



School of Health Professions
School of Communication
and Information



International Summer School in Greece (May 23-June 1, 2025)

“INTERPROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND COMMUNICATION IN HEALTHCARE, IN THE U.S. & GREECE”

PROGRAM ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

This program is co-organized and managed by Rutgers University (U.S.A.) and Democritus University of Thrace (Greece).

Representing Rutgers University:

School of Health Professions (<https://shp.rutgers.edu/>)

- James Scott Parrot PhD
- Riva Touger-Decker PhD, RD, CDN

School of Communication & Information (<https://comminfo.rutgers.edu/>)

- Matthew Matsaganis PhD

Representing Democritus University of Thrace:

School of Medicine (<https://med.duth.gr/>)

- Theodoros K. Konstantinidis, MD, PhD, Dean of School of Health Sciences
- Christos Kontogiorgis PhD

LOCATION

The school will be hosted in Greece, by Democritus University of Thrace (DUTH). Program activities will take place in the city of Alexandroupolis, northeastern Greece.

INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

To improve patient outcomes, better prepare the healthcare workforce of the future, and imbue healthcare systems with the capacity to learn and adapt to changing needs, interprofessional education and communication are key. According to the 2022 U.S. Joint Commission’s Sentinel Event Annual Review, communication breakdowns continue to be the leading factor contributing to sentinel events. The issues that the Joint Commission highlighted are pressing globally. The World Health Organization has also underscored the need to promote interprofessional education, which it has defined as the learning that “occurs when two or more professions (students, residents, health workers) learn with, about and from each other to enable effective collaboration and improve health outcomes” (WHO, 2010). This program, co-designed by faculty from Rutgers University in the U.S. and Democritus University of Thrace in Greece, aims to equip healthcare professionals and other experts in the two countries with the tools they need to better address the aforementioned challenges.

Join us for a transformative 10-day International Summer School in Greece, where graduate students and working professionals across health and healthcare disciplines converge. Participants will explore established models and innovative approaches to interprofessional practice, communication, and healthcare. Through hands-on application and collaboration, they’ll enhance team functioning, investigate best practices and challenges across clinical and public health contexts, and examine the critical role of culture. This immersive experience will also focus on regulatory and policy comparisons between the U.S., Greece, and the European Union. Engage with peers and

esteemed faculty from both the U.S. and Greece, advancing your knowledge and skills in interprofessional communication and practices.

The program is under the aegis of the School of Health Sciences, the Department of Medicine and the Department of Physical Education and Sport Sciences of Democritus University of Thrace.

Participants who complete the program will receive a Certificate of Completion from Rutgers University and Democritus University of Thrace.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of the program, participants should be able to:

- Describe established models of interprofessional practice, communication, and healthcare.
- Apply approaches previously tested to improve interprofessional team functioning and collaboration.
- Explain the best practices and challenges in interprofessional practice and communication, across clinical and community/public health contexts.
- Discuss the role of culture in interprofessional practice, as well as the impact of differences in applicable regulatory and policy contexts (with an emphasis on comparisons across the U.S. and Greece, and the U.S. and the European Union).

DAY-BY-DAY AGENDA (Overview)

Saturday 24 May

09:30-11:00	Welcome speech – Icebreaker session – Introduction to group cases
11:00-11:30	Coffee break
11:30-13:00	Introduction to communication practice and clinical practice (Didactic)
13:00-14:00	Lunch break
14:00-16:00	Participation in International Conference in Komotini
16:00-16:30	Coffee break
16:30-18:00	Participation in International Conference in Komotini – Interprofessional Communication Panel (Didactic)

Sunday 25 May

09:30-11:00	Communication and Inter-Professional Communication: Concepts, Theories, and Value in Healthcare (Didactic)
11:00-11:30	Coffee break
11:30-13:00	Communication Heuristics in Clinical Practice: History, Evidence, Limitations and Health Professional Perspectives (Didactic)
13:00-14:00	Lunch break
14:00-16:00	Interdisciplinary breakout: Practice SBAR (Practice)
16:00-16:30	Coffee break
16:30-18:00	Interdisciplinary breakout: Practice SBAR – Group case scenario evaluation and course of action, identifying barriers and limitations for each country (Practice)

Monday 26 May

09:30-11:00	Introduction to TeamSteps: overview; conflict resolution tool (Didactic)
11:00-11:30	Coffee break
11:30-13:00	How to disagree: structured communication to avoid healthcare errors (Didactic)
13:00-14:00	Lunch break
14:00-16:00	Adapting in Crisis: Greek experience with community pharmacies (economic and COVID crises) (Practice)
16:00-16:30	Coffee break
16:30-18:00	Discussion: Adaptation of communication heuristics across cultures. How disagreement among healthcare professionals is handled/negotiated. (Practice)

Tuesday 27 May

09:30-11:00	Group time to work on case projects introduced on 1st day (Didactic)
11:00-11:30	Coffee break
11:30-13:00	Role of Technology in Interprofessional Communication in Clinical and Public Health Settings (Didactic)
13:00-17:00	Free time
17:00-19:00	Field trip to community pharmacy (Practice)

Wednesday 28 May

09:30-11:00	The locality of practice: How local resources provide unique resources or barriers to effective IPP (Didactic)
11:00-11:30	Coffee break
11:30-13:00	Changing roles of healthcare professionals (Didactic)
13:00-14:00	Lunch break
14:00-16:00	Discuss commonalities and differences in Greece vs. U.S.: Roles of context, culture, policy (Round-table) (Practice)
16:00-16:30	Coffee break
16:30-18:00	Work on cases from U.S. and Greece to implement a tool like SBAR (Practice)

Thursday 29 May

09:30-11:00	Future of Work in Healthcare (Didactic)
11:00-11:30	Coffee break
11:30-13:00	Presentation from Healthcare Greece 2035 Project (Didactic)
13:00-14:00	Lunch break
14:00-16:00	Reflection & Discussion on Lessons Learned for Interprofessional Education, Communication, Practice. How can I effect change in my organization?
16:00-17:30	Coffee break - visit laparoscopy and robotic surgery laboratory
17:30-19:00	Guest Lecture and Discussion: EMR adoption, use, and challenges in the U.S. and Greece

Friday 30 May

09:30-16:00	Field trip
16:00	Free time

Saturday 31 May

09:30-11:30	Group Projects around Mediterranean Lifestyle - think about the role of your profession and how the professions give a single message
11:30-12:30	Brunch break
12:30-14:00	Group presentations
14:00-14:30	Coffee break
14:30-16:00	Faculty Farewell messages
16:00-19:00	Free time

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Sunday 25 May

19:00	Welcome dinner
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Wednesday 28 May

19:00	Mediterranean diet dinner – Introduction to the Mediterranean lifestyle
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Saturday 31 May

19:00	Gala dinner
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WHO SHOULD APPLY

This *International Summer School* in Greece is designed for healthcare professionals in training or who are already practicing in clinical settings, as well as graduate students and professionals with backgrounds and expertise in health-related professions, including but not limited to: medicine, dentistry, dietetics and nutrition, health communication,

health informatics, laboratory sciences, medicine, mental health, nursing, pharmacy, physical and occupational therapy, public health, social work, and speech pathology.

APPLICATION DEADLINE & REVIEW PROCESS

Find the application form here: <https://forms.gle/5cNuCfK1ah7FL7ea8>

Applications will be completed and submitted by **March 21, 2025**.

The associated faculty will review applications and invite those interested to brief interviews in the week after the submission deadline.

Final decisions will be announced to the participants by **April 4, 2025**.

Any questions regarding the application process will be addressed by Associate Prof. Christos Kontogiorgis (ckontogi@med.duth.gr)

IMPORTANT DATES

March 21, 2025: Application Deadline

April 4, 2025: Notifications of application Approval/Rejection (at this point participants who wish to withdraw their application will have 24h to do so).

April 15, 2025: The participation fee is payable after acceptance and by March 31, 2025. Payment information will be shared with accepted participants upon application approval.

May 23, 2025: Arrival in Alexandroupolis, check-in.

May 24, 2025: Program Starts. (Program activities start at 09:30 until 18:00)

May 30, 2025: Field Trip. Lectures will take place on location.

May 31, 2025: Program ends. (Program exams will take place in the morning sessions)

COST & FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Graduate students *	320 € (-20%)
PhD Candidates / Young Researchers **	400 €
Healthcare professionals ***	400 €

*All students who have received their undergraduate degree and students who are currently enrolled in a Post-graduate program. **All students who are currently enrolled in a PhD program and those who have received their PhD degree within the last 3 years. ***All healthcare professionals who are NOT currently enrolled in either a Post-graduate or a PhD program.

The program fee includes both didactic and practical components, as well as all teaching materials, coffee breaks, lunch breaks and Field Trip.