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## **SCIENCE COMMUNICATION PROJECT GUIDELINES**

Over the course of the semester, you will work on an individual semester “science communication” project.

“Science communication” (or SciComm/sci-comm) refers to public communication presenting science-related topics to an audience of non-experts – that is, how do you take the results of scientific research and explain them to people who are not scientists? Science communication is extremely important for informing the public about the results of research, guiding political decision-making, and encouraging interest in science.

One of the best things about science communication is that it can take many different forms – in fact, it is *important* that you communicate scientific ideas in an entertaining and engaging way. Much of what we produce in science can be very technical, loaded with scientific terms and complex ideas, and communicated in such a way that only other scientists could understand it. The opposite is true for science communication – we can use forms of entertainment like art installations, storytelling, films, websites, games, comics... the list goes on.

### **GOAL**

You will design a science communication product for a topic related to this course. You should choose a topic and a “product” (what you make) that interests you and that will be **fun** for you to work on over the course of the semester. This project is open-ended for a reason: I want you to be inspired and do something that matters to you. The best science communicators are those who are enthusiastic about their topic. This project will require that you do **additional research** on your topic outside of class – you must know the science so that you can communicate it to others.

### **GRADING**

Your semester project grade consists of 5 points for your topic selection, 5 points for your project proposal, and 25 points for your final science communication product. You will present your products during class sessions at the end of the semester.

You will design your project in consultation with the instructor to make sure that the project demonstrates your knowledge of your topic and meets the grading criteria.

### **PROJECT IDEAS**

- Photography series
- Graphic design
- Comics (webcomics, computer- or hand-illustrated)
- Websites
- Game design
- Advertising/public awareness materials (posters, pamphlets)
- Educational materials (course design, children’s books, training programs, lessons)
- Research report
- Story or poetry collections
- Documentaries or short films
- Script for a film or play
- Sculpture/modeling

## PROJECT COMPONENTS

**Topic Selection:** Complete the topic selection worksheet and submit your worksheet on Blackboard.

**Proposal (5pts):** Develop your project idea and complete the Project Proposal Worksheet (attached). Determine the assessment criteria for your project type and complete the Project Evaluation Worksheet (attached). Schedule a meeting with the instructor (calendar and sign-up sheets will be provided) to finalize project plans and assessment criteria.

**Project and narrative (25pts):** Your final project will be evaluated according to the criteria mutually decided upon by you and the instructor when you meet to discuss your proposal. In addition to whatever you decide to create, you must also complete a project narrative (3-4 pages, double-spaced). This is a narrative about the process of completing your project.

What were your goals?

What audience did you choose and why?

Why did you make the choices you did?

What ideas did you discard and why?

What challenges did you run into?

Why do you think that your project will be effective in teaching your audience about your topic?

Discuss the research process for your proposal. For example, were there topics that you were interested in but that proved too difficult to find good information about? Conversely, did you find something especially interesting in the course of your research that made you change direction?

## **TOPIC SELECTION WORKSHEET**

What course concept/issue is your main focus for your project? In other words, what will your project help us understand about your chosen issue? What sort of research will you draw on to educate your audience?

What will you do for your project? Clearly explain the steps you need to take, how you will complete each step, and your timeline for completing your project.

What are your plans for your class presentation? What materials or equipment will you need?

Any other questions or concerns?

## PROJECT EVALUATION WORKSHEET

Grade	Criteria to Meet
A Range	<i>(What should a project of this type achieve/contain/look like to be worthy of an A grade?)</i>
B Range	
C Range	
D Range	