

## So you Think you can ... *Communicate* about Healthy Communities

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**Learning Objective:** To communicate persuasively about contemporary social issues, *integrating historical* information and ideas, and present ideas in a clear, succinct way in a public forum.

**Assignment:** Students will complete a Print (Op-Ed or blog entry), Audio (1-minute radio spot), or Video (1-minute video) that communicates details about a built environment and health topic discussed in unit one of the course and seeks to persuade the audience to action. Focus your work on a specific neighborhood that will also serve as your location for assignments to follow. Students will present their work and receive feedback from peers through anonymous voting. The top three presentations will be highlighted on [www.bephc.com](http://www.bephc.com)

The work should focus on a built environment and health topic that clearly threatens or impacts the general public or at least some large segment of the public. It should be related to policy and/or ethics of popular interest dominating the news, or look ahead to something that will fit as a connection to what you want to write about. Select a position, build your arguments logically from historical and interdisciplinary facts and statistics (researched or first hand information), then clearly restate your position and issue a call to action, recommendation or solution (do not call for more research).

In developing your audio or video submission consider applying lessons from the print or Op-Ed arena. An Op-Ed is a highly focused opinion piece that aims to stir the reader's emotions while presenting facts that support the author's point of view. It sits opposite the publication's editorial page which hosts articles written by the senior editorial staff or publisher on an issue on which their readership is interested.

A successful Op-Ed (radio spot or video) will:

- Be **timely**
- Tell your reader **why he or she should care** about this topic, plug in to **self-interest**.
- Be **crystal clear** about what you are arguing and why. Make your point with a bold statement in the first sentence or two then convince the reader through the rest of the piece. Take a strong stand but maintain a reasonable posture in its tone. (approximately 25 words)
- Use **simple and easy to understand language**; do not use jargon unless it is absolutely essential!
- Use **powerful direct language** to educate your reader with active voice, and verbs; drop adjectives and adverbs.
- Use **short declarative** sentences and short paragraphs
- **Educate** your reader following a **personal (first person) conversational** approach
- **Acknowledge** the other side of the argument

- Use **facts and emotions** (humor works well) to drive action and include **great examples** that bring your article to life
- **End as strong as you start** (approximately 100 words)

**Rubric:**

Resources (20 maximum points)

Did the student include a diversity of perspectives? Is the content timely?

Presentation Content (30 maximum points)

Did the author include language found in Unit 1 resources and define disciplinary jargon where necessary? Did the author build their argument in a logical way? Were the main points clear? Did the author include examples to illustrate the main message? Did the student include sufficient information on his/her neighborhood selection?

Presentation (30 maximum points)

Was the work presented in a clear, concise manner? Did the work address interests of the audience? Was the audience engaged throughout the presentation? Did the presentation answer the audience's questions? Is the audience ready for the sequel?

Product (Print, Audio or Video) (20 maximum points)

Is the product well organized? Did the student present the work in a logical manner? Are the main points clear? Did the student include examples to illustrate the main points?