

My Journey to Becoming a Scholar-Teacher

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Introduction

American social psychologist Kurt Lewin's maxim "there is nothing as practical as a good theory" has influenced me throughout my career in academia. Over the past twenty years, I have discovered that good theories are those that are immediate and insightful enough to solve problems that we encounter in our daily lives. As a communication scholar, I research the ethical decision-making process, leadership, and upward influence tactics of public relations practitioners. I navigate how the emergence of social media has contributed to activism and social change. I also explore how storytelling strategies work differently depending on variable conditions, such as the speaker's credibility, gender bias, and emotional intensity. The theoretical insights I have gained from research have translated into practical implications in the classroom, and it is this that I teach to my students.

What I Teach as a Scholar-Teacher

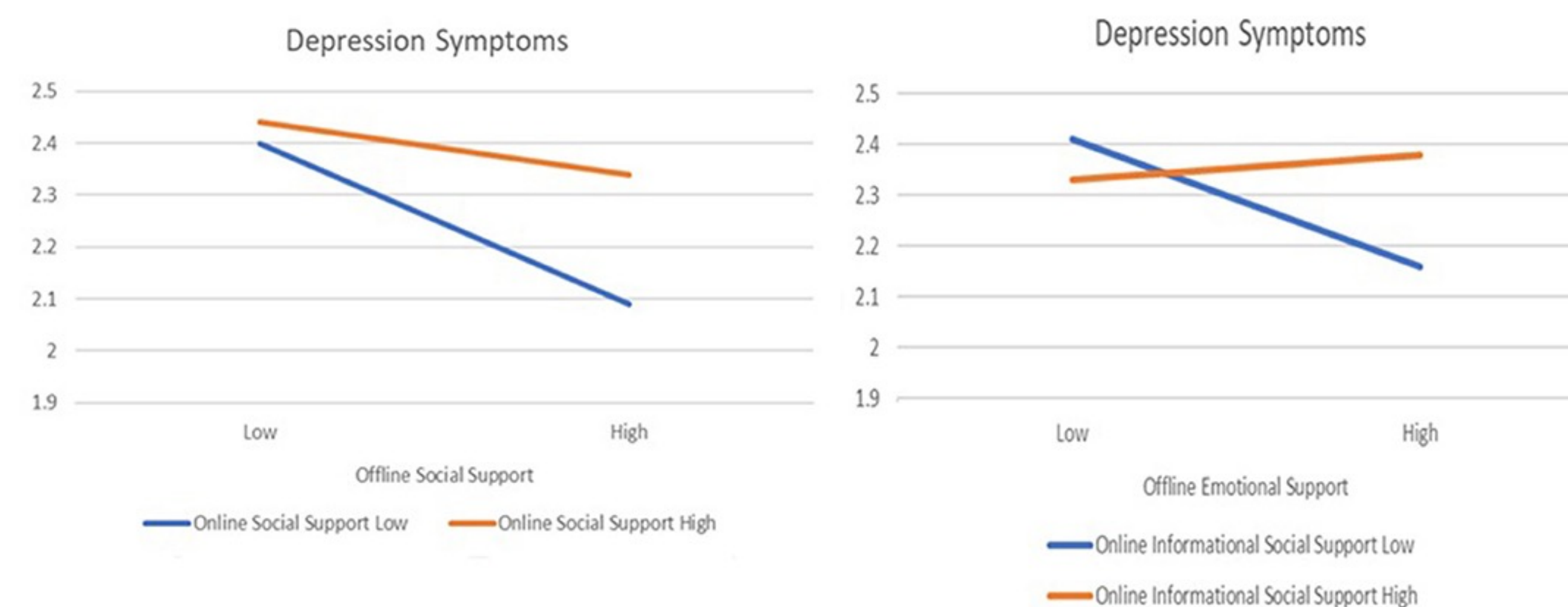
- My research efforts have served my teaching practice. For example, I led a health promotion project with the Diabetes Self-Management Education (DSME) Program of the Pitt County Public Health Department in 2014. The purpose of the project was to redesign the DSME program's print marketing materials because they had suffered from decreasing patient enrollment. I involved my campaign class students in the project. Under my supervision, the students followed every step of the systematic research process, which helped students to make evidence-based decisions as they redesigned the brochure. Students then tested the effectiveness of the new brochures.
- This project was presented at the Third Biennial DC Health Communication Conference in 2015 and received an honorable mention award. The DSME program also resulted in improved marketing materials.

Confidence in Telemedicine

I also advise graduate students to complete their research projects.

In spring 2020, I mentored a graduate student, Rachel Griffith to further develop her term paper by refining the research design, collecting data, writing a manuscript, presenting the paper at the Research and Creativity Activity Week (RCAW), and submitting it to a journal. Our work was finally published at *Health and New Media Research* in July 2021. The whole process required patience and energy. Mentoring student research, however, is the best way to connect research and education. There is pure joy in seeing the student intellectually grow as we go through the research process.

Social Media, Social Support & Mental Health During COVID-19



Another project that I recently published at *Frontiers in Health Communication* with my graduate student, Kaitlyn Longest is about how social media usage and online/off-line social support affect depression symptoms of the US young adults aged at 18 – 25.



(← Scan the QR code for the details of the research).

The research found that informational acquisition motive for using social media was positively associated with depression symptoms, and a higher level of online informational support contributed to increasing the symptoms. Young adults showed the lowest level of depression symptoms when they had a higher level of offline emotional support and a lower level of online informational support. Our survey stressed the importance of offline emotional support and reconfirmed that nothing can replace its value.

Who I am as a s Scholar-Teacher

I believe who I am as a teacher is as important as what I teach. The one thing that lasts in students' minds is that who I am as a teacher, not what I teach. Although students forget details of the course work, they do remember the passion for a subject I show in the classroom and the care that I take of students. Those are what last and transform students into lifelong learners.

My cultural identity also helps me to be a better scholar and teacher. Since I am a Korean native international scholar, I seek opportunities to give students international experiences. I led a study abroad program in the summer of 2017 and took my students to South Korea. It was fascinating to guide my students to go beyond their comfort zones and equip them with global perspectives. The conversations I had with my students during the trip were invaluable. Among the study abroad members, two of the students decided to pursue a master's degree in international relations. The study-abroad program also brought me a teaching award from the Korean American Communication Association (KACA). All these experiences remind me that all I have can be a source of inspiration to students.



Support Our Campaign: NO Confetti ECU

- One of my recent projects is *No Confetti ECU* campaign. My senior students in PR Campaigns (COMM4500) are working on this cause to raise awareness of the harmful effect of plastic glittering confetti on the campus environment.
- The students develop research-based campaign strategies in the coursework and execute their ideas.
- Follow our social media and spread the word!



Your Care Team
From left to right: Nancy Straker, Robin High, Joan Mansfield, Jackie Sagg and Elizabeth Scott
• Team of Registered Nurses, Dietitians and a Health Educator
• Over 25 years of combined experience in diabetes education
"We are proud to provide Diabetes Self-Management Education (DSME) to empower people living with diabetes and let them know...you're not alone!"
Call us today or ask your doctor for a referral to our program!

For More Information
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Diabetes Education Program
Pitt County Health Department
201 Government Circle
Greenville, NC 27834
Phone: 252-902-2307
Fax: 252-413-3446
diabetes@pittcountync.gov

Insurance
• Medicaid covers: 100% of the cost & transportation.
• Blue Cross/Blue Shield covers 80% of the costs.
• No insurance? No Problem! Cost will be according to your household size & income.

INTERESTED IN ENROLLING?
Call Us (252-902-2361) or Talk with Your Doctor Today!
(REFERRAL REQUIRED)

Who: Anyone with Diabetes
What: Meet with dietitians, nurses & health educators to learn behaviors that will help you meet your diabetes goals.
When: See timeline below. Sign up at any time.
Where: Pitt County Health Dept

Why:
• One-on-one and group instruction
• Customized plan to fit your needs
• Healthy recipe ideas
• Lower cholesterol & blood pressure
• Access to a support system
• Better quality of life
• Lower risk of complications

"I have incorporated a lot of information that I received from the program into my lifestyle, and that has benefited me greatly. I do not have to do insulin any more...I am happier about it and I am happier about the situation than I was before."
-Mattie, Diabetes Education Program Graduate

PROGRAM TIMELINE
Initial Consult → 4 Group Classes → Support Phone Call → 3 month follow-up Class → Go For Your Goals!