

Global Partners in Science Communication

9-day syllabus

Day 1

7 pm	INTRODUCTION Welcome! It all starts here. You will hand in your visual art assignment and get a copy of the updated syllabus and, most importantly, an introduction to the people with whom we are going to spend nine intense days.
8 pm	ART OPENING RECEPTION Each participant will be asked to present, in one minute or less, the message communicated by this visual, and what it says about you. It is a way of introducing yourself to the group. Reception to follow.

Day 2

9:00 – 9:15 am	CREATIVE CONTEXT Before we dive in, we will spend a few minutes to discuss the goals of the program. Science communication is an emerging culture, with a history of challenges concerning accuracy, visuals, sound, and the thirst for more creativity, larger audiences, means of engagement, and impact. This session sets the stage for the next few days by opening up the prospect of tackling these communication challenges with creativity, courage and passion.
9:15 – 10:00 am	BODY OVER MIND In order to loosen up for the days ahead, we have to set you free! We'll begin some with improv warm up exercises that will prevent that brilliant mind of yours from being trapped in a body that is working against you.
10:00 am – noon	GETTING STARTED: UBER PITCH Someone famously said, "I didn't have time to write you a short letter, so I wrote a long one instead." In this session, we will begin by having participants prepare a one-minute (that is, short!) "Uber pitch". The idea is to engage a stranger in your scientific quest in the time you would have while waiting for an Uber. The pitch should be about something you are passionate about – why should anyone come to see it/fund it/care about it? What is it about and why does it matter? We will record each person on video.
Noon – 1 pm	LUNCH
1:00 – 3:00 pm	PERSONALIZING THE IMPERSONAL Science communication often focuses primarily on getting the science right, but at its best probes the profound and personal questions about being human. The more intimately the communicator is connected to the science, the more powerful the audience response is likely to be. This session encourages you to ask yourself, why does science matter to you or, for that matter, to anyone else? In this session participants reveal something about themselves by personalizing their communication style.

3:30 – 4:30 pm	REACHING PEOPLE WHERE THEY LIVE You will be exhausted by this point in the afternoon, ready to watch YouTube. So that’s just what we’ll do. We’ll take you through a pixel buffet of some inspiring pieces of science communications on screens, including Instagram, websites and television. We end the day on this note to share the many ways the people are presenting science in a range of visual media – all of course informed by great ideas and storytelling.
4:30 – 7:00 pm	DINNER BREAK
7:00 – 8:30 pm	ART EXPERIENCE NIGHT

Day 3

9:00 – 9:30 am	AUDIENCE-FIRST REMINDER This session gets touchy feely. Almost everyone has an opinion or feelings about a topic, regardless of how much they know about the topic. So it is important to connect with audiences through emotion. We’ll start this intense day by exploring the prevalence and challenge of addressing preconceived notions, and listening to audiences.
9:30 – 10:30 am	CUTTING ROOM FLOOR Picking up on the audience-first theme, we will workshop some techniques for telling a coherent story. Don’t take this the wrong way, but in this course, you’ll learn why the cutting room floor is so cluttered and why editors of all stripes use the phrase, “Kill your darlings.” This session applies to all modes of storytelling. In this session we will analyze the traditional structure of a written piece for newspapers and magazines, and see how much of this structure still applies and how much might be reconsidered.
10:30 – Noon Location of your choice.	THE STRUCTURE OF YOUR WRITTEN PIECE You will develop the structure for the journalistic science story that you will write tomorrow. Faculty are available to workshop this process with you. You will hand in your outline at 1 pm at the Yurt.
Noon – 1 pm	LUNCH
1:00 – 2:00 pm Yurt	STORYTELLING ON THE INTERNET Both the 280 characters of Twitter to the images of Instagram might seem unsuitable for communicating science. But they are not. We will take a look at how best to do that. Believe it or not, this is also about structure. This whole day is about structure (wink).
2:00 – 3:00 pm	CONSTRUCTING A VISUAL PIECE Ten years ago network television and film would have been the go-to forums for science communication. Now of course

	the media have changed dramatically but the elements of a well-told visual story remain unchanged.
3:00 – 5:00 pm	CONSTRUCTING A VISUAL PIECE As a group, we will create a visual piece of science storytelling for the Internet – and post it!
7:30 pm	IMPROV NIGHT

Day 4

9:00 –10:00 am	Faculty Speed Dating In this feedback session, you will sit down for 30 minutes each with two different faculty members to get feedback on your outline. And then, with options in hand, you will go off to write.
10:00 am – 4:00 pm	SCIENCE WRITING ASSIGNMENT You've faced the hard reality of structure and discipline when it comes to creative work. Now you can exercise your creativity on top of that foundation. You will be asked to sharpen your focus and ideas on a specific science news story that you have been thinking about. You have the day to write an article, living in the shoes of a journalist with a daily deadline. Your deadline is 4 pm. This should be a story that you are genuinely interested in, and think is worth telling. You will get editorial feedback so you can revise when you return to your everyday life. Tonight, we'll have a fireside chat – everything you ever wanted to know about pitching your science ideas.
4:00 pm	GROUP PROJECT ASSIGNED You will be put into groups to come up with an original science communications project. Over the coming week, you will research, develop, produce, polish and rehearse the public presentation of your project. It could be a TV show, a nation-wide challenge, an app, maybe a fishing news web site, a kids' program, a crisis intervention campaign, or a pilot. Anything goes. All groups will develop the same elements that provide a compelling overall framework via a web site. We will take you to the studio that will be your group's headquarters for the rest of the course.
7:00 – 8:00 pm	FIRESIDE CHAT We'll find a fireside where we can chat. After outlining what gatekeepers are looking for – whether they be editors, or show producers – you will dive into your first evening of group work. You may choose to gather over a glass of wine or a run. Your task tonight is to come up with an idea for a project! Creativity loves constraint!

Day 5

9:00 – 10:30 am	<p>PITCHING</p> <p>Let the creative process begin! You'll start the day by pitching your concept to the assembled whole. Each group will have 15 minutes to pitch and get feedback.</p>
10:30 am – 1:00 pm	<p>UNDERSTANDING YOUR BRAND AND DESIGNING YOUR LOGO</p> <p>We don't expect to turn you into a graphic designer but you have to understand how design works emotionally in order to understand that visual processing should affect every choice you make about your project. Graphic designers will work with you to realize your logo. Your first task is to send your designer off with some logos ideas.</p> <p>All elements of your project will be influenced by your brand. So, today, you get started on realizing all of the cocktail napkin creativity that will eventually come together in your graphic, visual and audio works. This is a day of pure brainpower. The more clear your brand (think: emotion) the more magical it will be to make good decisions in the execution of the creative process.</p>
1:00 – 2:00 pm	<p>LUNCH</p>
2:00 – 4:00 pm	<p>STORYBOARDING YOUR VIDEO</p> <p>Today you need to figure out what your video and podcast will entail. Starting tomorrow, all groups will go into production. So we will workshop with you what each of these steps involves.</p> <p>For the video, you need to complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storyboard • Shot list
4:00 – 6:00 pm	<p>STORYBOARDING YOUR PODCAST</p> <p>For the podcast, you will need to think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • script • music/sound effects • interview clips (if relevant)
6:00 – 7:00 pm	<p>DINNER</p>
7:00 – 9:00 pm	<p>FREE EVENING!</p>

Day 6

9:00 am	Meet at home base to check in for the day
9:00 am – 5:00 pm	<p>Groups 1 and 2 AUDIO PODCASTING Two groups will write, record and edit their podcasts today, as follows (guidelines only!):</p> <p>9 - 10 am: Orientation 10 am - noon: Script writing noon - 3 pm: Recording (in Rice audio booth) 3 - 5 pm: Editing</p>
9:00 am – 5:00 pm	<p>Groups 3 and 4 TELEVISION/VIDEO SHOOTING Two groups will shoot and edit their videos today.</p>
7:00 pm	<p>SCIENCE WALK (OPTIONAL) Weather permitting, we will lead an evening walk to a field location where researchers are gathering data, and will stop for ice cream or beer on the way back.</p>

Day 7

9:00 am	Meet at home base to check in for the day
9:00 am – 5:00 pm	<p>Groups 3 and 4 AUDIO PODCASTING Two groups will write, record and edit their podcasts today, as follows (guidelines only!):</p> <p>9 - 10 am: Orientation 10 am - noon: Script writing noon - 3 pm: Recording 3 - 5 pm: Editing</p>
9:00 am – 5:00 pm	<p>Groups 1 and 2 TELEVISION/VIDEO SHOOTING Two groups will shoot and edit their videos today.</p>
7:00 – 8:00 pm	PREP TIME FOR PRESENTATIONS

Day 8

9 am –noon	<p>FINAL PRESENTATION SET UP</p> <p>Posters, flyers, memos, or other notices for audiences relevant to your project should be up and about.</p>
1 – 2 pm	<p>GROUP PRESENTATION</p> <p>Project work is presented to colleagues and invited guests</p>
2 – 3 pm	<p>GROUP PRESENTATION</p> <p>Project work is presented to colleagues and invited guests</p>
3 – 4 pm	<p>GROUP PRESENTATION</p> <p>Project work is presented to colleagues and invited guests</p>
4 – 5 pm	<p>GROUP PRESENTATION</p> <p>Project work is presented to colleagues and invited guests</p>
5 – 6 pm	<p>CHAMPAGNE RECEPTION</p>
7:00 pm to late!	<p>DINNER, DANCE AND TALENTS</p> <p>A not-so-formal formal wrap-up dinner, is followed by an extremely not-formal talent show and dancing mayhem. Bring your musical instruments, poetry, spoken word, gymnastic pyramids for an evening of entertainment that we provide for each other!</p>

Day 9

Early – 9:30 am	<p>WRITTEN PROGRAM EVALUATION</p> <p>We ask that you to take this time, before we get going on the final day, to complete the evaluation form. It is very important for future planning and we value the feedback on your experiences and suggestions for improvement.</p>
9:30 – 11:30 am	<p>PANEL DISCUSSION OF GROUP PROJECTS</p> <p>Feedback on the projects will be provided by the panel of evaluators. Additional comments from faculty and participants are also encouraged.</p>
11:30 – noon	<p>THE FINAL MOMENTS</p> <p>What have we learned?</p>