

Course description Master of Science in Public Health	
Module responsible: Anja Leppin	Last updated: August 2014
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Module number: 3969902	
Module title: Risk Communication	
ECTS-points	7.5
Responsible institute	Institute of Public Health, Research Unit for Health Promotion
Prerequisites connected to the module	None
General objectives	<p>Risk issues loom large in present-day society: from everyday life-styles to technical and environmental catastrophes to climate change, international terrorism and pandemics. The degree and quality of potential risks is often as controversial and contested as the price societies, organizations and individuals are willing to pay for adopting precautions. Risk management therefore does not only concern the specific hazards involved but also the publics' reactions to them. Sometimes public concern can widely exceed the risk potential that is attributed to a hazard by experts. In other instances, experts may perceive the public as being sublimely unconscious about a threat. Effectively communicating about risk is therefore a key strategy for risk management</p> <p>The aim of the course is to provide knowledge, understanding and analysis skills with regard to risk perception, communication strategies and evidence-based methods for communicating about different types of risk, ranging from potential crisis situations, such as pandemic outbreaks and bioterrorism threats to more everyday risks, such as food poisoning or nosocomial (in-hospital) infections. The course also seeks to provide skills in analyzing risk situations with regard to communication needs and developing risk communication strategies tailored to these situations.</p>
Specific competency objectives	<p>After successfully completing this course, the students will be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify, describe and discuss the cognitive and emotional processes underlying risk perception; • identify, describe and discuss the different theories, methods and perspectives of risk communication; • analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of communication strategies and processes in different health risk and crisis situations; • apply the diverse risk communication principles and methods to develop and implement effective risk communication messages.

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Time of teaching	3 rd semester, 1 st quarter (Autumn semester)	
Competency profile of the education	This module contributes to the elements 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 11 of the competency profile of the education (see MSc in Public Health curriculum section 1.4)	
Type of teaching	In this module the students will acquire new knowledge on risk perception, communication strategies and evidence-based methods for communicating about different types of risk in lectures and debate sessions. Students will train their ability to analyse risk situations with regard to communication needs and to develop risk communication strategies in case-based small group exercises.	
Prerequisites connected to the examination	Active participation in 1 group presentation	
Type of examination	Written report – written individually or in groups of 2-3 students. Size of the paper: 10 normal pages for individual reports and 7 normal pages per student for group reports. Internal censorship Grading by the 7-point grading scale.	
Evaluation at the grade 12 /evaluation Pass	Grade 12 is given if the student has shown excellent performance, having comprehensively fulfilled the module's objectives with no or only a few minor weaknesses.	
Approved by	The Academic Study Board of Public Health	Approved on 14 August 2014