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USF St. Petersburg Professor To Speak on Bioterrorism Advisory Messages

The anthrax scare that killed two people and closed buildings along the East Coast for months has come and gone. What lessons were learned about how it was handled?

That question is at the center of a presentation Wednesday, April 23, 2003, by a University of South Florida St. Petersburg journalism professor. Dr. Kristen Alley Swain will discuss findings from a semester-long study of how news media framed the anthrax issue, and the lessons journalists and public health officials learned about how to communicate information about bioterrorism. Graduate students who were involved in the study as part of a course will assist her.

The discussion will be at noon in room 118 of the Florida Center for Teachers. The lecture is part of the "Hidden Curriculum" ethics luncheon series sponsored by the Program for Ethics in Education and Community. To reserve a lunch, call (727) 553-1579.

Swain is a principal investigator on a $326,143 grant from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control to develop strategies for creating messages that public health agencies can disseminate to the media and the public in the event of a bioterrorist attack. The USF College of Public Health contributed another $18,000 for Swain's research team to analyze communications about the 2001 anthrax mailings.

Swain is a visiting assistant professor in the Department of Media and Journalism Studies and coordinator of the Science Journalism Center.

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