



## “Media, Politics, and Public Health: Reflections on the COVID-19 Infodemic”

Wednesday, February 2nd  
12:00 - 1:00pm

**In light of the community concerns regarding COVID-19, this talk will be given as a webinar. The link will be provided on February 1st to those that have registered by 5:00 pm on Monday, January 31st at [uccs.ucdavis.edu](https://uccs.ucdavis.edu).**

*The COVID-19 pandemic laid bare the weaknesses of the public health system in the United States. The first communicable disease pandemic in the age of social media and the “post-truth” world, COVID-19 was accompanied by an “infodemic” of misinformation that may have longer-lasting effects on perceptions of the trustworthiness of democratic institutions and democracy more generally than the novel coronavirus itself. In this talk Dr. Ramírez will elaborate a theoretical framework for considering the various roles that media may play in exacerbating or combatting misinformation relating to public health outcomes, including engendering support for or opposition to specific policies. Using COVID-19 as a case study, Professor Ramírez will demonstrate how the public information environment has contributed to longstanding racial and ethnic disparities in health outcomes, even as it has revealed these disparities and their effects on the broader population.*



**Dr. A. Susana Ramírez** is a social scientist whose program of research aims to advance the science of communication to improve population health, motivated by a concern for social justice. Professor Ramírez is a nationally recognized expert on media, inequality and dietary health, and Latino culture. She has provided expert testimony for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on communicating about obesity and chronic disease and is frequently invited to discuss communication and public health challenges facing rural and Latino populations. Her current research examines advocacy and public communication of federal food and nutrition

policy-making in Mexico.

Dr. Ramírez is currently an Associate Professor of Public Health Communication at the University of California in Merced. She earned a PhD from the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania, a Master of Public Health from Harvard University, and a Bachelor of Arts in Communication from Santa Clara University. She completed a postdoctoral fellowship in cancer prevention in the National Cancer Institute. In 2019-20 she served as the Faculty Director for UC Education Abroad Programs in Mexico.