p>	25 (5 points for each of 5 assignments)
<p><u>Development & Testing of a Health Information Piece</u> A piece of written health information and a field-testing plan is to be developed for a specified audience between Weeks 6 and 9.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will be asked to do a 10 minute presentation on why they developed the piece as they did and the field testing plan OR a summary of the topic they chose for the final paper ▪ Presentations will be done during the second hour of Week 9 or on Week 10. 	35
<p><u>Final Paper</u> Paper will focus on a specialized area of inquiry based on issues related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a specific population (e.g. elderly, ethnic groups, prisoners, ESL, etc.) ▪ health condition (e.g. diabetes, HIV/AIDS, heart disease, etc) ▪ public health communication issues (e.g. informed consent, rights / responsibilities, eligibility for health care, disclosures, etc.) <p>Guidelines for paper will be distributed in class.</p>	40
Total	100

Grading Scale:

The course is letter graded. The following point system will be used to award final grades.

Points	Letter Grade
93-100	A
90-92.9	A-
87-89.9	B+
83-86.9	B
80-82.9	B-
77-79.9	C+
73-76.9	C
70-72.9	C-
67-69.9	D+
63-66.9	D
< 62.9	E

Academic Misconduct:

Academic misconduct is defined as any activity that compromises the academic integrity of The Ohio State University or subverts the educational process. Academic misconduct of any nature will not be tolerated and will be reported to the OSU Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) following the procedures and policies outlined at <http://oaa.osu.edu/coam/home.html>

Disability Services:

Students who feel they need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor to arrange an appointment with the OSU Office for Disability Services. At the appointment, it will be determined if reasonable accommodations can be made to facilitate your learning. <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/welcome.htm>

Attendance and Participation:

Students are expected to attend all scheduled sessions and be prepared to participate in group discussions and activities with speakers, and in field observations and assignments.

Final Paper:

An 8-10 page double spaced paper to focus on a specialized area of inquiry based on issues related to a specific population, health condition, public health communication issue, literacy and health disparities, or communication methods or techniques to enhance health communication. The following criteria will be required for examination of this issue:

- Statement of the problem / issue
- Current research on the issue
- Gaps in research and recommendations for further studies on the issue
- Implications for professional practice

Course Schedule:

Week 1	
Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Course Overview ▪ Literacy, Myth, and Legacies: Lessons from the History of Literacy ▪ A Conceptual Framework for Health Literacy ▪ Definition of health literacy ▪ 1992 National Adults Literacy Survey (NALS) ▪ 2003 International Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey (ALL) ▪ 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL) ▪ Populations at risk for low health literacy
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Graff HJ. The Labyrinths of Literacy. (1995). The University of Pittsburgh Press, pp. 318-349. ▪ Schwartzberg JG: Ch1 Understanding Health Literacy, 3-16 Ch 2 Epidemiology of Low Health Literacy, pp. 17-23 Ch 3 Literacy Skills of US Adults, pp. 43-53 Ch 4 What Does Low Literacy Mean? pp. 55-68 ▪ The Health Literacy of America's Adults: Results from the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy, Sept. 2006. (Exec. Summary) http://nces.ed.gov/NAAL/ ▪ Highlights From the 2003 International Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey (ALL) http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/all/
Learning Activities & Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lecture / discussion / group activity ▪ Videotape: In Plain Language (Harvard School of Public Health) or Health Literacy: Help Your Patients Understand (AMA) ▪ Simulation of new reader experience

Week 2	
Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Forces for change and plain language agenda ▪ Factors that affect health literacy ▪ Reasons for low health literacy ▪ Health literacy research findings – part 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Impact on health-related knowledge ○ Impact on health outcomes / status
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Schwartzberg JG: Ch 2 Epidemiology of Low Health Literacy pp. 23-32 Ch 12 Health Literacy & Health Outcomes: Overview of the Literature pp.205-224 Ch 11 A Conceptual Framework for the Relationship Between Health Literacy & Health Care Outcomes: The Chronic Disease Exemplar pp. 181-196 Ch 5 Literacy Demands in Health Care Settings pp. 69-81 • Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality, Literacy and Health Outcomes (summary), January 2004. http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/epcsums/litsum.htm
Learning Activities & Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lecture / discussion ▪ Search internet for websites (1) about plain language and (2) that provide materials written in plain language for clients. Write a one-page summary of findings.
Week 3	
Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Health literacy research findings – part 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Impact on health promoting behaviors ○ Impact on health utilization / costs ○ Gaps in research ▪ Methods and measurements used in health literacy research (Prose, Document, Quantitative comprehension) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Research methods ○ Cloze ○ TOFHLA / STOFHLA – Test of Functional Health Literacy in Adults ○ REALM – Rapid Estimate of Adult Literacy in Medicine
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Schwartzberg JG: Ch 10 Literacy Testing in Health Care Research pp. 157-176 ▪ Nielsen-Bohlman L. Health Literacy: A Prescription to End Confusion (IOM Report) 2004. http://www.nap.edu/catalog/10883.html#toc <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Measures Used in Health Literacy Research pp. 43-55 ○ Appendix C pp.301-322.- Sample Materials from Selected Assessment of Literacy and Health Literacy ▪ Doak, Doak, Root: Ch 3 Testing Literacy Skills of Patients pp. 27-39. http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/healthliteracy/doak.html
Learning Activities & Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lecture / discussion ▪ Develop in class a Cloze Test for a health information piece

Week 4	
Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assessment of reading ability and understanding of health information in clients <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clues of low literacy ○ Screening questions / observations ○ Listening test ○ Newest Vital Sign (NVS) ○ Listening Test ▪ Characteristics of poor readers, behaviors, coping techniques ▪ Cross-Cultural Communication
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cornett S. Module 2: You Can't Tell By Looking: Assessing a Person's Ability to Read and Understand Health Information. http://medicine.osu.edu/ahec/6272.cfm ▪ Doak, Doak, Root: Ch 1 The Literacy Problem pp. 1-9 http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/healthliteracy/doak.html ▪ Bass PF, Wilson JF, Griffith CH (2003). A shortened instrument for literacy screening. <i>J. Gen Intern Med</i>, 18:1036-1038. ▪ Weiss BD, Mays MZ, Castro KM, et. al. (2005). Quick assessment of literacy in primary care: The newest vital sign. <i>Annals of Family Medicine</i>. 3(6):514-522. ▪ Chew LD, Bradley KA, Boyko EJ, (2004), Brief Questions to Identify Patients With Inadequate Health Literacy, <i>Family Medicine</i>, 36(8):588-94. ▪ Schouten BC, & Meeuwesen L, (2006), Cultural Differences in Medical Communication: A Review of the Literature, <i>Patient Education and Counseling</i>, 64(2006) 21-34.
Learning Activities & Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lecture / discussion ▪ Video ▪ Develop in class a list of questions for a listening test. ▪ Visit an Adult Education Center, Neighborhood Health Center, or Community Pharmacy Site and use the REALM, STOFHLA, or Newest Vital Sign to determine a client's reading ability. Use assessment clues for low literacy. Write up brief report of findings for class discussion.
Week 5	
Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analyzing reading levels and degree of difficulty of health information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Readability formulas: SMOG, Fry, Flesch Reading Ease, Computer based formulas ○ Suitability Assessment of Materials (SAM) ▪ Studies on reading levels of health education materials ▪ Usability of health information on the internet
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Doak, Doak, Root: Ch 4 Assessing Suitability of Materials pp. 41-60 http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/healthliteracy/doak.html ▪ DuBay WH. The Principles of Readability. Impact Information: Costa Mesa, CA. http://www.impact-information.com/ ▪ Schwartzberg J. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ch 8 The Challenges of Informed Consent for Low-Literate Populations pp. 119-133.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ch 9 Using the Internet to Move Beyond the Brochure and Improve Health Literacy pp. 141-151. ▪ Wallace LS, Lennon ES, American Academy of Family Physicians Patient Education Materials: Can Patients Read Them? (2004). <u>Family Medicine</u>, 36(8):571-4. ▪ Kang E, Fields HW, Cornett S, Beck FM, “An Evaluation of Pediatric Dental Patient Education Materials Using Contemporary Health Literacy Measures,” <u>Pediatric Dentistry</u>, 27:5, 2005, 409-413. ▪ Foster DR, Rhoney DH. (2002). Readability of printed patient information for epileptic patients. <u>The Annals of Pharmacotherapy</u>, 3(12): 1856-61. ▪ Eysenbach G, Powell JP, Kuss O, Sa E. (2002). Empirical studies assessing the quality of health information for consumers on the World Wide Web. <u>Journal of the American Medical Association</u>, 287(20): 2691-2700.
Learning Activities & Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lecture / Discussion ▪ Discussion on Center/ Clinic visit, observations, and use of assessment tools ▪ Practice doing a readability index and review of materials in class ▪ Class to develop criteria for assessing the usability of health information on the internet. Using the assessment criteria, compare and contrast 2 health-related websites of your choice. Write a one-page summary of findings for discussion next class
Week 6	
Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Framework for design of health materials ▪ Key elements for writing easy-to-read materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Writing style ○ Organization ○ Appearance and Design
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Doak, Doak, Root: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/healthliteracy/doak.html <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ch 2 Applying Theory In Practice pp. 21-24. ○ Ch 6 Writing the Message pp. 73-88 ○ Ch 7 Visuals and How to Use Them pp. 91-127 ▪ Pfizer Principles for Clear Health Communication (2nd edition): A Handbook for Creating Patient Education Materials that Enhance Understanding and Promote Health Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> http://www.pfizerhealthliteracy.com/physicians-providers/chc-principles.html <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ch 3 Planning Consumer Pieces to Meet Goals of Clear Health Communication pp. 9-16 ○ Ch 4 The Principles for Easy-to-Read Health Care Materials pp. 17-47.
Learning Activities & Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lecture / discussion ▪ Report findings of usability of health information on internet. ▪ Group exercises in class to apply key elements ▪ Examples of materials demonstrating key elements ▪ Do a SMOG or Fry Index and use the SAM or other tools distributed in class to do an analysis of the reading difficulty of health education

	material. Edit / revise the material, based on plain language criteria.
Week 7	
Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Steps in planning easy-to-read materials ▪ Field testing health materials
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OSU AHEC Guide to Planning Easy-to-Read Materials (2005) ▪ Doak, Doak, Root: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/healthliteracy/doak.html <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ch 10 Learner Verification and Revision of Materials pp. 167-185 ○ Appendix D – Learner Verification and Revision pp. 203-206
Learning Activities & Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Visit a health care facility and make observations of the literacy demands placed on people navigating the system. Write a one-page summary of your observations and possible solutions for these challenges for class discussion next week. ▪ Use the OSU AHEC Planning Guide for Writing Easy to Read Health Materials to develop a one-fold brochure or a one-page piece of material on a health information topic of choice. Material to be presented in class Week 9 or Week 10, if that option chosen by student. ▪ Develop a field-testing method for the piece of health information material being developed. Submit field-testing plan with health education piece on Week 9 or Week 10.
Week 8	
Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Guiding principles for effective health communication ▪ Opportunities to improve health literacy ▪ Organizational strategies for meeting the challenge of low health literacy
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Schwartzberg J: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ch 6 Health Literacy and the Patient-Provider Relationship pp. 87-98 ○ Ch 7 Participatory Decision-Making in the Medical Encounter and Its Relationship to Patient Literacy pp. 101-113. ▪ Nielsen-Bohlman L. Health Literacy: A Prescription to End Confusion (IOM Report) 2004. Ch 4 Culture and Society pp. 108-136. http://www.nap.edu/catalog/10883.html#toc ▪ Doak, Doak, Root: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/healthliteracy/doak.html <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ch 5 The Comprehension Process pp. 61-70 ▪ Cornett S. Organizational Strategies for Meeting the Challenge of Low Health Literacy (2005).
Learning Activities & Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lecture / discussion ▪ Discussion of “navigating the system” field trip to health care facility ▪ Case studies in class ▪ Video with vignettes for group activity ▪ Case study - Group plan for organizational strategies
Week 9	
Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student presentations on issue paper or health education piece
Learning Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussion ▪ Peer critique of presentations

Week 10	
Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Student presentations on issue paper or health education piece
Learning Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Discussion▪ Peer critique of presentations▪ Planning guide, health education material, and field-testing plan due▪ Final paper due

12/07