Class Sessions: Tuesday + Thursday 2:00-3:15 pm PT, remote
Contact: lisa@bren.ucsb.edu | Office Hours: Mon 3-4pm PT +10-11am PT (Zoom)

Course Overview

Environmental solutions are only as effective as your ability to communicate them and achieve buy-in. But successful environmental communication is not just about getting the facts right. Before tackling an issue, it's critical to consider the intended audiences and their values and attitudes—and to use storytelling to reach them. In this class you will study communication theory, including how logic, emotion, persuasion, and social influence work. You will also learn about strategic messaging and how to develop compelling stories using conflict, drama, and character. To build skills, you will also practice messaging for different audiences, and will gain an understanding of the complex media environment in which your messages compete for attention.

Course Objectives

- To learn to decomplexify science and present it in a concise and compelling way.
- To understand the environment in which your messages compete for attention.
- To apply concepts from communication theory to improve message effectiveness.
- To build skill and confidence in message framing for diverse audiences.
- To create equitable message frames and expand communication representation.
- To understand and apply the basics of strategic messaging and outreach.
- To learn and apply the elements of story in your own storytelling and outreach.
- To develop a comprehensive communication intervention, applying course concepts.

Format

Class meets most frequently as “in person” Zoom lectures, which will include a combination of short lectures, discussion sections, group activities, and/or peer review workshops. If for some reason you cannot attend class, lectures will be recorded and posted to GauchoSpace and I will find a way for you to make-up any missed activities.

Pre-recorded lectures will also occasionally be provided before class with discussion/activities to follow during our scheduled class time. Please consult the calendar and GauchoSpace site to keep up-to-date with the requirements of each class meeting.
REQUIREMENTS

Participation: Since strategic communication requires effective and open communication of ideas, regular participation is expected. However, the quality of contributions is more important than quantity; if you’re a comfortable contributor and extrovert, remember to make space for introverts or those who haven’t shared yet. Also, when you attend class lectures and discussion sections, try to show up with your camera on and ready to participate. That said, I understand there may be a few days when you need to have the camera off—no problem!

Grading: Assignments: 75% (feedback only, marked “complete,” all must be attempted to pass) Final project: 25% (graded, group work encouraged)

While this course is graded, I will be removing the stress and competitiveness of grades, in favor of you spending more time learning to communicate creatively, stress-free. This means that I will not be grading your weekly assignments, only providing feedback. Attempting all assignments is a requirement to pass the course, however. If you are having trouble meeting deadlines, please contact me to discuss an extension. I will be grading your final project, however, which counts for 25% of the grade. I recommend starting work early in the quarter and working with a group.

Assignments: To build communication skills—you must practice writing and communicating! Therefore this course has 11 short assignments that you will either post to forums, bring to class as drafts for feedback, or submit to me for feedback on GauchoSpace.

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<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due</th>
<th>How to Submit</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Favorite Science Communicator</td>
<td>Thurs Apr 1 @ 10am</td>
<td>Post on GS forum</td>
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<td>Be ready to discuss in class</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>90 Second Science DRAFT</td>
<td>Thurs Apr 8 @ 2pm</td>
<td>Bring draft talking points to class</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>90 Second Science FINAL</td>
<td>Tues Apr 13 @ 10am</td>
<td>Post to GS forum</td>
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<td>Review others’ posts &amp; comment on one</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Message Frame Grid DRAFT</td>
<td>Thurs Apr 15 @ 2pm</td>
<td>Bring draft outline/ideas to class</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Reading Reflection / Forum Post</td>
<td>Tues Apr 20 @ 10am</td>
<td>Post to GS forum</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Message Frame Grid FINAL</td>
<td>Tues Apr 27 @ 2pm</td>
<td>Submit on GS</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Strategy Review</td>
<td>Thurs Apr 29 @ 10am</td>
<td>Post to GS forum</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Press Release Pitch</td>
<td>Tues May 4 @ 10am</td>
<td>Submit on GS</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Six Word Stories</td>
<td>Tues May 11 @ 10am</td>
<td>Submit on GS</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Narrative X-Ray</td>
<td>Thurs May 13 @ 2pm</td>
<td>Submit on GS</td>
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<td>Bring copy to class to share/discuss</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Story of Science &amp; Nature</td>
<td>May 18, 20, 25 @ 2pm</td>
<td>Prepare to tell/present story to class</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>(optional) Final Press Release</td>
<td>Thurs May 27 @ 2pm</td>
<td>Submit on GS</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Final Project DRAFT</td>
<td>Jun 1 + 3 @ 2pm</td>
<td>Submit on GS</td>
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<td>Be prepared to present in class</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Final Project FINAL</td>
<td>Thurs Jun 10 @ 11:59pm</td>
<td>Submit on GS</td>
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<td>(submit only one per group)</td>
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Assignment Format: Assignments should be uploaded to GauchoSpace as a Word document. Please be mindful of the time each assignment is due. Assignments should be saved as: Lastname_Firstname_AssignmentName_MMDDYY.docx.

TOPIC OUTLINE

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Unit</th>
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<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Mar 30 Apr 1</td>
<td>Science Comm Overview</td>
<td>Simplifying Science</td>
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<td>Apr 8</td>
<td>Creating Digestible Science</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Apr 6 Apr 8</td>
<td>The Message Environment</td>
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<td>The Art of Framing</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Apr 13 Apr 15</td>
<td>Deficit Model &amp; Persuasion Theory</td>
<td>Science of Science</td>
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<td>Power of Social Networks &amp; Cues</td>
<td>Communication</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Apr 20 Apr 22</td>
<td>Communication for EJ</td>
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<td>Apr 22</td>
<td>Communication Strategy Basics</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Apr 27 Apr 29</td>
<td>Applied Communication Strategy</td>
<td>Strategy</td>
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<td>Audience Research &amp; Impact</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>May 4 May 6</td>
<td>Managing the Press</td>
<td>Storytelling</td>
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<td>Story, Conflict, &amp; Drama</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>May 11 May 13</td>
<td>The Power of Myth</td>
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<td>May 13</td>
<td>Science Narratives</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>May 18 May 20</td>
<td>Stories of Science &amp; Nature 1</td>
<td>Environmental Art</td>
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<td>May 20</td>
<td>Stories of Science &amp; Nature 2</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>May 25 May 27</td>
<td>Stories of Science &amp; Nature 3</td>
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<td>Art &amp; Visual Storytelling</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Jun 1 Jun 3</td>
<td>Final Presentations 1</td>
<td>Wrap-Up</td>
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<td>Final Presentations 2</td>
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Readings: Readings are meant to augment what you learn in class lectures. There are more readings than you can likely comfortably get through for each class period, but please do your best to extract the main points of each paper—just be sure to spend time with those that you are most interested in. *Please note that readings are subject to change; always check GauchoSpace!*

UNIT 1: SIMPLIFYING SCIENCE

Mar 30: Science Comm Overview. Course intro, framing, basic science communication tips
- No readings assigned.

Apr 1: Creating Digestible Science. Best practices in decomplexifying science, review of science communicators and practice speaking simply
• YouTube tutorial: How to explain scientific ideas: 6 SIMPLE tips from a communication expert | FameLab

Apr 6: The Message Environment. Audience considerations, the science media landscape, US public perceptions of science, anti-science, pop science


Examples of anti-environmental propaganda (optional):


April 8: The Art of Framing. Frames, schemas, developing multiple issue frames, how and when to use different frames


UNIT 2: THE SCIENCE OF SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

April 13: The Deficit Model & Persuasion Theory. Deficit model, persuasion, dual-process theories, fear appeals


April 15: The Power of Social Networks & Cues. Group identity, social influence, psychology of climate denial, leveraging group cues
• Stoknes, P. E. (2015) Ch 6: The Roots of Denial and Ch 7 The Five Psychological Barriers to Climate Action, In What We Think About When We Try Not To Think About Global Warming, Chelsea Green, White River Junction, VT. p. 70-84.


UNIT 3: EQUITABLE COMMUNICATION

April 20: Communication for Environmental Justice. Equity framing, inclusive messaging, positionality, expanding representation


UNIT 4: STRATEGY

April 22: Communication Strategy Basics. Developing goals & objectives, campaign design, theories of change, community-based social marketing


• (skim) Grant Craft (n.d.) Mapping change: Using a theory of change to guide planning


April 27: Applied Communication Strategy. Guest Speaker: Deb Berlin, former Director of Strategic Communication for the EPA under the Obama Administration to discuss campaign design

April 29: **Audience Research & Impact.** Design and methodology for audience research & evaluation, audience segmentation


May 4: **Managing the Press.** Guest Speaker: Matthew King, former Communications and Marketing Director for Heal the Bay to discuss journalistic norms, press releases, pitching science stories, creating talking points


**UNIT 5: STORYTELLING**

May 6: **Story, Conflict, & Drama.** Storytelling basics, conflict, consuming/producing media, spectrum of drama, use of emotion

- Audio lecture by Richard Hutton, former Disney Imagineer & Oscar winning documentary producer, “Storytelling”

May 11: **The Power of Myth.** Hero’s journey, role of myth in storytelling, review six word stories

- Audio assignment: ”Six Word Stories,” by Richard Hutton
- The Hero’s Journey “Cheat Sheet,” by Dan Bronzite

May 13: **Science Narratives.** Identifying science narrative structures, review narrative X-rays


May 18: **Stories of Science & Nature – Group 1.** Presentation of student stories with critiques

May 20: **Stories of Science & Nature – Group 2.** Presentation of student stories with critiques

UNIT 6: ENVIRONMENTAL ART

May 27: Art & Visual Storytelling. Science communication in informal settings, environmental art, design, and creative indicators
- No readings assigned.

COURSE WRAP-UP

Jun 1: Final Presentations 1. Presentation of draft final projects (in groups) with critiques.

Jun 3: Final Presentations 2. Presentation of draft final projects (in groups) with critiques.

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