

Course Title: Media Production for Environmental Science and Policy

Instructor: Jennifer Lewis, PhD

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Meeting time and location: TBA

Office Hours: By appointment over zoom

Class Summary: Successful science and policy now require having the ability to share information in a way that captures attention and keeps it. Whether you are presenting to a group, sitting for a news interview, or producing material for social media feeds. Understanding what works and why, will ensure you succeed. In this class, we will start with the science of how we have evolved to communicate, and then apply this to the art of sharing your work (written, spoken and visual) across the rest of the course.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the course students will:

- Have practice in producing all forms of science and science policy media (written, spoken and visual) (see course topics and schedule for specifics)
- Students will be prepared to offer this knowledge and service to others (e.g., NGO's, advising on communication strategies), or to use what they have learned in their own work
- Deliverables will be produced that will be useful for boosting Resume/Curriculum Vitae for science communication jobs

Course Topics and Schedule: (Course topics may not follow the schedule exactly as written below)

<u>Week 1:</u>	Why do we care about communicating better to scientists and the general public? We will cover the history of communication between science and the public, up to the current state, and we will use this to discuss the need to improve our communication skill sets today.
<u>Week 2:</u>	The evolution behind human communication . Discussing how humans developed our primary mode of communication, and how these transpose to our current biological responses. We will discuss how to use this information to do a better job at capturing and maintaining the interest of audiences.
<u>Weeks 3-6:</u>	Writing . We will cover multiple examples of science writing, including news editorials, periodical papers (for the general public), social media posts, and scripts for short videos (for multiple formats ranging from YouTube to TikTok). Lecture will cover each of these situations separately and students will gain practice through assignments. The essence is not to teach how to write, but how to write to capture attention and maintain attention.
<u>Weeks 7-10:</u>	Speaking . Students will learn how to apply the concepts learned to multiple types of speaking when covering science and policy topics. Examples include speaking at/for meetings, speaking to the press, speaking for "radio" (i.e.,

	podcasts, as interviewer and interviewee), and elevator speaking (short, to the point speaking when time is limited, for example, approaching members of congress for support in a hallway). Each situation will require different tactics and design. Through example and practice, students will learn how to master each.
<u>Weeks 11-13:</u>	Using visuals to communicate. Students will be taught skills in photography and video, including video editing and management of media (to prepare for the need for visuals when approached by news organizations for example). The focus of student work will be to deliver products for use in social media as well as building social media.
<u>Weeks 14-15:</u>	How to develop science communication strategies for yourself or organizations. Looking at the different needs and types of organizations, students will learn and practice how to develop the best strategies potentially using all forms of media.

Grading:

Undergraduates

Biweekly quizzes (4)	40%
Assignments (8)	40%
Final Project	20%

Graduates:

Biweekly quizzes (4)	30%
Assignments (8)	40%
Final Project Presentation	15%
Final Report	10%
Film on thesis/dissertation research	5%

Biweekly quizzes will measure retention and understanding of material covered prior to the quiz date. Quizzes will be given online prior to the class meetings. There will be no makeups for missed quizzes.

Assignments will allow practice of the concepts covered. Assignment due dates and requirements (deliverables expected) will be given at the start of the course or discussed as the course progresses. Note: some practice (not graded) will also occur in class as a group (e.g., podcasts, mock news interviews and brainstorming communication strategies). The following includes potential assignments that students will complete to turn in.

1. Writing a short news editorial
2. Writing a short piece for a periodical or news column
3. Writing for social media (taking one topic and preparing it for each type of social media, Facebook, Tiktok/Instagram and Twitter/Threads)

4. Script writing for a short film for use on YouTube
5. Developing a plan to prepare for a news interview (topic of the interview will be provided)
6. Developing a plan to prepared for a short elevator talk (practice in class will also take place)
7. A photo assignment for social media
8. A video assignment (producing multiple pieces for different forms of social media, all on the same topic).

A final project will involve assessment of an actual organization's current media strategy, and developing a proposal to improve it, using what was learned in the class. This proposal will be presented to the class during the final week of class. A rubric will be provided detailing the expected deliverables in the proposal.

Graduate students will be required to produce one additional short film on the topic of their research (developed to be used in social media) and will submit a written report in addition to the final project presentation

Scale used for grading: A+:97-100, A:93-96, A-:90-92, B+:87-89, B:83-86, B-:80-82, C+:77-79, C:73-76, C-:70-72, D+:67-69, D:63-66, D-:60-62,F: 0-59

Attendance Policy: Students are required to attend all scheduled class and lab periods for the duration of this session. To receive the chance to make up any missed tests or assignments the student must have documentation to verify why missed days/times occurred (it is up to the discretion of the instructor to determine whether supplied documents provide enough proof to allow student to perform makeup activity).

Academic Misconduct: All acts of dishonesty in any work constitute academic misconduct. This includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication of information, misrepresentations, and abetting in any of the above. In the event that academic misconduct occurs the student will be given a 'zero' on the assignment. Any formal grievance to the instructor's decision to declare academic misconduct will follow the guidelines outlined in the DISL Graduate Student Handbook (available from the DISL Registrar).

Americans with Disabilities Act: In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, students with bona fide disabilities will be afforded reasonable accommodation in this course. If a student has a disability that they feel might impede their ability to fully participate in the class, they are asked to advise the instructor at their earliest convenience (no later than the first day of the course). In such cases, the instructor will work with the student and the Office of Special Student Services (or its equivalent) to provide reasonable accommodation for the student.