

## Science Communication course

### Course description

Scientists are increasingly evaluated also by their ability to transmit their ideas and findings. This 3-day course aims to help students develop their communication skills in different settings. The course looks into science communication as a whole process and gives students the opportunity to train oral and written techniques to meet both peers and lay audiences. In general, the course follows three main vectors: write, talk, and dialogue. It starts with a more traditional approach to science writing by focusing on the structure of scientific papers, both in the natural/exact sciences and in the social/human sciences. The second day is devoted to overcoming common difficulties when addressing an audience, from structuring a presentation to mastering posture and voice, through improvisation techniques. Finally, the course takes the stance that scientists must leave the ivory tower and dialogue with the outside world, both through the media and by engaging directly with the public, namely by making use of web2.0.

### Study Load (activities/number of hours)

Lectures	8 hrs
Practical activities	16 hrs
Reading/self-study	4hrs

### Assessment

Communication exercises throughout the module are not subject to evaluation to guarantee that students express their real difficulties and look for solutions. At the end of the module students are invited to put in practice what they have learned by writing a blog post about their research project targeting educated lay audiences.

Commitment to the proposed exercises	80%
Blog post writing	20 %

## **Learning Outcomes**

At the end of the module, students should be familiar with the challenges of science communication at different levels:

- Reading a scientific paper
- Writing different sections of a scientific paper
- Organizing thoughts
- Addressing an audience – posture, voice, content
- Simplifying the message
- Interacting with the media

## **Recommended reading**

Olson, Randy (2009). Don't Be Such a Scientist: Talking Substance in an Age of Style. London: Island Press.

Schimel, Joshua (2011). Writing Science: How to Write Papers That Get Cited and Proposals That Get Funded. Oxford University Press

## **Course coordinator**

Ana Sanchez

## **Teachers**

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