

Department of Communication

# Summer Doctoral Seminar

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY  
College of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts



# Free Webinar

*This Talk is offered as part of  
the Wayne State University  
Summer Doctoral Seminar*

## *Chaos at the Intersection of Crisis and Health: Navigating the Paradox of Communicating Certainty in Uncertain Times*

**MONDAY, JUNE 8, 2020  
5:30 PM (US EST)**

By their nature, crises are shocking, threaten lives and livelihoods, and create enervating uncertainty. Regardless of crisis type, anxious publics demand explicit answers to questions about how to best protect themselves and their loved ones from the looming threat. Paradoxically, the more uncertainty the crisis evokes, the more publics' demand certainty. When, as is painfully often, crises become politicized, uncertainty is further intensified by conspiracy theories, personal attacks, and denial of compelling evidence. This presentation views the paradox of certainty in uncertain times from the perspective of chaos theory. In doing so, the problem is clarified and recommendations for navigating this paradox are provided.

## Webinar Registration

Join us by Zoom for a lecture by and conversation with Dr. Timothy Sellnow on Monday, June 8, 5:30 pm EST/ 2:30 pm PST/ 9:30 pm UTC

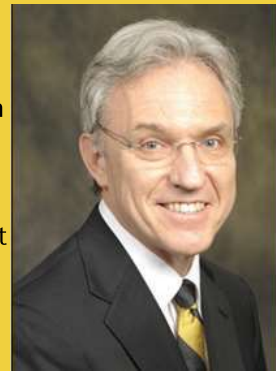
This talk is free and open to the public. We do ask, however, that you register in advance to attend using this link: [https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_5KQc7iSsQ1Cic6rBuk-zTw](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_5KQc7iSsQ1Cic6rBuk-zTw)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing a Zoom link for joining the webinar.

## Speaker

### Timothy L. Sellnow

Timothy L. Sellnow (PhD, Wayne State University) is a professor of strategic communication in the Nicholson School of Communication at the University of Central Florida. His research focuses on biosecurity, pre-crisis planning, and strategic communication for risk management and mitigation in government, organizational, and health settings. He has conducted funded research for the Department of Homeland Security, the United States Department of Agriculture, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Environmental Protection Agency, the United States Geological Survey, and the World Health Organization. He has also served in an advisory role for the National Academy of Sciences and the Food and Drug Administration. He has published numerous refereed journal articles as well as six books on risk and crisis communication. His most recent book (with Matthew Seeger) is *Communication in Times of Trouble: Best Practices for Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication* (2019; Wiley-Blackwell). He is a recipient of the National Communication Association's Gerald M. Phillips award for Distinguished Applied Communication Research and the Nicholson School of Communication's Excellence in Teaching Award. He is a past editor of the *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, published by the National Communication Association.



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