Communicating to Build Trust
Course Syllabus
Fall 2025

Communicating to Build Trust is a 5-week course that includes four live 90-minute calls on the topics of misinformation, data visualization, social media, and media relations.

Prior to each call, attendees watch a recorded lecture with foundational concepts which allows the live calls to focus on practice, workshopping, and small group breakouts to apply new concepts.

After each live call, attendees are given a short assignment to submit in order to receive written feedback from faculty. There are also additional resources and readings provided for each topic area.

Learning objectives and assignments are mapped out below.

Oct. 23-29: Welcome & Foundations of Misinformation

Format	Learning Objectives	Assignments
Self-paced learning	- Understand the flow of the course - Define misinformation - Identify predominant tropes and narratives in the current health misinformation environment - Understand who tends to believe misinformation - Distinguish between high- and low-evidence interventions to counteract misinformation	- Fill in your learner profile - Read Welcome & Introductory Instructions - Watch brief Welcome video - Watch Misinformation Lecture - Answer reflection question in the community platform

Oct. 30, 2-3:30 pm ET: Addressing Misinformation

Format	Learning Objectives	Assignments
Live 90-minute Call	- Meet course faculty and fellow students - Q&A session with experts - Examine misinformation scenarios - Recommend misinformation response strategies	- Label misinformation tropes and/or narratives in an example - Write a one-paragraph response and rate how likely that response will be successful and why

Oct. 31–Nov. 5: Foundations of Media Relations

Format	Learning Objectives	Assignments
Self-paced learning	- Identify the story in your study - Learn to communicate clearly in a media interview	- Watch Media Relations lecture - Share your experiences with the media in the community platform

Nov. 6, 2-3:30 pm ET: Building Relationships with the Media

Format	Learning Objectives	Assignments
Live 90-minute Call	- Q&A session with experts - Observe a mock interview and share feedback and reactions - Practice interviewing with your peers	Write a 3-4 sentence pitch to a member of the media that describes your research, its relevance and potential impact.

Nov. 7-12: Foundations of Social Media

Format	Learning Objectives	Assignments
Self-paced learning	• Understand the benefits of using social media as a researcher • Demonstrate the difference between transparency and authenticity. • Explain audience expectations on various social platforms and different ways to engage.	• Watch Social Media lecture • Review two social media videos and respond to reflection questions in the community platform

Nov. 13, 2-3:30 pm ET: Leveraging Social Media

Format	Learning Objectives	Assignments
Live 90-minute Call	• Q&A session with experts • Examine one social media platform in detail with a small group • Recommend social media strategies to achieve various goals	• Develop and submit 1-2 goals for social media engagement and select an appropriate social platform to achieve them

Nov. 14-19: Foundations of Effective Data Visualization

Format	Learning Objectives	Assignments
Self-paced learning	• Identify 5 strategies of creating better data visualizations • Understand the pre-attentive processing model to enhance data visualization design	• Watch Data Visualization lecture • Review a resource packet with information on data visualization best practices

Nov. 20, 2-3:30 pm ET: Building Data Literacy & Visualization Skills

Format	Learning Objectives	Assignments
Live 90-minute Call	• Q&A session with experts • Categorize graphs into different groups • Examine & evaluate various data visualizations	• Review a poor data visualization and identify its major issues • Submit your thoughts on an updated visualization